

The Communicator



Fall 2016 Issue

Official Newsletter of Community Conscience

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25th Annual Mardi Gras Ball 2017!

March 4, 2017 at North Ranch Country Club

Title Sponsor: Union Bank



Save The Date
March 4, 2017

Fran Brough and Luayne Valestrino, our 2017 Mardi Gras Ball Co-chairs, have been busy coordinating the activities for the 25th Anniversary of the annual Mardi Gras Ball. They are excited to share that the event will be held at a new location, the premier North Ranch Country Club in Westlake Village on March 4, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Community Conscience is thrilled to announce that Union Bank will once again be our Title Sponsor with a \$10,000 donation! Several other sponsors have committed as well - Montecito Bank - \$5,000 Platinum Sponsor; Manchester Financial - \$3,000 Gold Sponsor; Umpqua Bank - \$2,000 Silver Sponsor; and Custom Creations - \$1,000 Bronze Sponsor.

Major Sponsorship opportunities for the 2017 Mardi Gras Ball are now available. If you are interested, please contact Robin Britt at 805-494-3543, or email at robin@communityconscience.org.

The 2017 Mardi Gras Ball dance band will be The Hodads, who have been thrilling audiences with Classic party music from every era at special events since 1989. Their energetic performance will get everyone up and dancing immediately!

As with past Mardi Gras Ball events, this milestone year will surely be filled with excitement and fun. There will be plenty of Silent and Live auction items on which to bid. Our Mystery Wine Bottles will once again be on display for your viewing delight and bidding pleasure, with one premium wine bottle waiting to be discovered.

Nominations are being sought for the 2017 King and Queen of the Mardi Gras Ball. The nominations chairperson, Barbara Ashcraft, asks all service clubs, community nonprofits, and groups that serve the area to send in nominations for the honor before November 23rd. The nominees should be individuals who have made significant contributions to the Greater Conejo Valley over time through their actions, talents, dedication, or financial support. Applications can be obtained from the Community Conscience office by contacting Robin Britt at robin@communityconscience.org or can be downloaded from the website – www.communityconscience.org.



Mardi Gras Ball Co-Chairs:
Fran Brough & Luayne Valestrino

**We look forward to seeing you all on March 4th
to share in the excitement of our 25th Silver Anniversary celebration!**

Conejo Free Dental Clinic - Update



As a follow up to our exciting announcement in the last issue about our Dental Clinic to open early next year, we are pleased to report we are weeks away from the actual construction to begin. With the talented expertise of Patterson Dental and Al Lowe Construction, the design and architectural phases are nearing completion.



Our strong dental leadership team includes Dr. John Graeser, DDS, Dr. Suzanne Berger, DDS and Dr. Teri Bianchi, DDS. "Their expert guidance and enthusiastic collaboration have kept the project's momentum in

(Continued on page 4)

AN INVITATION TO YOU!

Since I have been Executive Director of Community Conscience, I have seen some truly amazing and wonderful actions taken by the non-profit organizations housed at our Human Services Center building that have significantly helped to improve the quality of life for many of their clients.

The amount of services collectively offered by our non-profit tenants is staggering. It feels remarkable to be a part of an organization that accomplishes such an important task and makes a difference in the lives of others.

My office is located in the Human Services Center building that is owned and operated by Community Conscience. Each day I walk the building and grounds to make sure everything is in working order, properly maintained and a safe environment. I have had the opportunity to meet some of the clients who come here seeking services.

Recently I met a woman and her teenage daughter who have suddenly become homeless and are now living in their car. Due to a disability, the mother is not able to drive so the daughter does the driving. I was able to provide them with information on meal and shelter programs that are available and located in the Conejo Valley, and introduced them to a charity in our building that can offer them some of the assistance they need. Not all of the clients who seek services at our building are in a state of crisis; however, many of them are.

It is experiences like this that remind me every day why I am passionate about the support that Community Conscience provides to the community by offering rent-free office space to the non-profit tenants.

I invite you to take a tour of the building so that you may learn firsthand about the many programs that are offered by our tenants to provide assistance to the clients that are in need of some help. Also, I would like to get to know you and find out about your personal passions for helping others. Please contact me to schedule a tour:

robin@communityconscience.org or by phone at 805 494-3543.



