



# Backside News

MAY 2009

## MAY EVENTS:

**MAY 1ST-3RD** –  
DERBY GIFT SHOP  
AT NATIONAL CITY  
BANK PARKING LOT  
OFF 4TH AND CEN-  
TRAL AVE

**MAY 3RD**– DERBY  
GIFT SHOP AT BACK-  
SIDE LEARNING  
CENTER

**MAY 11TH**– GROOM  
ELITE 101 BEGINS

**MAY 14TH**– VOLUN-  
TEER/STUDENT  
RECOGNITION  
PARTY 5-7PM

**MAY 26TH**–  
HORSEMEN'S GOLF  
TOURNAMENT

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**JUNE 15TH & 16TH** –  
GROOM ELITE 101  
ASSESSMENT

**JUNE 18TH**– VOLUN-  
TEER/STUDENT REC-  
OGNITION PARTY  
AND GROOM ELITE  
GRADUATION PARTY  
5-7PM

## MAY CENTER HOURS:

**MONDAY-FRIDAY**  
CHURCHILL  
11:30 AM-8PM

## Closing the Gap

*Written by: Melissa Johnson*

The main reason The Backside Learning Center came into existence is because of the growing language gap on the backside of Churchill Downs. The Learning Center has sought to reduce that gap by providing English language learning services. We recognize that acquiring another language is a difficult feat and our goal is to make the journey as convenient as possible for the backside workers.

In 2008, 176 students enrolled in our English services. We provided formal English classes and informal English practice.

This year, we are expanding our English programming. We created a new volunteer role called *Class Support*. There will be one volunteer available during each class to assist teachers and work one-on-one with students who need extra, individual help.

Also, we offer the Tutoring Program, which was piloted last Fall and, due to its success, will continue this Spring. This program was only open to students who were already attending English class or English practice class. This year, we will expand its audience to include anyone who

wants to participate in it. This is a great opportunity for students to receive individualized study and for volunteers to build relationships with the students.

Another exciting addition to our programming is the Bilingual Hour. This is a form of conversation practice that will take place on Thursday evenings in a relaxed environment. A student and volunteer will pair up and practice con-



Intermediate English Class

versational skills in English for the first half-hour and Spanish for the second half-hour. This is beneficial for our students because they will have the opportunity to practice speaking English and then they will take on the role of teacher and help the volunteer practice speaking Spanish. This will build relationship and confidence.

The last two additions to our programming will enable students who cannot come to classes or would like to study

English independently. The first is the English Language Lab. It is located in the Lending Library and is comprised of two computers. They use the Ellis Academic 5 software which includes activities for all levels and tailors lessons based on student strengths. The student takes an initial quiz given by the program to determine exercises for all areas of language learning. The program also offers Spanish language support for beginners. The English Language Lab also includes the literacy collection which consists of leveled books to practice reading, a CD and tape player to practice listening with language cassettes and audio books. The lab will be ready for use in May.

The second addition for independent learners is the internet resource guide which is being developed by one of our newest volunteers, Melita Swank. The resource guide is an overview of ESL sites in English and Spanish and will be included on our website and in hardcopy in the English Language Lab.

Our English services are already underway at the Learning Center and we are excited about the expanded services we will offer this year.

## MAY CLASS SCHEDULE:

### MONDAYS:

1 PM-2PM: ENGLISH  
TUTORING HOUR  
5PM-7PM: ENGLISH  
CLASS

### TUESDAYS:

11:30AM-1PM: BEGIN-  
NING & INTERMEDI-  
ATE ENGLISH PRACTICE

1PM-3PM: AD-  
VANCED ENGLISH  
PRACTICE

5PM-7PM: ENGLISH  
CLASS

6:30PM-8PM: CITI-  
ZENSHIP CLASS

### WEDNESDAYS:

11:30AM-1PM: BEGIN-  
NING & INTERMEDI-  
ATE ENGLISH PRACTICE

12PM-2PM: ART  
CLASS

1PM-3PM: AD-  
VANCED ENGLISH  
PRACTICE

5:30PM-7PM: SPANISH  
CLASS

6PM-8PM: COMPUTER  
CLASS

### THURSDAYS:

11:30AM-1PM: BEGIN-  
NING & INTERMEDI-  
ATE ENGLISH PRACTICE

1PM-3PM: AD-  
VANCED ENGLISH  
PRACTICE

6PM-7PM: BILINGUAL  
HOUR

### FRIDAYS:

1PM-3PM: AD-  
VANCED ENGLISH  
PRACTICE

5:30PM-7:30PM:  
MOVIE NIGHT

### GROOM ELITE 101:

MAY 11, 12, 18, 19, 26 &  
27 11:30AM-2:30PM

## Student Profile

Written by: Jennifer Hoert

José Arriaga has been working with horses for almost seven years, and he shared with me that his favorite thing about working with horses is "winning a race...being in the winner's circle...it is hard to describe the emotions."

