

## Editorial: Thumbs up, thumbs down

By The Bee Editorial Board

Thumbs up to **Stacey Gonzales**, mother of slain 9-year-old Janessa Ramirez, for receiving a key to the Fresno during Mayor Ashley Swearingin's annual state of the city luncheon. Gonzales came to the stage to a standing ovation, as Swearingin noted she had forgiven the shooters in the incident that took her daughter's life. After the luncheon, Gonzales said her favorite part of the big surprise was hearing that the Foundation for Central Unified Schools will allocate \$15,000 annually to the newly formed Janessa Ramirez Student Scholarship Fund. Beginning next spring, Central Unified students can apply for six \$2,500 scholarships to either college or a technical or trade school. Donations are welcome to grow that scholarship. Details: [www.CentralFoundation.org](http://www.CentralFoundation.org).

Thumbs up to teacher **Pam Johnson** and her class of transitional kindergartners from Thomas Elementary School. The 5-year-olds gave up a field trip of their choosing to raise money toward the campaign to save Storyland/Playland at Roeding Park. The park organizers were so grateful for the \$1,800 they hosted a special tour of Storyland for the children, even though it is closed. One girl at school was so inspired by the children's generosity that she gave \$80 of her birthday money. If you're inspired to give up your morning Starbucks for a day or your after-work beer, there is a matching program going on right now thanks to another donor. So your gift would be doubled. Details: [www.savestoryland.com](http://www.savestoryland.com)

Thumbs up to Fresno's **University High School** for being listed as the sixth best high school in California (No. 42 in the nation) and the 11th best charter school in America by the latest U.S. News and World Report rankings. The magazine compares more than 21,000 public high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Schools were awarded gold, silver or bronze medals based on their performance on state tests and how well they prepare students for college. University High earned a gold medal, moving up the rankings from last year, when it was eighth in the state (No. 53 in the nation) and the 13th best charter school. Nice anniversary present for the school and a continual source of pride for the Valley.

Thumbs up to **Valley Children's Hospital** for sponsoring its 10th annual May Day Summer Safety Fair and Drowning Prevention Program last week at Chukchansi Park. More than 3,000 first-graders were there to get water safety information at the Chuk's swimming pool. So far this year, 24 children in the Valley have suffered water-related injuries and a girl remains hospitalized from a near-drowning at Millerton Lake. The Water Safety Council of Fresno also presented a \$2,000 check to the city of Fresno to provide swimming lessons for dozens of children from low-income families. The lessons will be provided at the city pools. As warm weather season moves in, all water spots are magnets to children and could be dangerous. This is the time to register for swim lessons and review the family safety procedures.

Thumbs up to **Nicholas Mason**, a Clovis police officer, for receiving a California Hero Award at the 17th annual Statewide Law Enforcement and Community Recognition event sponsored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Mason was honored recently at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento along with other officers and community leaders throughout the state for contributions in the fight against DUI and the prevention of underage drinking. With only two years of DUI arrest experience, Mason made 33 DUI arrests, the most in the department in 2014, Clovis police said.

Thumbs up to **undefeated professional boxer Jose Ramirez** for setting up a scholarship fund at Fresno State. Ramirez, a former Olympian, drew a sellout crowd of 9,000 people to Selland Arena May 9 and saw him remain undefeated. He just signed a deal with local gift-card shop, Card City, for five figures and the boxer decided to share his good fortune. Ramirez was the first in his family to attend a major university and he is eager to help out other students. Now that's a gift that will make students see stars.

Thumbs up to **Paws for Pints Blood Drive**, an event that will pull together the animal support organizations to help out Fresno Fire Capt. Pete Dern with a blood drive today. Donors can come in from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Central California Blood Center, 4343 W. Herndon Ave. Participating organizations include the Animal Compassion Team, Valley Animal Center, Fresno Bully Rescue, Central California Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Labrador Rescue of Fresno, and Veterinary Specialty and Emergency Center. "Many firefighters rescue our communities' pets from home fires and we want them to know how much we appreciate their efforts!" says Naomi E. Flam of the Central California Animal Disaster Team. That's for sure. Nothing tugs at the heart like those firefighters pulling kittens and puppies to safety in a crisis.

Thumbs up to the **good citizen** who yelled, stopped and also photographed a graffiti tagger vandalizing a brick wall next to the European Grove North gated community on West Bullard Avenue east of Figarden Loop. The vandal drove off, but thanks to the sharp witness, there are pictures. Anyone who can identify the moniker or tagger is asked to contact the Fresno Police Department at 559-621-GANG or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-STOP. See the photos of the suspect online at [www.fresnobee.com/crime](http://www.fresnobee.com/crime).