Message from the President - Phyllis Rickert

At the time of our last newsletter, I was just beginning my term as president. Now my first year is coming to an end. It has been an exciting 10 months! I have met and worked with so many people dedicated to making the lives of others better. I get to see firsthand the amazing things that go on in our building.

As an example, recently a homeless man who was at our building frequently was found unconscious on our property. He was taken to the hospital by ambulance and later died. LSS arranged with a local Pastor for a memorial service outside on our grounds for his friends - all homeless and/or clients of the nonprofits in our building. This was a wonderful act of human kindness and understanding.

It has also been a busy 10 months. We have reviewed the leases for our 13 nonprofits, updated investments as advised and rewritten policies and procedures as needed. Robin, our Executive Director, and I have started meeting every 2 months with the executive directors and leaders of our building's 13 charities. We hope as we all discuss the needs of the community, we are able to find the areas where help is still insufficient and by working together we can find ways to improve it. We are always interested in what the people working within our building see as a missing component of our "under one roof" concept of assistance. We are also doing two fundraisers in addition to our fantastic Mardi Gras Ball. We are selling Corridor Community Discount Cards and 4x8 inch bricks in memory of or to honor loved ones. There is more information later in the newsletter about these projects.



Occupants of the Community Conscience "Under One Roof" Human Services Center

- Community Conscience
- Conejo Free Clinic
- Conejo Pregnancy Center
- Conejo Youth Employment Service
- County of Ventura - Human Services Agency
- Fit 4 The Cause
- Holy Family Services
- Hospice of the Conejo
- Interface Children & Family Services
- Kids & Families Together
- Life After Brain Injury
- LSS Community Care Centers
- Senior Concerns Bargain Boutique
- Villa Esperanza Services

Community Conscience "Under One Roof" Tenant Update



Life After Brain Injury

Life After Brain Injury has served the brain injury community in and around Ventura County since 2008. In fact, our support meetings that first year were held in the Community Room of the Grant R. Brimhall Thousand Oaks Library!

Since longtime Thousand Oaks resident Cherie Phoenix founded the organization eight years ago, our programs, services and impact have expanded

exponentially. Last year we were elated to be selected as one of the newest tenants of the Community Conscience Under One Roof building! Our rent-free office enables us to allocate more direct services to brain injury survivors living in the greater Conejo Valley. *

So... you may be wondering who are we, and what do we do? We get asked that question a lot!

Using the social model, **Life After Brain Injury** is a non-profit, non-medical organization that supports survivors who are struggling to achieve "community reintegration."

That is, after they leave the ER, hospital or rehab, we help survivors fill their toolbox with everything they need to live, work, shop and play at home in the community. Because we are grounded in the Independent Living philosophy, we don't do *for* survivors – we do *with* them. And we provide all of our services for free.

This involves educating survivors and their families about brain injury, both in the group setting and individually:

- why each survivor has unique abilities and impairments and is essentially a "new person" post-injury;
- why their personality and behavior may be different now;
- why they have trouble with memory, judgment, problem-solving and other critical-thinking skills;
- why some of them can't drive or return to work;
- why some survivors appear unmotivated and don't know what to do with themselves.

We also train survivors in the use of compensatory tools, strategies and accommodations that improve their quality of life.

Brain injury can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time. You can slip and fall and hit your head. You can be the most careful driver but you can't evade a reckless driver who was texting or who ran a red light. You can be out for a bicycle ride – yes, even with a helmet – and be the victim of a hit-and-run. These are just a few ways that people we know have sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury, or TBI. Or your very own head can betray you by causing a stroke or aneurysm.

We're looking for new members for our board of directors, so if you have a heart for people who have lost everything and now live on the margins of society due to no fault of their own, we'd love to have a conversation with you. As part of our efforts to spread awareness about brain injury throughout the community, we're always looking for opportunities to speak at a club or service organization meeting. And of course, we adore volunteers.

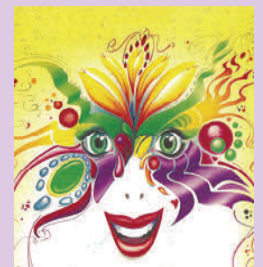
Please visit our website, www.LifeAfterBrainInjury.org, for our calendar and other information about our organization.

