

Toluca Lake Times

Toluca Lake Elementary School: An Arts Prototype School / 818.761.3339

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<<http://toluca.weebly.com>>



Words of Wisdom

*Somewhere I read
Of the freedom of
speech. Somewhere
I read of the
freedom of press.
Somewhere I read
that the greatness
of America is the
right to protest
for rights.*

*-Dr. Martin Luther
King, Jr.*



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Assembly

by

Savannah Mintz-Turner, Alyssa Petach,
Laureline Terry, and Tatiana Sarkisyan

On January 18, 2013 we celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday with a spectacular assembly featuring different songs and poems performed by Toluca Lake Elementary students. It was a wonderful ceremony that celebrated our belief in the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, jr.

The program started with Michelle Rollins and Melanie Flores from Ms. McDuffey's class reading their letters to Dr. King. They were very wonderful letters. Next, our talented Kindergartners sang "Happy Birthday Dr. King." Then, fifth graders Ruby Hagerman and Alexis Casas read their letters to Dr. King. The next performance was by students from Room 10. They did a terrific job! Then, Helen Getnet and Thaly Rivas read their excellent their letters to Dr. King. All of these performances were great.

Third grade students from Room 14 did a great job singing "Let Us Keep His Dream Alive." Next, Maya Grahman and Maxwell Walker read their well-written letters to Dr. King. Then, students from Room 17 presented their ideas about the "Greatness of America" and their dreams for America's future. Students spoke about our great schools, diversity, equal rights, and their hopes for peace, jobs, and more fairness in our country.

Finally, all of the second grade classes sang a great version of "This Little Light of Mine." Mr. Murphy played the guitar and led the singing. The audience liked it so much that they joined in with the singing. It was awesome!

There were so many wonderful and brave performers during the assembly. Nobody was the best, because they were all great! Everyone got up with bravery and performed wonderfully. Dr. King would be very proud, and he will always be in our heart ... so remember to stand for what you believe in to make the world a better place for everybody.



The Petrojvic Blasting Company

by

**Maya Grafman, Alexis Casas,
Seuz Trabucco, & Ethan Zamora**

The Petrojvic Blasting Company is a band that performed for our fifth grade students on a field trip to the Skirball Cultural Center. They played many genres of music like New Orleans Jazz, Romanian, Klezmer, and Brass Music. They started as street performers, and now perform in concert halls around the world. They played these types of music because they don't want old music to die.

They started playing together three years ago. Josh, the leader of the band, plays the accordion, an instrument designed with a mini, hand-held piano on a squeezebox that uses guitar chords. Josh has been playing the accordion for 15 years. Brandon, another member of the group, plays the tuba. He has been playing for five years. Dominic has been playing the bass drum for 19 years. Charles has been playing the trumpet for 19 years, too. Jessica, the only female band member, has played the clarinet for 24 years. The Petrojvic Blasting Company was able to use their talents and instruments to perform these wonderful genres of music.

After the performance, we had a special opportunity to go to a workshop with the musicians. They performed music and taught us to do Serbian dance. They again overwhelmed us with their talents of being amazing musicians. Then, they split us into two groups to do different activities: dancing and playing percussion instruments. All of the students loved the special activities we did with the band.

We think that the band played beautifully with their interesting instruments. They really touched our hearts with the different symphonies and melodies. They for sure practiced to make the performance perfect. We had a blast listening and dancing with the Petrojvic Blasting Company!

Walt Disney Concert Hall

by

Thaly Rivas and Maya Grafman

Fifth grade students visited the Walt Disney Concert Hall to see "The Composer is Dead" last month. The orchestra played music in this amazing performance. The performance was centered upon the mystery, "Who killed the composer?" For most of the play, we listened to the classical music so that that music doesn't die.

The Walt Disney Concert Hall is a magnificent place to visit in California. The hall was designed by Frank Gehry. He is an architect who lives in Southern California. When they asked him to make a visual representation of the building, he made a sketch on a napkin. It had crazy curves that make it feel like the movement of the music.

The inside of the Walt Disney Concert Hall was inspired by Gehry's love of sailing. It has pipe organs that look like giant French fries. Once you get inside of the hall, you see wooden and metal columns and curved wooden walls.

The stage floor is where the musicians in the orchestra perform. The orchestra sits in rows and columns with their instruments. The brass instruments are in the back, the string instruments are in the front, and the woodwinds are in the middle. The conductor leads the orchestra from the front podium. She tells them how and when to play.

