

# Toluca Lake Times

Toluca Lake Elementary School: An Arts Prototype School / 818.761.3339

April 30, 2013  
Vol. 6, # 5

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

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## Words of Wisdom

*This has been far more than three men on a mission to the Moon; more still than the efforts of a government and industry team; more, even, than the efforts of one nation. We feel this stands as a symbol of the insatiable curiosity of all mankind to explore the unknown.*

*- Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr  
(Astronaut reflecting upon Apollo 11, the first manned mission to the Moon)*

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## Toluca Lake Star Party!

by – Lily Hernandez, Ethan Zamora, Cindy Lopez,  
Alyssa Goodson, Michelle Gray, & Jackie Gedikyan

Our annual Star Party was held in April. We had a special visitor, Mr. Joel Harris. He is an engineer and astronomer from Rocketdyne. He brought a powerful telescope for us to view the Moon, Jupiter, and two of Jupiter's moons. It was an amazing experience to see them in the beautiful night sky because we were using a Dobsonian mirror telescope.

We were able to learn a lot about Mr. Harris by interviewing him at the start of the evening. His first experience with astronomy was when his father bought him his own telescope. He was just five years old! From then on, he loved astronomy, and knew it was his life and hobby. He first studied the Moon because it was simple to study and observe, but his specialty is the Sun. At the age of 17, he went USC because he wanted to earn a scholarship in astronomy. Before he worked at Rocketdyne, he worked for JPL (the Jet Propulsion Laboratory). He hasn't seen anything unusual like an UFO or aliens, however he says, "you can still believe" in the amazing.

We had many activities during the Star Party. Some teachers volunteered to help out at the event). Mr. Reidman helped students create star charts. Ms. Jill did a few fun activities called "Three-Headed Creature from Another Planet," "Hot Seat," and "Planet Lineup." In Ms. Harriman's class the kids and parents drew the solar system. Ms. Miya's class made fortunetellers about space. Ms. Denes and Ms. Luis Juan helped students make three-dimensional space probes, memory games, and flip books. Mr. Hagen-Smith organized the event. He started the night by showing a movie called the "Blue Planet." The PTA helped out with yummy treats and beverages.

About 150 people attended the Star Party. It was cool to do look through a telescope and do astronomy events with our parents. We all had a great time at the Star Party!



## Featured Faculty: Ms. Claudia Torres

by - Giselle Piceno, Laureline Terry, Andrew Amarni, & Justin Carmona

We interviewed a new teacher named Ms. Claudia Torres. She just began working here this year. She is a very creative teacher and very unique in her own special ways.

Ms. Torres had to overcome many obstacles to face in order to be where she is now. She needed to obtain a bachelor's degree and a teacher's credential in special education and child development. A proud accomplishment of hers is obtaining her Master's degree by participating in professional development such as conferences, team-building, and staff development. She had to overcome time constraints and fatigue from long hours of school to accomplish this goal.

Ms. Torres enjoys working at our school because of its culture. She says that everyone here is nice and helpful. One of her many heroes is her grandmother because she is a very courageous woman and accomplished many things in her life. Ms. Torres really enjoys teaching at our school, and educating students.

Ms. Torres isn't your average teacher. She is very

fun and entertaining. Some of the hobbies she enjoys are hiking, listening to music, dancing, and bike riding. One thing she would like to change about our school is more themed family events after school to help make families a larger part of the school culture. Finally, Ms. Torres advises students to study at least five times a week, go outside at least once a day without technology, and find a hobby that lets you explore and be creative.



## Awesome Alumni: Mr. Trae Smith

by- Michelle Gray, Anisa Karneh, Luis DePaz, & Isaac Rivas

Trae Smith, a former student at our school, visited our class to talk to us about his experiences at Toluca Lake Elementary between 2001-2005. He remembers Mr. Hagen-Smith as his inspirational teacher. He also remembers other great teachers like Mr. Brent, Mrs. Miya, and Mr. Reidman.

After graduating from Toluca Lake Elementary, he attended, Millikan Middle School and North Hollywood High schools. Now, he is a senior at



Birmingham High school. He, plays quarterback on the football team.