**Note: This Human Services "one-stop shop" is made possible thanks entirely to the non-profit entity Community Conscience. We encourage you to give generously to them so they can continue to provide access to over a dozen agencies needed by the community.*

2017 Mardi Gras Ball Sponsors Announced:



We are excited to announce that Union Bank will once again be our Title Sponsor with a \$10,000 donation!



Also, we have several other sponsorships committed to date:

Montecito Bank - \$5000 Platinum Sponsor
Manchester Financial - \$3000 Gold Sponsor
Umpqua Bank - \$2000 Silver Sponsor
Custom Creations - \$1000 Bronze Sponsor

Save The Date
March 4, 2017

high gear,” said Teresa Seeley, Conejo Free Clinic Executive Director. “We are honored by the tremendous support thus far from individuals, civic groups, donors and the dental community. I am confident our new Dental Clinic will have a positive, far reaching impact for those who are suffering without access to dental care - some who haven’t seen a dentist in years. Many thanks to the Community Conscience and Conejo Free Clinic Board of Directors for their support of the first free dental clinic in the Conejo Valley.”

We will keep you updated on our continued progress and targeted opening date. We are pleased to acknowledge a sampling of our Dental Clinic donors to date: Community Conscience, Soroptimist of the Conejo, Patterson Dental / Patterson Companies, Inc., Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern California and the Weingart Foundation. To sponsor an inscribed donor tile, please call 805-497-3575, ext. 203.

(To be added to the Conejo Free Clinic mailing list to receive the Dental Clinic e-newsletter, please send your name and email address to lisaconejofreeclinic@gmail.com. This newsletter will be updating our dental clinic friends and supporters throughout construction with project updates and donor acknowledgements. Our project will also appear online at www.conejofreeclinic.org.)



Looking for Ways to Give Back? Show Support for Community Conscience *Here's how!*

- ◆ **In Honor & Memorial Gifts:** Your charitable gift is given to honor someone or perpetuate the memory of a loved one. Following this donation, a letter will be sent to the person or family you designate to notify them of your caring contribution. The amount of the gift is always confidential.
- ◆ **Cash Donations:** Your gift made by cash, check, via credit card payment, or through PayPal can put your money to work immediately to help people in our community who are in need. This help will support the non-profit organization in the Community Conscience Human Services Center by allowing us to continue providing them with rent-free office space. You will receive a letter for income tax purposes.
- ◆ **Matching Gifts:** Double or triple your gift through your company matching gift programs for employees and retirees. To find out if your employer has a matching gift program, speak to the Human Resources Department and ask them to identify Community Conscience as the recipient.
- ◆ **Donations of Stock:** Contribute stock that has appreciated in value and receive a tax deduction for the full market value. This can eliminate the capital gains taxes you would have incurred from a routine stock sale. The stocks must have been held by you for at least one year. If you own stocks or other investments that have decreased in value, you could sell them and donate the proceeds. You may be able to deduct the loss from other income for additional tax savings. Together the two deductions may be worth more than the current value of the investment. Community Conscience is currently accepting these donations. *
- ◆ **Real Estate Donations:** Gift a second home or other real estate to Community Conscience either outright or by bequest. You can preserve your cash assets, receive significant tax and income advantages and make a charitable gift at the same time. The gift of a 'Charitable Remainder Trust' of your property allows you to continue to live in the residence for the rest of your life. *
- ◆ **Donations of Tax-Deferred Retirement Plans and Life Insurance Policies:** Donating retirement assets is one of the best ways to avoid costly income and estate taxes for your heirs. Naming Community Conscience as a beneficiary (or contingent beneficiary after the death of your spouse) of all or a specified percentage of any retirement plan assets can save your estate both income and federal estate taxes. You may also designate Community Conscience as the sole, partial or contingent beneficiary of a new life insurance policy or one you and your family no longer require. *

