

TOLUCA LAKE TIMES

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Words of Wisdom

Violence & hatred are like tubes of toothpaste; they can't get put back, because all they do is build up.

- Ian Cardenas

Principal's Message

We have done amazing work since the beginning of school.. I am proud of all of our staff, students and parents for your commitment to Toluca Lake Elementary. My number one priority continues to be ensuring the safety and security of your children and of our staff. Please know that our school has a safe school plan which is available for viewing in the main office. Our morning Valet Parking on Cahuenga continues to be an area that needs more volunteers, please volunteer your time in the morning to ensure the safety of our Tigers. Attendance is very important. Please make sure that your child attends school every day, on-time, and ready to learn. Our school wide goal is 96% attendance which is for students to miss less than 7 days during the whole school year. It is also very important that students come to school on-time; I want every student to "be great not late." Please note that 3 tardies = 1 truancy. I am thrilled at the many opportunities our school has to offer, especially with the addition of our after school enrichment programs. This year we were able to offer 14 after school enrichment classes which have had an overwhelmingly positive response from our students, parents, and staff.

Let's continue the momentum...

**Mr. Prendez
Principal**

MR. PRENDEZ OUR NEW PRINCIPAL

By: Paulina Guzman, Fernando Herrera, and Mikka Flores

Our new principal is Mr. Joseph A. Prendez! Born in Chula Vista, California, Mr. Prendez grew up in National City, California. He likes to eat, play racquetball, and go to the movies. His hero is his twelfth grade teacher, Ms. Scott. He admires her because she helped guide him to his future dream of attending college & pursuing his dreams.



Mr. Prendez started working in education because he wanted to be a role model and guide students to new opportunities. He likes to see students grow to become mature adults. His old school was Weigand Elementary School. His favorite memory there was getting slimed.

The most challenging thing about working in education is when students don't take advantage of their opportunities. As any principal, Mr. Prendez wants to change our school so it can be better. Mr. Prendez wants to see more enrichment activities, and wants to prepare students for future jobs that don't exist yet. Mr. Prendez's proudest accomplishments are when his students come back to thank him as adults.

Some advice Mr. Prendez wants to tell all of his students, including his new ones, are to focus, study hard, and ask a lot of questions. Mr. Prendez wants us to take pride in our work and have personal responsibility in developing excellence. Mr. Prendez likes the people, teachers, staff, students, and parents because they are wonderful. We hope he's going to make great advantages at our school!



Going to America

by - James (Jimmy) Harris
(Third Grade)

Hello! My name is James Harris. My family is sailing to America. I'm excited. Let me tell you about it.

"I'm so sad," my sister says. "We have to leave our home."

I see her tears. "Hey, don't worry. America will be the land of our dreams," I say, wiping away her sadness. Soon, it's time to leave. We say goodbye to our relatives, and go on the boat.

On the boat, we have a difficult time. The waves are like sea fists, but Pa loves the sea smell. I notice that Lucy isn't with us. "Ma, Pa, I'm going to search for Lucy."

They said, "Okay." I find Lucy in our room. "Lucy, why are you hiding?"

I'm scared because we may sink." Then, I tell her a story. Before we know it, the speaker comes on and says, "If you look to your left, you'll see Lady Liberty." We stumble up the stairs to the deck. We see Lady Liberty. We are so happy to get off the boat. But, soon we have to take a check up.

The tests are simple. We soon go on a ferry and sail to New York City. Looking back, I liked the trip. Besides the waves and the rocking of the boat, I had fun.



Holiday Performance

By: Rebecca Thompson, Suchel Camacho, Eduardo Diego and Reysa Cevallos

Wow! Another amazing holiday performance by the students at Toluca Lake Elementary School! Did you see the wonderful surprise performance by Toluca Lake's teachers and assistants? They were amazing dancers! When they started dancing, it was amazing because they were all dressed up as characters: Santa Claus (Mr. Wyatt), an elf (Mr. Prendez), a snowman (Ms. C, a teachers assistant) and a Christmas tree (our host, Ms. Wassler!).

