Procession Enters Boone Field: Some 230 graduates formed a long, black line from the Hilb Student Center to the COD football field for Commencement ‘08. At sunset, the grads reached their destination (below left) in front of the stage. Their faces express a variety of emotions as a significant leg of a long journey comes to an end. Below, right: Student Speakers Cheri Mattucci and John Dennem-Tigner.
Best & Brightest Employees Honored

COD’s Best and Brightest Awards for 2008 went to Roger Bell, Tanya Bogarin, Robin Cotton, Ethan Camargo and Daryl Murphy.

The winners, chosen by a panel of judges appointed by the Council of Classified Supervisors, were surprised at their desks during Classified Employees Week May 22 with a framed award and a gift certificate for $100. If you missed the email announcement, click here for all the details.

Enrollments Up, More Classes Start June 23

COD’s Summer 2008 opened on June 2 with a big bump in enrollments over last year. The official figures show 4,467 enrollments in 272 classes at the end of the first day of summer session. Last year, there were 4,204 enrollments for 264 classes. The 6.3% increase was higher than expected.

Since June 2, late enrollments have pushed enrollments up a few more points over last year. The second wave of summer session, six-week courses beginning June 23, should also be popular.

Students may also apply and register for fall semester now.

Visit the COD website for complete class schedules for both summer and fall.

COD Insider Wins Newsletter Award

The Insider, the Newsletter for Faculty and Staff at COD, has won a bronze medal in competition against California’s 109 community colleges. COD finished third in the Best Online Newsletter category. The award was made at a recent CCPRO conference in Newport Beach.

Editor Tom Wixon, who is COD’s Director of Public Relations, accepted the award on behalf of the college.

It is the sixth state and regional prize awarded to the newsletter since 2001.

Wellness Program Will Feature Dancing

A summer wellness program is offered this summer by the Office of Human Resources. Now through Aug. 27, employees are welcome to join dance instructors Anita Corral and Marisol Reyes at Theatre Too from Noon to 12:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays are devoted to dance aerobics. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, it’s Mexican Folkloric/Salsa dancing.

Sign up in HR or phone Ext. 2529 for more info. You must sign a waiver/release form.

Summer Hours Announced at Cafe

The COD Cafe is open during summer session, but only from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The grill closes at 1:30 p.m.

Student Health Services Available

If you’re on campus and need the attention of Student Health Services this summer, the seasonal hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday each week through July 31. On Wednesdays, the office is open 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. instead.

Upcoming Catalog Has ‘50th’ Theme

COD’s upcoming 2008-09 Catalog will have a 50th Anniversary theme.

The cover carries a collage of historical photos. Other photos dating back to 1958 are found inside the Catalog, with captions highlighting the growth and development of College of the Desert since it was founded a half century ago.

A series of celebration events are being scheduled for the fall semester, including a 50’s Sock Hop, a gala fund-raising COD Foundation event, photo and art exhibits, and more.

COD was founded in 1958.
Graduating Class of 2008

Student Speaker: Speakers included two students with highest honors (see photo, pg. 1). Above: John Dennem-Tigner tells students to follow their dreams, persevere and find joy.

Left: Graduates head into the Hilb Center prior to lining up for the processional to Boone Field, the site of Commencement ’08. The Hilb’s reflection is captured in the pool. Above: One of the 230 students who participated in Commencement flashes a smile after receiving her degree.

More Photos Pages 4, 5, 6.
Some Early COD Graduates

Representing the First Graduating Classes at COD: In honor of College of the Desert’s 50th Anniversary (1958-2008), members of some of the earliest graduating classes at COD were invited to be recognized and represent their original classmates. Receiving a special souvenir 50th Anniversary COD Medallion were, from left: Juan Lujan ('68), Matt Monica ('68), Joel Johnson ('68), Ron Evans ('68), Scarlett Norris Adams ('68), Rick Post ('67) and Barbara Eastes ('65).

Above: Presidential Medallion recipients Patrick and Edeltraud McCarthy seated in VIP section with former COD Foundation Executive Director Gene House (at left).
Commencement ‘08 was a colorful, festive event, celebrated with balloons, song, speeches, and highlighted by the presentation of Presidential Medallions and the introduction of some of COD’s oldest living graduates in honor of the college’s 50th Anniversary.