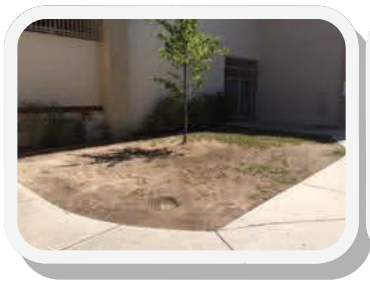
* **Please check with your tax advisor to find out how you can help us and help yourself on taxes.**

Landscape Improvements at Community Conscience Eagle Scout Project by Andrew Little & Troop 753

In August, Community Conscience was delighted to have Boy Scout Andrew Little and various members of Troop 753 complete a community service Eagle Scout project at our building. Due to the drought, the grass had died in some of our landscaping areas and was in need of updating. They changed existing irrigation to drip line to help us conserve water. The Scouts planted drought-friendly butterfly bushes and lavender. The City of Thousand Oaks donated mulch to the project which was spread in the pictured area and the landscaping in the front of the building. Decorative rocks were placed around the tree. The Scouts also installed a bike rack and made a new table to go under the mural by our front door. The project took the scouts three days to complete. They did a terrific job! The Monarch butterflies are visiting the new plants daily.



**Andrew Little,
Boy Scout
Troop 753**



Before



After



Caterpillar in the garden

Update:

The butterfly garden donated to Community Conscience by Boy Scouts Troop 753 is blooming! We have lots of caterpillars making use of the milkweed that they planted. It is a friendly welcome to see the Monarchs for all who visit our building!

OUR MISSION

Ensuring that public assistance/welfare programs are available and accessible for the basic relief of those in need of such services in the Greater Conejo Valley.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President - Phyllis Rickert
1st Vice President - Fran Brough
Treasurer - Ed Sahakian
Assistant Treasurer - Jerry Miller
Secretary - Ricki Mikkelsen
Assistant Secretary - Luayne Valestrino
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OFFICE MANAGER

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Chris Kimball
Frances Prince
Hugo Roche
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Tex Ward
Joan Young

Communicator Editor: Jacque Turner

Community Conscience Booth at Thousand Oaks Rotary Street Fair October 16, 2016



These are just some of the adorable children who had their photo taken at the Community Conscience booth at the Rotary Club Street Fair where they could be photographed as their favorite TV character. We participate in the Street Fair to provide important information to the public about our services and were able to connect with and inform dozens of people attending. Staffing the

booth were trustees Barbara Ashcraft, Fran Brough, Dave Crawford, Dee Crawford, Jerry Miller, Don Phillipson, Jean Saunders, Luayne Valestrino, and our Executive Director Robin Britt. Special thanks to Dave, Dee, Don and Robin for setting up and taking down the booth!



Linda Parks, Ventura County Supervisor, having fun posing with the batman character board.

2017 Mardi Gras Ball Sponsorships

If you are interested in becoming a Sponsor for the 2017 Mardi Gras Ball, please contact Robin at 805.494.3543 or email at Robin@communityconscience.org

Tickets & Table Sponsors

For more information about buying tickets or hosting a table, please contact us at 805 494-3543 or email info@communityconscience.org



**Save The Date
March 4, 2017**

2017 Mardi Gra Ball - New Location and New Band!

We are excited to have The Hodads as our dance party band this year! They have been thrilling audiences with Classic party music from every era at special events since 1989. Their energetic performance will get everyone up and dancing immediately!

**2017 New location:
North Ranch Country Club**



**2016 King & Queen
Chuck & Eloise Cohen**
photo credit: Society Social Calendar Magazine

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR COMMUNITY CONSCIENCE 2017 KING AND QUEEN OF THE MARDI GRAS BALL

Nominations chair for the organization, Barbara Ashcraft, asks all service clubs, community nonprofits, and groups that serve the area to send in nominations for the honor before November 23rd. The nominees should be individuals who have made significant contributions to the Greater Conejo Valley over time through their actions, talents, dedication or financial support. Applications can be obtained from the Community Conscience office by contacting Robin Britt at robin@communityconscience.org or are also available to download at <http://www.communityconscience.org>.

Community Conscience Launches Commemorative Brick Campaign

Do you know someone you would like to recognize with a once in a lifetime donation?