Although Trae is now being recruited to play football at top college, the accomplishment that makes him the proudest is his high grade point average. His heroes are Kobe Bryant and his brother because they inspired him to play sports. And, his mom has always made sure that he gets all of his work done.

Trae's favorite memories were going on special field trips, especially the Aquarium of the Pacific. Trae's advice to Toluca Lake's current students is, "Never give up on your dreams..." He added, "Failing is not in my vocabulary."

Trae Smith is an amazing person. We were very lucky to interview him for this article. We are thankful that he took the time to visit our school and share his experiences. Maybe, we'll see him playing football on television someday!



## Family Writing Night

by

**Erick Rocha, Alyssa Goodson,  
Leslie Duke, & Savannah Mintz-Turner**

Toluca Lake Elementary held a Family Writing Night this month. Mr. Hagen-Smith organized the event to encourage kids and families to write more. Connor and Martha from the Story Pirates and the Geffen Playhouse were there making the night lots of fun.

The Story Pirates showed us how to write and perform a commercial. We had to get in teams with our family and friends. We learned different advertising techniques like bandwagon, repetitive, testimonies, and many more.

Michelle Gray made a delicious commercial about rainbow sherbet-chocolate ice cream. This mixture of rainbow sherbet and chocolate sounded like a rich, creamy delight. Savannah Mintz-Turner and Alyssa Goodson made their commercial about the all-new "Bugs-in-my-Hair-Wig-Spray." Once you spray your hair with it, you instantly have a bug-hair wig! Kayla Clearly and Tatiana Sarkisyan made a cool commercial about a magical pencil that does your homework and all your class work for you. Isn't that something! We would all love to have that kind of pencil! Christopher Gonzalez made a commercial about different colored corn. If you pop it you'll have different colored popcorn. Cool!

We learned lots of cool writing techniques that will help us in the future. The Story Pirates are a great influence for children. They help us to develop our writing skills and brighten our attitudes. We love Story Pirates! We love to write!



## Teacher's Tip

Visiting educational websites is a terrific way to share new learning experiences with your children. Students enjoy learning about the world. You can explore the relative size of both the largest and smallest items in the universe at:

<http://htwins.net/scale2/?bordercolor=white>.

Another fascinating website, the Encyclopedia of Life, provides "global access to knowledge about life on Earth" at <http://eol.org>.

The icivics website offers interactive games that teach about the rights and responsibilities of citizens. It includes a number of fun, educational games as well:

<http://www.icivics.org/games>.

The WatchKnowLearn website offers a variety of free educational videos ... organized to make them easily accessible. You can check it out at:

<http://www.watchknowlearn.org/>.

You can hear hundreds of bird songs, and learn about the habitat and characteristics of each species at:

<http://www.birdjam.com/learn.php>.

"A Walk in the Woods" from the University of Illinois takes students on an interactive walk through the woods to explore nature ... from inside your home. You can go for this interactive stroll at:

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/woods/>.

You can even have a live bird's eye view of bald eagles on the Channel Islands at

<http://www.nps.gov/chis/photosmultimedia/bald-eagle-webcam.htm>.

Enjoy exploring cyberspace with your kids this summer!

### **Free MONEY** for our school!

Sign up with eScrip and everytime you shop at any of the over 6,000 merchant locations (including Vons, Pavilions, and HOWS!), a percentage of your purchase will go to Toluca Lake Elementary! Really!

- Go to [www.escrip.com](http://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 easiest fund-raiser that our school has. Our monthly contributions continue to gradually increase. Last year our school received close to \$10,000!"*

-Julene Kurtz, PTA President, Blossom Valley, El Cajon, CA

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

**eScrip**

Brought to you by the Toluca Lake Elementary PTA.  
tlawatch@comcast.net

## Principal's Message

This Friday, May 3, we will have our first "Spring Fair / Cinco de Mayo celebration". We are very excited about this new event. Our PTA, Parent Center, and teachers are working together to make this fair a day to remember. We will start right at dismissal (2:09). Parent volunteers will be setting up the activity booths beforehand. Once the dismissal bell rings, teachers will be running booths, showing short films, and helping out as volunteers during this special event. There will be food, games, raffles, and much more. Our students can't wait to be able to participate in all of the fun activities. Please come and have fun with your children; enjoy and support our school during this "wild and crazy" adventure.

