

Toluca Lake Times

Toluca Lake Elementary School: An Arts Prototype School / 818.761.3339

May 24, 2012
Vol. 5, # 7

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



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)*



Toluca Lake Students Visit NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston!

by - Alessandra Rugamas, Britney Arana, & Rashel Alvarez

Our school is a part of the NASA Explorer School (NES) program. As a NES, we get to do some cool lessons and activities from NASA. Our teacher, Mr. Hagen-Smith, got our school into this program after taking a class called "Teachers Touch the Sky" last summer. One of our favorite lessons was designing a "Lunar Plant Chamber." Students designed a prototype to grow plants to support a research colony on the moon. Two of our students, Ali Freas and Caitline Molina, did such a good job on their design that they were selected to participate in the National Student Science Symposium in Houston, Texas. They were the only elementary students from California to earn this honor. "I am very proud of their creativity and hard work," said Mr. Hagen-Smith.

During their trip to the Science Symposium, the students presented a power point of their prototype to NASA scientists and engineers. The people at NASA were very impressed with the design. They liked how the students created innovative solutions like a pedaling an exercise bike to generate electricity, and modified their original design after learning that it doesn't rain on the Moon. They also like that the students made connections to social studies, language arts, and related careers in science. When asked about their next steps, Freas responded, "... to colonize the moon!" The people at NASA said they were looking forward to seeing kids like Ali and Caitline visit Mars in the future.

During their trip, the students had many amazing experiences. They met many astronauts, participated in a live web career panel interview, met students from around the country, visited the Mission Control Center, constructed models of pods that could land on the moon, ate pecan pie, and stayed at a Hilton Hotel. They visited the center where astronauts are trained under water, walked along a life-size rocket, saw a new lunar vehicle controlled by an ipad, got stuck to a wall with Velcro, and saw how scientists are designing a habitat for deep space exploration. Caitline said, "Going to NASA was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.... I really liked the career panel because I want to work for NASA someday."

We are very proud that our students were selected for this very important honor. They were two of only a dozen elementary students to be selected from the entire country! "This trip inspired me to want to study, work hard, and go to college to be a scientist or engineer someday," said Ali. "I feel like I can accomplish all of my goals," said Caitline. "We believe that each of our students can reach the stars if they put their minds to it and do the work necessary along the way," said Mr. Hagen-Smith. Way to go Ali & Caitline!



Awesome Alumni: Awesome Amy Johnson!

by - Agenda Domsitz, Ali Freas, Daniella Martir, & Angel Mendez

Amy Johnson is a woman who attended Toluca Lake Elementary School from 1994 until 1997 (grades 3-6). Her name was Amy Jones back in those days.

Amy's favorite hobby has always been swimming. She was very good at it. In fact, in 2000, she participated in the Olympic trials in Indianapolis in the 100-meter free style!

Amy graduated from Cleveland High as an excellent student. But, school was not always easy for her. While she was at our school, Amy had a **huge** problem. She was dyslexic. That means that she reversed some letters when trying to read. She needed special help with her studies. Luckily, her teachers

were up to the challenge, and so was Amy. She finished high school with high grades, and went on to study sociology at Princeton University in New Jersey.

During all of her school years, Amy's parents have lived in North Hollywood, very close to our school. Her parents still live there, but now her half-brother lives in Florida and her sister lives in New York.

Amy gave us some words of advice for Toluca Lake's current students. She said, "Keep working, stay focused, and make sure you're doing what you want to do." Amy is now married and expecting her first baby. She is awesome!



Featured Faculty: Ms. Maral Manachian

by- Narek Manachian (5th Grade)

Maral Manachian started working at Toluca Lake Elementary school on April 9, 2012. She works as a teacher's assistant with Mr. Brent, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Sorozac. She is also a former student at our school



... and my cousin! She has earned a Bachelor's degree in science, and plans to become a physician's assistant in the future. She knows how to take care of sick and injured people so she helps keep our school safe.

Her favorite part of working here is "being around kids." She advises students "to study hard and not waste time." That's what Maral did when she was a student here. She started in third grade. At that time, Maral was still learning English. She was in Mr. Hagen Smith's fifth grade class ... before I was born! Her hard work and determination made her a favorite at our school. After graduating elementary school, Maral used to come back to Toluca Lake and volunteer. She has always been very helpful to our school.

