



Rosalie Rendu Center ... where seeds are planted
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Fall 2014

**ROSALIE RENDU
 C E N T E R**

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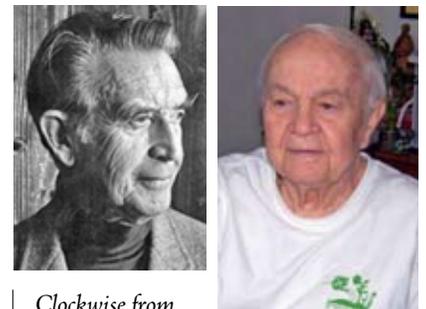
IN THIS ISSUE

- *Recognizing Center Supporters: Ivan, Maria & Kris*
- *Summer Reading*
- *Holiday Wish List*
- *In Memory of Dick Brennan*

Dear Friends of the Rosalie Rendu Center,

This Spring and Summer there have been many milestones, some happy and some sad. Several of our families celebrated graduations from high school and transitions to college. And we have lost some good friends, leaving voids in our hearts, as well as happy memories.

Ira Ruskin, who served in the California State Assembly, was a supporter and friend to the Center for many years. He passed away earlier this year. Dick Brennan was a longtime member and leader of our Conversation Club (see article on page 4). He was always looking for ways to help our students—buying each one a dictionary, inviting an ACLU representative to visit the group, imparting valuable information and answering many questions. Arthur Deex, our first Computer Teacher and longtime friend, also joined this elite group of men whose lives have changed but not ended. Even in death these dear men have continued to support us through donating leftover campaign money and creating friends' memorials, showing how special our students were to them.



Clockwise from the top: Sister T and Ira Ruskin in 2006, Arthur Deex in 2009 and Dick Brennan in his younger days.

Yes, our students are special, hardworking and eager to learn. I'd love to have more of you get to know them and watch them grow more comfortable with themselves and others. Our Conversation Club is a good place to learn new customs, make new friends and share stories. Spanish is NOT necessary because the conversations are in English! Speaking and sharing are tools that help our students use their new language skills, while building self-confidence. Our Homework Club also needs a few more friendly faces to help our young students with their homework. This club grew from a suggestion given by a mother who was unable to help her child with his homework because of the language barrier. Assisting a child with math or listening to them read is a huge help. We'd love to have you spend a couple of hours a month with us in our homework center. This summer, thanks to many volunteers, our children had a reading club that kept their skills sharp (see article on page 3).

Our garden continues to grow and I am most grateful to our volunteers and friends who have become charming gardeners, helping our children and adult students blossom. As we approach Thanksgiving, know that each of you are on my very long "thank you" list. Each of you is a blessing to me. Devotedly yours,

Sister Trinitas

Sister Trinitas Hernandez, D.C., Executive Director

Recognizing Three Center Supporters



Ivan Barragan
PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Ivan is the Rosalie Rendu Center's Program Assistant and Sister T's "right-hand person." He started working at the Center in 2007, teaching computer skills classes and maintaining the wireless network in the Carriage Manor Apartments to be used by the residents and students. Today, Ivan's responsibilities have grown into a variety of projects.

Ivan leads our computer classes and network and computer management. When Ivan first came to work at the Center, he updated the laptops at the RRC and made them available to the residents of the Carriage Manor. He also helped obtain wireless routers and installed them in the building to allow residents to access the internet from their apartments. Today, the Center continues to provide computers on loan to residents and the children of the Carriage Manor so they can do their homework in

their apartments, or in the After School Program with a tutor at the Center.

Ivan also performs a multitude of other duties. He fills in as an ESL teacher whenever needed. He manages our donor database and sends out donor receipts and other communications. Over the years, Ivan has written grant applications and supported our volunteer grant writers in this function. He's always available to support our volunteers when they need supplies, access to the Center or anything else. We're very excited about the program that Ivan helped develop. He supports the annual Summer Reading Program by coordinating volunteers, purchasing supplies and whatever else is required to execute this exciting program for the children of the Carriage Manor and our students.

When asked about why he continues to support the Center, Ivan says, "What I love most about working at the Rosalie Rendu Center is that I get to interact with people on a daily basis who are humble, down-to-earth and are just trying to improve their lives every day. I love being a part of that community."

In 2015, Ivan plans to graduate from the University of California Santa Cruz with a B.A. in Politics. He'll be the first in his family to obtain a B.A. degree; his sister recently received her A.A. in Criminal Justice. Ivan lives in Redwood City and loves to play soccer and golf in his spare time.



Maria Lozano
NEW ESL TEACHER

The Center is fortunate to have found another talented and dedicated teacher for the beginning ESL class. Maria Lozano has several years of experience in classrooms in the Sequoia Union High School District Adult School and at Belle Haven School, working as a volunteer ESL teacher's assistant, then as a substitute ESL teacher. She also was an ESL classroom coordinator for Project Read. She recently added literacy outreach and volunteer recruitment to her role at Project Read.

