

Toluca Lake Times

Toluca Lake Elementary School: An Arts Prototype School / 818.761.3339

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Words of Wisdom

An excerpt from a conversation between the author and Winnie the Pooh.

"Pooh, you could be doing something important," I said.

"I am," said Pooh ... "I'm listening."

"Listening to what?"

"To the birds. And that squirrel over there."

"What are they saying?" I asked.

"That it's a nice day," said Pooh.

"Su you know that already," I said.

"Yes, but it's always good to hear that someone else thinks so, too," he replied.

-Benjamin Hoff in
The Tao of Pooh (1982)

Halloween Parade

by - Anisa Karneh & Giselle Piceno

On October 31st at Toluca Lake Elementary School, we had our very own Halloween Parade. Kids walked the track to present their costumes to friends, family, and judges. This year we started off with the first Toluca Lake Drill Team Halloween Dance. Drill Team did their routine to the classic and groovy "Ghostbusters" song. When Drill Team was done everyone cheered.

Then we moved on to the parade. First, we looked at the Pre-K and Kindergarten students. Their costumes were adorable. Secondly, we saw the 1st and 2nd graders. Their costumes were amazing. Next, we saw the cool 3rd graders. Finally, we moved on to the astonishing 4th and 5th graders. It was like looking at models walking down the runway.

It took hard work in order to plan this event. Everyone was busy taking their time to do a great job. The parade was full of happiness. The decorations were wonderful and so were the pumpkins. The best part was that kids got a chance to do something creative like participate in contests.

Finally, the judges announced the winners for the pumpkin carving, best costume, and scary story contests. It was so fun! After the parade the PTA helped us by selling food to raise money for the school.

Everyone had a wonderful time and enjoyed the parade. This special day encouraged kids to be a part of more things. Everything went great and it was a nice parade because everyone put effort into it. It was a great experience for everyone because it gathered people together to make this day special for everyone!



Toluca Lake Scary Story Contest Winners!

The Haunted House

Angie Zavala—Room 4, 1st Grade

One day I went to my friend's house. There is a guest room next door. We were playing with her dollhouse. She said, "Wait! I'll get water." I was playing. Then I saw the guest room door open and I got scared (!) because the door was closed before.

I ran to the kitchen, and my friend asked, "What happened?" I told her everything, but she laughed at me.

She said, "Sorry!" It was my cat that scared you."

"Your cat tricked me!! I thought your house was haunted."

I was happy after my friend told me that it was her cat that scared me. And her mom came with a surprise: she made macaroni and cheese!

Scary Spooky Night

Julian Spinola—Room 5, Kindergarten

One Halloween night a skeleton, a witch, a ghost, and a black cat went trick-or-treating. The witch went up to the door at the first house, and all the other children said, "Boo." The witch was so scared that she fell on her broom and went flying way up to the moon.

Then a bat bumped into her and she fell off the broom right next to the black cat. The black cat was scared and screamed "meow!" so loud that that his fur stood straight up. Then the scared ghost started to float around the yard saying, "BOOOO!" The ghost floated right into the skeleton so hard that the skeleton's bones fell apart!

All the other children who were trick-or-treating ran away screaming because they were so scared. It was one scary, spooky Halloween night!

"Boo! A Halloween Story"

Morgan Renard—Room 8, 1st Grade

Once there was a ghost, and one Halloween all the ghosts came out. This is a spooky Halloween when all the ghosts come out.

Good spirits come out to stop the evil spirits. The more they defeat them, the less power they have. *BOO!* The good ghost watches over all the children so they have a happy Halloween.

The Zombie Village

Teresa Fernandez Rocha & Christine Manachian
Room 2, 2nd Grade

Once upon a time there was a happy village named Elfwood. One day, two little girls named Jessica and Annie went down the hill out of the village where they saw a really big graveyard; but all the graves were empty. Next to a grave they saw a dead body with half its neck torn open. Then they heard a scream from the village. It came from their mothers.

They ran up the hill and ran inside the cottage, but instead of their mother and father, they saw two living zombies about to eat their brains. They ran out and saw that their whole village was zombies. They ran into the public library and locked the doors; then Jessica said, "How do we get out?"

"I do not know," said Annie.

Then they ran to the back door and locked it. A zombie rat had come in, so Annie grabbed it and pushed it back outside, and then put a brick in front of the hole. "I can't believe that the rats are zombies," said Annie.

"Me neither," said Jessica.

Then Annie remembered that her dad told her that to kill a zombie you have to shoot it in the head.

