

TOLUCA LAKE TIMES

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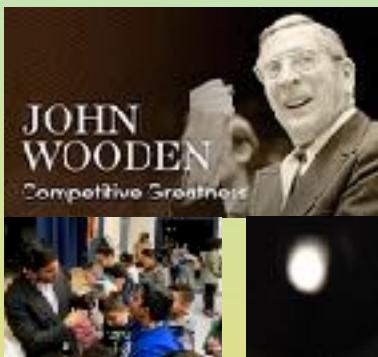


WORDS OF WISDOM

"If you're not making mistakes,
then you're not doing anything.

I am positive that
a doer makes mistakes"

~ John Wooden- Former
Basketball Coach & Teacher of
UCLA Teacher



**STAR
PARTY**



Star Party Soars!

by - Isabelle Singngam, Jazmin Lix, Suchel Camacho, & Journey Smith

Toluca Lake Elementary School's Annual Star Party soared to another fine success this year! This Toluca Lake Star Party year was the best one yet! We had many activities like making planet masks, galaxy mobiles, straw rockets, moon phases, astro comics, space probe models, astro art, and star charts. The Star Party was better than ever!

In the auditorium, Dr. Brandon Rodriguez of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), gave a great presentation called "It's Never Too Early to be a Citizen Scientist" and then led a hands-on activity about water on the ISS (International Space Station). Dr. Rodriguez was really cool and inspirational!

Doctors Emmanuel and Zoe Masongsong of UCLA's Earth and Space Science department led a very cool activity in Room 12. They taught us about space weather and showed how the earth's magnetic field creates the aurora borealis. They will be returning to our school in the spring to do hands-on activities with the fifth grade classes.

Another great activity was creating comets in the Steam Lab with Ms. Donna Smith of the Burbank Sidewalk Astronomers. We used dirt, cola, dry ice, water, and a plastic bag; shook them all up ... and bam! We made our own comets! Outside, the Sidewalk Astronomers returned with many telescopes to see the moon, planets, and stars. We saw the moon was in its third quarter, Mars, and Saturn. It was so cool!

There were many other great events at the Star Party. The PTA gave hot chocolate, cookies and other goodies to enjoy! We also enjoyed lots of cool workshops led by the teacher volunteers. Mr. Mudaliar did planet masks, Mr. Wyatt made galaxy mobiles, Ms. McConville did moon phases, Ms. Keppel made straw rockets, Mr. Lee did chalk drawings & mission to Mars, Ms. Gonzalez-Vargas did star charts, and Mr. Rodriguez made space probe models.

Mr. Lee's class performed a wonderful presentation about moon rocks and meteorites in school. Mr. Lee attended a special class at JPL to get the moon rocks and meteorites to show the school and share at the Star Party. His class enjoyed the giving their wonderful presentation teaching other kids that meteorite showers occur because large meteors start to burn into small meteorites.

We interviewed some of the amazing student scholars in Mr. Lee's class. Jordan was in the moon phases group. Sabrina's favorite part had to be choosing the photos and backgrounds for their presentation because they were so "epic". De Di Novi was in the "What are Meteorites" group. He said, "A meteorite is a meteor that has already landed on Earth."

We are very grateful to Dr. Rodriguez, Dr. Masongsong, the Burbank Sidewalk Astronomers, the PTA, all of the teacher volunteers for making this event possible. We would also like to thank Mr. Hagen-Smith because he created the first Star Party and organizes them every year. Now, it's time for us to blast off!



Principal's Message

P.R.I.D.E.: Personal Responsibility In Developing Excellence

We have had a great first semester this year! Our continued effort of delivering the promise of a quality public education depends on all of our stakeholders to be an active participant towards student proficiency. The culture of Toluca Lake Elementary is to provide rigorous lessons at every grade level that challenge students to become independent thinkers to support our goal of preparing students towards college and career readiness. Using the Common Core standards as our guide, mastery requires students to take a Personal Responsibility In Developing Excellence (P.R.I.D.E.) by being actively engaged in class, complete assigned work within due dates, and complete homework which is an extension of the school day. I encourage parents to support our ongoing efforts and instill the same level of expectations for your child to be in school each day, on time, and no more than seven absences for the entire year. Our collective efforts will solidify our ongoing school performance trends that far exceed district and state results.

Let's continue the momentum into the second semester with P.R.I.D.E.

