



Backside News

DERBY MONTH EDITION!

MAY 2010

LEARNING CENTER UPCOMING EVENTS:

MAY 10TH-
GROOM ELITE 101
CLASS BEGINS

MAY 15TH-
THE PREAKNESS

MAY 31ST-
MEMORIAL DAY-
NO ESL CLASSES

JUNE 5TH-
THE BELMONT
STAKES

JUNE 8TH-
HORSEMEN'S GOLF
SCRAMBLE

MAY CENTER HOURS:

MONDAY-
FRIDAY
11:30a.m.-
8:00p.m.

RESEARCHING GUATEMALA: LEARNING AS A TOOL FOR TEACHING

Written by: Jeni Rogers

We are heading into another busy season at The Backside Learning Center and have quite a few new volunteers who will be sharing their time and knowledge with our students. Before we get down to the particularities of positions such as ESL teacher or tutor of English, it is only relevant that each of us takes some time to learn about the culture and lives of the students we will influence this summer.

Although our Spanish speaking students come to us from various parts of Latin America, the majority arrive from Guatemala, a country just south of Mexico that is home to native Mayas, Mestizos (those of mixed indigenous and Spanish descent), Asians and a number of other ethnicities. Spanish is recognized as the official language of Guatemala but there are over twenty indigenous languages that are either a first language or the only language a community speaks. Most of the students at the learning center speak Spanish and have received an education in Spanish, therefore, any connection we can make with the Spanish language will create a more comfortable atmosphere for learning. Books and dictionaries are provided at the Learning Center to help both teacher and student find good ways to communicate.

Making the journey to the United States requires effort and hard work for our students. Language acquisition is a good starting

point to establish communication in a country that speaks almost all English. While teaching we can be aware of content that is relevant to the lives of our students. For example, those who have lived in urban areas of Guatemala may have experienced similarities to the environment in Louisville, Kentucky. Carlos Mendez, a student at The Backside Learning Center, explains that life in Guatemala City, the capital of Guatemala, does not differ much from that of Louisville. Children live with their parents generally until they are 18 or they marry, and marriage occurs around the age of twenty. Both parents work, although, much like in the U.S., men tend to more laborious positions such as construction work and women to more non-laborious positions, such as secretarial work. All engage in recreational activity, such as roller-skating. Many families have pets and television occupies much of their time. Yes, they too are influenced by media and even enjoy dinner in front of the TV from time to time.

Spirituality also influences the lives of Guatemalans. Religion is prevalent throughout the country, with the most prominent religion being Christianity, including evangelical and Catholic. Many of the same holidays are recognized, such as Christmas, Halloween and New Year's Eve. Other holidays include Dia de Guadalupe on December 12, which honors the region's Virgin of Guadalupe, and Guatemala's independence from Spain in 1821,

on September 15. Long held traditions are continued and community involvement plays an important role in many celebrations.

Food also plays an important role in the customs and traditions of Guatemala. Certain dishes are served for certain occasions with the purpose of honoring the family unit and paying respects to loved ones lost. For example, a dish called fiambre is popularly served for Día de los Muertos. This cold salad is comprised of various vegetables, sausages and other meats and seafood and is shared with many friends and families. Other foods consumed on a regular basis include maize, generally in the form of a tortilla, black beans and rice. Plantains are a starchy fruit found in tropical areas similar to bananas, but used in Guatemala much like we use potatoes. They can be boiled or fried and served as a side dish to any meal. Yucca, a root also known as Cassava and found in tropical climates as well, provides a starchy alternative. If you have an interest in experiencing the staple foods of the students we share our time with at the Learning Center, there are several restaurants, such as Sevicehe and Havana Rumba, that Louisville boasts as creating similar fare. While Guatemalan citizens embrace a strong family community many face the decision to send one family member or more to other countries, such as the United States, in order to make wages adequate enough to support their

LEARNING CENTER WISH LIST:

- Any book for adults written in Spanish
- Bilingual books
- Audio books with accompanying texts, particularly shorter or easier books, poetry or adult-appropriate learning-to-read books
- Spanish-English dictionaries
- Soccer shoes (size 8, 8 ½, 9, gently used is fine)
- Soccer balls
- Class supplies, especially notebooks, binders, pencils, dry erase markers
- 2 Updated GED textbooks in English
- 2 Updated GED textbooks in Spanish
- 10 Pimsleur Inglés: English for Spanish Speakers with Audio CD textbooks
- Popcorn & oil packets for theater popcorn machine

Team Notes

Written by: Kevin Oberhausen

Every year the Learning Center staff prepares itself for a busy April & May. Among other things, the weeks leading up to the Kentucky Derby is time spent working on fundraisers, securing donations, organizing our volunteers, scheduling classes and welcoming clients back to the school. The weeks following the Kentucky Derby we begin all programming at the Learning Center, promote these programs, recruit new students, prepare the classrooms and get back to the work we enjoy most. Despite the 2 long sentences that precede this one, this is actually an extremely brief summary of what goes on during these two months.

One of our biggest fundraisers, the Backside Learning Center Derby Gift Shop, was a great success this year. We would like to send out a tre-mendous thank you to all of the volunteers who helped us out with this important benefit. We would also like to thank the volunteers who show up the week after Derby to get the Learning Center year started off on the

right foot. Lastly, we want to thank volunteers who gave time in so many other ways too numerous to mention. Your time, patience and willingness to assist the Learning Center are beyond appreciated.

