



March 2016 Newsletter

400 Kern Street
Taft, CA, 93268
Phone: (661) 765-2165
Fax: (661) 765-6639
www.taftchamber.com
TaftChamber@gmail.com



Join us for networking, socializing, and community connecting!

WHEN:

Thursday, March 10, 2016
5:00-6:30PM

WHERE:

Roger Miller Insurance Agency
531 Kern Street, Taft

COST:

Free for Chamber members
\$5 for non-members

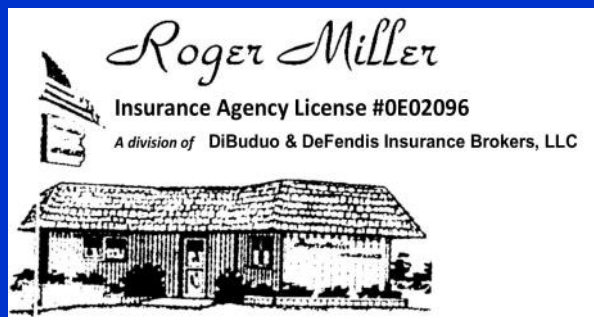
Come meet and network
with other local business
owners, and enjoy
appetizers and drinks
compliments of
Roger Miller Insurance
Agency.

Bring your business card for
the raffle!

Our Platinum Sponsors



Our Gold Sponsors



The Taft Chamber is holding
Monthly Business Mixers. If your
business would like to host, please
contact us at 661-765-2165.



MESSAGES FROM OUR MEMBERS

Phillips 66 Visits and Donates to Taft College

Recently, over 60 students, friends, and industry members came together at the ETEC building to celebrate and learn! We learned about the Phillips 66 company as well as celebrated their generous gift to Taft College of \$20,000.

It was great to see the students engaged with engineers and technical leaders from Phillips 66.



Read Across America

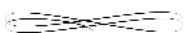
You could not,
Would not,
Want to miss this

Taft City School District is having their annual
Read Across America Celebration

March is the month the 2nd is the day and from
9 to 1 reading will be taking place

But first, please give Mrs. Carter a ring to let her
know that you wish to come in. Just give her a
call at 661-763-4236, or Email her at
acarter@taftcity.org

Leave a message
And she will know
To book you for
A reading to enjoy!



Alliance Tax Credit Consulting Looking for Taft Business Owners

May I introduce to you the "New Employment" and "WOTC Credits."

Do you feel that you pay too much in corporation/ personal taxes? Chances are you probably are not taking advantage of programs initiated by the State and Federal Government to provide you with tax relief.

We're a company that specializes in recovering money in tax refunds and credits utilizing California's New Employment Credit and Federal WOTC Programs.

- We work strictly on a contingency basis!
- There are no upfront costs!
- We only get paid when you do!
- We are not asking you to change your CPA. Rather, we work with your CPA.
- It is a win-win for both parties!

Do you employ veterans or previously unemployed individuals or CalWORKs recipients? There are government incentives to hire particular types of employees. Again, the Government will actually pay YOU to hire certain types of employees!

We have been a member of the Taft Chamber of Commerce working with companies in the Taft area like yours for many years; some of whom you may know:

- Dennis Schertz at Asian Experience
- Bob Leikam at Dominos Pizza
- Ed Herrera at Edward J. Herrera Insurance Agency
- Dr. Charles Walker DDS
- Dave Taylor at Fastrip
- Mr. Foster and Mr. Alldredge at Compressor Parts
- Mr. and Mrs. Collins at Oildale
- Oz Katz at Chicken of Oz

I would like to arrange a meeting/ phone consultation (no obligation) to discuss with you how the new employment and WOTC works and explain in more detail of how we may be able to retrieve refunds and credits owed to you.

Any questions, please contact Jimmy at the office at 310-305-2823 or me directly on my cell phone at 310-902-9253.