Mr. Prendez (Principal)

"Jane" Movie Screening

By - Suchel Camacho, Aidan Mora, Dylan Wyke, and Journey Smith

Toluca Lake Elementary had a special family science night this Fall. Students did cool science activities, and then we all got to see the documentary Jane. That's an amazing movie about Dr. Jane Goodall and her love for chimpanzees. We think that this film is not only very educational, but a beautiful and moving story about Jane's family and life that incorporates important science facts.

Dr. Jane Goodall decided to take on the life changing event of going to Africa to study the life of chimpanzees when she was a young woman. When Jane went to Africa to study nature, she was one of the first women scientists to do that type of work out in nature. She discovered that chimpanzees used tools just like humans. That was one of the best discoveries that she could have made because using tools is what many thought separated chimpanzees and humans. After Jane's amazing discovery, people respected her more, but there was still some negative feedback about her being a very young girl who they thought was not in, "her place" especially because she was not married. Later, she did marry a photographer from National Geographic, Hugo, that Jane only allowed to work with her because of the funding. After that, they had a beautiful baby boy. We personally think that it's not fair or right that she was criticized because no matter her gender or age, Dr. Jane was a great scientist. Today, people all around the world respect and honor her!

The PTA set up snacks and juices to enjoy during the amazing event in the school auditorium. Mr. Hagen-Smith got the film for us and set-up lots of hands-on activities for us to do before and during the film. Students did a cool activity to be like the chimpanzees using tools. Just like the apes put sticks in an ant or termite hole to search for yummy ants or termites, we tried to gather our prize with little sticks! Of course, we didn't eat bugs with a stick. Instead, we used straws to gather hole-punch leftovers from under a plastic cup (as if they were sticks and termite holes). It was harder than it looked, but it was probably a lot of people's favorite activity!

We had many other activities to choose from, too. These activities consisted of many things that taught us more about chimpanzees and their habitats. Some of them were more for the younger kids, like coloring. We also used a tack to put together an ape, and completed word puzzles. These activities were all important because they taught us even more about the world of these amazing apes. This also gave all kids (and adults) something fun and entertaining to do during the film (unless of course they were taking notes like us!!)

Thank you to Mr. Hagen-Smith for organizing this event, and to all of the PTA members who set up the snacks and activities. They were all kind enough to take their own time to set up and fund this awesome night. It was a great night and we really are very grateful that we had a great event and teachers!!



After School Enrichment

By: Anita Saakyan, Isabelle Vega, and Mayah Reaves

Did you know about all of the fun enrichment classes at Toluca Lake Elementary? We have all sorts of fun classes for kids to attend after-school like Journalism, Film Forward, Lego Robotics, and lots more! These classes teach very important subjects.

Mr. Lee teaches basic and advanced coding classes, as well as theater production. Mr. Lee uses code.org to teach children about coding. Mr. Lee also works with Ms. Wassler to teach children how to become better actors and arrange a play based on American History!

Mr. Wyatt and Mr. Hagen-Smith teach Film Forward to students on Wednesdays. In this class, students analyze classic film clips and are working on creating their own films about controversial issues. Students are encouraged to present two sides of compelling and relevant* topics while learning film techniques.

Mr. Wyatt teaches Lego Robotics. He uses LEGO Mindstorm to show children how to program robots with technology.

Mr. Hagen-Smith teaches journalism on Mondays. That's the class in charge of writing the school newspaper, the *Toluca Times*. Mr. Hagen-Smith also teaches "Hamilton Lives," a class that teaches the history behind the Broadway hit musical, and lastly Film Forward.

We also have a tap dance class after school (thank you, Ms. Lauer) & chess club. Intervention classes help students in academic areas, too. Finally, Mr. Hagen-Smith is working with Robogals from Cal Tech to teach kids to code robots!

We really like all of these great after school programs here at Toluca Lake!

***"compelling and relevant" theme inspired by fifth grade student, Aidan Mora**

Mr. Daniel Departs

By: Suchel Camacho, Rebecca Thompson, and Mayah Reaves

Toluca Lake Elementary School is sad to announce that our wonderful coordinator, Mr. Daniel, has left our school for a new opportunity at another school. Everyone has developed a great bond ever since Mr. Daniel arrived at our school 19 years ago. Most families have grown close to him and are devastated to know that he's leaving. We journalists decided to interview him before it was too late.