Some of Maral's favorite hobbies and interests are basketball, babysitting, and shopping. She is a big Lakers fan. One of her heroes is her mom because she sets a great example with her hard work and kindness. Now, Maral sets a great example for all of us kids. I plan to college and earn a degree just like my cousin!

School Beautification Day

by
Ms. Beth Stengel (PTA)

On Saturday, April 28, school and community volunteers **descended** upon our school to paint, plant, weed, clean, and generally "spruce up" our campus.

Planters on the playground were painted to brighten up the yard, flowers - including poppy and nasturtium seeds, which will sprout soon! - and herbs were planted, trees were trimmed, rain gutters cleaned out, garden beds weeded and replanted, and classrooms were cleaned!

Two new trees were planted - a fruitless loquat and a Mandarin orange tree. With care, these trees will provide shade or fruit in years to come. Please treat them right - which means no dumping leftover milk in the planters, wink, wink....

This was truly a community event, bringing together volunteers from all walks of life (students, families, staff, local high school students and community volunteers) and sponsors from around the community.

A big thanks is given to: The Greater Toluca Lake Neighborhood Council, especially Daphne Kozek and Cornelio Gutierrez-Lozano of the Environmental Affairs Committee, for purchasing all the supplies for the event; Togo's on Pass Avenue (in the Vons Shopping Center) for donating the delicious sandwiches to feed our volunteers; Jarrito's Sodas for donating the drinks; The Office of Councilman Tom LaBonge, especially Alice Roth, for underwriting a portion of the event; and, of course, the VERY hardworking volunteers!



PTA representative Beth Stengel (L) and Principal Ms. Carol Reo-Bove (R) present a school t-shirt to Alice Roth (center) from the office of Councilman Tom LaBonge. Councilman LaBonge's office assisted with funding for our 2012 School Beautification Day.

Students have been painting our playground planters to add a bright touch of color to the yard!



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, Pavillions, and HOWS!), a percentage of your purchase will go to Toluca Lake Elementary! *Really!*

- 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 easiest fund-raiser that our school has. Our monthly contributions continue to gradually increase. Last year our school received close to \$10,000!"

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

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

Brought to you by the Toluca Lake Elementary PTA
TolucaLakePTA@aol.com

Principal's Message

During the month of May we celebrate the people we love and appreciate. Mother's Day and Teacher Appreciation Day are at the top of the list. Here at Toluca Lake, we honored our Teachers and staff on May 8th with a delicious brunch organized by our wonderful PTA, led by Antonia Goedde and our Parent Center Director, Lucy Gonzalez. Our teachers are outstanding in many different ways. They work late hours at school, plan and attend classes during their vacation, provide a variety of extra-curricular activities for the children and most importantly give their students the support and knowledge they need to succeed for the rest of their lives. Please remind your child to show their appreciation by saying "Thank You" to their teacher for all the hard work they do throughout the year.

- Ms. Carol Reo-Bove

Toluca Lake Student Wins Grand Prize in Art Contest!

by Agenda Domsitz, Gabriel Alaniz, & Millie Gonzalez

A few months ago, the Los Angeles Vector Control Department sent the Vecmobile to our school to work with fifth grade students. We learned about vectors, insects and animals that carry diseases such as encephalitis and West Nile Virus. Female mosquitoes are the most dangerous vectors because they suck blood to get nutrients for their eggs. When they bite someone, they can spread diseases.

We learned different ways to control the mosquito population. It's important to get rid of standing water around our homes because that's where mosquitoes like to lay their eggs. We also learned about the anatomy of a mosquito.



During their visit, the Vecmobile docents told us that they were having an art contest to create a poster to encourage people to get rid of mosquitoes. The contest gave the winner a *HUGE* prize (\$100), tons of fame, and would display their poster on city buses for quite a while.

About a month later, the docents returned to our class with balloons and a poster-size piece of paper. We knew something was up. We found out it was the results of the contest. The winner was in our very own class. Who do you think it was? Well, it's the aspiring artist, Jennifer Castro! She has won a \$100, a pizza party for our class, and her poster will be on 40 different buses in Los Angeles for a long time. Now, Jenny is our own special star ... and the mosquitoes better watch out!