*Story continues on Page 6.*
...Ceremony Was Festive, Colorful

From Page 5

It all started at the Hilb Student Center, where students gathered to don caps and gowns and register for the ceremony and organize for the procession, which began at 7:30 p.m. Some 475 students were eligible to graduate and of those about 230 marched in the procession.

The ceremony got underway with the presentation of colors by the U.S. Marine Corps Color Guard. Habacuc Flores, ASCOD President, led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the singing of the national anthem by vocalists Theresa Jewett, Clifford Plummer, Jack Ramoran and Kaley Smith. President Jerry R. Patton gave the welcome. Dr. Fred Jandt, Dean, CSUSB (PD Campus), greeted the graduates. Presidential Medallions were given to benefactors: City of Palm Desert, Patrick and Edeltraud McCarthy, and Jo Ann McGrath. Dr. Bud Miller, Chairman, Board of Trustees, awarded the degrees. Dr. Diane Ramirez, VP Students Services, and Dr. Gari Browning, VP Instruction, also spoke, as did Dr. Doug MacIntire, President of the Academic Senate and a Physics Professor. Michael O’Neill, voted “Faculty of the Year” by his peers, delivered an address, as did Dr. Doug MacIntire, President of the Academic Senate and a Physics Professor. Michael O’Neill, voted “Faculty of the Year” by his peers, delivered an address, as did Dr. Doug MacIntire, President of the Academic Senate and a Physics Professor. Michael O’Neill, voted “Faculty of the Year” by his peers, delivered an address, as did Dr. Doug MacIntire, President of the Academic Senate and a Physics Professor. Michael O’Neill, voted “Faculty of the Year” by his peers, delivered an address, as did Dr. Doug MacIntire, President of the Academic Senate and a Physics Professor. Michael O’Neill, voted “Faculty of the Year” by his peers, delivered an address, as did Dr. Doug MacIntire, President of the Academic Senate and a Physics Professor.

Both of the speakers had gone to college later in life and shared their experiences and hardships with the graduates and a crowd of about 1,500.

Dennem-Tigern said he had substance abuse problems in the past, which led him to be homeless for 18 months. Through the help of Drug and Alcohol Abuse Counseling, he found joy in his life and learned to focus his energy on being successful. Today, he counsels others and also walks the walk.

“Fear can paralyze, yet fear can be overcome and then great things are possible,” he said. “Having overcome my fears about returning to school allowed me a new perspective on who I am and what I can expect from life.”

Mattuci was 50 years old when she came to COD and got “connected to my hope. I was shut down for so long, one parent and alcoholic and once having to live in a women’s shelter. I am a survivor. I saw the future here for my and my vision was to become a college graduate.”

This year’s commencement was a lot of work, according to John Loera, Dean of Enrollment Services, who pointed out that the threat of rain produced some short-lived anxiety. “From the feedback I received it was a joyful celebration of student success and teamwork on behalf of the campus community. Outside of the unusual weather, it went well.”

Revae Reynolds, Executive Assistant to the President, said, “The clouds broke and all went smoothly with record attendance. It is important that each and every commencement be a special event for the graduates who are participating that year. We plan a commencement ceremony every year, but for the graduates and their families, this is a milestone event in their lives so it needs to be memorable.”

In honor of the college’s 50th anniversary, seven representatives from graduating classes of the 1960s were recognized. One of the college’s original faculty members, hired in 1962, Dr. Dan Deti, participated as well. They were given souvenir medallions created from the college’s new 50th Anniversary logo.

An honorary degree was bestowed on Palm Desert City Mayor Pro Tem Bob Spiegel.
College of the Desert continues to do its part to ease the shortage of nurses in California. On May 23, COD graduated 49 students who qualified to take their RN exam. Almost all of them will pass the first time, if past history is any indication.

The students processed into the McCallum Theatre, were welcomed by a series of speakers including COD President Jerry Patton and Health Sciences Dean Leslie Young.

Students were pinned by faculty members while their words of thanks to family, friends, significant others and children were read over the theater’s sound system.

A candlelight ceremony included the recitation of the nurse’s pledge.

The students passed a rigorous two year course of study and earned Associate of Science degrees in Nursing.