This field trip gave us a great opportunity to experience the performing arts in a beautiful building.



Jack, Jill, and Snowmen Creative Stories from 4th Grade Students!

New Stories about "Jack & Jill"

Well you know how Jack and Jill went up that hill well this is what happened after. Jack and Jill's dad said, "We are going to Germany to hike to your grandma's house". Jack and Jill said "No more hills for us!" so they flew over there. They said hi and went to play with Hansel and Gretel. Once they got the ball they played basketball, handball, and kickball but then the ball rolled away to a dark scary cave. Jack and Hansel went to go get it. A monster grabbed them, so an axe-man came to rescue them. Jack and Hansel grew up to be axe-men, Jill became a princess, and Gretel was a witch hunter.

– **Santiago Garcia**

Once there were two siblings and their names were Jack and Jill. One day, Jill the curious, and younger, one went wandering off into an airport. Jack followed Jill because he was in charge, but he hardly even knew what he was doing because he was so stuck to The Hunger Games, Catching Fire book. The people who worked at the airport were not trained well enough so Jill just walked right into an airplane. She was heading for Hollywood and she had no idea. She sat in the first seat she could find and Jack went tumbling after. When the plane landed Jill said, "Wow this is an awesome place! Where am I?" As Jill said that a hippy said, "read the sign you're in Hollywood!" When Jill heard that she immediately bought a disposable camera and went to all the movie sets she could find. Jill grew up there got married and never saw Jack again.

– **Anna Zayas**

My Life as a Snowman

One day in Las Vegas people were making snowballs, and that was the day I was built. I was the most beautiful snowman, but I didn't know why they called me a snowman if I'm not even a guy I myself am a "snow girl". I really loved my life, except for getting hit by snowballs and melting. I saw another snow girl get hit once and her head rolled down the steep slippery hill. I panicked and hoped that wouldn't happen to me! I was most beautiful snow girl! The moment came when I lost my life, the day I melted. My last words were "No I am melting! Don't do this to me! No! No! No!" What a life I had.

– **Michelle Cerda**

One nice stormy winter day, there was a kid named George who made a snowman and that's how Snowflake was born. Snowflake was the shiest snowman and she didn't have any friends. "I wish I had friends, but I'm too shy", said Snowflake. After awhile Snowflake started to make friends, two other snowmen, and their names were Frosty and Winter Blossom. One day some kids saw Frosty dancing and singing to his favorite song, "I knew you were Trouble when you walked in..." Frosty became a hit singer. Winter Blossom and Snowflake never saw him again. The next day it started to get hotter and hotter. Before they knew it they were melting. "Well all good things must come to an end", said Snowflake "until next winter".

– **Anna Zayas**

Well as you see my life as a snowman is bad because I don't really have friends. My only friend is Fuzzy. She is a bunny her eyes are like chocolate. Her fur is like a white coat. Another reason why I am not happy is because I can't go to other places. For example if I go to the desert I will melt. If I go to the beach I will be washed up by the waves. If I visit a rain forest the rain will turn me into water. Either way my life as a snowman is about to end because in two weeks summer is coming. Other children are very happy that summer is coming but I'm not. Now you see why my life is bad and difficult.

– **Damaris Amaya**

Awesome Alumni: Christian Mercado

We had the stupendous chance to interview former student Christian Mercado. He attended Toluca Lake Elementary School many years ago, graduating in 1993. He is now 26 years old. He was born and raised in Bolivia. His first language was Spanish, but he's also a fluent in English.

When he grew up, Christian joined the army and went to college. Christian is very proud of his work. He graduated from Bradley College with an administrative degree in law enforcement. He's also worked fixing airplanes for the army from 2004-2008. Christian has always been a very hard worker.

Christian has Christian many good memories from his years at Toluca Lake Elementary School. His favorite one was when Mr. Hagen-Smith played music every morning for Daily Writing. Mr. Hagen-Smith remembers Christian staying after school to do his work every day. "I have taught many amazing students over the years," remembers Mr. Hagen-Smith, "and nobody ever worked harder than Christian Mercado."

In addition to Mr. Mr. Hagen-Smith, Christian remembers other fine teachers like Mrs. Lee and Mrs. McDuffey, There were many schools Christian attended after elementary school including Walter Reed Middle School, North Hollywood High School, and Bradley College. Christian, as you can tell, was a very hard working, committed student.