The second performance was by Ms. Lauer's fourth grade quintet! They were singing "Christmas the Whole Year Round" by Sabrina Carpenter. This quintet includes fourth graders Jazmin Lix, Isabelle Singngam, Suchel Camacho, Isabella Brant and Anita Saakyan-Nowschadian. The third performance was by the third graders singing, "All I Want For Christmas is you". Our fourth performance was by our fourth grade as they danced to the song "Jingle Bell Rock" with Christmas choreography. Our last performance was by the fifth grade as they sang "Silver Bells of Peace" with one of our students, Erik Gutierrez, playing the piano.

All of the performances were amazing, outstanding, and looked like the students put a lot of good effort into this amazing performance!

We will all remember this extravagant day!



AWESOME ALUMNI:**Special Friends Kathy Lara and Anderson Muñoz****By: Jazmin Lix, Isabelle Singngam, Gaby Rodriguez, and Mikka Flores**

Did you know Kathy Lara was a old student in Mr. Hagen-Smith's class sixteen years ago?! After attending Toluca Lake Elementary, she went to Walter Reed Middle School, North Hollywood High School, and U.C.L.A. The professional accomplishment that makes her proudest is being accepted to U.C.L.A. because it shows that all of her hard work paid off. Her favorite topic was history because she liked learning about the missions. She says, "College was hard for me, but I learned from my mistakes, and other scholars should too." She gave us advice, "Find people who will support your dreams and who will never give negative advice." One of her role models was her sister, Jennifer. One of the reasons why she admires her sister is because she is kind and earned good grades in school. Now, Kathy works as a labor organizer, and at a pediatrician's office.

Anderson Muñoz was a classmate of Kathy Lara. Like Kathy Lara, he was in Mr. Hagen-Smith's fifth grade class at Toluca Lake Elementary from the years 2001-2002. His favorite memory was going on field trips like to the Getty Museum, House of Blues, and The Museum of Tolerance. He also remembers acting in the play, "The Wizard of Paz" - a combo of "The Wizard of Oz" and "The Man of LaMancha". His favorite subject was math because it was the only subject that had one answer for each problem. Since he had dyslexia, a learning disability, he had trouble in school. He advises current students, "to never give up on your dreams, take advantage of all school opportunities, and always listen to your elders." Anderson is currently finished studying to become a nurse or an entrepreneur at Brightwood College in California.

**Family Reading Night****By: Nathatson Phothong aka *Posh***

We recently had Family reading night in Room 17. We brought our parents with us to learn more about how we can improve in reading. Some of the strategies we used were to clarify in the text, connect the information together, ask questions predict what will happen next in the story, and talk to your parents about what you read. We also

learned to make a hat about books we have read. We drew pictures and wrote about favorite books on our hats. We also learned about the ten strategies you can use at home to make you excited about reading. The first step is to play games or make a game for a friend to do. The second step is to listen to your parent read to you and you can have more questions. The third step is to read aloud to your parents, so they know you are reading the book and tell them what the book is about. The fourth strategy is model reading as an enjoyable activity (which means it will make you enjoy reading). The fifth step is to talk about literature as a family because you can discuss what you have read so far. The sixth way to improve your reading is to read with your parents every night. The seventh strategy is to discuss the importance of reading with your parents. Kids need to know more about reading so we can succeed as students. The eighth way is to turn off televisions and electronics so don't get distracted from reading. The ninth step is to put learning to use by acting out what we've read. The tenth and final strategy is to listen to books on tape (available on most new computers, iPad apps, and the library). Thank you for taking this adventure with me. I am amazed by the wondrous places I can go in a book!

Enrichment Classes

By: Erik Gutierrez, Giancarlo Morales, and Dylan Wyke

We have lots of new enrichment classes after school here at Toluca Lake Elementary school. We spoke to our principal, Mr. Prendez, about the new programs. We asked him some questions, and he had responses for all of them.