Students Visit California Science Center

by
Agenda Domsitz

The CA Science Center is a cool place. Fifth grade students visited their "Ecosystems" exhibit recently. We did a scavenger hunt while we were there. First, we went into a hallway where we were surrounded by a short film about the earth's ecosystems. Then, we headed for the Extreme Zone. It was composed of Deep Sea Vents, Arctic, Desert, and Rocky Shore biomes. We also saw the cool Rot Zone, the CA zone, the Island Zone, and many others. We learned about the different components of each ecosystem, including how living creatures survive in each by adapting, and evolve over many years. Finally, we learned that each organism has its own job on Earth. If one is lost, we may follow it because we depend upon one another to survive!



Service Organization

Essay Contest Winners!

The March of Dimes Foundation

by - Naomi Marquez (5th Grade)



What in the world is the March of The Dimes Foundation? You really have no idea? Well, the March of Dimes Foundation is a U.S. non-profit organization that helps improve the health of mothers and babies. President Franklin D. Roosevelt found it in 1938. It provides mothers and pregnant women educational resources on baby health, pregnancy, and new motherhood. When the foundation first started, it was named the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. In 1976, it was renamed the March of Dimes Birth Defect Foundation. Then, in 2007 it officially became the March of The Dimes Foundation.

Every year, over one million people march from two to seven miles. Anyone can participate in the march. Grandmas, Grandpas, aunts, uncles, moms, dads, and even brothers or sisters can march. Guess what? It get's even better! People who are in the march often raise over 1.8 billion dollars! Isn't that amazing? All of that money helps thousands of mothers and babies.

The march takes place in all 50 states the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The marches usually take place in the morning around 9:00 AM. Each state has cities where a march takes place. Each starting time has a registration time the people who will participate in the march can sign in and get ready.

You might ask, "How does it help mothers and babies?" The March of The Dimes Foundation help mothers and babies in many ways. It helps moms with their health to prevent against miscarriage, Rubella (German measles), whooping cough, birth defects, and fetal alcohol syndrome (that's when mothers drink alcohol when they are pregnant. That can cause babies to be born with mental retardation, various growth, or behavioral problems). This organization helps prevent these diseases.

Pet Orphans

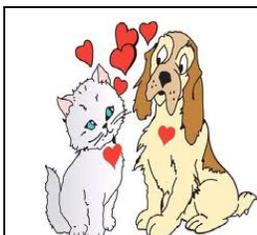
by - Angel Mendez (5th Grade)

Pet Orphans have been everywhere helping lost dogs and cats. Pets need families, food, and homes to survive. Pet Orphans helps match pets with families.

Orphaned pets are like homeless people that need homes. Pet Orphans provides homeless companion animals for Los Angeles County, and the majority of the pets in the facility have been transferred to North Hollywood from Los Angeles County shelters. After getting adopted, these pets will lead happy and safe lives. The pet orphans' "volunteers are the heart and soul" of the organization.

The shelters need donations, and people need to adopt pets. Last year, Pet Orphans established a special Medical Service Program to provide medical treatment for animals. Pet Orphans is important, and needs your help.

My puppy, Dora, used to be a pet orphan. Dora, a Chihuahua, was born on November 11, 2011. She is half brown and half black. My sister's teacher found her in a pet orphan shelter. The teacher gave my sister Dora for her birthday. Dora is kind of well trained now. Pet Orphans need your help, so please, please help. You'll spread lots of love and happiness.



Goodwill

by - Alessandra Rugamas (5th Grade)

Goodwill is a non-profit organization that helps all kinds of people in many communities. They provide a lot of services for all kinds of people, and helps in different ways.

Goodwill provides job training, employment placement services, and other community-based programs for people who have disabilities, lack of education, no job experience, or can't find a job. Goodwill has stores all over the country that sell stuff to help the needy. They assist all people who need help. Anyone can donate stuff to Goodwill, but the items can't be damaged. That is the one rule that's important. Goodwill resells most of the donations. People can feel good just by donating because they are helping others.

Goodwill hires many people of all different backgrounds. It's an important service organization that accepts people for who they are, and helps people who need it. People can donate anything that they don't need, instead of throwing them away. My mom donates to Goodwill and feels good because she knows she is helping others. Goodwill is a great service organization that makes a positive difference for many people!



Toluca Lake Student Honored at Festival of Books!

by - Genaro Diaz & Chris Emiliano

Each year the Los Angeles Times sponsors the Festival of Books to celebrate reading. This year was very special because fifth grade student Gabriel Clark from Room 17 won the million-word challenge. For his hard work, Gabriel Clark 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.