Christian Mercado is so amazing. He can be a great role model to anybody. His hero/role model is Mr. Hagen-Smith because he inspired him to be his greatest, and now Christian has taught us to be our best!



Principal's Message

As the second semester is upon us, we are working very hard to be sure your boys and girls are thoroughly prepared for the California Standards Tests coming in May. A really important part of this preparation is teaching them **self-discipline**. They need to understand the importance of completing **all** of their homework on a **daily** basis, coming to school **every day**, and coming to school **on time**. You, as the role model, have the biggest influence on your children. Talk to them about all of the tasks you must complete on a daily basis in order to provide for them and the family. Explain that if you often came to work late, you would lose your job and that is why they need **to learn the habit of being on time on a daily basis**. As always, our door is open for you to come in and talk if ever you have any concerns. We love our parents and are very lucky to have so much support at our school.

- Ms. Carol Reo-Bové

Featured Faculty:
Masterful Mr. Lee
by – Julianna Happacher,
Giselle Piceno, & Anisa Karneh

We interviewed a wonderful kind man who works at Toluca Lake Elementary School. His name is Mr. Rick Lee. He began working here during the 2010 school year. The education he needed to achieve his career was to get his Bachelor's degree in liberal studies with an interest in literature. Then, he earned a multi-subject teaching credential for grades K-8.

Some of his hobbies are reading, watching movies, martial arts, and collecting signed baseballs and cards. One of Mr. Lee's heroes is his 6th grade teacher Mr. Ritter because that teacher took great interest in him. The toughest part of his job is getting his brain working in the morning because he is not a morning person. The professional accomplishment that makes him the proudest is seeing improvement in kids that he works with throughout the year. That makes him feel very satisfied. Some of the obstacles that Mr. Lee had to overcome to achieve his goals were finding money to go to college and finding time in his schedule to do it.

Mr. Lee's favorite part about working at our school is that he enjoys working around kids because "their view of life is inspiring." The changes that he would like to do in our school is to have more scheduled sports like baseball and soccer. Finally, some advice he gives to his current students is work hard, do their best everyday, and do things that they really want to do. Working with Mr. Lee was a pleasure. We enjoyed listening to the story about how he grew up to be a successful man. We're lucky to have him here at Toluca Lake Elementary School!



PTA NEWS

The PTA would like to sincerely thank all parents, teachers, and volunteers for your time and effort. You are greatly appreciated! Parents, teachers, and community members are always invited to participate, volunteer, or attend any event or meeting to share their valuable contributions. Membership is accepted year round and is only \$7! You do not have to be a member to participate!

Holiday Boutique

Thank you to all parents, students, and volunteers who helped support the Holiday Boutique. These funds will support a PTA sponsored assembly in the Spring, and to the 5th grade annual marine field trip.

Literacy Night- Huge Success!

At Literacy Night on January 23rd, PTA was able to give away more than 200 new and used books at the evening meeting. Parents and students enjoyed choosing from a wide variety of books. Parents, teachers, and members of the community donated dozens of books. The presentation by Deborah Armes discussed reading strategies and tips to help your child advance in reading. Deborah provided a valuable presentation with a packet of helpful information and tips (available upon request). Here are some tips parents really enjoyed:

Top 5 Reading strategies

- Let students read for fun and choose their own books from different genres – fiction, fantasy, poetry, non-fiction, fables,
- Read aloud with your student - Use titles, pictures, and vocabulary to teach as you read the book – predict, question, and discuss as you read
- Read every day! (At least 10 minutes (younger) -20 minutes (older).
- Make reading a family activity – Replace it with television for 30 minutes – Everyone can read together, and share!
- Have children write a response after reading, or draw a picture to illustrate an important event in the story

*Congratulations to PTA members Emily and Tanya who both won a \$25 gift card to Barnes and Nobles Bookstore at Literacy Night!!!

Upcoming Events -

Black History Month Writing Contest – due 2/26

In honor of Black History Month, the PTA is sponsoring a writing contest, open to all 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students at Toluca Lake Elementary!

The best essay from each grade will be published in our school's Toluca Lake Times newspaper! And one essay per grade will be chosen to be read at the school's Black History Month assembly in February.