"What made you think of these classes?" we wondered. Mr. Prendez responded, "To have something fun for after school." Another question we asked was, "What do you think of the after school classes?" His response was, "It's very positive for Toluca Lake." He added that Lego Robotics has been the most popular class so far. That's why our school purchased some new Lego kits for students to use at school.

Some of the other popular classes are Tap Dance, Improvisation and Public Speaking, Coding and Advanced Coding, Project Citizen Science, Spanish & French Cultures, and Journalism (that's the club that writes & publishes this newspaper!).

Mr. Prendez emphasizes that, "All these classes are preparing students for the 21 century, so they could get jobs that don't exist currently- We're thankful to Mr. Prendez and all of the teachers for providing these great classes.



Family Writing Night

By: Nathatson Phothong aka "Posh"



Hi!! My name is Nathatson Phothong. We all had so much fun at this year's Family Writing Night. Connor White and Annabeth Bonder-Stone, the authors of the Shivers the Pirate books came and led the awesome activities. We all made our own pirate character and shared the characteristic of pirates. My pirate was called "Captain Sword Hands". His name is Captain Sword Hands, because he has swords instead of hands. Then, we started drawing our pirate and made our character look weird or silly. When we were all done drawing, we created a setting for where our character lives. My character lives in a library next to a huge volcano because my character has glasses that LOVE reading, but he was ONE BIG problem. He can't hold a book because of his sword hands. He could

only hold a book lightly to read. When we were all done with where our character lives, we had to make a VILLAIN!!!!!! We named our villain and created a problem for the main character. My villain was called "Evil TV." He was taking all of the BOOKS so no one could have an education. Finally, we drew our villain and made a characteristic for the villain. My characteristic is that he always wants to distract people by turning on a cartoon channel for everyone so no one would remember BOOKS!!!!!! Captain Sword Hands will destroy the villain by using his hands to slice the TV like body, and we will all have our freedom to get an education. Thank you for adventuring with me on this incredible journey through Family Writing Night!

Reach for the Stars at Our Star Party

By: Fabiya Ahsan, Mayra Macuitl, Eduardo Santos, and Patrick Lima

Have you ever wondered what those little shiny speckles are in the sky? Those little shiny speckles are stars! Stars come in many different shapes and sizes. Did you know that our sun is a star? Also, did you know that 1,000,000 earths could fit inside the sun? I know, that's crazy! You can probably tell by this that the sun is very big. Now, I want you to think about how big the sun is. Whatever you're thinking, it is 1,000 times bigger than that!

The sun creates energy by combining two elements, hydrogen and helium, for nuclear fusion. What is nuclear fusion, you ask? Well, nuclear fusion is basically the power that fuels the sun and the stars. Hydrogen bombs actually get their power from nuclear fission which is splitting atoms. Many scientists believe that the sun's atomic energy is the basis for the energy that created life on Earth.

Now that you know about stars, let us tell you about a special program our school: this year's annual Star Party. It was very entertaining and educational. We learned lots of new ideas from the teacher volunteers (Mr. Hagen-Smith, Mr. Lee, Mr. Wyatt, Mr. Garcia, Ms. Keppel, and Mr. Mudaliar), and from Dr. Brandon Rodriguez from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The teachers' workshops taught us things like space art, making models of space probes, star charts, and marshmallow galaxies. Dr. Rodriguez gave a very interesting presentation about how he overcame hardships to become a scientist. He had to work very hard and never give up on his dream. He is very inspirational to us. He also taught us about space exploration, careers in science, and showed us that you don't have to wear a lab coat to be a scientist. Later in the night, he taught us to make and test stomp rockets.

The Burbank Sidewalk Explorers provided telescopes for the Star Party. We got to see the moon, Saturn, Jupiter, and far-off galaxies. It was out of this world! It was very nice of them to let us use their telescopes. And, the PTA was very nice, too. They are the ones who brought yummy treats and glow sticks for everybody. It was awesome!