A day earlier, on May 22, COD also pinned 29 Vocational Nursing students.

COD Produces More New Nurses
Adult Ed Students Reach Milestone

A significant part of COD’s commencement-related events at the end of each academic year is a special ceremony for Adult Education Students.

This year, 70 students were recognized for completing GED or High School Completion courses, often the first step on the road to higher education.

Pam LiCalsi, Dean of Center for Training and Development at COD, and Ty Thomas, lead instructor, made the presentations at the Pollock Theatre.

The grads were treated to refreshments after the ceremony.

A few photos from the event:

**Above, Right:** Pam LiCalsi congratulates Ysmael Hernandez as Jose Castillo looks on. **Right:** Ty Thomas poses for a photo with Martha Arellano. **Below,** left to right: Ana Vasquez, Jason Talbott Ross and Christiana Clancy are some of the other grads.

Luxury Car Dealer to Celebrate COD Training

Desert European Motorcars LTD of Rancho Mirage, home of famous auto marques such as Audi, Jaguar, and Porsche, will hold a celebration June 24 to mark a successful partnership between the auto dealership and College of the Desert.

COD’s Center for Training and Development worked with the auto dealer to create a customized training course for luxury brand auto technicians, preparing them for certification testing with the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence.

“Preparing for and passing the exam “signifies a commitment to the technician’s chosen career and ability to perform to set standards,” said Charles Wallace, Director of Parts and Service at Desert European Motorcars.

“This relationship between public education and the business community will provide a resource of technically trained apprentices in our own backyard.”

The celebration is from 9 to 10 a.m. at the dealership, according to Pam LiCalsi, Dean of the CTD.
At Attention:

Nearly 60 Cadets from COD’s Public Safety Academy at Palm Desert were joined by uniformed officers from most of the Valley’s law enforcement agencies for the semiannual recognition event on May 22.

PSA Ceremony

Police Chiefs from throughout the Coachella Valley were in attendance (above, left): Shown here, front row, from left: Leonard Pervis, Banning; Pat Williams, DHS; Steve Thetford, Coleen Walker, and Craig Kilday, Riverside Sheriff’s Department.
Grant Will Provide East Valley Tutors

The future East Valley Campus has received a $100,000 grant from the Desert Alliance for Community Empowerment (DACE) to help fund a new tutoring center. The center will be located on the college site near Thermal, which is scheduled to open in phases beginning as early as January 2009.

The endowment earmarks the proceeds for use in hiring more tutors for the new center. “This will help expand the number of hours of tutoring we can offer for our students,” said Jerry Patton, COD President.

Chris Nelson, Coordinator of COD’s Tutorial Center on the main campus in Palm Desert, said, “This will help assure that the same level of tutorial services we already offer at Palm Desert will be duplicated in the East Valley.”

Jeff Hays, DACE Executive Director, said, “We’re all about empowerment, giving students an edge so they can learn. Education is one of our strategic priorities. We are pleased to be part of such a transformative project. The new East Valley Campus will provide better access to higher education and will practically guarantee an increase in future opportunities for our residents.”

“This is a significant grant,” said Dr. Rick Post, former COD professor and dean, who wrote the grant. “It will generate 500 to 650 hours a year of additional tutoring at the new East Valley Center, which will make a big difference in the level of services we provide.”

Funding More Tutorial Services (from left to right): Dr. Rick Post, retired COD dean who wrote the grant; Chris Nelson, Academic Skills Center Coordinator who heads up COD tutoring services; Jeff Hays, DACE Executive Director; Dr. Diane Ramirez, VP of Student Services at COD; and Jerry R. Patton, COD President display a check for $100,000 earmarked for the new tutorial center that will be housed in the East Valley Campus.

Steel Beam Autographed

Donors and VIPs were invited to sign a steel beam on the construction site of the new Public Safety Academy at COD. A plaque will be mounted on the finished wall inside the building at the exact spot where dozens of signatures will be encased in sheetrock. Above, left: Marcy Gregory signs her name; Riverside County Supervisor Roy Wilson does the same (he’s a COD faculty emeriti member). Below, right: Indio Police Chief Brad Ramos, a staunch supporter of the PSA program, confers with COD President Jerry Patton. The facility should be completed in Fall of 2009.