Gabriel Clark said that he liked the Festival of Books because it was his first time there. He liked that it encouraged kids to read because that's one of his favorite pastimes. In fact, since Gabriel started at Toluca Lake Elem. this year, he's broken the record for reading points earned by one of our students on Accelerated Reader! Gabriel also liked that he got a fifty dollar gift card to Target at the festival. He's planning to use it to buy more books. Way to go, Gabriel!



"William Shakespeare" Visits Toluca Lake!

by - Gabriel Clark, Hunter Ragle,
Oswaldo Diaz, & Jorge Cortes

The great English writer William Shakespeare visited our school on April 28, 2012! Actually, Shakespeare died a few centuries ago, but his words are still alive! An actor named Jim Schendel visited our school as part of the "Shakespeare at Play" organization. They gave our school a \$400 scholarship to pay for the program!

During the presentation, we learned all about William Shakespeare. Mr. Schendel brought a copy of Shakespeare's Globe Theater to our auditorium for the show! It helped us understand what it must have been like to see a play by Shakespeare hundreds of years ago.

Mr. Schendel became an actor when he was 19 years old. He's also worked on computers and as a substitute teacher (even here at Toluca Lake Elementary!). In 1998, Mr. Schendel got a part as Shakespeare at the Gentlemen of Verona Company. Some plays he recited were Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, and Macbeth. Mr. Schendel was Shakespeare's biggest fan. He told us that Shakespeare wrote comedy, tragedy, and history. He gave us advice to "follow our heart and do the right thing" in our lives.

One of the most famous catchphrases Jim shared came from the play Hamlet: "to be, or not to be, that is the question." That has to do with the importance of making the most of your life.

In Shakespeare's time, there was no electricity so the Globe Theatre had no lighting. The actors improvised and used natural light, sunlight ... THE THEATRE HAD NO ROOF! The rich people sat in the top stands, and the poor stood on the floor. Those people would actually yell and throw whatever was in their hand at something they didn't like. There were no props, so the actors had to pretend and act like they were using certain things.

Mr. Schendel's motive for acting is to encourage people to share the joy and wonder of Shakespeare's words. He even looks like Shakespeare! We are very glad that Mr. Schendel came to our school and taught us so much about William Shakespeare ... "and kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy" (excerpt from A Midsummer's Night Dream).



PTA News!

We have lots of great events coming up. Please join us for these upcoming dates!

Friday, June 1 - Free Family Movie Night!

5:30 pm (movie starts at 6:30pm)

Everyone is invited to a free screening of "The Muppets" in the school auditorium on our big screen projector. PTA volunteers will staff a full concession stand, complete with hot dogs, popcorn and candy, and you'll have a chance to take part in our fabulous "Family Fun Night" raffle! Visit our website to see the prize packages: www.tolucapta.weebly.com. First prize is your own "Family Movie Night" - A Cuisinart EasyPop Popcorn Maker, 22 family DVDs and your very own concession stand snacks! A \$200 value.

Wednesday, June 13 - Night of the Arts!

5:45 pm (show starts at 6:00 pm)

Everyone is invited to this very special annual event. This year's program will include a performance from the renowned *Story Pirates* (sponsored by the Geffen Playhouse in Westwood). In addition, students from Rooms 2, 10, and 17 will be presenting amazing premiere performances displaying their skills and creativity! Performing Arts teacher, Ms. Jill Holden, will join in with some special highlights from our Arts Prototype program.

*Seating is limited and "first come, first served"
for both events so arrive early!*

Lunch on the Lawn: Family Picnic

by - Gianna Carias

On Tuesday, March 27, Toluca Lake Elementary school had a family picnic. Parents were allowed to come on campus and eat with their child during the lunch hour. Many parents came to this event, and had lots of fun.

The Toluca Lake PTA set up this event. They thought it would be a great idea because it allowed parents to spend time with their child, see the school, and meet some of the teachers at Toluca Lake Elementary. This event was held in an enclosed area (set up by the PTA) with colorful decorations. Parents were allowed to bring picnic blankets and food for this event. Mr. Daniels took photographs that were later sent home in a decorated frame.

Parents and children enjoyed this event. You could see parents chatting and children playing all over the lawn. One parent said, "I'm having a great time *at Lunch on the Lawn* and don't regret coming because I have the opportunity to spend time with my child and got to see the school and meet some teachers." Another said, "I think it was a great idea to create this event because I get to see my child playing with his friends." This event was a success.