"Jessica, look for a gun in the desks." They ran to a library desk to see if there was a gun to shoot a zombie in the head with, but all Annie found were pencils, money and a note pad.

"Nothing," she said.

"Then I guess there is no way to kill them," Annie said; and they sat in the dark and waited until the zombies came in.



More Scary Stories!

Did You Hear That?

Michelle Gray—Room 17, 5th Grade

It's October thirty-first,
so don't underestimate Dracula's thirst!
And avoid each evil curse.
The day is done, now it's night,
And witches and ghosts will surely give you a fright!

Dead rats, black cats, a floating candle stick,
And so much candy can make you sick.
Then a knock...who can it be?
And what's with the clock? "This is very tricky!"

"Did you hear that?" Did you see?
Maybe it's young trick-or-treaters, don't you agree?
"Did you hear that?" Pounding, pounding on the door.
"Do those kids really need anything more?"

As they tip toed and tip toed,
they opened their creaky door.
It was their cat, Matt, who wanted food galore.
Each year on October thirty-first,
you'll hear your doorbell:

The knocking of the warlock dwell.
Mysterious things might smell.
So don't get over-dramatic
When you confront Frankenstein's static.
Don't fear the witch's broom-falling,
Spider's migration of his crawling,
And of the zombie's methods of calling.
And this year, who knows what will be most appalling!

The Imaginary Ghost

Heidy Paniagua—Room 12, 3rd Grade

One Halloween there was a boy named Austin. He was getting ready to go trick or treating. Austin was dressed as Batman; Batman was Austin's favorite superhero because he was brave and strong. When it was dark enough, Austin and his friends went trick or treating. While they were walking they told each other scary stories. After a few hours it was time for his friends to go home. Austin was on his way to his house when he decided he had time for one more house.

At the end of the street there was a beautiful and colorful house. When he got close to the door he saw a delicious tempting bowl of candy. He tried to grab one, but suddenly the door opened and the bowl moved inside the house. It was dark and Austin was scared. In the corner, he saw something he saw something. He said to himself, "Oh no, a ghost!"

He couldn't believe what he was seeing. He was trembling and he even peed in his pants. Austin tripped and he remembered he had a flashlight in his pocket. When he turned it on, to his surprise, there were a bunch of little kids laughing at him. The ghost that he had thought he saw was just a white tablecloth hanging from the ceiling. It was all his imagination. He felt embarrassed and he ran as fast as he could all the way home. Finally home, his mother asked him, "How was trick or treating? Did you have fun?"

Austin answered, "Tonight I learned a lesson."



Spooky

Samuel Chiloyan—Room 2, 2nd Grade

Once there was a little boy named Loo. He lived with his mom in their old house. Loo's mom didn't like the rusty old house because it had a secret of its own—it had ghosts.

One day she decided to move out and go to Washington state where her sister lived at the time. They packed their stuff and took off.

It was 10:00 in the evening. Mom was driving and Loo was asleep when suddenly ghosts appeared and scared Loo's mom. She lost control and crashed the car. She was able to get out but Loo got hurt badly. By the time the fire fighters and ambulance came, it was too late.

Loo became a ghost, too. He couldn't understand how he was able to fly. At first when he saw the rest of the ghosts, he was scared and didn't like them, but then he grew strong and wasn't afraid anymore.

A week later, Loo's mom came to the cemetery to visit Loo. He tried to hide, so he pretended that he was a statue. Loo tried as hard as he could, but his mom saw him and jumped. She didn't recognize Loo at first because he was a ghost and all ghosts are scary. But then she recognized her son and wasn't afraid any more.

Scary Story Contest

"Raggy, the Rag Doll"

Jenny Lix—Room 13, 5th Grade

Once upon a time there was an 8 year-old girl named Darcie. She had a very pretty Rag Doll named Raggy. Every day she played with her rag doll to take her fear away because she lived in a very scary house. At least that was what she thought. But let me tell you something about that Rag Doll—it has been at that house for 100 years, and it used to belong to one of Darcie's ancestors who lived in that house a long time ago. When Darcie moved there, she just found it lying on the floor, but she didn't notice that the doll had an evil spirit inside. Every single night while everyone was sleeping, the Rag Doll snuck out of Darcie's arms, went downstairs, opened the door as quietly as she could, and went around town giving everyone a terrible nightmare.