Sincerely,

Gerald Stetson



Masks & Mimosas A Mardi Gras Soiree

Chamber Installation

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Taft Fox Theater



Chamber Staff

Shannon Jones, Kathy Orrin, Madison Rubadeau



Chamber Board of Directors 2016



congratulations to the Award Recipients





March 2016



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6pm, City Council	2 9am, Sit n Sip, Taft Chamber 6pm, Industry Night Read Across America	3 6pm, Kern COG Awards Dinner, Seven Oaks Country Club	4 9am, True Value Grand Re-Opening 6-10pm, First Friday Cruise Night, Center Street	5 True Value Grand Re-Opening
6 True Value Grand Re-Opening	7 11:30am, Kern County 150th Celebration Meeting	8 5:30pm, Relay for Life Meeting, The Fort	9 9am, Sit n Sip, Taft Chamber	10 9am, Coffee with a Cop, Black Gold 5pm, Chamber Mixer, Roger Miller Insurance Agency	11	12 NO Golf Tournament!
13 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS	14	15 6pm, City Council	16 9am, Sit n Sip, Taft Chamber 6pm, Rotary Reverse Draw 6pm, Planning Commission Meeting	17 St. Patrick's Day 5-8pm, Relay for Life Fund-raiser, Pizza Factory	18 8:30am-12pm - NEEDS Center Hodel's Cinnamon Rolls Pick Up	19
20	21 CHAMBER CLOSED Spring Break No School 11:30am, Kern County 150th Celebration Meeting	22 CHAMBER CLOSED Spring Break No School	23 CHAMBER CLOSED (No Sit n Sip) Spring Break No School 7am-11:30am Kern County Economic Summit	24 CHAMBER CLOSED Spring Break No School	25 CHAMBER CLOSED Spring Break No School Good Friday Service, Calvary Temple Church	26 Taft Sportsmen's Club Clay Shoot
27 EASTER	28 CHAMBER CLOSED Spring Break No School	29 12-6pm, Houchin Blood Mobile, Taft Chamber	30 9am, Sit n Sip, Taft Chamber 4pm, Chamber Board Meeting	31 9am-2pm, TUHS Oil Academy Career Day		



April 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 7am-12pm, Fund the Fireworks, 4th & Kern Streets 6-10pm, First Friday Cruise Night	2
3	4 11:30am, Kern County 150th Celebration Meeting	5	6 9am, Sit n Sip, Taft Chamber	7 9am-1pm, TCFPP West Kern Petroleum Mini Summit	8	9 8am, Kiwanis Kolor Fun Run 9am-12pm, Soroptimist Garden Tour & Luncheon
10	11 11:30am, Kern County 150th Celebration Meeting	12	13 9am, Sit n Sip, Taft Chamber	14 9am, Taft Job Fest, The Fort 12pm, State of the City Luncheon, OT's 5pm, Chamber Mixer, Monarch	15	16 12-6pm, Kern County 150th Year Anniversary Showcase, Kern County Museum



APRIL 2016 (CONT.)

17, WCMA COMMUNITY BBQ
23, TUHS HALL OF FAME AWARDS
25, THUS HONORS NIGHT
29, AL BALDOCK GOLF TOURNAMENT

May 2016

6, Fund the Fireworks
12, Chamber Mixer @ The Bank
13, CASA Orientation
21, Relay for Life

COMMUNITY, CONVERSATION, COFFEE & COPS.

Next Meeting **March 10, 2016**
9:00 a.m.
at

Coffee
WITH A COP

BLACK GOLD BREWING COMPANY
TAFT, CALIFORNIA
SINCE 2013

508 Center Street
Taft, CA 93268
661-765-6556

Second Thursday of Every Month

JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS AND POLICE OFFICERS FOR COFFEE AND CONVERSATION.

No agenda, no speeches, just coffee and a chance to ask questions, voice concerns, and get to know the officers in your neighborhood.

Hope to see you there!

SPONSORED BY
TAFT POLICE DEPARTMENT

For additional information, please contact
Belinda Cole at Taft City Hall
(661) 763-1222 Extension 12

MESSAGES FROM OUR MEMBERS

George Runner Responds to Gas Tax Cut

Sacramento - Board of Equalization Vice Chair George Runner issued the following statement after joining a 3-2 board vote to lower the state excise tax on gasoline by 2.2 cents per gallon effective July 1, 2016:

"Today's vote was simply a matter of fairness. Californians overpaid gas tax last year because of a bizarre formula known as the 'gas tax sweep' passed by lawmakers in 2010. Lowering the rate is the right thing to do, and I'm sure Californians will welcome the reduction.

"Unfortunately, even after the cut goes into effect, Californians will still pay some of the highest taxes in the nation. What we need now is for lawmakers to simplify our tax laws and look for ways to provide value for the money that Californians send to government."