- Ms. Carol Reo Bove

## Toluca Lake Student Honored at Geffen Playhouse!

by – Laureline Terry

One of our fifth grade students, Laureline Terry, was recently honored by the Story Pirates at the Geffen Playhouse. She was selected to have one of her stories performed by the Story Pirates in front of a live audience during the Geffen Playhouse's Gala Fundraising Event. This annual event includes celebrity guests performing to a full house. This year's guest of honor, Jon Heder (the star of "Napoleon Dymamite"), starred in Laureline's story, "The Wedding." Laureline also got to go up on stage during the show, and was interviewed on camera about her story. Here are Laureline's special memories from this big day.

*I had an awesome time at the Geffen Playhouse. My story was "The Wedding." When I first wrote it, I didn't think it was going to be a hit. But, when Mr. Hagen-Smith told my mom that the Story Pirates were going to perform my story at the Geffen Playhouse, I was very excited.*

*I went with my friend, mom, sister, dad, step-mom, grandma, and grandpa. When I got there, I got free ice cream, a fresh chocolate chip cookie, popcorn, and three applesauce packets. I also did some fun activities. Then, my teacher and I were interviewed on film. After that, it was show time. The theater was packed with people. At that time, I was freaking out! The performance was perfect. It was just the way I imagined it. I even got to go up on stage, meet movie stars, and answer some questions about my story. As we exited the theater, we got red velvet cupcakes. My family was very proud of me. I had such a wonderful time I was practically jumping out of my seat!*

Congratulations, Laureline. We're very proud of you. Keep on writing, Toluca Lake Students!



## The Vecmobile Visits Toluca Lake Elementary

By - Luis DePaz, Martin Reyes, & Erick Rocha

THE VECMOBILE VISITED OUR SCHOOL THIS MONTH. IT'S A LEARNING LABORATORY ON WHEELS! THE L.A. COUNTY VECTOR CONTROL DEPARTMENT SENT IT TO OUR SCHOOL SO THAT FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS COULD LEARN ALL ABOUT VECTORS. A VECTOR IS AN ANIMAL OR INSECT THAT CARRIES DISEASES OR CAUSES HARM. MOSQUITOES ARE THE MOST DANGEROUS VECTORS IN THE WORLD.

DURING THE VECMOBILE'S VISIT, FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS GOT TO GO INTO THE SCIENCE TRAILER AND VISIT DIFFERENT LEARNING STATIONS. IN STATION ONE, WE STUDIED ANATOMY BY CONNECTING THE BODY PARTS OF A MOSQUITO TOGETHER. IT WAS FUN AND EDUCATIONAL. IN STATION TWO, WE LEARNED ABOUT THE METAMORPHOSIS, OR LIFE CYCLE, OF A MOSQUITO BY EXAMINING SPECIMENS THROUGH AN ELECTRONIC MICROSCOPE. WE SAW THE EGG RAFT, THE LARVA, PUPA, AND ADULT STAGES. IN STATION THREE, WE LOOKED AT THE DISEASES MOSQUITOES CARRY AND TRANSFER TO WILD BIRDS. IN STATION FOUR, WE LEARNED ABOUT THE BEST PREDATORS OF MOSQUITOS. THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ONES ARE MOSQUITOFISH BECAUSE THEIR MOUTHS AND EYES HAVE EVOLVED TO LOOK UP TO THE SURFACE OF THE WATER WHERE THE



PUPAE ARE FLOATING. THIS WAS A VERY FUN EXPERIENCE FOR ALL OF US STUDENTS ... BUT IT WON'T BE FUN FOR ANY MOSQUITOES AROUND HERE!

## Debussy Trio Brings Classics to Toluca Lake

by - Leslie Duke, Cindy Lopez, & Ethan Zamora

Last month the Debussy Trio gave Toluca Lake Elementary students an amazing performance. The performance blew our minds away with the relaxing chamber music. The chamber music was used for dancing in ballrooms or expressing feelings. The Debussy Trio was named after Claude Debussy, a famous French composer. The three main musicians in the Debussy Trio are Angela,



Marsha and David.

