



Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

Written by Mayor Justin Ray

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November 2016 – A National Campaign About Local Issues

Hello Neighbors, Residents and Friends

At the time of this writing we are a few days out from the national election that will determine the Presidency and Houses of Congress. I'm sure many of you like myself have been glued to the cable news and internet following this fascinating campaign season. I have noticed national candidates more and more addressing local issues on a federal scale. National candidates will hit the stump discussing education, public safety, and infrastructure projects among others. I think it's important to point out that while it may sound good at a rowdy and flashy rally, real change on the local level is affected by dedicated people in the community working with local officials to affect change.

When it comes to education, nothing from the federal level replaces active and direct community involvement in our schools and School Boards. An example of that would be the WatchDOG program at Post Elementary. The WatchDOG (Dads of Great Students) Program "is an innovative father involvement, educational initiative of the National Center For Fathering. The two primary goals are (1) to provide positive male role models for the students, demonstrating by their presence that education is important and (2) to provide extra sets of eyes and ears to enhance school security and reduce bullying. WatchDOGS are fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other father-figures who volunteer for at least one day each year at an official WatchDOGS school. During the day, WatchDOGS may read and work on flash cards with students, play at recess, eat lunch with students, watch the school entrances and hallways, assist with traffic flow and any other assigned activities where they actively engage with not only their own students, but other students as well". This past month I had the awesome experience of serving as a WatchDOG at Post Elementary. I had a blast engaging with the kids and was totally worn out by the two recesses I participated in and the countless high fives throughout the day. It was a total kick watching little 3rd and 4th grade minds blown when they learned that not only was I the Mayor but I attended Post when I was their age. I am certainly looking forward to my next WatchDOG day this month.

In Jersey Village, we see local involvement on display with our flood recovery activities. This past October several hundred residents showed up to participate in a town hall conducted by our engineering consultants Dannenbaum Engineering. Citizen comments were well thought out and constructive. Residents were able to engage City Council members and consultants to discuss strategies and methods to address flooding in Jersey Village. The City will have several more town halls where updates will be provided and resident involvement will be elicited.

Moral of the story- Don't let your civic involvement end at the ballot box. Real change happens at the local level with an active citizenry working with local officials.

All the Best,

Justin Ray

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