George Runner represents more than nine million Californians as an elected member and Vice Chair of the State Board of Equalization. For more information, visit www.boe.ca.gov/Runner.



Cooper's True Value

GRAND RE-OPENING EVENT

Friday, March 4 through
Sunday, March 6

BUY ONE, GET ONE FREE

Buy one gallon of EasyCare® Ultra Premium, EasyCare Platinum, WeatherAll® Ultra Premium or WeatherAll Extreme Paint and get a second gallon free.

With coupon. Limit 5 gallons. Excellent coverage and long-lasting durability. Superior resiliability. Lifetime warranty. Valid at participating True Value® stores from 03/04/16 - 03/06/16 only. One coupon per household. Second gallon must be of equal or lesser value of first gallon. Not redeemable for cash. Not valid with any other offer or gift cards. Not transferable. Void where prohibited. Consumer responsible for all taxes and fees. See store for details.

The first 40 customers each day get a FREE 5-Gallon Bucket and receive **25% off** all regular priced items you can fit inside!

All other customers each day get a FREE Greener Options® Reusable Bag and receive **25% off** all regular priced items you can fit inside!

*Includes Weber®, power tools and sale items. See store for details and restrictions. Limit 1 bucket per customer per visit.

Our SERVICES

- Carpet Cleaner Rental
- Computer Paint Matching
- Copier Available
- Fax Available
- Fishing & Hunting Licenses
- Gift Cards
- Key Cutting
- Knife & Scissor Sharpening
- Pipe Cutting & Threading
- Rental
- Senior Citizen Discount
- Special Orders
- Window & Screen Repair
- Free Ship to Store

Friday:

- Ribbon Cutting 9:00 a.m.

Saturday:

- Various Food Vendors 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Register to WIN Fantastic Prizes!

- Weber Gas Grill
- 7-Pc. Patio Set
- Gas Pressure Washer
- Weed Eater Gas Line Trimmer
- 22-In. Self-Propelled Mower

No purchase necessary. See store for details.

Cooper's True Value®
407 9th Street • Taft, CA 93268
661-765-7531
Mon. - Sat.: 7 - 6; Sun.: 8 - 5
www.cooperstruevalue.com

BEHIND EVERY PROJECT IS A True Value®

Taft Westside Little League needs your help!

For 63 years, Westside Little League has offered Little League Baseball on the West Side of Kern County. The League's operations rely on sponsor support and donations to keep the program going. In 2015, the program's cost totaled over \$25,000 and they are looking for support from the community for the 2016 season.

There are several ways to support the program including:

- Team Sponsorships—\$425 Single Team Sponsors
- Weekly Game Ball Sponsorships—\$60 per week
- Materials/Services/Supplies/Cash Sponsorships—Varies

Visit www.TaftWestsideLittleLeague.org or [www.Facebook.com/TaftWSLL](https://www.facebook.com/TaftWSLL) for more information.

You can also donate through www.GoFundMe/TaftWSLL. All sponsorships and donations are tax-deductible.

Taft Westside Little League thanks you for your support. This is a worthwhile investment in the lives and memories of hundreds of local children, parents, and volunteers.

Kern County's 150th Birthday Celebration!

Coming up on **Saturday, April 16, 2016**, the County of Kern will celebrate its 150th Birthday with a wonderful expo, with all supervisorial districts in the County being represented. This event will take place at Pioneer Village, adjacent to the Kern County Museum, near the baseball fields on Chester.

The City of Taft will be represented thanks to the hard work of the City Manager's office. They have been in on the planning since the early Fall of 2015, but they graciously did not require the attendance of anyone else from Taft due to the time all were spending on the 105th Oildorado celebration.

The Chamber came on board last week, meeting with the Board of Trade at the old Fellows Hotel in Pioneer Village. Belinda Cole, Assistant to our City Manager, Craig Jones, had been keeping our office up on the discussions and general plans for the event, but the time came when we needed to get this thing planned and up and running.

So here's the "straight scoop" on the 150th Birthday celebration: if you are a business that has been on the West Side for around 100 years, you need to be included. If you

have existed for around 100 years as a club or group of individuals with a name, e.g., Taft Petroleum Club, Rotary, Kiwanis, you need to be part of this. If you are a building or landmark that is old, e.g., The Historic Fort, the Midway Cemetery, you should participate in this. If you know about the history of our City, have pictures, memorabilia, trucks, random stuff, e.g., the West Kern Oil Museum, come on down! Schools? Conley has much of which to be proud—join us! Taft Union High School just turned 100 a few years ago . . . perfect!! If you are known to celebrate the past on a regular basis, say, like maybe OILDORADO . . . you may need to be on board.