Please support the Commemorative Bricks Project from Community Conscience. With the words you choose to have engraved on these bricks, you can honor and remember ones you love and celebrate those who are important to you. They also make great holiday and birthday presents. By purchasing an engraved brick, you will be leaving a highly visible legacy at our building, The Human Services Center, located at 80 E Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks.

Net proceeds from your purchase go directly to operating and maintaining our building where we provide rent free office space to 13 non-profit human service agencies. It is our mission to ensure these organizations will always have a facility to provide their exceptional services to those in need. Many thousands of lives in our community have been changed and touched by the efforts of the agencies in our building. Community Conscience receives funding for the building through fundraisers such as our Commemorative Bricks and public and business donations.

We will permanently place each of these 200 engraved bricks in the garden around the memorial flag pole in front of our building. The bricks are 4"X8" and cost \$100.00 each with 3 lines and 18 characters per line.



Help us pave the way to a better future for members of our community who are in need.



There is a link on our website to order bricks. Visit us at: www.communityconscience.org

Conejo Valley Corridor Card

Purchase a discount card to save money and give back to Community Conscience - It's a Win! Win!

This card offers discounts at local businesses all across the Conejo Valley and beyond. You can easily save hundreds of dollars per year on tickets to movies & theme parks, dining, entertainment, recreation, golf, dry cleaning, spas, services, automotive, fitness and more! Even better, Community Conscience will keep \$15 for every \$25 card purchased. So you get all your money back (and more) in discounts, while supporting our team and helping our local businesses right here in the Conejo Valley. Take advantage of this opportunity to support Community Conscience and make a difference!

Cards are available for purchase at the Community Conscience office. For more information contact Robin Britt, Executive Director or Cindy Brand, Office Manager at 805-494-3543.



2016 MARDI GRAS BALL MAJOR SPONSORS

Title Sponsor



Platinum Sponsor



Gold Sponsors



**Ashcraft Family
In Loving Memory
of Mel Ashcraft**



Robert & Suzy Beaty



**George &
Jeanette
Hutchison**



**Ricki & Don
Mikkelsen**



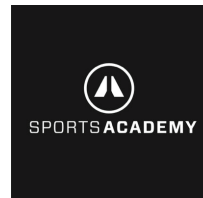
**Maria & John
Prescott**



Silver Sponsors



Hugh & Keets Cassar



Bronze Sponsors



**Fran Brough &
Chuck Cunningham**



Custom Woodworking & Design

Custom Creations by
Jonathan Flintoff



Sunset Hills
Women's Golf Association



Monetary Donations from Supporters of Community Conscience - Thank You!

\$1000

William & Sandra Puchlevic

Jacque Turner

Richard & Elaine Williams

Denis Weber

George & Kerry Williams

Evelyn Hall
James & Janet Hartely

\$500

Bill & Maryann Bang

Suzy & Bob Beaty

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\$100 - \$199

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\$200 - \$499

Marlene & Leonard

Alexander

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Inc.

"Keep The Lights On" Live Auction Donations 2016

Supporters of Community Conscience - Thank You!

\$1500

Wayne and Phyllis Rickert

\$1000

Barbara Ashcraft

Chuck & Eloise Cohen

General Electric -Matching
Gift: Wayne Rickert

Dave & Kathy Lippman,
Pierce Bros. Valley Oaks

Luayne & Jim Valestrino

George & Jeannette
Hutchison

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\$250

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Phone: 805-494-3543
E-mail: info@communityconscience.org
Web: www.communityconscience.org

COMMUNITY CONSCIENCE

UNDER ONE ROOF
HUMAN SERVICES CENTER



Save the Date!
MARDI GRAS BALL

Saturday, March 4, 2017

**New location:
North Ranch Country Club**

2017 Mardi Gras Ball Sponsorships

**If you are interested in becoming a Sponsor
for the 2017 Mardi Gras Ball,
please contact Robin at 805.494.3543
or email at Robin@communityconscience.org**

2017 Title Sponsor



UnionBank®

COMMUNITY CONSCIENCE

UNDER ONE ROOF
HUMAN SERVICES CENTER

www.communityconscience.org



*Ensuring that public assistance/
welfare programs are available
and accessible for the basic relief
of those in need of such services
in the Greater Conejo Valley.*

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