This will be the fifth season that José has been active at the Learning Center. He participated in English, Computer, and Art classes, game night, and Groom Elite. His passed his certification exams in the Groom Elite 101 and 201 classes. His artwork was featured in the



José Arriaga at Churchill

Dreamchasers exhibit at the Kentucky Derby Museum. José informed me that the Learning Center has helped him "with English and to make a lot of good friends." When asked about the Groom Elite classes, José shared that "I was a groom before taking the class, but I was not prepared. I learned a lot in the class and I am a better groom than before."

José has been promoted to a foreman with Rusty Arnold, and when asked how he felt he said, "excited and a little nervous." I spoke with Jack Bohannon, Assistant Trainer for Rusty Arnold, who said that José is "a quite, reserved kid. He speaks English well. He is sensitive to other people's needs and gets along well with everyone in the barn. This is important as a foreman. He's been in the barn for a few years and he has never missed a day. He is willing to do whatever is asked of him. If things go well there is always the possibility for José to move up, but for now we are focused on helping him in his new role as foreman."

## Team Notes

Written by: Kevin Oberhausen

On April 22, The Backside Learning Center hosted our annual Spring Open House. The Learning Center Spring Open House is an event where we reach out to the backside community, so they can come see all of the different services and programming we offer. This year, with the help of several volunteers and a generous pizza donation from Papa John's International, the event was a huge success!

We opened our doors at 11:00am, and over the next few hours hundreds of backside workers came and visited our facility. All in attendance were able to first take a tour of the Learning

Center given by staff, register for classes at tables overseen by volunteers, and finally enter our classroom extension where they could pick up their complimentary pizza.



Spring Open House

At the end of the day, over 50 people had registered for classes as 93 signatures filled our registration sheets. Most popular as

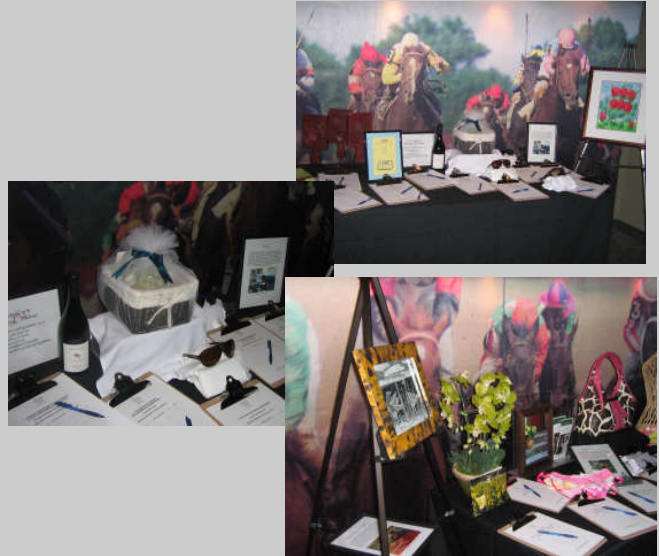
determined by the number of signatures were Groom Elite 101, English class, English practice, the Bilingual Hour, Computer Class and Art Class. This came as no surprise as programs like GED, Citizenship and Tutoring are almost always sought by a smaller constituency.

While not all attendees elected to register for a class, everyone who came contributed to the overall cheerful environment. Once again, we thank all volunteers who helped make this event possible and Papa John's for bringing people together with their pizza donation.

# Special Events Update

## Simply Chic

The Backside Learning Center hosted a silent auction at the Kentucky Derby Museum's Simply Chic event on April 9th. The silent auction was very successful and raised over \$800 for the Learning Center's programming. Special thanks to Z Salon & Spa, José Arriaga, Sunglass Hut, René Rofé Lingerie, Westport Whiskey & Wine, The Pink Zebra Boutique, Summer Classics, and Patina Interiors for their generous donations. Also a special thanks to the Kentucky Derby Museum for the opportunity to participate and to those who supported the Learning Center at the event.