Mr. Daniel has had a big impact on all of our students. When he told us that he would be moving to a different school, we were very sad. Mr. Daniel said he would be moving on to become an assistant principal at Arleta High School. He is going to be in charge of their visual and performing arts academy. Mr Daniels states, "I am excited because I am going to have a new position and adventure, but sad because I am leaving Toluca Lake."

Mr. Daniel's favorite memory was going on field trips like Santa Cruz Island. Now, he is looking forward to learning new ideas and going to the high school football games. Mr. Daniel says he is inspired by the staff at Toluca Lake. "Seeing how hard the teachers work makes me strive to do my best," he says. Mr. Daniel has been at Toluca Lake since 1999. He remembers having lunch and going to meetings with his classmate, Mr. Reidman, and his mentor, Mr. Hagen-Smith. We are all going to miss Mr. Daniel, but are excited for his future!



Awesome Alumni: The Alumni Power Squad

By: Dylan Wyke, Isabella Brant, Isabelle Singngam and Isabelle Vega

Did you know four former students who attended Toluca Lake nine years ago are now on their way to amazing colleges like UCLA and UC Irvine? We think just got to interview these amazing young women! Each of these students attended ordinary elementary school here at Toluca Lake. They worked very hard, always paying attention during class, doing their homework, and trying their best. Now, they are going to attend some of the highest level schools in California!

These students, Alejandra Huerta, Kaylee Elijah, Adelaida Rivas, and Brianna Madera, stopped by our school so that we could get to know more about them. After meeting these talented girls, we are so happy. Now we know that with a lot of effort and hard work we can be just as successful as them! Each of these students attended Toluca Lake Elementary from 2005 to 2011 (Kinder to Fifth). They all went to the same middle school, Walter Reed, and North Hollywood High School.

Now, they are all college freshmen, working hard to have an amazing education and career. We think so far they are on a great track! During their time at our school, these scholars realized their favorite subjects. For Brianna Madera, her favorite subject was science because of its importance. Alejandra Huerta loves math because it was very easy and simple for her, lucky! Kaylee Elijah loves English because it is very fun and she said, "I am a better writer, and

to me writing is easier than mathematics." Adelaida Rivas also loves math because she's really good at it, too. Each of these college-bound students has many different passions for many different reasons. For example, Brianna is studying in biology at UC Irvine, while Adelaida is studying sociology because it's such an important topic for our modern world today.



All three scholars gave the same advice. They say to stay positive at all times. Even though you may feel overloaded or stressed out at times, you have to have persevere and stay strong. They said that mental illnesses and depression are real things, so if you need to, you really should get help; it's a normal thing that can and does happen to a lot of people. These students really do have a very powerful and heartwarming friendship. They are inspirational to us; truly, they are AWESOME ALUMNI!

Authors Visit Toluca Lake: Connor White and Annabeth Bondor-Stone

By - Alessandra Laws, Dylan Wyke, and Isabelle Vega

Recently, Annabeth Bondor-Stone and Connor White, the authors of Shivers, The Pirate Who's Afraid of Everything, came to Toluca Lake Elementary school to discuss their work. They visited our classroom, Room 17, to discuss the beauty of story writing. They have written and published five books so far, and are not giving up that streak any time soon. They just keep on writing excellent books.

Their next novel is called Jacqueline Hyde. It's inspired by the famous story of Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde. That's the story about a kind doctor who turns into a monster when he takes a magic potion. Jacqueline Hyde is a story is about a

girl who sneaks into a professor's lab to make herself a potion so she can be perfect. Instead, it turns her into the complete opposite of what she wanted to be: a monster. Despite these different personalities, Jacqueline has to persevere and find a way to work things out.

Another great story written by Annabeth and Connor is a book called Time Tracers. It's a book about a group of friends that is robbed of their summer vacation. Their summer disappears because time really does fly when you have fun in this book. The problem is hard to solve, but they get help from a time tracer police officer that is all about getting back lost summer fun. Annabeth and Connor are very creative and write lots of great books. They shared some important writing tips with us during their visit. We are very thankful to them for sharing all of their great ideas with us!



Featured Faculty: Mighty Ms. McConville

By: Alessandra Laws, Jazmin Lix, & Marilyn Duran

Ms. McConville, a third grade teacher, is this month's Featured Faculty member. She grew up in Sunland after being born in nearby Glendale. She started her career as a teacher in Long Beach in 2016.