It might not be scary for some kids, but one day that doll promised herself that she would give the fearless ones a nightmare that would haunt them for the rest of their lives. One day Darcie's best friend, Ferra, who wasn't scared of anything came to school terrified with a nightmare that scared her to death. And that nightmare was done by an evil spirit in a rag doll. Darcie asked Ferra what the doll looked like. Ferra responded that the rag doll had red braided hair, a red, blue, and white silk dress, red and white socks, and black striped shoes. After Ferra told Darcie what the doll looked like, Darcie became suspicious.

Darcie stayed up all night thinking about the Rag Doll Ferra was talking about. She was very confused because it sounded just like the one she had. So, she kept an eye on the Rag Doll that night, but nothing happened. So Darcie pretended to fall asleep, but she still kept an eye on her rag doll. Then she felt her doll moving and also heard her doll talking. She started freaking out, but she that if she yelled, her doll would know that she was awake. So she stayed calm. After her doll walked out of their room, Darcie followed the doll downstairs and out the door. She was worried about the doll turning around, because if she did, it would see her. So she stayed quiet and still.

She followed the doll in and out of different houses; she was amazed at how the doll could jump all the way to the doorknob at once. She was also freaking out about the doll because when it talked, laughed, or made any noises, its eyes turned bright red and the blush on its cheeks turned black. She just guessed that it was the whole process of how the doll gave the kids nightmares. Darcie still didn't understand why her doll never gave her a nightmare. It just gave her good dreams. So she kept on following until they came home. The doll was the first one to enter the room and it wondered why Darcie was not there. So, Darcie just went to the kitchen, got a glass of water, came back to her room, and pretended that

she just went to the kitchen to get a glass of water.

The next day Darcie told everyone about her Rag Doll, but sadly no one believed her. So she told them that she was going to prove it and she came up with a plan. Which was...all the kids would pretend to sleep and wait until they hear their front door open; then they would wait until their bedroom door open, and they would see the rag doll Darcie was talking about. The next day when everyone came to school they told Darcie that she was right. Then they wondered about how they would get rid of the rag doll, and Darcie said that she would handle it. Darcie came home and grabbed her rag doll out of her bed, then she went to the kitchen and she got scissors and cut that doll into pieces. She was happy that she got rid of that doll. Also, her friends were happy and wouldn't worry about scary nightmares, but they didn't know that the evil spirit remained in the air. And that was...

Principal's Message

We're coming to the end of another year! Time flies by so quickly.

Our students have worked very hard during the fall semester. It's very important they continue to focus upon their learning during winter break.

Each student will benefit by reading at least 30 minutes each day during the next few weeks. It's also helpful for them to review their math facts and discuss current events with their parents.

I hope that each of our students enjoys a very happy and healthy holiday with their families. Enjoy this special time together with your loved ones, and get some rest.

We come back to school on January 7, 2013. Have a very happy holiday and enjoy the fruits of the coming year!

- Ms. Carol Reo Bové

Featured Faculty: Mrs. Cheryl Cottrell

by - Anisa Karneh, Jacob Perez, Michelle Gray, & Savannah Mintz-Turner

This issue's featured faculty member is one of our computer lab teachers, Mrs. Cottrell. She began her work here at Toluca Lake Elementary school in December of 2009. In order to become a "computer wiz" she had to get her BA degree in graphic design at California State University in Northridge.

Mrs. Cottrell isn't just a computer lab teacher. She also has a family and helps at her kids' schools. She has a husband named John. Her oldest daughter, Caitlin, is 16 years old. Her second daughter, Julianna, is 12. And, she has a son named Carter who is 9 years old. Mrs. Cottrell enjoys watching her children play sports. She also likes to read and work in the garden.

Mrs. Cottrell's heroes are her parents because they "instilled honesty and a hard work ethic." The hard work her parents taught her really shows in her now. She does a great job teaching all kids to use computers here at Toluca Lake Elementary.

The most hair-pulling part of her job is trying to get everyone at the same level of understanding in their knowledge of computers. The professional accomplishment that makes Mrs. Cottrell the absolute proudest is being the first in her family to receive a college degree. It made her and her whole family very proud!

We know this is a shock, but the Mrs. Cottrell you know, was once a shy child, but she overcame her shyness to become successful. Now, she is here helping kids learn new skills everyday. In her point-of-view, the best thing about working here at Toluca Lake Elementary School is that she's able to work with the teachers and staff, and watching all of the students learn and grow.

One thing Mrs. Cottrell wishes to change about our school is to minimize the budget cuts to retain all of our wonderful teachers. We would love to see her dream come true. Her advice to us students is "to always work hard and do your very best to become successful. And, always know if you do your best and never say you can't, that you shall surely achieve your dreams!"

