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School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation



Covering the Monrovia Unified School District

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JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2019

Looking Back – and Forward

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With the arrival of the new year, I would like to take a moment to appreciate how far we've come, where we are and where we are going. I am incredibly proud as I reflect upon our past progress, current victories and goals for the future.



In the present, we can appreciate and celebrate the progress our students have made this school year individually and collectively. In November, our elementary school students showcased their coding skills as they displayed projects and

conducted presentations as part of the Code to the Future program. Hard work, perseverance and teamwork also led the Monrovia Wildcats Marching Band and Color Guard to a first-ever first-place win at the Southern California School Bands and Orchestra Association Championships.

This school year, Monrovia High School celebrates its 125th anniversary, and celebration events have drawn alumni from throughout the community who maintain a lasting bond with our Monrovia schools. When the Monrovia High School library was renamed in honor of former English teacher Frank Jansson in October, Wildcat alumni from as far away as New York and Texas came to attend the ceremony. It was truly touching to witness the connection our graduates still have with one another and with their alma mater. The strong sense of community we build in Monrovia Unified enriches lives of students well beyond their school years.

In looking ahead, exciting opportunities abound on the horizon for Monrovia Unified. Because of the overwhelming success of our Dual Immersion program at Monroe Elementary, the district is expanding the program to Wild Rose School of Creative Arts in August 2019 for transitional kindergarten and kindergarten. The growth of this program to a second school is an exciting addition for our district, and I encourage parents to visit our website to learn more about the program.

Dr. Katherine Thorossian

I look forward to continuing our journey together as we head into the remainder of the school year.



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Happy New Year!

It is always exciting to begin a new year. Perhaps you have made some resolutions to eat healthy, exercise more, spend more time with family, study more, focus on the positive, or simply to say thank you and please. Whatever your resolutions or goals somehow a new year brings optimism. Reading *School News* is a great beginning to the new year.

Thank you for your nice comments when you email your contest entries.

Our next issue is March 6.

School News

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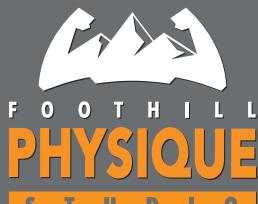


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Bradoaks Elementary

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Bringing Life to the Canvas

Recently, a group of fifth graders was asked to paint a beautiful picture of our school for the District Board Room and write a brief summary of our wonderful Bradoaks' history. Under the direction of our Artist in Residence, Shanon Fitzpatrick, our campus came alive on canvas. Our students worked in groups of three to create a wonderful depiction of Bradoaks and were able to accomplish their task in a day.

While the group of artists was bringing life to the canvas, two of our fifth-grade writers researched the history of Bradoaks and added some interesting and noteworthy facts to the summary. To learn more about our awesome school and view this awesome piece of art, I encourage you to check out our artwork and write-up in the boardroom.



Teachers See the Possibilities

At Oaks Christian School, Mary Kay Altizer applies her passion for the arts and educational technology as she leads the school's performing arts department, including a cutting-edge digital recording and production program.



Oaks Christian School, Advanced Digital Recording Class, Performing Arts Chair, Mary Kay Altizer, M.A. '15

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Canyon Early Learning Center

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Fall Festival

Canyon Early Learning Center celebrated the month of October and November with a Fall Festival. Our parent volunteers set up an amazing fall experience for students, staff and families complete pumpkins, hay bales, Fall Festival picture stand and Halloween decorations to celebrate the season. Canyon Early Center was also visited by Monrovia Administration who showed up in costume to hand out stickers and well wishes to the AM classes.

Instructionally, Canyon Early Learning Center spent October and November learning about Fall colors, shapes, and spent time utilizing balls and Fall objects for math skills. Students enjoyed the thematic nature of the Fall Season and their instruction both in and out of the classroom.



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The Spirit of Alternative Education

On November 16th, the staff at Canyon Oaks High School and Mountain Park School hosted their annual Thanksgiving Feast.

The Feast has become an annual tradition at our alternative programs, which began over a decade ago when Mr. Fil Lujan was a teacher at COHS. Ever since 2008, our teachers and administrators have kept the habit of preparing and enjoying a massive, warm, and tasty meal together before heading off for a week of vacation.