The Chamber, partnering with the City of Taft, will be spearheading the effort to make a display of our Westside contributions to the County of Kern. If you would like to help, keep your eyes peeled for more information about organizational meetings coming up in the near, very near future. We are hoping to provide a comprehensive look at our unique past.

Will you help us? Please call the Chamber if you have any ideas or suggestions. We want this display to be the BEST IN SHOW for this celebration.

Want to be part of Kern's 150th Anniversary Party? Here's how...

*From The Bakersfield Californian,
Written By Jennifer Self*

It was 1866 and gold fever had cooled to the point that local pioneers could think straight enough to campaign for the formation of a new county after a similar effort had petered out a few years before.

The mines were humming but no longer frantic, and commerce, agriculture and trade were taking off, making the necessary trips to the county seat in Visalia — on horse, no less — something of a drag.

And so prominent men of the day, including Col. Thomas Baker, got cracking.

This time around, the proposed name would be Kern instead of Buena Vista — what the Spaniards had called the southern San Joaquin — and the land would be carved from surrounding areas, predominantly Tulare and Los Angeles counties.

And so an act calling for the organiza-

tion of the county and the establishment of Havilah as the county seat was approved by the California Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Frederick F. Low in April 1866.

Which means there's some celebrating to do in 2016.

On April 16, the county will throw a 150th birthday bash at the Kern County Museum — also marking a big anniversary this year, its 75th. The plan is to feature the history, contributions and people of all areas of the sprawling county, said Teresa Hitchcock, Board of Trade executive director, who is co-organizing the festivities.

"We're looking for sponsors, people who may have interesting stories or artifacts or pictures," she said Tuesday. "We are also looking for unique things made in Kern County and local artists who would like to display their artwork. I think we have some phenomenally talented people."

A planning meeting at the museum on Monday offered a preliminary status report of the activities for the event, which is scheduled from noon to 8

p.m. There will be a model of the famed Tehachapi Loop, some old west "gunslingers" will make their way down from the Kern River Valley, at least one mariachi group has been lined up, and planners talked about other attractions, music and food possibilities.

The committee has not finalized booth fees, but commercial vendors probably will pay in the ballpark of \$150, whereas fees for arts and crafts booths will be around \$25. The county is using money leftover from the centennial celebration in 1966.

"It's \$8,000, a tiny amount of money, not some huge gonna-save-the-county-budget amount of money," Hitchcock said, "so we're looking for donations."

The event will be family-friendly and a field day for history lovers, Hitchcock said.

"There is a lot of things out there that folks in Bakersfield don't even know about," she said. "There are unique food vendors people might not have experienced, to showcase what each area has to offer."

MESSAGES FROM OUR MEMBERS

You're Invited to Taft Oil Technology Academy Career Day 2016

The Taft Oil Technology Academy is hosting the 3rd Annual Career Day on Thursday, March 31, 2016, from 7:30am-2:00pm at the Mullen Gym at 701 Wildcat Way. We are looking to our business partners for participation. Our goal is to have companies set up display booths and let our students circulate and learn more about our business partners and career opportunities. Juniors and Seniors who are interested in Summer internships will be able to sign up for 3 interviews, which will be conducted that day.

Career Day Schedule:

7:30-8:30am—Set up Booths/Equipment

8:30-10:00am—Oil Tech Juniors tour business partner booths and interview with prospective employers

10:00-11:30am—Oil Tech Seniors tour business partners booths and interview with prospective employers

11:45-12:30pm—Lunch for all participants

12:30-2:00pm—Oil Tech Sophomores tour booths

2:00pm—Career Day Ends

Contact Ted Pendergrass at lpendergrass@taft.k12.ca.us to sign p for a booth

All raised funds will be used to provide neo-natal tetanus shots to mothers in third world countries.

Kiwaniis KOLOR RUN
5K / 3.1 MILES
what's your superpower?
Saturday, April 9th, 2016
RACE STARTS AT 8AM
FROM THE OILWORKER MONUMENT AT
6TH ST & SUPPLY ROW
TAFT, CA 93268

**PRE-REGISTRATION: \$30 Adults
\$20 Kids 12 & Under**
**At the door: \$35 Adults
\$25 Kids
\$5 T-Shirts**

PRE-REGISTER & RECEIVE A FREE KOLOR RUN T-SHIRT

vivint. solar
Rey Alonzo
661.623.2411

The UPS Store

Register Online at www.raceentry.com or see reverse!