Need another reason to enter? EVERYBODY who enters will get a chance to win 1 of 6 \$10 gift cards to Barnes & Noble!

To participate, write at least one paragraph about an African-American who is a role model to you and other students. Include your name, classroom number and a title for your essay. Describe why you admire this person, giving examples of what they did to inspire you. Be sure to use correct spelling and punctuation! You can choose any current or past African-American historical figure. Submissions are due to your teacher by February 26th, 2013. Participate, learn, and win!

Family Math Night

by
Leslie Duke, Ethan Zamora, & Anisa Karneh

On February 4, 2013, fifth grade students in Mr. Hagen-Smith brought their families to school at night! They all participated in the the 2nd Annual Family Math Night. That special night is when all of the students in Room 17 and their parents came together to review math strategies together. Everyone had a splendid time learning about math.

Mr. Hagen-Smith started the night by playing an educational film called "Donald Duck in Math Land". Everybody laughed. Mr. Hagen-Smith brought some cheese, crackers, and vegetables, but when Arianna Alvarado's dad brought pizza, everyone went wild! Later, Ernesto Espinoza's mom brought more pizza. Mr. Hagen-Smith suggested using the pizza to display fractions, but we thought it was more fun to eat it!

During the night, Mr. Hagen-Smith showed us a Power Point he made to help us with math. It included the information about math properties, the Common Core Standards, and math ideas we could do at home. Then, Mr. Hagen-Smith passed out paper to create a number line. He let the parents and students make fractions on paper by folding the paper. While making fractions, Luis De Paz yelled out, "I have an 8th grader (his sister) to help me!" Some parents got confused while folding all the paper, so Mr. Hagen-Smith did some examples on the board to help everybody understand better.

On Family Math Night, parents and students all learned a lot. Everyone enjoyed themselves and had a magnificent time. Next, we're going to have a Family Writing Night with the Story Pirates!



Valentine's Day

by Anisa Karneh & Cindy Lopez

As we all know, Valentines Day is a very special day! It was first celebrated on February 14th, 496 A.D. in Ancient Rome. But did you know, this holiday started out as a "liturgical celebration of one or more early Christian saints named Valentinus, and a holiday to honor Juno, the queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses"? Valentinus was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians who were persecuted under the Roman Empire.

Since it is the time of Valentines Day, we went around the school, interviewed some students, teachers, and coaches after school, and asked them what "love" means to them. We heard many interesting responses.

Fifth grade student Alexis Casas said, "Love is when you meet someone and you have a special connection." Kindergarten student Tyler Coleman said, "Love is when you like somebody who's handsome or beautiful."

We interviewed some adults, too. Our wonderful coach, Coach Jane said, "Love is a magical feeling and wholesome chemistry." Third grade teacher Mrs. Miya says, "Love is accepting somebody for who they are and forgiving them for their faults."

Mr. Hagen-Smith says that students should love their homework. But, he sings, "You Gotta Have Heart" to try to get us to do our best work. It's kind of scary for our ears! Coach D., on the other hand, said, "Love is waking up in the morning and calling that special person to ask how their sleep was and being able to tell them good night." Also, he added that when you see that person, you start to act like a dork in front of them. Love is passionate feeling that everybody should feel at least once in his or her life.

Now, we know a lot about this holiday. We hope you had a great Valentines Day!

Calendar

Feb. 26 = Inspirational African Americans
Writing Contest Deadline

Feb. 27 = Volunteer Day

Feb. 28 = Black History program

March 4 = Primary Grades Awards Ceremony

March 4-8 = Parent Conference Week

(early dismissal) – Progress Reports

March 10 = Daylight Savings Time Begins

March 11 = Upper Grades Awards Ceremony

March 12 = Local Leadership Meeting

Toluca Lake Community Council

March 19 = School Site Council – 8am

March 23 – April 1 = Spring Break

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The Japanese American National Museum
by - Alyssa Goodson & Julianna Happacher

The fifth classes of Ms. McDuffey and Mr. Hagen- Smith went on a field trip to the Japanese American National Museum. It was a cool experience to learn about Japanese American history and culture.

When we first got into the auditorium area at the Center for Democracy, the docent taught us about taiko drums. He showed us how to play them, and then let some kids have a try. This was an awesome, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Next, Then we crossed the road and entered the Japanese American National Museum. We went up stairs and learned to make t-shirts and boxes from paper. We had to make our folds neat, balanced, and with sharp creases. The Japanese call this art origami. It was very fun, and we got to keep the things we made.