Ms. McConville enjoys playing volleyball, attending music festivals, sleeping, and using technology. She attended Mount Gleason Middle School, Verdugo Hills High School, and Cal State Long Beach so she's really a local! She had to learn how to improve to be a great student at Cal State Long Beach.

Ms. McConville always wanted to be a great teacher. She choose to work in education because she loves working with kids, enjoys being a positive influence, and everyone laughs at her jokes. Her favorite memory from Toluca Lake Elementary is being able to meet all the students, and getting to know all the teachers.

Ms. McConville wouldn't have made it to where she is now without powerful influences, like her mother. Her mother had a vital role in helping Ms. McConville by teaching her valuable lessons like how to tell wrong from right and to stick up for herself.

While learning to become a teacher, Ms. McConville had to overcome obstacles like taking all of the classes to learn to become a teacher. She was always a good student, but had to learn how to improve to become a teacher. Once she made it as a teacher, she has faced other obstacles. For example, she has to stay cool, calm, and collected, even after repeating herself millions of times to some students.

Ms. McConville wishes that our school had more direct services for students. We only have a nurse once a week, and we are losing teacher assistants. Ms. McConville is most proud of being a teacher because she loves to teach, deal with problems, and decorate her room. Her journey has had many ups and downs, but she's happy all the way through. She wants everyone to be kind, and know that journalism students are awesome!



WRITING CONTEST WINNERS: SUSPENSE STORIES

Zombies

By Aslyn Schindler (Room 2 - 2nd Grade)

The first day of school, Ella was walking down the street to her new school. She saw a gate with zombies. She was even more scared. Do you know how it got there? Well, I do. Let me tell you. There was a zombie apocalypse. At P.E. the zombies escaped and started to walk towards the school. There was a troll and the zombies were servants. They were attacking the children. Ella was the only kid left.

Ella was very, very scared. She freaked out, yet she knew deep down she felt strong inside. She thought she was brave enough, so she tried and tried and she did it! She was very happy! She got her friends back. It is over...or is it? She forgot the troll. She and her friends tried to defeat it. The teachers, too. And they did, but it is not over because there is one king zombie!

Then Ella saw the king zombie outside. She was terrified. Ella, "OMG." She felt very strong inside, so did her friends. Everybody closed their eyes and started humming, the zombie hated music. Incredibly, they defeated him! It is all over now. They can have a normal life.

The Vampires And Lucy

By Elliott Pepper (Room 26 - 2nd Grade)

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Lucy. She was afraid of vampires. She watched a horror movie about them, because it was the only thing on TV. Then, all of a sudden she heard a knock at the door. Just like in the movie.

Lucy went to open the door, even though her parents would never allow her to. First, she peeked through the mail slot, but she didn't see anything. She opened the door. It was a vampire with some of his friends. She knew they were his friends because they were all together, and they looked alike. They were all medium height, with red eyes, matching coats, and black shoes.

Lucy shouted, "MOMMY! DADDY!" but they didn't answer...

Lucy tried to run out the door but the vampire caught her! She screamed! Lucy tried all of her best taek-wondo moves, but she couldn't fight them off. They took her to a cave. They locked her in a big metal cage hanging from the ceiling so she wouldn't escape. The vampires flew up to her.

Then she woke up from a scary dream. Her mommy said, "Lucy wake-up!!! It's time to go to school!!". After that experience Lucy was not afraid of vampires anymore.

The Haunted Day

By Bruno Ginn (Room 12 - 3rd Grade)

On Halloween Day, I was playing a soccer game. In the end, my team won the game. When we were leaving, we noticed that in the same park there was a carnival. So, my friend and I asked for our dads' permission to go to the carnival; they said, "Yes." My friend and I entered the mirror maze, there was a guy who was dressed up in a black suit with a white mask, he screamed at us. I ran out of the mirror maze, with my friend running right behind me.

Then we decided to go to the ferris wheel. This guy was in one of the seats of the ferris wheel, and he was looking at us. I was really scared of him. When we went to the slide and other games, the same person would continue to watch us.

I looked for my dad and told him that someone scary was at the carnival, so I told him if we can leave the carnival and go to my friend's house for a play date. He said, "Yes" and so did my friend's dad. We started walking to my friend's car, we had our soccer bags, so we have to put them on the trunk. I saw the suit and the white mask of the person that was staring at us, and I figured that it was my friend's dad.

When I realized it was him, he finally admitted to us that it was a joke and we started laughing.