Angela, the flute musician, started to play the flute when she was 10 years old. At the performance, she played delightfully. The flute she played is called a piccolo. It made a high, bird-like noise so realistic that we felt like we were in the jungle. Marsha, the harp musician, started to play when she was just six years old. She played gracefully. She also played the shortest note to the highest note and made this enchanted noise. David, the violin musician, began to play at the age of six. David played beautifully and played a center note for the kids to laugh. When all three of them combined their music, it made the Debussy Trio come alive with beauty. It also made all of us kids very happy!

Thank you, Debussy Trio!



## Toluca Lake Student Honored at Festival of Books!

Each year the Los Angeles Times sponsors the Festival of Books to celebrate reading. This year was very special because third grade student Zachary Ragle from Room 14 won the million-word challenge. For his hard work, Zachary Ragle won a \$50 dollar gift card to Target!

There are many reasons why the Festival of Books was originally created. One reason was to encourage families to read together. Another reason was to make reading more fun for all ages. Finally, they want to encourage people to read and succeed in college.

We here at Toluca Lake Elementary School are very proud of all of our student readers. Way to go, Zachary!



*"People that do not make mistakes,  
don't do new things."*

*- Albert Einstein  
(Quoted by Diego Sanchez)*

Awesome  
Art  
by  
Marko  
Mihajlov



## Poet's Corner

### Cinderella

by - Alyssa Mora (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)

Cinderella, all grum and grime.  
Hopefully she doesn't waste time.  
Her ugly stepsisters so rude.  
Hopefully they don't get in a mood.  
Cinderella all alone.  
With her mouse friends in her home.  
Wishing, hoping, for something just a  
little more.

Hoping she won't be poor.  
Gazing at the castle in every way.  
Hoping she will meet her prince one day.  
Then, one day her dream came true.  
Hearing the cows say "Moo!"  
Wearing a wedding gown.  
Turning her frown upside down.  
And she lived happily ever after,  
with a case of giggling laughter.

## PTA Update

The PTA would like to thank parents, teachers, students, and staff for their participation at the Spring Cleanup. With your help, we were able to plant, weed, paint, clean, and beautify our school. Thank you to Togo's in Burbank for providing over 100 delicious sandwiches. Jarrito's also sponsored the Spring Cleanup, and provided natural sodas and free student folders.

### Cinco de Mayo Spring Festival May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2-4pm

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 2-4 pm, the PTA will sell Mexican food at the Cinco de Mayo Spring Festival. We invite the entire community to the Spring festival to enjoy fun games, activities, and great food! If you cannot make it, make sure you send your child to school with a few extra dollars so they can enjoy the festivities. Volunteer recognition is on May 7. We will be recognizing volunteers who have contributed to our wonderful school.

### Calling all parents!

Make a real difference at Toluca Lake- become a PTA officer! It is now election time for the PTA and we are seeking parents that would like to volunteer for positions for the upcoming year. The officer job descriptions and open positions will be posted outside the main office this week. Come to our next meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 in the auditorium to run for office. If you have any interest in being a PTA officer, or volunteer, please review the officer duties, & email us: [tolucalakepta@gmail.com](mailto:tolucalakepta@gmail.com).

### Teacher Appreciation Week 5/6-5/10

Teacher Appreciation week is May 6<sup>th</sup>- May 10<sup>th</sup>. Please show your child's teacher that you appreciate all the hard work that they do for students! On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the PTA and Parent Center are hosting a teacher appreciation brunch at school during recess and lunch. We are requesting food, drink and dessert donations, to make this day special and unforgettable for teachers. Sign-ups will be in the main office next week.

The PTA would also like to thank our sponsors, **Big Wang's**, and **Cisco foods**, for donating to the Cinco de Mayo Spring Festival. Another big thank you goes to **Jade Apple Yoga** on Magnolia, who donated 2 unlimited 2 week yoga passes to the PTA. Congratulations to the parents that won them at our last meeting.