Although I'm continually impressed and overcome with the dedication of our volunteers *throughout* the year, I feel this "Derby period" really puts things in perspective of how much **we** depend on **you all**. There is so much our volunteers do during this period that sometimes we can't even keep track of it all, (so make sure you are logging your hours!). In essence, we just want to say "thank you", and let you all know that you are the greatest! Truly.



VOLUNTEER CORNER

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Contact Emily Dingman at the Learning Center if you're interested in volunteering.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER:

If you would like to write an article for the newsletter about a class or student you teach/volunteer with, please contact the Learning Center. We would love to have your contributions!

DATA ENTRY: Volunteer needed once per month to update student and volunteer hours for soccer, movie night, guitar and other programs in Microsoft Access. Experience with Microsoft Access preferable but we can train.

HORSEMEN'S GOLF SCRAMBLE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

We are already planning for our 2nd Annual Horsemen's Golf Scramble. If you would like to be a part of the planning committee, contact the Learning Center. Tasks will include planning the event, promoting and getting donations/sponsorships. Time commitment: meet once a month starting in January and any additional planning/promoting as necessary.

BILINGUAL COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR:

We are searching for an individual who speaks both English & Spanish, and who has a good knowledge of com-

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND TIME!

puters. This person needs to be comfortable showing people how to use a mouse and keyboard, set up an email account, use search engines, and type word documents. There are some materials for this class already prepared.

FUNDRAISING DINNER COMMITTEE:

We are planning a fundraising dinner tentatively scheduled in June. This would be the first time we have ever had the event. We need a committee to plan and organize the event. Time commitment: monthly meetings starting in January and any additional planning/promoting as necessary.

Congratulations to
“Super Saver”!
 The winner
 of the
 2010 Kentucky
 Derby!



**RESEARCHING
 GUATEMALA
 CONTINUES:**

family back home. Sacrifices are made to keep the family alive and healthy if not together. Although employment is often easily obtained in developed areas, “rural workers suffer the gravest consequences,” (www.nationsencyclopedia.com). Many are overworked and underpaid, while also suffering health issues involved with poor sanitation practices in the workplace. The decision to immigrate to a different country and adapt to different customs and language is one based on the family unit, and it affects and changes the culture of Guatemalan communities.

At the Backside Learning Center we are able to provide a support network for students by helping them assimilate into their new community. Providing assistance with language acquisition is a valuable offering that we as volunteers have the ability to do just by knowing English as a first language. While teaching English we can be aware of our students’ needs and cultural backgrounds as well as have sensitivity for their privacy. Getting to know each individual will help us to create a better learning environment for them, as well as teach us what tools are best used to prepare them for success.

2nd Annual Horsemen's Golf Scramble!

Join The Backside Learning Center for our 2nd Annual Horsemen's Golf Scramble on June 8th at Glenmary Country Club in Fern Creek, Kentucky. It is an eighteen-hole golf tournament that will begin at 12 p.m. with a shotgun start. Lunch will be included and served at 11 a.m. that morning. This tournament is sure to be a memorable event and we would like you to be a part of it.




Cost: \$100 per player with four players to a team.

Register by: Friday, May 28th

Dress Code: No denim (jeans) and a collared shirt (or golf mock) is required.

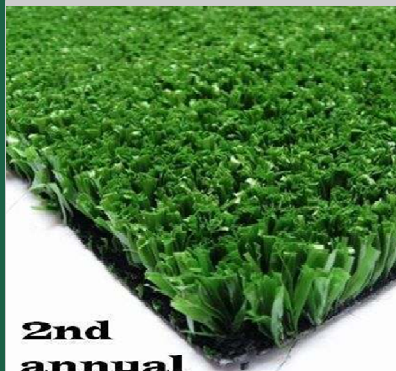
Food and Drinks: Outside food and beverages are NOT permitted at Glenmary Country Club.

Contests:

-  Longest Drive
-  Closest to the Pin
-  Hole-in-one (You could win a car from OX-moor Toyota!)

Raffle: All participants will be automatically entered into our raffle upon registration for the Horsemen's Golf Scramble. The winners will be announced at the end of the event.

Payment: The cost is \$100 per player with four players to a team. You can pay in advance or pay on the day of the event. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted.



**2nd
 annual
 horsemen's
 golf scramble**

**tuesday, june 8th
 glenmary country club**



swing easy. hit hard.



Thank you to Save-A-Lot on Taylor Blvd. for donating snacks for our 2010 Derby Gift

THANK YOU SIGN*A*RAMA

Many thanks to SIGN*A*RAMA Downtown for providing signage for our 2010 Derby Gift Shop! The Learning Center applied for SIGN*A*RAMA's "Signs of Support" grant and we were approved to receive both of the signs we requested for free. These signs are not dated specifically for 2010, so we will hopefully be able to use them for years to come! Thanks again to SIGN*A*RAMA Downtown for all of your charitable efforts in the Louisville community.



THANK YOU
PAPA
JOHN'S!



Thank you to Papa John's International for donating 40 pizzas and 10 2 liters of Soda for our Annual Open House on Monday, April 19th. We had over a hundred horsemen attend the event and 53 potential students register for classes! Food always helps to bring people together, and we couldn't have hosted such a successful event without our friends at Papa John's. Papa was in the Open House!