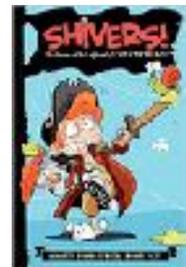
We are very thankful to all of the people who made the Star Party so great!



Shivers the Pirate Assembly

Fernando Herrera, Jazmin Lix, Steven Andrade, and Isabelle Singgam, & Gaby Rodriguez

It's Connor White or Annabeth Bondor-Stone! Remember the two people who came to our school to put on a play about reading!?! They kept us entertained with their funny show. They write a series of books series called Shivers the Pirate Who's Afraid of Everything. These books are about a boy who is a scared pirate. The ideas did not come from Connor or Annabeth. They came from kids like us! They said the best part about writing stories is going to schools and performing their stories to kids. It encourages kids to read and write more. They said they liked their jobs because they like to tell jokes. They have written books together for seven years now! They got their amazing education from Northwestern University in Illinois. Then, they worked for Story Pirates bringing comedy and writing to schools like ours. Now, they are writing another book called Time Tracers. We can't wait to read it! We all know it's going to be amazing ... just like their assembly!





A Star From Toluca Wrinkles Time!

By: Annette Jones, Yaretzi Castillo, and Mikka Flores

Did you know that one of our former Toluca Lake students is going to be featured in a new Disney movie with Oprah Winfrey?!? Her name is Storm Reid, and she's going to be the main actor in the movie A Wrinkle in Time. Storm was in Mr. Hagen-Smith's 5th grade class three years ago. Mr. Hagen-Smith says, "I'll always remember her having a good time assembling hand-made telescopes with her friends at the Star Party."

Storm has been acting for years. She was in the award-winning film, 12 Years a Slave. Ms. Garcia, the fine teacher's assistant, remembers, "Storm was very dedicated. She would never give up on accomplishing her dream as an actor." A Wrinkle in Time is about a group of kids trying to find their father. Some of the kids in the group are friends, and others are the children of the father. The group of kids, including Storm, are going through time to find their father, but they encounter many challenges along the way. It'll be fun to see Storm act her way through these obstacles!



New Hot Supper Program

Briana Garcia Solis, Samantha Castillo, Neriah Ibarra and Gaby Rodriguez

Hot meals!! Did you know that there are hot suppers for all kids now? We are doing this to provide hot meals instead of cold meals. Also, they want to make sure students get 3 healthy meals each day. The food is healthier than before. The state of California is providing hot supper for the district. The district is paying for our hot supper meals. We have very healthy meals than what we usually have that have healthy ingredients in the food like hamburger, hot dog, burrito, taco stick, and French fries. The district and the food services apartment had decided the hot supper meals for us kids.

The hot supper program is really only popular inside school and not out side. The lunch lady's took a lot of effort to make a bunch of meal a day. The hot supper Program is doing well since kids in after school program and who are at the gate have come to eat a hot meal. Most elementary schools are doing the hot supper meals for us children. Quick question would you prefer a hot meal or cold well if you said hot your right because that's how the hot supper program got its name. Another fact is that children do not choose their foods instead its based on calories and numbers. We hope you like the article now we got to go exercise because we ate so much.

FILM REVIEW:

The Greatest Showman

by - Mikkayla Flores

The "Greatest Showman" is a beautiful movie. There were many songs and dances, a little bit like "La La Land". Speaking of "La La Land," the actual choreographers from "La La Land" choreographed the dances in "The Greatest Showman." Many songs of the movie were inspirational, especially "This is Me" and "From Now On." "This is Me" is a fun song to learn as a dance. It's been posted it on YouTube! I really appreciate the work they put into this movie. From the costumes, to the songs, and the dances, this is a terrific film! I think the hardest part of this movie was learning to dance

together so well. One time the whole cast was in a bar, and they had to all dance together. They had to do the dancing at the same time, some even danced while they were drinking. The film has elephants with costumes and lions jumping through hula hoops on fire, people throwing knives, and the trapeze flying through the air. There was many terrific performances by cast members in this movie. Hugh Jackman plays P.T. Barnum, The Greatest Showman. Another important cast member is Zac Efron as Phillip. The next cast member used to be on the Disney Channel Star. Her name is Zendaya, and she plays Ann Wheeler. The last very important cast member is Keala Settle. She plays a very powerful role. Her character is Lettie Lutz. She was judged by her looks rather than her personality. I really hope your parents will let you go to this terrific film.. Have a good time if you do get to go see this great show!



