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El Cajon Boys & Girls Club renovated

Special to the Daily Transcript

After 50 years of providing local children a safe place to play and study, the Boys & Girls Club of East County's El Cajon campus recently received a landscape renovation that has helped the clubhouse save on water and operational costs.

The landscape renovation was part of a Founder's Day project hosted by San Diego-based **Brickman Landscape**, which donated all of the landscape design services and labor. Various landscape industry vendors donated materials.

Brickman's project team consisted of 35 administrative and operations managers who completed the project in one day.

Dan Salsberry was part of the Brickman team that dug trenches for a new irrigation system, laid sod, planted plants, applied mulch and more.

The project might have taken the crew only one day to complete but for Salsberry, the day brought back many years of memories from his youth spent at the Boys & Girls clubhouse.

Salsberry was proud to be a part of Brickman's Founder's Day so he could give back to the very same institution that gave him a safe place to hang out with his nine other brothers and sisters during the late 1960s to early '70s.

"I'll never forget the Boys & Girls Club — it changed my life and was a



Courtesy of the Boys & Girls Club

The Boys & Girls Club of East County's El Cajon campus is seen here after a renovation. Brickman Landscape oversaw the project.

blast," Salsberry said. "It was one place I never wanted to leave.

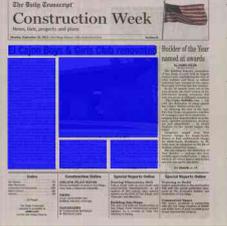
"Then, to go back there to work on Founder's Day — to work on the club that you attended as a kid was really special. I just kept thinking, 'Wow I can't believe I am back here giving back — after all those years.' They gave me so much."

The landscape renovation included

the conversion of a parking area alongside the building to both a large planter in the front of the building and a safe drop-off zone for children. Also, a dry riverbed was created to provide a drainage solution for the site.

Drought-tolerant plant material

See **El Cajon** on 11B



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was installed in most planting beds, including kangaroo paws, fountain grasses and various succulents. Turf sod was laid in various parts of the campus where dead grass formerly occupied, and a new, more efficient irrigation system was installed.

Lesla Mitchell, director of development for the Boys & Girls Club of East County, said that the new irrigation system yields a 50 percent savings in water and maintenance fees.

Because the plants are drought-tolerant, they not only need less water, but don't require as much maintenance. The clubhouse has been able

to cut down on landscape maintenance hours due to the new landscape enhancements.

Now, as children of all ages approach the newly enhanced Boys & Girls Club, there is a sense of pride for the updated façade of the club.

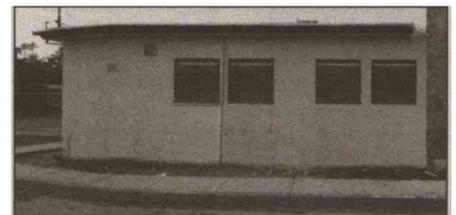
"It is important that a first impression of the facility is that it is well maintained and inviting to both parents and children," Mitchell said. "Our first impression is now just that: clean, inviting and new. With the newly installed landscape, we can finally say the 50-year-old clubhouse renovation project is complete."

The landscape enhancements have updated and softened the surrounding clubhouse's building façade, which was formerly outdated with an antiquated architectural style.

Brickman's Founder's Day is a company-wide program designed to give back to the communities in which Brickman serves.

The company was recently recognized for its charity work at the Boys & Girls Club's El Cajon campus with a 2012 Beautification Award from the San Diego chapter of the California Landscape Contractors Association.

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Courtesy of the the Boys & Girls Club
 This photo shows what the Boys & Girls Club of East County's El Cajon campus looked like before Brickman Landscape revamped it. Work included converting a parking area, a large planter and a safe drop-off zone for children.