Thanks to TAHS Board member A.J. (Tony) Coco, people of all ages now have a new way to get some outdoor exercise and meet new people at the Tustin Senior Center.

During his tenure as Tustin’s Mayor, Tony is credited with creating what is probably the only known slogan Tustin has ever had – “Work Where You Must, but Live and Shop in Tustin” – to be put on the blank reverse sides of existing signs welcoming visitors to Tustin. That way, residents would know how much they’re appreciated, and visitors would know that Tustin values its residents.

Recently, Tony realized that while Peppertree Park in the center of Tustin welcomes out-of-town park goers, there was little associating the park’s amenities with one of the town’s most active segments just steps away, the ‘good folk’ frequenting the Senior Center. As a kid in Rochester, NY, he’d had the opportunity to play Bocce (boh-chee), a game of his Italian ancestors, alongside his father and other community adults, and he knew that it’s a game that isn’t limited to the young in body, only the young in spirit.

He designed a petition for construction of two Bocce courts in Peppertree Park adjacent to both the children’s play area and the Senior Center, and after a four-year process which culminated with a City-sponsored Grand Opening Ceremony on September 3, 2014, the courts opened with an already filled “dance card” of interested players who’d been looking for a venue.

Don’t let ignorance of the game keep you from getting involved. There are flyers around town inviting the public to the courts for lessons at 1:00 p.m. on the 4th Sunday of the month starting in February. There will be experienced people there on those days to instruct you, so drag along a friend or two and come on down. Bocce balls are available at the Senior Center – first come, first serve – for seniors. The courts are reserved on the first and third Sundays at 1:00, but that would also be a good time to observe the game and maybe pick up some tips from experienced players.

Oh, are you moving?!

Please help with a problem that’s plaguing us. A number of our members are downsizing, moving to be closer to children and grandchildren, or just getting the heck out of town. With all the other things they have to think about, they sometimes forget to tell us their plans, and about a week after mailing out the newsletters, we can count on getting a few back with postage due since, as bulk mail, they can’t be forwarded to a new address. We don’t want to lose touch with you, and while you’re certainly worth the $.49 cents to us, the PO won’t provide your new address no matter WHAT we pay them! Thanks.
The past few years have been productive years for the Tustin Area Historical Society thanks largely to the leadership of our outgoing President, Gretchen Whisler. Her selection as the Tustin Woman of the Year in 2014 was in part a recognition of her leadership of your society. However, as the saying goes, all good things must end as Gretchen has reached the limit of her allowable terms on the Board of Directors and we enter 2015 with a new President.

By way of introduction, my name is Al Corfield and my wife Pat and our three sons moved to Tustin from Ohio in 1975. All of our sons have attended Columbus Tustin Junior High and Tustin High School. I have previously served for four years on the TAHS Board of Directors, two of those years as your Treasurer.

A major objective during 2015 will be to continue on the successful path blazed by Gretchen over the past three years. As always we are looking forward to the Promenade and Home Tour to be held this year on May 2nd. Gretchen Whisler and Pete Beatty have agreed to co-chair the event this year and have already started things moving toward another fun day for the community. The theme they’ve decided on to show off Old Town this year is “Puttin’ on the Ritz”. This is our biggest fundraiser and an entertaining topic or speaker, please give Gary a call. Also an important part of the mission of the Historical Society, particularly the education of local school children in the history of Tustin and the Tustin area. To this end we provide materials to the schools for the “History in a Box” program and we also conduct visits to the schools through our “Mobile Museum” program. Past TAHS president Joe Specklemeyer oversees these programs with the help of Bebe Radiche, Don Larsen, and Margaret Pottenger. Look for more information later in this newsletter about these programs. Joe also oversees the art programs including the JoAnn Bolleson Art Contest involving budding artists from the Tustin elementary schools.

Of course, the Tustin Museum remains open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM and on the first and third Saturdays of each month between 12 noon and 3:00 PM. Your participation as museum docents is always welcome and deeply appreciated. Without it we could not maintain our present museum schedule. We also support or participate in other community activities such as the annual Art Walk, the Old Town Tustin Day, etc.

If interested in becoming a docent, or becoming involved in any of our other activities, please call Barbara at our museum office at 714-731-5701. And don’t forget our General Meetings, held every three months, the first meeting scheduled for 7:00 PM on Feb. 11 at the Tustin Library. Look for more on the topic of the meeting elsewhere in the newsletter. Gary Siegel will be our Program Chairman this coming year so if any one has any great ideas for an informative, entertaining topic or speaker, please give Gary a call.