Relay for Life Fundraiser Coming Up

Help us raise some gold!

ST PATRICKS DAY

Relay for Life—Fundraiser

When:

Thursday, March 17

5:00-8:00 PM

Where:

Pizza Factory

614 Center Street, Taft

10% of proceeds of this fundraiser will go to
Taft Relay for Life—Cancer Crush



**2016
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President: Emmanuel Campos
Monarch Fleet Services

1st Vice President: Jordan Miller
Roger Miller Insurance Agency

2nd Vice President: Tony Cordova
Synagro

Treasurer: Bart Hill
United Security Bank

Jan Ashley
Retired RN

Devinder Bains
Taft Chevrolet—Buick

Glenn Black
Black/Hall Construction

Eric Burkhardt
Total Western Inc.

Les Clark
West Side Recreation and Park District

Bob Hampton
Westside Waste Management

Ed Herrera
Edward J Herrera Insurance Agency

Sharon Hill
Taft Union High School

Sandy Koenig
Westside Community Resource Center

Orchel Krier
Tumbleweed Café

Yvette Mayfield
City of Taft

Brock McMurray
Taft College

John Neumann
Accelerated Environmental

Alicia Price
Aera Energy LLC

Dennis Schertz
Asian Experience

Alan Sorensen
Buena Vista Golf Course

Ron Sousa
Albertsons

Harry Starkey
West Kern Water District

Jerry Starr
West Side Health Care District

John Swearengin
Kern County Sheriff's Office

Adam Taylor
California Highway Patrol

Adele Ward
Taft City School District

Rodney Wikoff
West Hills Church of the Nazarene

**Welcome to our new and returning members for
February 2016!**

Acme Jewelry & Gifts
Adventist Health - Central Valley General
Aera Energy LLC
Alliance Tax Credit Consulting, Inc
Alpha House Women's Shelter
Ashley, Janice
Asian Experience
Black, Bill
Black/Hall Construction
Bright House Networks-m
Cavins Oil Well Tools
Charles J. Walker D.D.S., Inc.
Chevron
Chevron Valley Credit Union
Chicken of Oz
Employers' Training Resource
First Baptist Church of Taft
Hodel's Dining
Independent Oil Producers Agency
J. Sterling Bryan, D.D.S., P. C.
J.C. Complete Service
Jack's Flower/Trophy Shop
Kern Citizens for Energy
M & S Security
Management & Training Corp (MTC)
McKittrick Waste Management
Miller, Randy & Ginny

Omni Family Health
Pacific Perforating
Pizza Factory
Proforma Solutions for Printing
Roger Miller Insurance Agency
Route 33 Sandwich Co.
Shar-On Corporation
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
Swearengin, John
Taft City School District
Taft College Cougar Corner Bookstore
Taft Lions Club
Taft Midway Sunset Lions Club
Taft Production Company Oil-Dri
Taft Sky Sports, Inc.
Taft United Methodist Church
The Arc - Taft
The Fort Preservation Society
United Security Bank
Vibul Tangraphaphorn, M. D. Inc.
West Kern Oil Museum
West Kern Water District
West Side Senior Care
Western States Petroleum Association
Westside Christian Ministers' Association
Westside Furniture

**TAFT OILWORKERS MONUMENT
SPACE IS LIMITED!!**

*Call us at 661-765-2165 to order a
brick for that special oilfield
worker or family member to be
placed at the Taft Oil workers
Monument.*

4x8 Brick: \$100—8x8 Brick: \$175



SAVE THE DATE!

