



Toussaint Youth Villages

FAST FACTS

The mission of Toussaint Youth Villages is to provide homeless and foster youth with healthy and stable environments where they may develop their identity, self-worth, sense of belonging, and connection to family and community. Toussaint Youth Villages includes Toussaint Academy of the Arts and Sciences, A Children's Village and Rancho San Vincente.



VILLAGE NEWS Patricia M. Walsh

Influences

By Hector Luquin

That with which you surround yourself will shape you. That is amongst the truest characteristics of life in general.

The biggest factor in the way a life turns out is that from which it feeds.

A being surrounded by negative forces, withers. One surrounded by nothing never changes and one with nourishing surroundings will flourish.

This applies to all living things from microbes to forests.

We, as manipulators of life and societies, should implement these theories into our daily thoughts and activities. That is in order to make more responsible decisions.

We are deeply polluted with the negative propaganda that surrounds us, hence, we naturally become vehicles for negativity. In turn making those that surround us give into negativity, and then they themselves become similar tools of an apparently unstoppable movement of lies and misperception.

The only thing I can hope for, in order to prolong life, is that one person at a time abstains from giving into the temptation of seeking the darkness in humanity.

It will take self-discipline and patience.

Only I have the power to decide what will influence my perspectives, and how.

Only I have the power to decide how I influence my surroundings and why. We all, however, have the power to begin a beneficial movement of positivity.

I choose to be positive, I choose to think positive, and I choose to infect you with my perspective.

Hector Luquin is a former resident of Toussaint Academy of the Arts and Sciences. The 25-year-old read his musings during an open microphone night at Pierre's Place.

Meanwhile out at the Ranch

Flying 'A' Ranch, Rancho San Vincente busy with activities

By Patty Lawrence



Feeding ranch animals is part of the Equestrian Program.

Campo, Calif.—Campo Ranches were busy over the summer months with the youthful activity of outdoor adventures. The Ranches hosted children from St. Vincent de Paul Village and Martha's Village & Kitchen. The children came for summer camp and were able to just enjoy the great outdoors! They rode horses, painted bird houses, went swimming, tried their hand at archery and played outside for hours in the fresh air. This was a chance for them to learn about nature and animals and just getting along with one another. Our staff made sure all the children helped with ranch chores too! Thanks to Jerry, Chuy and Tim, their ranch visit was an enjoyable one.

Equestrian Program

The teens from Toussaint Academy of the Arts and Sciences continue to visit the ranch to ride in our Equestrian Program. Some of the teens who initially started have graduated and gone on to college, but a few return to help with the younger teens. These teens continue to participate with the local youth in the gymkhanas held in our area each month.

In order to participate in the Equestrian Program, the teens must learn about horses, safety procedures and riding techniques. They also must work at the ranch either before or after they ride each time. They may help feed ranch animals, clean pens or work at the barn and in the tack room. They also learn the essentials of grooming their horses. We want them to know the responsibilities that go along with riding a horse and being on a ranch. The teens had a boys' retreat and a girls' retreat at the ranch in October. Tim Lawrence directed these retreats and they were very successful.

Group outings

During the cooler fall and spring months we have visitors from San Diego County and Imperial County. Teens come for retreats, adults visit for seminars and workshops and we have a number of equestrian groups that come to enjoy the ranch and the many riding opportunities. We also hosted Father Joe's annual Boy Scout Retreat at Rancho San Vincente in November. The Boy Scouts, who range from 10 to 18 years old, are always well-behaved and a pleasure to host! ■

Patty Lawrence is the manager of Campo Ranches at Father Joe's Villages.

Teens Talk

A Roger Hedgecock radio special on Wednesday, Dec. 10, will feature teens from Toussaint Academy of the Arts and Sciences. Current residents and graduates will join Father Joe Carroll to share their personal stories from 3 to 7 p.m. on AM 600 KOGO. The show will air live from the front of Toussaint Academy at 5th and Ash streets in downtown San Diego. ■

VILLAGE NEWS Patricia M. Walsh

Former TAAS resident Shirley with Father Joe Carroll and Roger Hedegcock.