Finally, on a side note, it has been a little over three years since the fire that nearly destroyed Margaret Pottenger’s historic Jabberwocky building on El Camino Real. The process of reconstruction has been a lengthy one but the reconstruction is nearing completion and the building looks better than ever. If you have a chance, drive by and take a look. Thanks from the Historical Society to all those who contributed to the restoration of this significant part of Tustin’s history.

Al Corfield
President
TUSTIN AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY’S
GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday, February 11, 2015, Tustin Public Library

On Wednesday evening, February 11, Tustin Area Historical Society will hold its first General Meeting of 2015 at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Tustin Public Library, located at 345 East Main Street in Tustin.

TAHS long-time member and former president, Joe Sprekelmeyer, along with fellow members Margaret Pottenger and Don Larson, will give a presentation about the four ongoing educational programs that are provided to students in the Tustin school community by the Society. The programs are primarily for the 3rd grade classrooms and they include History In A Box, Museum Tours, the annual JoAnn Bollesen Art Contest in the spring, and the Mobile Museum. Each area will be discussed, but the Mobile Museum will get the most emphasis.

The Mobile Museum came about due to the recent recession. Field trips for the Museum Tours became expensive for the classrooms; consequently, fewer classes participated in field trips. The idea of taking the Museum to the students was born and so the Mobile Museum was created.

Don Larson will be dressed as a Tustin Farmer and will provide information about a farmer’s life in long-ago Tustin. Margaret Pottenger will entertain as a Tustin Farmer’s Wife and will show items from History In A Box such as a rug beater, washboard and a very heavy clothes iron. Joe Sprekelmeyer will discuss the Civil War, which even affected California, and will dress as a Union Artillery Soldier. A question-and-answer period will follow.

TAHS General Meetings, held four times a year, are always free of charge, open to the public, and refreshments are served. Come and join us for a historical evening. Information is also provided on Tustin Area Historical Society’s website: www.tustinhistory.com.

DEDICATED SOCIETY MEMBERS

On January 22, a third grade teachers’ workshop was held at Linda Jennings home (Hewes House) to discuss the educational programs offered by TAHS. In preparation for that meeting, Becky Cameron and Kim DeBenedetto have been hard at work in the Museum updating the History in A Box program, adding recently written books about Tustin history, and improving the Instructional Guide for the teachers’ use in the classroom. Joe Sprekelmeyer is our new (and first ever) Educational Chair, and with the three of them taking time to look at all we have to offer, Tustin’s third grades are sure to come out ahead!

CHECK IT OUT!

The Museum has many books on Orange County history, including Jim Sleeper’s that was the source for the movie article in November’s Heritage, and they are available for check-out by our TAHS members. You’re welcome to come in and take a look, and Barbara, our office manager, will be happy to sign any of them out to you.

JOIN THE TUSTIN AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND KEEP YOUR NEWSLETTER COMING. PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES OR AN ADDITIONAL GIFT TODAY. ASK A FRIEND TO JOIN!

ANNUAL DUES:
(Please check one)
[ ] $20-$34 Contributor
[ ] $35-$59 Explorer
[ ] $60-$99 Colonist
[ ] $100-$249 Settler
[ ] $250-$499 Frontier
[ ] $500-$999 Pioneer
[ ] $1,000 Heritage
[ ] Renew  [ ] New

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New Members:
Ivan Bishop
Ed Nelsas

Obituary:
Frances Laster
Walt Sullens
Virginia Riehl Keeler
FEBRUARY MEETING

Wednesday, February 11, 2015
7:00 p.m.
Tustin Library Community Room
345 E. Main Street, Tustin
Program
“Voices of Tustin”
Holiday Program

LATE BUT TOO GOOD TO PASS UP

Under the heading of “too good to pass up” is this item concerning former TAHS president, Joe Sprekelmeyer. A retired art teacher in the Tustin School District, and the person responsible for the Joann Bollesen Art Contest, he’s a pretty good artist himself—undoubtedly his talents extend far beyond chalk art. Joe’s pictured masterpiece was done in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Art Walk, October 18, 2014. Hoping to attract budding artists, elementary school students were encouraged through advertising with the school district to join the sidewalk Chalk Art fun, with Parks and Rec providing the chalk and the Tustin Library providing the sidewalk space in their large patio. Sure looks like Joe had fun!