**State of the City
Luncheon**

Thursday, April 14

12pm–1:30pm

OT Cookhouse

\$15 Lunch

Call 661-765-2165

**400 Kern Street
Taft, CA 93268
661-765-2165**



www.taftchamber.com

Executive Director: Dr. Kathy Orrin
kathy.taftchamber@gmail.com

Event Coordinator: Shannon Jones
shannon.taftchamber@gmail.com

Membership Coordinator: Maddison Rubadeau
maddison.taftchamber@gmail.com



TAFT SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

Third Annual Sporting Clay Shoot Saturday, March 26, 2016

Five Dogs Shooting Range 20238 Woody Road 93308

Taft Sportsmen's Club is a Non-Profit Organization ID#77-0220279

**TO BENEFIT TSC JUNIOR PHEASANT HUNT
TAFT COLLEGE AND TAFT HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS
JC CHITWOOD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Sign In: 8:00 am

Shoot Starts: 9:00 am

Ammunition available for purchase at Range

Teams and Individual sign-ups welcome ~ \$400.00 per team of five

\$ 80.00 per person* Limited to 34 Teams on 17 Station Course

Includes BBQ Lunch and Drinks

1st, 2nd Place Team Prizes. High Score.

Individual High Shooter Prizes for Male & Female

Make Checks Payable to Taft Sportsmen's Club or use Pay Pal

General Sponsor \$100.00 ~~~~ Station Sponsor \$250.00

Additional BBQ tickets will be available for non-shooters for \$10.00

*** SPECIAL GUN RAFFLE ***

- *GLOCK 27 .40 Fixed Sights Smith & Wesson Pistol*
- *SPRINGFIELD Armory XD 9mm 5" Pistol*
- *REMINGTON 870 20 Gauge 26" Wood Stock Shotgun*
- *SAVAGE A17 .17 HMR 22" Rifle*
- *REMINGTON 887 12 Gauge 18.5" Barrel Shotgun*
- *SPRINGFIELD Armory PX9109LP 1911 .45 ACP*
- *RUGER American .270 Winchester Rifle*

\$20.00 per Ticket – ** Pick your GUN * Pick your Bucket **

(If Winner does not pass background check, GUN will be forfeited and will become property of TSC for future events)

*** SPECIAL GUN SAFE RAFFLE ***

T & T Liberty 23 Gun Safe ~~ \$10.00 per Ticket

Name 1 _____	Phone _____	E-mail _____
Name 2 _____	Phone _____	E-mail _____
Name 3 _____	Phone _____	E-mail _____
Name 4 _____	Phone _____	E-mail _____
Name 5 _____	Phone _____	E-mail _____

Registration Contacts:

Tom Brown – (661) 978-1230

Eric & Sandy Ross – (661) 979-8876 - sross@live.com

***** ENTRIES WILL CLOSE AT 34 TEAMS *****

Send Check or Money Orders **Payable** to **Taft Sportsmen's Club**

Sandy Ross

12109 Brockridge Ct

Bakersfield, CA 93312

Or you may pay with Pay Pal: www.taftsc.com/clays.html

Shoot Charges:

Shooter Entry Fees **(\$80.00 per shooter or \$400.00 per team)**\$ _____

General Raffle Tickets* (\$5.00 each or 6 for \$20.00)\$ _____

Additional BBQ Tickets (\$10.00 each)\$ _____

General Sponsor \$100 or Station Sponsors \$250\$ _____

Special Raffle (GUNS) Tickets ** (\$20.00 each)\$ _____

Gun Safe Raffle ** (\$10.00 each)\$ _____

50/50 Raffle ** (\$5.00 each)\$ _____

TOTAL CHARGE.....\$ _____

** WINNER FOR GUNS / GUN SAFE RAFFLE DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN IF NAME AND PHONE NUMBER ARE ON TICKET **

****SPECIAL RAFFLE PRIZES ** MARK TICKET STUB WITH GUN CHOICE AND TICKET WILL BE ENTERED INTO THE CORRECT BUCKET DAY OF EVENT ****

GUNS ARE PURCHASED AT TEN PERCENT FIREARMS AND IT IS THE WINNER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REGISTER GUN.

TEN PERCENT FIREARMS

1277 KERN STREET

TAFT, CA 93268

(661) 765-6899

WWW.TENPERCENTFIREARMS.COM

~~ TAFT SPORTSMEN'S CLUB FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS ARE \$40.00 ~~

**Display your Company Business Card in the TSC Bi-Monthly Newsletter
- Annual fee of \$40.00 (Due January 1st of each year)**

Taft Sportsmen's Club is a Non-Profit Organization ID#77-0220279

www.taftsc.com

AVID program at Lincoln Junior High provides students tools to succeed

Lincoln Junior High School teacher Amy Hill remembers a student who tried really hard in school to succeed, but struggled nonetheless.