We love Mrs. Cottrell because she always helps and understands the students. She is someone who we will never forget (especially her sweet voice!). She is awesome and we love her assistance at everything. We are thankful to her for all of her hard work and dedication towards our school and us!



Tree People

by - Luis De Paz

THIS FALL SOME FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS WENT ON A COOL FIELD TRIP TO TREE PEOPLE. DURING THE FIELD TRIP, WE WENT ON A HIKE AND LEARNED ABOUT EARTH SCIENCE.

TREE PEOPLE IS A PEACEFUL PLACE WHERE YOU CAN RELAX AND VISIT NATURE. THEY PLANT TREES ALL OVER THE CITY AND TEACH PEOPLE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT. OUR DOCENT TAUGHT US HOW TO PLANT A TREE AND CARE ABOUT PLANTS.

DURING OUR HIKE, WE SAW MANY INTERESTING THINGS. WE SAW LIZARDS, POISON OAK, BIRDS, AND MULCH. WHEN WE STOPPED HIKING ON TOP OF A HIGH HILL, WE SAT ON SOME BENCHES WHERE WE WERE ABLE TO SEE A GREAT VIEW OF THE VALLEY.

WE LEARNED THINGS THAT WERE AMAZING. ONE OF THE THINGS WE LEARNED WAS HOW TO MAKE MULCH. WE HAVE TO ADD GRASS, TWIGS, WATER, AND DIRT. MULCH IS ORGANIC MATERIAL THAT IS PUT ON PLANTS TO HELP IT STAY ALIVE BY KEEPING IT MOIST. WE LEARNED THAT GRASS GROWS BETTER IN THE SOIL THAN THE CEMENT BECAUSE THE CEMENT COVERS THE GRASS AND DOESN'T LET SOIL ABSORB WATER. IN ADDITION WE LEARNED THAT TREES RELEASE OXYGEN. THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE WE NEED OXYGEN TO BREATHE AND SURVIVE. PLANTS HELP US STAY ALIVE.

TREE PEOPLE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IN THE CITY WE DON'T NOTICE MANY PLANTS AND TREES, BUT IF YOU GO THERE YOU CAN LEARN ABOUT THE URBAN FOREST AROUND US. EACH STUDENT WAS ABLE TO PLANT A TREE, AND GIVEN A SEEDLING TO CARE FOR AT HOME. SOMEDAY, WE CAN PLANT OUR TREES AND WATCH THEM GROW!

Autry Museum of Western Heritage

by - Ava Ocegueda

Fifth grade students visited the Autry Museum of Western Heritage on a field trip this semester. We learned different ideas during this trip. We learned a lot about Native Americans and people who migrated to the American West.

We learned about the Native Americans at the Autry Museum. We saw that Native American tribes came from different regions like the Pacific Northwest, Desert Southwest, Eastern Woodlands, and Great Plains. A docent took my class to a big room and explained how different tribes developed their cultures based upon the resources in each region. We saw examples like different kinds of food, shelter, and toys. It was lots of fun to touch animal fur, a bone, and a purse that they used that was made out of flesh from a bison. All of this helped us because we also did a class project about different Native American tribes.

We also saw six Native American quilts at the museum. It was very interesting because each had very creative designs and simple colors like red and black, or blue and black.

We learned about Westward Migration by observing the great mural in the big downstairs room at the museum. We learned that what happened in the past still influences people today. We learned that clothing designs from the Old West influenced people in modern times. For example, Michael Jackson had clothing designed that looks like clothes from the Old West because he was a big fan of the West. They had a sample of his western clothes on display at the museum.

We learned that during the years in the Old West, men traveled to places like California to try to find gold with their tools. People looked for gold because they wanted to get rich. We saw some of these men's tools (like bowls and axes) on display. The men also used a scale for gold to tell how much the gold is worth. People from the East came to the West looking for better opportunities like gold.

We saw different people that lived through his story. This field trip helped us learn how people started moving west to find new opportunities. 



Huntington Library

by Laureline Terry
& Alyssa Goodson

Our field trip was a phenomenal adventure through Huntington Gardens. Our docents, Ms. Julie and Mr. Mack, taught us plants adapt to different biomes.

Huntington Garden was amazing and cool. We visited the desert and rain forest areas. In addition we walked to the desert area to examine the plants. We each had different jobs like equipment manager, recorder, and being in charge of the identification cards and magnifying glass. We made our own team names, and decided what we were going to do during our project.