Monsters

By Daphne Chacon (Room 8 -1st Grade)

Once upon a time, there was a little girl. Her name was Daphne. One night she was sleeping, and suddenly she heard noises from under her bed like someone was scratching the floor. She tried not to be scared, but deep down she really was. She was sure there was a horrible monster under her bed. She covered her head with her blanket, but the noise never stopped. She wanted to get out of her bed, but she was scared. She was trying to figure out how to get out of her bed without the monster grabbing her leg. She had an idea, she jumped on the furniture like a monkey, until she got to the door. There was another big problem, because there was a long hallway. She was thinking of what to do. Should she run, jump, or scream, "Mooooom!?" One minute later she started laughing, because she just remembered there was a light switch in the hallway. What a silly girl! She turned on the light, walked to her mom's room, and opened the door. Her mom was sleeping like a koala. Her mom woke up and then they went to her room and carefully looked under her bed what a great surprise!!! They found their parrot ,Charlie, walking ha ha ha it was a cute green monster! Their pet Charlie got out its cage during the night. The girl and the mom laughed and laughed.

Teacher Tips

All parents can be helpful in their children's literacy development, regardless of their language, education, or literacy level. Parents who speak little or no English can contribute to their children's education in valuable ways. English language learners may benefit when they develop solid literacy skills in their first language before learning to read in a second one. Through Spanish, they are developing key language and literacy skills that may enable them to become excellent readers in English. Here is a list of specific strategies that may be utilized by parents to assist students at home:

- "Read" wordless picture books, fiction stories, and non-fiction articles together
- Discuss current events
- Storytelling, songs, raps, and chants
- Insure that you child has a quiet, comfortable place to complete home assignments and to read
- Turn off the television and all other electrical devices when doing homework and reading
- Watch and discuss educational children's television programs together
- Make frequent trips to the public library, and start a home library
- Read maps together; plan a family trip
- Engage in meaningful conversations: encourage your child to elaborate and provide descriptions ... when in doubt ask "why" to inspire critical thinking
- Take a "field trip" to the market. Use this opportunity to teach health lessons (i.e.; reading food labels and discussing the importance of eating fruits and vegetables, and avoiding sugar) and math lessons (i.e.; calculating the cost of various items, weighing produce, and working with a budget.

Biomes of the World

By: Rebecca Thompson and Isabella Brant

Did you know the world is full of biomes? Do you know where biomes are located and which plants and animals live in each biome? We didn't and that's why our helpful friend, Ms. Carol Ackerly, came from the L.A. Zoo to help us out!

Each week, Carol brought us slides and biofacts from a different biome. We learned about the polar/tundra, montane forest, desert, grasslands, and rain forest biomes. Carol explained that each biome is a very large ecosystem. Everything in the biome must adapt and correspond to their environment for survival. The biggest factor making the environments different from each other is their particular climate. Throughout the world there are many biomes, and throughout the biomes there is life.

We also learned a few things about Carol during these presentations. She said that she received her information at the L.A. Zoo's docent trainings. They would mainly cover the big section on biomes and use flashcards to help them

remember facts. Carol said that she likes to study biomes because she always liked to travel and learn about new places in the world. She added that she was an animal lover, so it was very interesting for her to see animals in their natural

environment. Carol says that the rainforest is her favorite biome. Though she likes other biomes, the rainforest is her favorite because it is so broad and has many types of plants and animals. Many medicines and foods come from the rain forest, too.

Carol says, "The internet is a great tool. Usually, I go to Redlist and find out if the species is endangered or not" before each presentation Carol also enjoys traveling. Her favorite trip was to Alaska because she saw bears, whales, and a lot of other wildlife there.

Carol taught us all about the different biomes in the world. Most importantly, we learned that everything in a biome must adapt and correspond to their environment and to one another. There has to be equality in the food chain and life itself. Throughout the world are biomes, and throughout the biomes is life!



UCLA Field Trip

By: Jazmin Lix and Journey Smith

The classes of Room 17 and Room 15 went on a field trip to the amazing college, UCLA. They saw a performance by Sweet Honey and the Rock, and a presentation by Dr. Katsushi Arisaka in the Physics Department. Students learned about things like the Higgs Boson, your eyes, your brain, and sign language on this amazing trip!