Then, we found out more about our docents' lives. Then, we went for a tour of the museum. We saw a lot of artifacts about immigration and World War II. One thing we saw was a model of the barracks the Japanese Americans were forced to live in during their time in relocation camps at the start of World War II (1942). Our country was in that war for five years. During that time, Japanese Americans lost their homes and had to go to these camps, even though they were United States citizens. The U.S. government later apologized for this unfair action.

Our docents explained artifacts to us during the tour. We walked on top of a glass floor that had objects from the relocation camps that people later donated to the museum. We saw necklaces, gold, and other types of materials. Next, we got to try on some clothing that they used to wear. After that, the docent explained that each Japanese primary source is an artifact.



Teacher Tips

Preparing for Success - Criteria Chart

- Arrive Prepared for Class
 - Eat breakfast
 - Bring all completed homework to school
 - Have material organized
 - Start work upon entering the classroom
 - Attempt to answer all teacher-generated questions
 - Add additional information when relevant
- Positive Attitude
 - Consistently demonstrates curiosity
 - Consistently demonstrates motivation for learning
- Use of Time
 - Makes excellent use of time to work on assignments
 - Attempts to answer all questions on an assignment
- Quality of Work
 - Finished assignments provide evidence that student has checked quality of work for content, mechanics, and appearance

AROUND THE TOWN

This section of our newsletter features free or inexpensive activities happening "around the town." We encourage you to extend your child's learning by exploring the many cultural activities available in the greater Los Angeles community.

- Irish folk singer/songwriter Ken O'Malley will be presenting a free concert at the Burbank Central Library (7:00pm) to commemorate St. Patrick's Day. Come by and check out some books during your visit. Call 818.238.5600 for more information.
- On Sunday, March 3, the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Griffith Park will be hosting an American Indian Culture Family Day at 1:00 pm. Call 323.667.2000 for more information.
- The Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena will feature "Ganesh's Sweet Tooth" for their Family Day on Sunday, March 16. Children will decorate a small bowl to enjoy their favorite treats in addition to learning about Hindu culture and history. Call 626.449.6840 for more information.

Toluca Lake
Elementary School:
An Arts Prototype
School

Principal:

Carol Reo-Bové

Assistant Principal:

Carla Miller

Parent Representative:

Lucy Gonzalez

Coordinator:

Jeff Daniel

Lead Teacher:

Steve Reidman

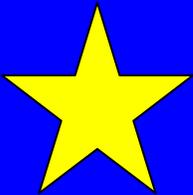
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<http://toluca.weebly.com/>



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- Go to www.escrip.com and click on "Sign Up".
- Enter our Group ID# 164439465
- Ask family and friends to register, too!

"This is, by far, the most fund-raiser that our school has. Our monthly contributions continue to gradually increase. Last year our school received close to \$10,000!"

-Julene Kline, PTA President, Blossom Valley, El Cerrito, CA

It's completely free!
It's easy!
It's powerful!

Brought to you by the Toluca Lake Elementary PTA.
Education@ptalake.com

Super Sleuth & Scavenger Hunt

1. Who did fifth grade students Maya Grafman and Maxwell Walker read letters to at the assembly on January 18, 2012?
 2. Where did some students see the Petrojvic Blasting Company perform?
 3. Who designed the Walt Disney Concert Hall?
 4. What event is Damaris' snowman worried about?
 5. Which cartoon did students watch at Family Math Night?
 6. Why does Mr. Lee enjoy working around kids?
 7. What is the name of the song Mr. Hagen-Smith sings to encourage his students to try their best?
 8. What is one strategy shared at the PTA's Literacy Night?
 9. Where was Christian Mercado born?
 10. What type of drums did students play at the Japanese American National Museum?
- *) Where is this special, life-saving object located?



Riddle Me This ...

- Why did the skeleton go to the barbeque? - **Leslie Duke**
- There's a madman in a truck 20 feet away at 9:30 am. He traps you. He tries racing towards you, but only goes ten feet. He tries again, but can only advance five feet. If this pattern continues, when will the madman reach you? - **Zachary Miles**
- What has four wheels and flies? - **Sofie Maya**
- What type song do bees like? - **Cindy Lopez**