## Items Donated for Special Events:

**Blue Oak School:** An Insider's visit to the Napa Valley  
**Elements:** 50 minute massage

**Hal Wiggins, Trainer:** Rachel Alexandra Halter

**Hidden Creek Golf Club:** Golf with 2 outstanding Jockeys

**Learning Center Students:** José Arriaga and Michelle donated Artwork

**Leonard Luskey, President of Secretariat.com:** Framed Secretariat photo finish, Memories of Greatness Print Set

**Louisville Convention and Visitors Bureau:** Louisville Bats Luxury Suite

**Patina Interiors:** Home Décor

**The Pink Zebra Boutique:** Giraffe Purse

**René Rofé Lingerie:** Junior's Assorted Lingerie

**Summer Classics:** Potted Orchid

**Sunglass Hut and Lens Crafters:** Ralph Lauren and DKNY Sunglasses

**University of Louisville Athletics:** UofL basketball autographed by the coaching staff, UofL autographed Seniors poster by Rick Pitino, UofL 2009 Big East championship hat, and authentic UofL warm-up suit

**Westport Whiskey & Wine:** Bottle of Wine and 2 Free Passes for any Tasting Event

**Z Salon & Spa:** Aveda Body & Bath Gift Basket and Gift Certificate

**Woodford:** 2 bottles of Woodford Reserve



## 2009 Derby Preview at John E's Restaurant

Special thanks to the Blue Oak School, Hal Wiggins, Hidden Creek Golf Club, Leonard Luskey, Louisville Convention and Visitors Bureau, University of Louisville Athletics and Woodford for donating items for our silent auction at John E's Restaurant on April 27th. We raised \$4,500 to support the Learning Center.

# Class in the Spotlight



Written by: Norma Gruen  
The Advanced ESL Class, taught by Norma Gruen, meets Monday and Tuesday evenings from 5:00 to 7:00. This class is for those who speak English, but need practice in oral and written English. Life skills are also taught in this class.

We have completed two levels of the ALL STAR Series, which is centered around life skills. Life skills are those activities a person uses in everyday life such as banking, foods, shopping, making appointments, reporting emergencies, completing applications, safety and other skills needed for successful living in our society.

Often, the students can read English, but have poor comprehension. We develop better comprehension by reading short stories and news articles orally;

then discuss them by answering questions regarding the readings. We have read several novels. The students are given a list of new vo-



Advanced ESL Class taught by Norma Gruen

cabulary from the assigned chapter and given time in class to define the words using the dictionary. We read a chapter a week independently and discuss it in class.

Included in the curriculum are news articles from BREAKING NEWS ENGLISH and NEWS FOR YOU. These publications cover current events in the United States and the world.

These articles are read orally and discussed in class.

We also work on English writing skills. This includes learning the parts of speech, punctuation, verb tense, capitalization and other skills needed to write sentences clearly and correctly.

Only English is spoken in class. The students are encouraged to speak English outside of class as this is the best way to develop English fluency.

This year we are coordinating our efforts with the Citizenship Class. This will reinforce what is taught in the Citizenship Class and help those students with their writing, spelling and vocabulary skills. It will also give the ESL students an opportunity to learn about the United States.

## CENTER WISH LIST FEATURED ITEMS:

- Soccer shoes (size 8, 8 1/2, 9, 9 1/2, 10, gently used is fine)
- Soccer balls
- Air pump for soccer balls

## VOLUNTEER CORNER

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Contact Rachel Brokaw at the Learning Center if you are interested in volunteering.

**ESL TUTOR:** Provide personalized instruction, encouragement, and support to an adult English language learner. Plan lessons and work one-on-one with your student. Time commitment: Two hours a week, Mondays at 1pm.

**ESL CLASS SUPPORT:** Provide instruction to new and/or struggling adult English language learners. Use class curriculum in a one-on-one or small group setting to prepare students to enter (or re-enter) the classroom. Time commitment: Two hours a week, or every other week.

### CONVERSATION PARTNERS FOR BILINGUAL CONERSATION

**TABLES:** Converse with adult English language learners during bilingual conversation tables. Use both English and Spanish to affirm students' knowledge and create a non-threatening environment. Conversation prompts will be provided. Time commitment: One hour a week, Thursdays from 6-7pm.

**CONVERSATION LEADER FOR BILINGUAL CONERSATION TABLES:** Plan bilingual conversation prompts for multiple levels of language ability. Assist in matching conversation partners and adult ESL students. Act as a conversation partner when needed. Time commitment: one to two hours a week, Thursdays from 6-7pm.

**QUILTER NEEDED:** Someone has generously donated materials for a quilt.

For more information, visit the Volunteer Corner on our website!

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND TIME!

We need a talented quilter to put these materials together and make a quilt for us to sell for a fundraiser.

**RECOGNITION PARTY SPONSORS:** We need 2 sponsors for every party to bring drinks and party snacks for about 20 people. Parties are usually the second Thursday of the month from 5-7 PM, starting in May.

### THE OUTRIDER'S SOCIETY

The Outriders Society is the volunteer organization of the Kentucky Derby Museum. Since we are a Derby Museum program, all Learning Center volunteers are eligible to join, and your volunteer hours count towards Outriders benefits. Contact Julie Henry at 637-1111, x336 or online at:

<http://www.derbymuseum.org/>