Toluca Lake Teachers Write Big Grants

By - Yaretzi Castillo & Isabelle Vega

Wow! Did you know that Mr. Lee and Mr. Hagen-smith have earned lots of grants for our school this year? Let's check them out!

Have you ever heard about a grant of \$1,000 for books? That grant is a grant from the Riordan Recreational Reading grant. It provides money for teachers to buy books for their class library. Last year, Mr. Lee got this reading grant, and shared the grant with Mr. Hagen-Smith. This year Mr. Hagen-Smith got the reading grant and shared it with Mr. Lee. The some of the books Mr. Lee got last year are: How Stuff Works Now, PAX, The Poet's Dog, The Best Man, and The Unlucky Lottery Winners of Room 13. This year, Mr. Hagen-Smith ordered: A Wrinkle In Time, Flush, Harry Potter Box Set, Benjamin Franklinstein Meets The Fright Brothers, The Way We Work, Science Year By Year, A Really Short History of Nearly Anything, 20th Century Cartoons, and Bone.

Look, more grants to see! The next grant paid \$1,700 for a field trip grant to Riley's Farm in Oak Glen. This money came from Azusa Pacific University as a "Keeping History Alive" grant. Both fifth grade classes received this field trip so they'll get to go on this amazing, extended day field trip to learn about colonial times by doing fun activities and seeing performers in colonial costumes.

More and more and more grants, awesome right? What? A Target grant? Yes, you heard it, a Target grant. Target has given us seven hundred dollars for a field trip! (How kind) Mr. Hagen-Smith got this grant this year. The field trip will be to the California Science Center! The fifth grade classes will see the Endeavor Space Shuttle and the Ecosystems exhibit. It will teach students a ton of science!

Aww, the last grant! I know, I know you have been having fun with grants, and us but cheer up this grant is really cool. This grant is Jane Goodall Roots & Shoots grant. "Roots & Shoots" is a non-profit group started by the famous naturalist, Dr. Jane Goodall. The grant gives money to groups to help the environment for a better future for Earth. This grant will provide \$200 to the after school class, *Project Citizen Science*. Project Citizen Science will use this money for one of these three reasons: for supplies for an experiment making solar energy with blueberry juice. Also, they will make little buttons and stickers encouraging people to save energy. Finally, three students from Mr. Hagen-Smith's class got to go to the Hollywood Bowl to see a film about Dr. Jane Goodall featuring the famous composer, Philip Glass. The film was really terrific.

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.

- March 24: Los Angeles will be hosting **March For Our Lives** at 532 S. Olive St. at Pershing Square. This special event join is promoting a family atmosphere for individuals to voice concerns about student safety in light of the recent tragedy in Florida.
- April 21-22: **The Los Angeles Times Festival of Books** takes place on the USC campus. This free event includes a large children's area with many activities.
- The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society's Young Birders Group is hosting a **free family bird walk** at Franklin Canyon (Coldwater Canyon & Mulholland Drive) on Saturday, April 28 at 9:00 am. These fun walks foster that learning, helping to create the next generation of environmentalists. Call (818) 990-5405 for more information.

SUSPENSE STORY WRITING CONTEST WINNER:

"THE UNKNOWN STALKER"

BY: VALERIA BARRANCO

Once there was a 6th grade girl named Aly. Aly was a very nice and honest girl. She was like any other girl. She had very nice friends but only a few of them. Aly got good grades too! Her life was pretty normal, like any other life, but her life wasn't *too* normal.