The annual Thanksgiving Feast is just one of the many manifestations of our culture of love, care, connections, and concern that define what our alternative programs are all about. But there is no magic bullet. There is no “quick fix.” There is not a “one size fits all” solution that guarantees student success. The counseling team at COHS/MP want to make sure that each of our students has their schedule tailor-made to fit their specific social, emotional, and academic needs.



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Clifton Middle School

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Jennifer Jackson
Principal

Día de los Muertos

Last month, the Clifton Middle School library was brimming with white skulls, flickering candles, and the smell of cempasúchil, the flower of the dead. It was part of the first Day of the Dead celebration and showcase. The Dual Immersion and Spanish elective students displayed handmade arts and crafts, such as paper masks, shadowboxes with the images of deceased loved ones, and altars inside shoe boxes, custom-made to honor deceased family members and friends.



In class, students explored the traditional significance of this Hispanic tradition. It is believed that for one day the spirits of the deceased are allowed a return to earth to be among the living. Altars are assembled in homes, and each includes the returning family member's favorite foods and beverages.

When asked about her altar, an eighth-grader explained, “I took a lot of pride making my altar. I imagined that my loved one would be happy to be remembered and to know how much he will always matter.”



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Mayflower Elementary

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Second Language: Code!

Recently, Mayflower School proudly presented their first Epic Build Showcase of the year! Students, teachers and parents celebrated the coding accomplishments of children in kindergarten through fifth grade. All were excited to participate and share in our epic journey of teaching and learning code as a second language!

The Showcase began with a slide presentation for guests, provided by 13 select Mayflower students. These students shared about Mayflower's two-year coding journey that started in 2016. Following the presentation, parents toured classrooms and witnessed students acting as problem solvers, using precise commands, and following specific directions while demonstrating their code projects.

At Mayflower, we are preparing students for the future. Through learning code, students are developing collaboration skills, becoming critical thinkers, and honing their ability to communicate. Students use block-based coding and JavaScript. They also use hands-on programming, robotics and analog.

At Mayflower, we know that computer science is so much more than just computers. Beginning in kindergarten, students engage in projects that allow them to apply the logic of computer science, such as loops, sequence and animation. By second grade, students creatively build a working maze game.

Fourth-graders eagerly learn about projectile motion, and fifth-grade students skillfully combine coding concepts with an integrated story.

Computer science is an important industry, and every industry depends on computer science. Our students are learning skills that will help them to someday change the world. Mayflower Mariners are proud to be Code to the Future scholars!



Monroe Elementary

402 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2300 • monroe.monroviaschools.net



Explosive Science

Recently, the students at Monroe were wowed and impressed by a one-of-a-kind science assembly by a "dancing scientist," Dr. Jeff Vinokur. Our Mighty Lions experienced a series of live science demonstrations that brought relevance to the domains of the Next Generation Science Standards: physical science, life science, earth and space science, and engineering. Challenging crosscutting concepts such as cause-and-effect were made fun and accessible to students.

The interactive show included a host of explosive demonstrations set to upbeat music and contemporary hip-hop dance moves. The show culminated with a riveting student-friendly competition and dance-off. Dressed as famous scientists Marie Curie, Albert Einstein and Benjamin Franklin, students tested the Bernoulli principle on stage. Competitors balanced a floating beach ball through a Hula-Hoop using an electric leaf blower. Children were thrilled during and after the assembly and left with a fresh appreciation for science! Thank you, PTA!



Monrovia High School

845 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2800 • mhs.monroviaschools.net



More Scholars and Champions!

On Saturday, November 17th, our Monrovia High School Marching Wildcats Band and Color Guard competed in the 2018 SCSBOA division 1A Field Championships. For the first time in Monrovia history our Marching Wildcats won first place and were crowned SCSBOA Champions!

This achievement culminates a season where the Marching Wildcats have won first at four of their five regular season tournaments, once each winning Sweepstakes Color Guard

and Sweepstakes Percussion along the way. In addition to the Gold Medal, the Marching Wildcats also won High Percussion for the best drum line performance at Championships.

