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Messenger

Citrus Heights

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The Underground Clothing Connection

Venture into Style and Fashion for Teens at Sunrise Mall



Volunteer scheduler, and SJHS alumni, Kaylor McBride and HART board member Stan Muñoz work to make The Underground Clothing Connection a great place for students to shop. Photo by Gerry Stolz

By Elise Spleiss

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - The difference between failure and success can be found in just the right clothing, especially when you are a teenager. Enter, The Underground Clothing Connection.

The Underground, a one-of-a-kind store at the Sunrise Mall in Citrus Heights recently opened for qualified high school students to shop free of charge for all their clothing and accessory needs.

A community partnership between the Citrus Heights Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART), Sunrise Mall, San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD) and Sunrise MarketPlace (SMP) has made this history making project possible.

Many high school students in the SJUSD, while living in secure housing of some kind, are facing hard times with their families in other ways. After filling their basic needs, parents or guardians are often left with little if any funds for adequate, if not stylish clothing and other accessories for their teens.

The school district attempted to fill this need with a clothing closet at a satellite location. When it was noticed that students were not going there, HART board members Stan Munoz and Kaylor McBride, formed a small panel of Mesa Verde High School students to find out why.

The students asked Munoz if he would have gone into a store where, when he came out, he would have been teased about getting his clothes from that "poor kids' store." Acknowledging the dilemma, Munoz asked them "how can we change this and give these students a sense of pride?" The answer, find a location away from their school where all students would be proud to go.

The stars lined up for the project as Munoz presented the issue to HART Chair and Executive Director of the Sunrise Marketplace Kathlynn Carpenter. Carpenter met with Sunrise Mall general manager Natalie Worstein, who was happy to be part of this community partnership. With 30 percent of the mall vacant, Worstein offered the former REI 21 space for the new venture at

no charge.

Munoz, with 40 years as manager at J.C. Penny's enlisted Casa Roble student volunteers to create this only store of its kind in the country. Asking them how they want the store to look, he sent them into Macy's and J.C. Penny's for ideas. "We want it to be the best-looking store in the mall. We don't want it to feel or look like a thrift store. We want it to feel like you're just shopping." They have succeeded.

The name, The Underground, was also chosen by the students. These volunteers set up the store, and are continuing to take care of it under Munoz's guidance. There are no tables, all clothing is hung and well-marked. Volunteers help the customers find what they are looking for. The most sought-after items: torn jeans, leggings and hoodies.

Clothing and other donations are plentiful. The clothing on the clothing trailer was brought to the store. Mall shoppers, teens and adults alike, mistaking the Underground for a regular store, would leave and return

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Felony Assault Weapons Charges for Mission Avenue Incident

By Sergeant
Rod Grassmann,
Sacramento Sheriff's
Spokesman

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - At 1:53 a.m. on Thursday, February 25, 2021, the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Communications Center received a call from a male subject in the 1400 block of Mission Avenue in Sacramento County. The male stated that the people who were in his house to repair a gas leak were instead eating his food and he had them at gunpoint. Moments later dispatch heard a single gunshot; the subject then stated he shot someone. Deputies arrived at the residence and with assistance from dispatch, calmed the subject and convinced him to walk out of the residence where deputies detained him without incident.

Deputies entered the home to search for a victim(s) but found no one else in the residence. It was evident that a shot had been fired inside and a gun was located. The subject and sole occupant of the house at the time of the incident was identified as Bradley Imre Bodai (38). Bodai was showing signs of a mental health crisis. Due to Bodai's acute state of mental health, a Gun Violence Restraining Order was sought and signed by a judge at approximately 5:58 a.m. A search of the residence revealed a massive cache of guns, ammunition, weaponry hardware and ballistic safety equipment. A large gun safe contained what appeared to be 3 sticks of dynamite with a charge timer which prompted an evacuation order of a half mile radius affecting 1800 residences. Sacramento Sheriff's Office Explosive Ordinance Detail (EOD), Special Investigative Intelligence Bureau (SIIB) as well as the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, State DOJ and Alcohol-Tobacco-Firearms (ATF) converged on the scene to assist with the evacuation and search for and inventory of the firearms.

The dynamite turned out to be an authentic looking imitation. Approximately 30,000 AK-47 rounds, 5,000 AR-15 rounds and tens of thousands of semi-automatic handgun rounds were recovered. In addition to 21 semiautomatic handguns, 4 revolvers, 18 rifles and 3 shotguns, investigators found 3 Polish Made Grenade Launchers, many armor piercing rounds, firearm silencers, equipment to manufacture firearm silencers and an array of ballistic safety equipment. Some of the weapons had been

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Open Up SJUSD Protests at Sit-In

By Patrick Larenas

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - San Juan Unified school students, parents and supporters held a Sit-In Protest joining the movement Open Up SJUSD on February 23, 2021. Assembling at several district schools, including the SJUS District Office on Walnut Avenue in Carmichael, the groups demanded the still unavailable in-person learning option under COVID.