Aly would always see this man everywhere she would go. She would see him everywhere, including home. The man looked like a man who would work in a busy office. He had a black suit on, black gloves on, black shoes on, and a black top hat. Aly would tell everyone about this including her parent. The man would not harm her or do anything to her. He would just watch her. Whenever Aly would blink, the man would get closer and closer and closer to her.

One day at school Ally was playing tetherball with her friend Clarissa. Right next to the tetherball court there were lunch tables. While she was playing, Aly saw the man sitting at the lunch tables. The man distracted Aly while she was playing tetherball because Aly felt uncomfortable when someone would watch her. While Aly was looking at the man, the tetherball ended up hitting Aly so hard that she fainted. Her classmates surrounded her trying to wake her up. She ended up waking up 5 minutes later. "What happened Aly?" asked her classmates. "I was playing tetherball with Clarissa, then I saw my stalker and I got so distracted that the ball ended up hitting me. I feel very dizzy thought." Aly responded with an exhausted voice.

Aly ended up going home with no homework at all! Lucky her! When Aly got home she went upstairs to her room. She was trying not to fall asleep since she was dizzy. When she got to her room she turned on the lights and laid in bed. As she was falling asleep she saw the man again! Aly kept on blinking so the man got closer and closer to her. The man got so close to her that she started to scream with the highest pitch she had ever made. Her parents went running to her room. Her parents were panicking and asked her what's wrong. "I-I saw the m-man again..." Ally murmured.

Her parents stayed in her room trying to make her feel better. She soon fell asleep. Aly decided to write a letter to her future family. Like her future aunts, uncles, parents, and children of her family. The letter was trying to warn them about the man. The letter said this:

Dear Future Family,

There is this unknown man who can stalk any of you. The man has a black suit, black shoes, black gloves, and a black top hat. Don't be afraid of him. He won't harm you because he didn't harm me at all. If you can please figure out who he is.

*Your Dearest Ancestor,
Ally*

Aly put the letter in a little box and hid it in the attic of her house where not a lot of people entered. May or may not this man stop stalking her. No one would ever know. For now, he would be called the "unknown stalker".



Toluca Lake Elementary
An Arts Prototype School

Principal:
Mr. Joseph Prendez
Assistant Principal:
Ms. Dori O'Shea
Coordinator:
Mr. Jeff Daniel
Lead Teacher:
Mr. Dan Murphy
Parent Representative:
Ms. Lucy Gonzalez
PTA President:
Ms. Alyssa Rossetti
Newsletter Editor:
Mr. Dennis Hagen-Smith



We're on the Web!

See us at:
<http://toluca.weebly.com/>



Riddle Me This!

Coach Jane asks:

What has an eye but doesn't cry?

Patrick Lima asks:

What's an astronomer's favorite chocolate bar?

Eden Lester asks:

What is something you gain, but also lose?

Ryan Zabielski asks:

Imagine you are on the street and a car is coming towards you.... What do you do?

Coltrane asks:

Why aren't dogs good dancers?

Super Sleuth Quiz & Scavenger Hunt

1. What is the name of the third grade student who wrote this month's amazing story, "Coming to America"?
2. What song did fourth grade students perform at this year's holiday show?
3. What was the name of the play that this month's Awesome Alumni, Kathy Lara & Anderson Muñoz performed in when they were in fifth grade?
4. Why is Ms. Scott Mr. Prendez's hero?
5. Who wrote Shivers the Pirate who is Afraid of Everything?
6. What is the most popular enrichment class this year?
7. The *Keeping History Alive grant* is paying for fifth grade students to go on a special field trip this spring. What is the location of that field trip?
8. Where did Ally hide from the "Unknown Stalker"?
9. What was one activity that you could do at this year's Star Party?
10. What is the name of the former Toluca Lake Elementary student who is starring in the Disney film, "Wrinkle in Time"?

* SCAVENGER HUNT

Where can you find this object?

Find all of the answers at
<Toluca.weebly.com>