The first place these classes went was to watch the "Sweet Honey and the Rock" concert in historic Royce Hall. The singers sang in harmony and kept their beat. You could tell they were having a great time because they

were smiling and being true with their emotions. It was also the first time some people heard an acapella group perform; that's a group of people singing without with barely any instruments. You could realize that they all had different voices, but sounded beautiful together. Students learned sign language with "Sweet Honey and the Rock" too. That's because they had an interpreter sign the songs to the audience during the show!



During the physics part of the trip, students learned that Dr. Arisaka and some of his students study both the human brain and the universe! They experiment on small organisms called *C. elegans* to help them understand big ideas about our universe. Dr. Arisaka gave us a special presentation and let us do lots of fun learning activities in

the lab. Students loved using virtual reality games like connecting body parts, or shooting a bow and arrow. It was very kind of Dr. Arisaka and his graduate students to take their time to teach us about their experiments on this fabulous day!

Star Party Rangers!

This year's Star Party was incredible, but not everything was done by itself. This is a huge thank you to everyone who helped make this spectacular event possible! We also want to recognize the outstanding students who did the work necessary to become Star Rangers. This year's rangers includes in the lower grades like **Ayala Cardenas** (Room 2) and **Alison Rivera** (Room 5). In the upper grades, **Ariella McFalls** (Room 9), **Issac Sneed** (Room 9), **Geraldine Salinas** (Room 9), **Kenneth Keil** (Room 9), **Gisselle Leon** (Room 10), **Aiden Ramirez** (Room 12), **Lyric Kirkpatrick** (Room 13), **Aaron Dumelod** (Room 13), **Zenas Benitez** (Room 13), **Violette Flores** (Room 14), **Marilyn Duran** (Room 14), **Dean Risk** (Room 15), **Adrian Padilla** (Room 15), and **Aidan Mora** (Room 17) all worked hard to become Star Party Rangers! Again, thank you for everybody who worked to make the Star Party happen this year! And, a special shout-out to all of our wonderful Star Rangers!

Annenberg Space for Photography

By: Suchel Camacho and Isabelle Vega

Fifth grade students from Toluca Lake Elementary recently visited the Annenberg Space for Photography in Century City! We saw a cool exhibit called "Photo Ark" created by Joel Sartore, an amazing photographer. This exhibit taught about the importance of taking care of the world so we don't kill all of the endangered animals. We learned to respect all animals, large and small, because they all have a purpose. Sartore used black and white backgrounds to make each animal stand out, big or small, so that each animal could be heard. He wants people to care about them whatever size they are and to spread positivity and peace. Each photo of an animal felt very heart-warming. He found the way to take the perfect shot of an animal: you feel as if you have a bond with the animal because they are looking to directly in your face.

Sartore took pictures that had the animals with direct eye contact towards you, as if they are hearing you and you hearing them. An example of this is the Arctic Fox; the way his little head tilted made it seem like he was curious. There was always meaning, you could look at one of his photos and say "Gee whiz, that poor animal seems to have gone through a hard time." Not to mention, with the amount of light he was using made each image so clear that we could see every imperfection and perfection, like the top of its fur standing out, and the color of its eyes. Sartore is such a amazing person for trying to spread a powerful message. All animals should have the same rights to live on this planet with us. We hope this article encouraged you to help animals, too.



Griffith Observatory

By: Jazmin Lix and Journey Smith

Room 17 and 15 want to say thank you to the Griffith Observatory for inviting us on this field trip, paying for our bus, and teaching us about stars and astronomy. We learned so much about stars and astronomy ... it was out of this world!



Students learned about planets and stars in the planetarium. Did you know that our galaxy, the Milky Way, has billions of stars, and that there are billions of galaxies in the universe!

When we look up at the sky, we can see a different constellation each season. Our favorite part was looking at all the constellations in the planetarium. It



looked like an artist took a pencil and drew the constellations! We learned that many constellations tell a story. Students also liked the part of the observatory where you stand on scales to see how much you weigh on each planet, and try to find out if there is life on that planet.



We loved the Griffith Observatory because it taught us so much about astronomy. We've been waiting to go to there for many years! We loved the experience and want to return with our families ... and it's free so we can all go there to learn more science! It's always fun to stop by for a quick visit with the Sun!