Sit-In participant Tammy Shade demonstrated with her two boys and said it had been quite the challenge "constantly dealing with kids all day for almost a year now". She says her sixth grader gets really tired of "watching a screen the whole school day". The boy is a very social child and was really looking forward to all the band music,



The Open Up SJUSD movement is pushing for students' basic fundamental need to be back in school, in person. Photo by Patrick Larenas

physical education and diversity of classes offered at middle schools.

UC Davis graduate, and father of two district students, Ken Firl joined the movement concerning that "it would take years to academically catch up after this." He said, "Most

teachers would be here, but the main problem is the unions."

The Open Up SJUSD Sit-In Protest came in between two scheduled clinics which vaccinated thousands of district employees in the last weekends of February.

An agreement reached in November 2020 by the employee-represented unions and the district that once in the red tier teachers would return to in-person teaching, whether or not all are vaccinated, has had no effect

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Read More at www.CitrusHeightsMessenger.com

Citrus Heights Receives Tree City USA Recognition



Tree City USA recognition by meeting four requirements set by the Arbor Day Foundation, including having a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita, and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

“Receiving Tree City USA recognition is a goal that started back in 2015, but as a City we’ve been focused on planting and preserving trees in our community since inception,” said Citrus Heights Mayor Steve Miller. “In fact, over the last three years alone, the City of Citrus Heights has overseen the planting of more than 300 oak trees within our public parks through community planting events. It is an honor to see those efforts recognized through the Tree City USA designation.”

The City of Citrus Heights will be honoring Arbor Day the week of March 7-14 on social media, and encouraging the community to participate in National Plant a Tree Day on April 10 while staying safe and minimizing the impacts of COVID-19 on our City.

The Arbor Day Foundation is a conservation and educational non-profit, with more than a million members. The organization's mission is to inspire people to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees. They want to educate people to know the benefits of having, maintaining, and planting trees in their communities. Trees help to improve the visual appeal of a neighborhood, increase property values, reduce home cooling costs, remove air pollutants, and provide wildlife habitat among many other benefits. ★

Above: The City of Citrus Heights with its beautiful tree scenery is located near the geographic center of the Greater Sacramento Area. Photo: City of Citrus Heights

By Jackie Schmitt, City of Citrus Heights Communications Intern

has been named a “Tree City USA” by the Arbor Day Foundation, in honor of the City’s ongoing commitment to effective urban forest management.

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - For the third year in a row, the City of Citrus Heights

Citrus Heights achieved

The Underground Clothing Connection



Sunrise Mall offered the former REI 21 space for the new venture at no charge. Photo by Elise Spleiss

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with their own donations; Word of mouth and social media is spreading the word. Private mother’s online groups help each other, all taking on a life of its own.

As in the major stores, each section of clothing and accessories is a separate shop. Girls and boys separated by age. Juniors, young men, shoes, a boot bar and, handbags. Shoppers are given a shopping list with up to 25 items they can take home. Mothers who come in with their students and younger children are often pregnant. They now have maternity, small children and infants clothing.

This experience is bringing out the best in both the student customers and volunteers. With their integrity restored some customers say they want to volunteer to work. While many are earning their community service hours from school, they say they would work even

without getting credit.

These jobs look good on a resume. Students are learning about customer service, merchandising, displays and cleaning. They have spent endless hours sorting bags and bags of clothes. Some are finding they have a good eye for what’s in style.

Shopping is by appointment only, two days a week. Customers are referred by a school principal, counselor or school liaison. Kaylon McBride, SJHS alumni, is the customer and volunteer scheduler working with the schools.

On a feedback form, one shopper commented, “Very welcoming, loving people; When I feel that kind of spirit, I don’t feel like I’m being judged.”

More volunteers are needed in order to expand their hours of operation.

For information, email: citrusheightshart@gmail.com ★

Felony Assault Weapons Charges for Mission Avenue Incident



Image of several assault-style rifles and grenade launcher found at the Mission Avenue residence. Photo: Sacramento County Sheriff’s Department

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modified to be considered an assault rifle under California Penal Code. All of the items seized are being held as evidence in the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office Property Warehouse.

Initially Bodai was booked into the Sacramento County Main Jail on a

single misdemeanor charge of Discharge of a Firearm in a Grossly Negligent Manner and placed on a mental health hold. He has since been add-booked with 19 felony charges of Possession of an Assault Weapon and is being held on \$250,000 Bail. At this time, no further suspects are outstanding. No further information is available. ★

Open Up SJUSD Protests at Sit-In

Continued from page 1 in purple-tiered SJUSD.

The source of parent frustration, that not all counties, school districts or private schools are under the same phase restrictions, added to what is a serious learning loss and harmful effects to the mental well-being of their children.

Parent attendee Michelle Amiot said her kids transferred to Placer County schools but is aware of the Sacramento County situation. Amiot says she knows a lot of students from volunteer coaching girls basketball in Citrus Heights

Kingswood K-8, and believes “many would not be failing this year at Mesa Verde and San Juan High Schools.”

Jeff Ratchford is concerned with his third and fourth graders at Deterding Elementary in Carmichael. He said, “With all the glitches last year was just a waste of time. If the school doesn’t open on its own, I’ll pull my kids off and send them off to St. John’s. We all look at teachers as heroes... and I see teachers shopping and doing things outside, but not for the education of our kids. They need to show some more courage.” ★

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