In conclusion, the *Lunch on the Lawn* event was a great idea. We thank the Toluca Lake PTA for making this event possible. I hope other events will be as great as this one.

Solar Eclipse

by - Hunter Ragel, Gabriel Clark, & Gianna Carais

On May 20, 2012 at 5:00 the shadow of a solar eclipse came upon Toluca Lake. This event will not happen here again until about 2070. A solar eclipse is when the moon has direct alignment with the sun, covering the sun from our view here on Earth. This solar eclipse did not completely cover the sun, but did cover about 86% of it. The full eclipse hit between the cities of Castella and Redding on highway five. Local resident, Hunter Ragel looked at it with a welding helmet. He got to see it without being blinded. Another resident looked at it in awe with five pairs of sunglasses, one on top of another. The eclipse only lasted for about an hour and a half. We wonder how NASA scientists are using the data gathered from this eclipse. Space is awesome!



Drill Team Travels & Excels!

by Angel Mendez & Kayla Molson

On April 14, 2012, the Toluca Lake Drill Team performed at the Burbank Parade. All of the members of the team were scared and nervous to dance in front of everyone ... and on television! But, we got used to it very quickly and did a great job! We won 1st place for the parade! When we got to our location, we were tired, dehydrated, and hungry. We ate and played at the playground. Then, when it got close to the end of the day everyone left... eventually!!! It was fun. We bet that Ms. McDuffey, Ms. Miya, and Ms. Harriman had fun too. What could be better than spending a Saturday with all of us kids!?! It was awesome.

On May 12, 2012, the Toluca Drill team performed at the North Hollywood Fire Station's annual pancake breakfast fundraiser. It was awesome! Kayla Molson, an avid member of the Drill Team, had an awesome time because it was her birthday! We performed two times and ate yummy food. Then, we did many different activities like face painting, playing on a water hose, going on a fire truck, and playing basketball. It was fun. We would love to go again. "Drill Team is great because it gives us an opportunity to dance and travel," reflecting Kayla Molson. Way to go, Drill Team!

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.

- The Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena is hosting its annual Open House on June 9-10 (9am - 4pm). This annual free event, themed "Great Journeys," will take visitors on a "ride" through the wonders of space. Highlights include a life-size model of Mars Science Laboratory, the NASA/JPL spacecraft currently bound for Mars; demonstrations from numerous space missions; JPL's machine

shop, where robotic spacecraft parts are built; and the Microdevices Lab, where engineers and scientists use tiny technology to revolutionize space exploration. You can call 1-818-393-5467 for more information.

- On June 5, 2012, you can see the Transit of Venus across the Sun at the Griffith Observatory. This very special event will not take place for another 105 years! Call 213-473-0800 for more information.

Toluca Lake
Elementary School:
An Arts Prototype
School

Principal:

Carol Reo Bove

Assistant Principal:

Joyce Miles

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. Where is NASA's Johnson Space Center located? _____
2. Which subject did this month's *Featured Faculty* member study in college? _____

3. Which event did "Buzz" Aldrin refer to "as a symbol of the insatiable curiosity of all mankind to explore the unknown"?

4. Which event did Amy Johnson participate in for the Olympic Trials in 2000? _____

5. Who does Goodwill help? _____
6. Who can you see at this year's Night of the Arts? _____
7. What is one thing that happened on our School Beautification Day? _____

8. What was the name of William Shakespeare's theater? _____
9. What is the date of JPL's Open House? _____
10. What are vectors? _____

* 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 28 - School Closed
(Memorial Day)
- May 29 - Story Pirates (5th Grade)
- May 31 - World Wildlife Assembly
- June 1 - Family Film Night
- June 5 - Chorus Show
Transit of Venus
- June 7 - Parent Volunteer Awards
- June 8 - Fifth Grade Activity Day:
Santa Cruz Island
- June 13 - Night of the Arts
- June 14 - Donuts with Dad
- June 19 - 5th Grade Culmination
Last day of school
- June 20 - School Closed
Start of Summer Vacation!
- August 14 - Start of new school year

Riddle Me This ...



- What did the Pacific Ocean say to the Atlantic? - **Naomi Marquez**
- What is the baby's motto? - **Hunter Ragle**
- What did Monday say to Tuesday? - **Agenda Domsitz**
- Think of any number. Multiply that number by two. Next, add ten to the product. Divide the sum by two. Then, subtract your original number from the quotient. Your answer is always the same.
What is it? - **Zachary Miles**