Toluca Lake Elementary**An Arts Prototype School*****We're on the Web!****See us at:*<http://toluca.weebly.com/>

Principal:

Mr. Prendez

Assistant Principal:

Ms. Anna Valenzuela

Coordinator:

Ms. Gabriela Gonzalez

Lead Teacher:

Mr. Murphy

Parent Representative:

Ms. Lucy Gonzalez

PTA President:

Ms. Alyssa Rossetti

Newspaper Founder:

Mr. Dennis Hagen-Smith

Newspaper Editors:

Isabelle Singngam

Anita Saakyan

Suchel Camacho

Marilyn Duran

**Riddle Me This!**

- **Jaedy Bueno-** Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?
- **William Twoomey-** How do you cut the sea?
- **Aidan Mora-** Why did the kid cross the playground?
- **Peyton Cynthia-** Why did the cow cross the road?
- **Marilyn Duran-** Why was the sailor trying to learn the alphabet?
- **Coltrane asks:** How is a tree like a big dog?

**Super Sleuth Quiz & Scavenger Hunt**

1. According to [Mr Daniel Departs](#), what was Mr. Daniel's favorite memory?
2. According to [Annenberg Space for Photography](#), what did Joel Satore do to make the animals in his photos stand out?
3. According to [UCLA Field Trip](#), what organisms Dr. Arisaka and his students study on?
4. According to [Awesome Alumni: The Alumini Power Squad](#), what advice did these students give?
5. According to [The Clown Night](#), what game did the boys play?
6. According to [A Not-So-Sweet-Unknown](#), what is the name of the main character?
7. According to [Authors Visit Toluca Lake: Connor White and Annabeth Bondor-Stone](#), what is the name of their next book?
8. According to [Griffith Observatory](#), what did the students realize about the constellations?
9. According to [Biomes of the World](#), why does Ms. Carol like to study about the biomes?

Scavenger Hunt: Where is this location found on our campus?

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS: SUSPENSE STORIES

A Not-So-Sweet-Unknown

By: Reysa Cevallos (Room 17 Grade 5th)

Alaska. I moved here just a few months ago. I loved it here, but then I kind of had a change of heart. There is a lot of flora and fauna. In other words, plants, and animals. But the thing that gave me insomnia was the stories and myths about a mysterious animal. The locals called it "The Nothing." In California, it was called "The Grim Above All." They called it that way because when it destroyed something, it never left a clue to where it went or even if it was there at all. All you could find would be torn trees, buildings, and sometimes, some ashes.

No hoof print, paw print, or any kind of track. It reminded me of the reason my family and friends left California. Our apartment was destroyed. All that was left was soot and dust. Everywhere you went it was a ghost town. People were so afraid. There were no kidnappers, robbers, no one. Oddly, it never killed anyone. It came and left without taking anyone's life or taking them. The only time I saw "it" was the first time that I cried since my 9th birthday. People say it looks like a dark mass, looking but not taking anything.

Anyway, right now I'm 11, and my name is Ava. I have a sister nine year old sister named Luna and a husky named Arctic. I also have two best friends named Blue and Lunar, weird names! My friends and I get bullied for our names by three girls named Freya, Destiny, and Candy. Secretly, I want to be the one that solves the truth behind The Nothing.

On Friday, Freya and her friends cornered me and hit me with my bag and stole my school lunch money. I was sad and bruised, so I ran into the forest with Luna, Lunar, and Blue chasing after me. I thought I was just going to stay with them in the forest for a little while. What I did not know was that I just lead my friends and myself into my goal I dreamed of but never thought I would do. The goal of learning what The Nothing was.

I didn't remember that Arctic, my husky, was outside of the school doors. All I saw was my joyful dog bounding to me with her collar jingling. She must have run in circles around me about five times because then she laid down. I must have been lost in my mind because Blue tapped me on the shoulder real hard. I was thinking about what my mom would say. "What do you want, Blue," I said.

In a whisper she responded, "Look at Arctic." I turned and saw Arctic in defense pose, growling at bushes behind us, teeth bared, and her ears back and flat.

What came next was even more surprising. A pure white wolf came walking out of the bushes. She was wearing what appeared to be a medal. It said "*My name is Byx. I am an angel wolf.*" At once Arctic stopped growling and bowed down in a playful pose. Blue told all of us "*An angel wolf, a wolf that helps people on their journeys, I wonder if there are other kinds of wolves with special powers?*" Byx turned around and started running into the forest. A moment later she returned as if saying, "Let go!"

It was so unfair. Byx and Arctic took off at full speed with us way behind. I was most curious and the fastest out of all of us. When we arrived at a small den, we stood for a while catching our breath. After we caught our breath, Lunar asked me, "Why do you have to run so fast?"