They were so many beautiful plants at the garden! We saw was the California state flower, the Golden Poppy. Also, we investigated to see if plants were dry or wet. We observed each plant's texture and the shape of their leaves. While we were in the rain forest area, we saw the largest leaf in the whole world. Finally, we saw the home of the Huntington Family. They had a huge lawn for their children to play and have fun. Our trip was fascinating!

All of us had a great time. We enjoyed going for a walk to find the mystery plant. The mystery plant was a plant that only absorbed air and it was the ear. We all had so much fun. We hope to go back to the Huntington again!



Big News About Student Achievement!

by - Osmarely Soto & Jazmin Echeverria (3rd Grade)

Toluca Lake Elementary School had its annual California Standards Test (CST) Awards Assembly on November 28th. Many students earned medals for scoring either advanced or proficient on the CST for last year. Many children were expecting a medal around their necks because they work so hard on their studies.

Billy Alvarez was the only kid out of the whole school that got a perfect 600 in Language Arts. Six other kids scored a perfect 600 in Mathematics. They were Maxwell Walker, Cindy Lopez, Jeremy Luna-Hernandez, Martin Reyes, Giovanna Aldana, and Seuz Trabucco. Each student who scored a 600 received a trophy with their name on it. The Advanced Aces got gold medals, and the Powerful Proficients got silver medals. Some kids even received two medals. Congratulations to all of the medal winners!

Thank you to Mr. Daniel and Ms. Bove for organizing an exciting awards assembly!



Teacher's Tip

Most students are very interested in learning more about their family's history. The students may enjoy creating a family scrapbook in which they celebrate family traditions. They can begin by taking photographs of some aspect of the family's holiday celebration. They may interview parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and/or friends of the family to learn more about when the family began this tradition. Students may write captions in the scrapbook explaining what they've learned about their family's traditions. They may also enjoy decorating the scrapbooks to help bring these special memories to life!

Calendar

- Dec. 13 = Holiday Program
- Dec. 17 = Start Winter Break
- Jan. 1 = Happy New Year 2013!
- Jan. 7 = Return to School
- Jan. 15 = Leadership Council Meeting
- Jan. 18 = Parent Meetings & ELAC
- Jan. 21 = Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Holiday (school closed)
- Jan. 22 = School Site Council Meeting

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 Fowler Museum at UCLA is hosting a family day on Sunday, Dec. 16 (1-4 pm). "Kids in the Courtyard: Gifts to Delight the Senses" is a free event celebrating cultures throughout the world and the scented oils, spices, and herbs used to communicate, delight, and endow an object and its owner with powerful properties. Call (310) 825-4361 for more information.
- The Stough Canyon Nature Center in Burbank offers children (ages 8 - 14) an opportunity to become junior docents (\$24 for the entire year). Participants may earn service hours while having fun learning about, and helping nurture the natural

environment. Call 818.238.5440 for more information.

- The Columbia Memorial Space Center in Downey is welcoming aspiring astronomers of all ages to join us for our monthly Astronomy Club meeting. This meeting will include a fascinating program about the night sky and talk about astronomy. Information on how to pick the proper telescope, how to use a telescope, how to build a telescope, and how to identify different celestial objects will be provided at this free event. Call (562) 231-1200 for more information.

Toluca Lake
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An Arts Prototype
School

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Assistant Principal:

Carla Miller

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for our school!**

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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 easiest fund-raiser that our school has. Our monthly contributions continue to gradually increase. Last year our school received close to \$20,000!"
-Adlene Kwart, PTA President, Blossom Valley, El Cajon, CA

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Super Sleuth & Scavenger Hunt

1. Who danced to the "Ghostbusters" song during the Halloween Parade?
 2. What does Winnie the Pooh say it's important to do with your time?
 3. What makes Mrs. Cottrell feel the proudest?
 4. How does mulch help plants?
 5. Where can you find one of Michael Jackson's old western shirts?
 6. Who is the only student in our school to earn a perfect 600 on last year's California Standards Test (CST) in Language Arts?
 7. What is the state flower of California?
 8. Where is the Fowler Museum located?
 9. What is the name of the village that Jessica and Annie visited (see the "Scary Story" section to find out!)?
 10. What is the name of the rag doll in Jeremy's scary story?
- *) Where is this special, life-saving object located?



Riddle Me This ...

- Why did the duck cross the road? - Sofie Maya
- What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries? - Seuz Trabucco
- Why didn't the skeletons go to the movies? - Andrew Amarni
- What do you ask somebody skating on thin ice? - Zachary Miles