

# NEIGHBOR

VOL. 4 NO. 7

A monthly publication dedicated to Eastlake & Otay Ranch

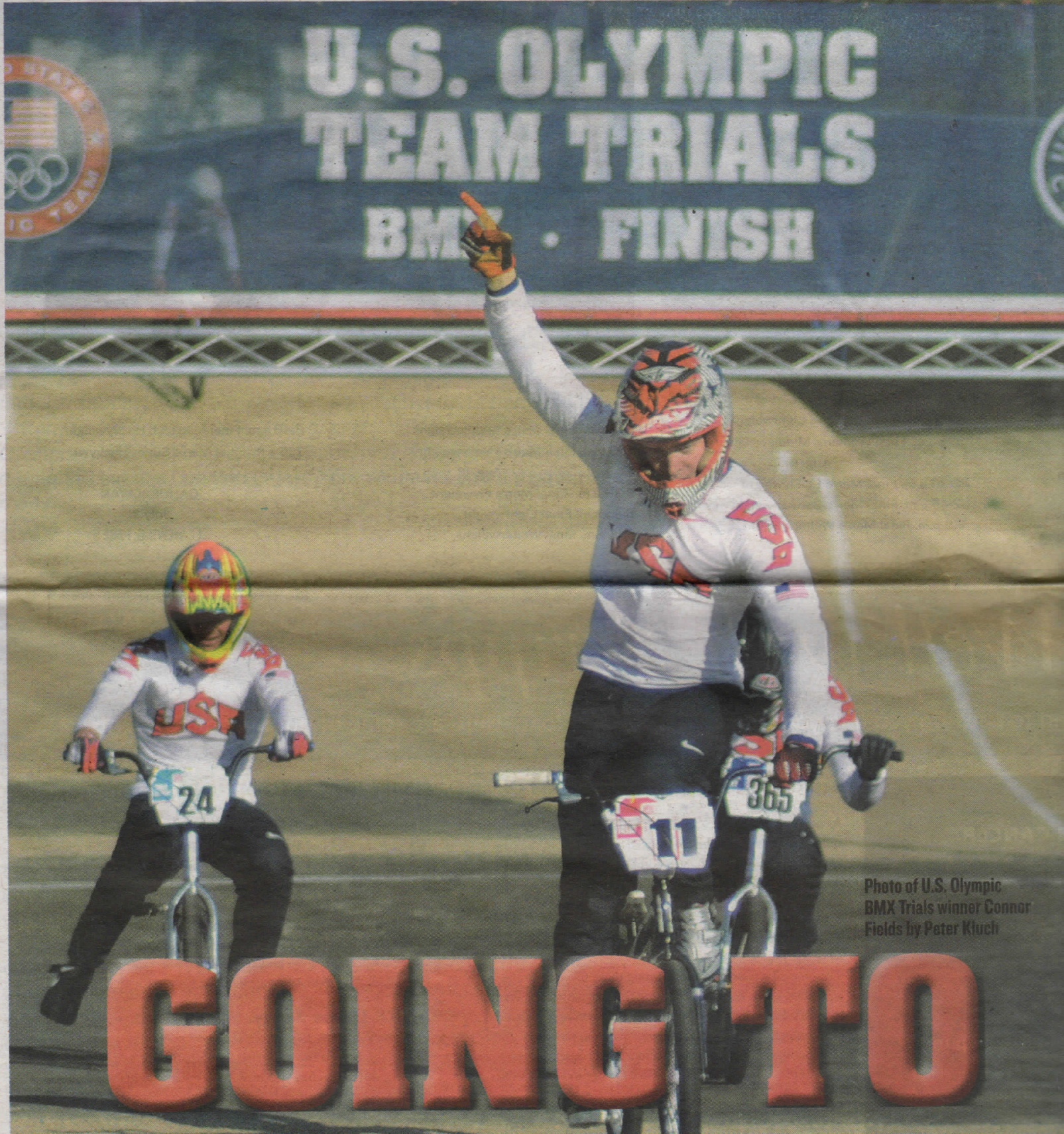


Photo of U.S. Olympic  
BMX Trials winner Connor  
Fields by Peter Kluch

# GOING TO



# New program may be the SPARK to get kids active again

By Dave Schwab

Eastlake Middle School has found a high-tech way to battle student obesity using iPads for physical education.

Danielle Cherry, Eastlake Middle School PE teacher, credits the use of the bodybugg arm-band calorie counter for the new weight-watching breakthrough.

"We bought the bodybugg calorie management system to track your calories measuring your exercise through the day compared to the food you consume to teach kids how to monitor calorie deficits or surpluses," Cherry said, adding the system helps obese children consume fewer calories than they're burning.

"We've had a good success rate with kids losing weight using the bodybugg," Cherry added, noting easy access to fast-food and high-calorie snacks, along with video games and other electronic diversions, have com-

bined to make children more susceptible today to weight gain.

The bodybugg system includes wearable devices complemented by a user-friendly, web-based program allowing real-time access monitoring daily activity through smartphones like Android and iPhone.

Another boon to fighting student obesity and improving student fitness in general has been the participation of Sweetwater School District in the federal SPARK (Sports Play Active Recreation for Kids) PE program.

Developed through a non-profit organization of San Diego State University and originally funded by the Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, SPARK fosters research-based PE programs, accessible online, which are dedicated to creating, implementing and evaluating programs that promote lifelong wellness.

Noting "our society is set up for us to gain weight," SPARK spokesman Aaron Hart said it's

easy nowadays for kids to consume high-calorie drinks or foods that don't have much nutritional value.

"On top of that, kids are not as active as they need to be based upon what they're putting into their bodies," he said.

Hart stressed that the SPARK program over the years has compiled extensive research on the effectiveness of PE programs, which has helped build curriculums providing the educational tools to help teachers "maximize time with kids, not just phys ed time, but education content as well so the message they're delivering is clean and consistent."

Statistics, said Hart, show that when a SPARK PE curriculum is utilized in a school district like Sweetwater, student improvement in physical education is both measurable and sustainable.

"The great thing with Sweetwater is they've really embraced

the technology for phys ed," he said. "Over the last three years, the school district has really moved to an electronic-based delivery system using things like iPads and instructional videos that help get kids active."

And activity is the mission — and the ultimate goal.

"What we're advocating, first and foremost, is quality physical education," Hart said.

## NEIGHBORS 427-3000

Associate Publisher Margo G. Caffrey  
Managing Editor Carlos R. Davalos

The purpose of Neighbors is to be the community's voice in EastLake and Otay Ranch. Neighbors provides an opportunity to learn about your neighborhood and be informed about community events and school happenings. Neighbors is published monthly. Please send comments, photos, letters and story ideas to: 296 Third Ave., Chula Vista, CA 91910; telephone (619) 427-3000, fax 426-6346, e-mail: carlos@thestarnews.com. To advertise call (619) 427-3000.

©2012 Neighbors. All rights reserved. All property rights for the entire content of this publication shall be the property of Neighbors. No part hereof may be reproduced without prior written consent © The Star-News 2012



THIS PUBLICATION  
IS PRINTED ENTIRELY ON  
ON RECYCLED NEWSPRINT