"Why do Arctic and Byx have to run so fast," said Luna. Me and Blue were starting to panic.

The sky was pitch black and the floor was trembling. That is when I saw him for the second time. He was blending in with the sky, I could barely see him. All I could see was a corner of a big mass of black. That was when Luna started to cry. He had found us. The Nothing.

When he touched the ground, the dark mass vanished. In its place was a great black wolf with red eyes. He also had a medal, and it said, "*My name is Shadow, I am a devil wolf.*" Shadow bared his teeth. I knew that we were going to die.

That is when three blurs jumped out of the den in front of us. It was Arctic, Byx, and a new wolf. His medal said his name was Midnight and he was an angel wolf. He looked just like Shadow but with blue eyes. Shadow launched himself at Midnight. Midnight looked like he was winning. Once he pinned Shadow down Shadow disappeared never to be seen again. All he left was a black rose.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS: SUSPENSE STORIES

The Clown Night

By: Anita Saakyan (Room 17 Grade 5th)

A girl named Kate was 14 years old. Her house was filled with rooms, and old artifacts that she was forced to memorize everything about them. She was babysitting her brothers while her parents were next door for coffee and had told her, "After putting your brothers to bed. Go to the basement and watch tv, because you might make noise if you are in your room. Also, do not stay up texting your friends after 12:00 because you have school tomorrow." Kate had just returned to the living room when she heard a loud creak. She unheeded the sound, and as fast as lighting raced to the basement, so she did not miss her favorite show. She could not help but notice the clown in the corner of the room. She had told herself that once her show came to a halt, she would grab a drape and cover the clown with it. Finally, after the clown incident, she jumped back onto the couch for her next show. She had heard a shuffle of feet, but knew the boys were sound asleep. She could not bear to see the clown's over-sized feet sticking out of the blanket. She had known that they do not own a clown, but maybe this clown was a very old artifact that she did not get to study and learn about yet. Kate finally got super freaked out, that she called her dad, to tell him if she could watch tv in a different room because of a clown that was standing in the corner of their basement. She should have paid attention to the clown while she was on the phone. "Listen very carefully, because we do not have a clown, we never did, and we never will. Remember how your brothers kept saying things that a clown comes into their room, in the middle of the night, and we just thought it was nightmares. You need to get the kids and get out of the house NOW! I'll call the police," the father yelled at the teen. Kate turned off her phone, turns around and finds no life-size clown, but instead a drape on the floor. She hears feet coming down the basement stairs.

Boys' Point of View

Kate had just left the room when Alex said, "Can we play hide and seek?" Austin was his younger brother, who always had to listen to his older brother.

"I guess I have to. Since you are the older twin!" Austin replied.

"Stop yelling, and I am only older by sixteen seconds!" Alex said

"Hey, what happened to that game of hide and seek?" Austin replied.

"Let's play!" they both yelled.

They began playing their game of hide and seek. The boys had just finished their tenth round when it was Austin's turn to find Alex. Alex turned his head to the wall and began to count. He could hear his little brother's feet as he scampered about looking for a place to hide. Ready or not I'm coming," cried the Alex and off he went looking for his brother. He looked in all the usual places, behind the sofa, in the bathroom behind the shower curtain, behind the curtains in every room, and under all the beds, but he couldn't find him. The apartment was eerily silent. Then, he heard a scraping sound coming from the wardrobe. Alex was sure he'd already looked there, but he went anyway and called out, "Come out I've found you!" but there was only silence. He had yelled that, because every time they played a game of hide and seek, Alex would yell "Come out I've found you!" and Austin would come out, from his hiding spot. Again he called for his brother to come out and again nothing. Opening the door, the boy tried to peer behind the wall of dresses and coats hanging there. He bent down, but he did not see any feet standing there. He began to rise up and put his hand out into the mass of clothing to feel for his little brother, and came out of the closet when a small, icy cold hand came out, grabbed his wrist, and tried to pull him into the closet. As Alex was trying to pull himself free, he hears a noise behind him, looks over his shoulder, and sees his brother behind him. "Couldn't you find me?" asks the boy. The older brother screams in fright and desperately tries to free himself from the grip of the hand, because both of his brother's hands were on him. Then Austin noticed what was happening to his older brother, and grabs Alex and together they manage to pull free. They both run screaming from the apartment where they find flashing lights everywhere, and people waiting outside.