Maria had her first introduction to the Rosalie Rendu Center while taking a course in community organizations that Bill Somerville helped facilitate. One of the assignments for the class was to write a grant proposal for an organization supported by Philanthropic Ventures. Maria's team chose the Parent Involvement Workers, which Bill started at Cesar Chavez Academy and which hires ESL students from the Center. Maria's group came to the Center

to interview one of the Parent Involvement Workers and briefly met Sister T.

Maria says, "It is a true gift and blessing to be a part of this effort now. I enjoy the community spirit of service and discovery that has come with joining all of you and the students."

Maria grew up in Salinas. She earned her B.A. in Linguistics from Stanford University, and she is bilingual in English and Spanish and proficient in French. Maria joins Jane Stern as the second certified, paid teacher at the Center. Welcome, Maria!



Kris Spencer-Jones
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Soon after the Advisory Board was established for the Center in 2005, the Board recognized how important it was to tell our friends about the successes of the Center. The board photocopied the first newsletter, then realized we needed something much more attractive and easy to read. Since the Spring 2006 issue, our



semi-annual newsletter has been designed by Kris Spencer Jones, who works full time for the Junior League of Palo Alto•Mid Peninsula and part time as a freelance graphic designer. "I enjoy working on the newsletter! I'm always excited to see what great work is being done. And I'm happy to play a small part in helping to tell the stories of the inspirational people who live, work and volunteer at the Center."

Kris has an M.A. in history and completed a graphic design certificate program at De Anza College in 2010. She has designed everything from football programs to the JLPA•MP's *Piper* magazine. Recently she has been developing her drawing and illustration skills, completing some technical illustrations for a biotech firm. A huge believer in continuing education and lifelong learning, her latest class was in hand-lettering. Kris is a Bay Area native and lives in San Jose with her husband, Anthony.



Summer Reading *Fun + Benefit!*

Twenty children participated in the Center's Summer Reading Program. Lead by Lynn, Perry, Debbie, Brigida, and Nancy, the program gave the children an opportunity to practice their comprehension skills. After reading engaging selections, different reading groups discussed the meaning of words and the connections between characters and their actions—pillars of comprehension. In addition to sharpening comprehension skills, providing a summer reading program keeps the children's reading skills active and gives them practice in group discussion. All of these activities improve their general readiness for the coming year of school.

At the end of each reading session, the children participated in games. For extra fun, we made strawberry jam one day—a real winner with the children. At the end of the summer reading program, we took a trip to the movies and went out for lunch as a reward for a job well done by all the children. We all had fun—children and adults alike. But our greatest joy is witnessing the enthusiasm the children have while exploring literature.

Clockwise from the top left: (L to R) Elena, Diana and Diego measure out crushed strawberries in preparation for making jam. Alison and Malia crush the berries. Brothers Luis and Juan carefully de-stem the fresh strawberries.



How You Can Help the Rosalie Rendu Center Reach Our Vision

At the RRC, we strive to help our families reach this vision: Every client is educated, financially independent, computer literate and integrated into the community.

HOLIDAY WISH LIST

- Financial support for our current programs
- Books: Classroom and enrichment books are always needed.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteering at the Rosalie Rendu Center is easy and fun. We will train you for meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Day and night options are available.

- Conversation Club, Monday mornings at 8:30 AM: Conversation practice with our volunteers may be the most valuable tool available to our students. Join a group, or start a new one.
- Homework Club: Come twice a month on Tuesday or Thursday to help our young students with homework and reading.

For additional information, please contact Sister Trinitas Hernandez at (650) 473-9522



In memory of Dick Brennan

April 22, 1922 – July 4, 2014

Our long time Conversation Club volunteer, Richard “Dick” Brennan, passed away on July 4, 2014 at the age of 92. A memorial mass and reception was held on July 31 and many of our volunteers and students were in attendance.

Dick led a very full life, both personally and professionally. In the conversation club, we heard his stories about growing up in the Depression, about running with the bulls in Spain, about how he was the oldest guy still working out at the YMCA, and how he was still taking tennis lesson in his late 80’s. He expanded our conversations beyond just learning English. He assigned science homework to our students, brought in stimulating articles from newspapers, and did research on community colleges and classes that our students could take.

Dick was well loved by his relatives and his very close friends. A number of them spoke at the reception about his intelligence, and his adventurous and welcoming spirit. Sister Trinitas also spoke at the reception about the example that Dick set for our students—that learning is not confined to just childhood or the classroom, but is a life long adventure.

From Dick’s obituary: “He spoke of science and literature with great joy. We will miss his quick wit and intelligence. He was unique.” We will miss Dick greatly and are very thankful that Dick and his wife Carolyn chose the Rosalie Rendu Center to be the recipients of their financial and volunteer support.

Above: Dick (right) and Elena in a photo from 2010.



In the News

The Center is mentioned in *USA Today's* November 3, 2014, edition in the story titled “Struggling in the Shadow of Silicon Valley Wealth.” Find the story at <http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2014/11/03/east-palo-alto-philanthropy-facebook-silicon-valley/16244117/>

Or scan the QR code to the right with your smart phone or tablet.