The student, a native Spanish speaker, had never learned how to study properly, how to organize his workload appropriately, or to think critically. It was no wonder he also didn't think twice about what he could do after graduating from high school.

But in eighth grade, the student was enrolled in AVID after being recommended for the program. AVID put him on the track to success, said Hill, who is also the AVID director for Taft City School District.

Now in high school, the same student is on the right track, and is gearing up for college.

"I remember him feeling so proud of how organized he was, and how his grades were improving," Hill said. "He was able to push himself because of this program."

Through AVID, Hill said, students learn the ability to challenge themselves, and to not give up when faced with a difficult task.

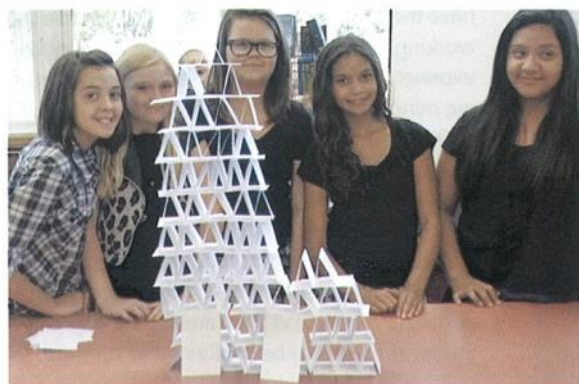
"AVID teaches them to think critically, and learn that they can accomplish a task when they get to that challenge," Hill said. "They come into AVID struggling in school, but are then able to step it up and learn what success can be like."

WHAT IS AVID?

AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, and the program has been offered at Taft City School District for more than 10 years. Students apply for the program, and must go through an interview process before being accepted.

In short, the program aims to help students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education to prepare for college and their prospective careers. AVID's mission is "to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society."

Recent nationwide studies of the AVID program, which was founded in 1980, show that 78 percent of AVID seniors in high school are accepted to a college or university, and 87 percent of AVID graduates enrolled in a second year of



AVID students participate in team-building activity and projects.

college, compared to 77 percent of students overall.

Part of the course focuses on teaching students organizational skills – keeping school materials and binders neat, and managing their time appropriately, for example. AVID also focuses on reading and writing, communication skills, and critical thinking and study skills. It also provides students with academic support from college tutors, who are paid for by the district.

"The program helps them to advocate to learn for themselves," Hill said. "It helps them learn skills to be ready for high school, and ultimately for higher education."

In fact, the students at Lincoln have taken several field trips to major universities in California to learn all about higher education, and how to apply for colleges. The junior high AVID program also connects with the AVID program offered at Taft Union High School, so that students who continue in the program through high school get a seamless experience.

At Lincoln Junior High, the class is offered as an elective course. District staff members who are involved in AVID are



Continued...

trained at the national level to use AVID-approved strategies in TCSD schools.

Parents of Taft students who are accepted into the program should note that the program is not offered at all schools in Kern County -- Taft City School District has made it a priority to offer the program at Lincoln because of its success, said Lincoln Principal Brandi Swearingin.

HOW TO BECOME A PART OF AVID

One of the focuses of AVID is to target students who may not have the support at home, perhaps because they have two working parents, who also may not have higher education experience. Many of the students currently enrolled in AVID are minorities, or first-generation in the United States.

Overall, the program provides that extra support that students may need to jump to the next level of success, Swearingin said.

"AVID provides them structure at school so that you can be successful if they decide to go to college," Swearingin said.

To apply, students need to have good attendance, earn above a 2.0 GPA, and have an interest in going to college. Students must also be motivated to succeed, are willing to

work hard to reach their goals, and are typically well behaved in their classes, school officials said.

The program is open to all sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students at Lincoln Junior High. If students meet the criteria, they go through an application process, followed by an interview with AVID staff. Parents and their students should note that past school years have experienced waiting lists to get into the AVID program at Lincoln.

AVID staff members have hosted parent informational nights in the recent semesters, which include a presentation on AVID and dinner. School officials hope to host another session this coming spring.

If you are interested in more information on the AVID program at Taft City School District – or are interested in volunteering to assist with AVID or to help raise funds for AVID trips and benefits – please contact Lincoln Junior High at (661) 765-2127.

Taft Community Blood Drive

Tuesday, March 29th
12:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Taft Chamber of Commerce
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- Be at least 17 years old or 16 with Parental Consent
- Weigh at least 110 pounds

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