## Michelle's Movie Reviews

by – Toluca Lake Film Critic Michelle Gray

Our Hollywood Insider, Michelle Gray, is back with another set of wonderful family film reviews!

- Monthly Trivia Question from previous issue: What are the names of at least 3 witches from *Oz the Great and Powerful*?  
Answer: *Glinda the Good, Theodora, and Evanora*

### ➤ Coming in May:

- *Epic*: RATED NA (Not Available)  
*Epic* is about a girl named Mary-Katharine who is transported to a different world where plants and animals speak her language. But, she finds herself in a controversy between good and evil. In theaters May 24, 2013. (Animation/Adventure/Comedy)

### ➤ Movies Coming in June:

- *Monster's University*: RATED NA (Not Available) Going back about 10 years before *Monsters Inc.*, Sully and Mike are starting college to learn how to scare kids. They become best friends.... In theaters June 21, 2013. (Animation/Adventure/Comedy)
- Monthly Trivia Question: What year was the original *Monsters Inc* movie released into theaters?

## 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.

- *National Train Day* honors the anniversary of the Transcontinental Railroad (1869). Amtrack is hosting a number of free activities at Union Station in Los Angeles. Highlights include interactive exhibits, kids' activities, model train displays, and tours. Visit [nationaltrainday.com](http://nationaltrainday.com) for more information.
- The *Los Angeles Children's Film Festival* is taking place at the American Cinematheque's *Aero Theater* in Santa Monica on May 3-4. They will be screening a number of award-

winning family films from around the world. This unique event is also a fundraiser for our school. You can purchase tickets & acquire information at their website: <http://americancinemathequecalendar.com/content/los-angeles-international-childrens-film-festival>. Please be sure to indicate our school when making your purchase so that a portion of the sale may go to our student body.

The *Japanese American National Museum* is hosting a free family day on Saturday, May 11. They will have many activities including the creation of a self-portrait, frame making, origami, mother's day cards, and a community timeline. Call 213.625.0414 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

Newsletter Editor:

Dennis Hagen-Smith

*We're on the Web!*

See us at:

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



## Super Sleuth & Scavenger Hunt

1. What was Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, jr.'s occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is one activity directed by Ms. Jill at the Star Party? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is one piece of advice Ms. Torres gives to students? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Which sport does Trae Smith play in high school? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the name of the product created by Savannah & Alyssa at Family Writing Night?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Where can you celebrate National Train Day in Los Angeles? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the name of the actor Laureline Terry met at the Geffen Playhouse?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Who won this year's "million-word challenge"? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What are the cows saying in Alyssa Mora's poem, "Cinderella"? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What are the most dangerous vectors in the world? \_\_\_\_\_

\* Where is this image located on our campus?

(Hint: it turns pink in the Spring adding color for some of our youngest scholars).

This image is located \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Calendar

- May 3 - Spring Fair /  
Cinco de Mayo Festival
- May 3-5 - Children's Film Festival  
(Aero Theater - Santa Monica)
- May 3-13- Story Pirates (5<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- May 6 - Awards Ceremony (K-2)
- May 7 - Awards Ceremony (3-5)  
Volunteer Recognition
- May 10 - Muffins with Mom
- May 11 - Drill Team performs at  
Fire Station #86  
Pancake Breakfast
- May 13 - Safe Moves Assembly
- May 15 - Family Writing Night #2  
with the Story Pirates
- May 27 - School Closed (Memorial Day)
- May 29 - Night of the Arts
- May 31 - Fifth Grade Activity Day:  
Santa Cruz Island

## Riddle Me This ...



- There is a green house, inside of a white house, inside of a red house, with a lot of babies. What is it? - **Seuz Trabucco**
- What goes "zzub"? - **Erick Rocha**
- Why don't you bother a person while eating steak? - **Cindy Lopez**
- Why don't lobsters ever share? - **Martin Reyes**
- What's the laziest mountain in the world? - **Zachary Miles**
- Why don't soccer players ever get hot? - **Sofie Maya**
- What is the teacher's favorite desert? - **Charlie Roy**