Marching bands from 70 schools competed this year in SCSBOA division 1A, and 34 were in contention for Championships. Of those 34, the top 12 (based on each band's best three scores) qualified as finalists. Monrovia went into Championships seated second, and ultimately defeated division rivals Charter Oak (second) and Taft Charter (third) to win Championships. Congratulations, Wildcats!



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Plymouth Elementary

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Coding-Project Showcase

In November, Plymouth showcased the amazing computer-science projects that students are creating! The event started with a presentation by a group of our student leaders who explained the importance of a technology-oriented education for college and career success. Guests then enjoyed classroom tours in which students presented their block-based coding projects. These projects ranged from animations created by kindergarten students to interactive games designed by our students in fifth grade.

Some of the most important learning occurred behind the scenes. In order to create successful projects, students engaged in critical thinking, problem-solving and teamwork—key areas of 21st century learning!



Since 2016, Plymouth has partnered with Code to the Future to move our students from being consumers of technology to creators of technology. All students participate in computer-science learning with technology integrated into their daily instruction. In addition to block-based coding, students learn JavaScript, robotics and analog programming.

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Santa Fe Computer Magnet School

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Quality Instruction, Quality Care

As the first semester of the 2018–2019 school year draws to a conclusion, we continue to focus on quality instruction every day. It's no secret: great schools have great lessons delivered by high-quality teachers!

Santa Fe strives to deliver great teaching and learning to every student, every day. We have been working from the ground up, beginning with clearly posted objectives that help drive thoughtful, engaging lessons. We want to give our Cougar Scholars a 21st-century education that will link to the powerful educational pathways which await them at Monrovia High School.

Technology is in wide use throughout the school day at Santa Fe. Our classrooms are now using Google Cast to co-construct meaning and collaborate great thoughts and ideas. Our use of technology is focused on students producing ideas and thoughts and then sharing them with other students who may or may not be in their classrooms. By using technology to expand the sharing of knowledge and ideas, we hope to develop a true constructivist approach to learning as a social endeavor.

Speaking of social, Santa Fe has been doing an excellent job of implementing the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program. Each week our Santa Fe students receive lessons and time to discuss important social-emotional topics about how we should treat each other, understand differences, and share our emotions. Lead by a caring team of educators, our Cougar Scholars are better equipped to confront and effectively deal with the many social challenges they will be facing. The Santa Fe Computer Science Magnet School is a place of quality instruction and quality care.

Contest!

This student is in a picture in this publication.
When you find him, email the **page number** to:

Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com
Please put Monrovia in the subject line



Your entry must be received by February 15, 2019. From the correct entries, we will draw a winner to receive a GAZUMP card/dice game.

Congratulations to Alexander Garcia Sanchez
Winner of our November Word Search Contest!

Wild Rose *Elementary*

232 Jasmine Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2500 • wildrose.monroviaschools.net



Big Win for Creative Arts

It is with great pleasure that I share our news: Wild Rose School of Creative Arts was named one of five Los Angeles County elementary school recipients of the Disney in Schools Music Grant from Center Theater Group. This is the second year of this competitive grant, which is offered by Center Theater Group in partnership with Disney Theatrical Productions.

As a selected school, Wild Rose will begin 17 weeks of musical theater. Our cast of 50 students and five teachers will have the opportunity to learn and receive support from two teaching artists in residence, who will bring "The Lion King" to life for audiences in April 2019.

The grant will also allow Wild Rose to receive performance rights to additional Disney musicals, and, as part of our experience, our students will perform a portion of "The Lion King" on the stage at the world-class Ahmanson Theater for an audience of students, parents, teachers, and our community.



Being accepted into the Disney Musicals in School Program opens so many vistas for our students and our school. I look forward to seeing this collaboration build our joy for creativity, teamwork and performing. We hope you will come see our students perform!

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B is for Book

Kept Me in the Action!



Bailey

To those of you who, like me, had never heard of the Hunger Games or those of you who have only watched the movie, I want to recommend you read this book. *The Hunger Games* is a great book for tweens and teens! It's full of action, romance, and suspense.

Each year, the Capitol hosts The Hunger Games where two contestants, a boy and a girl, fight to death until one remains. At the contestant selection, Katniss volunteers in an effort of saving her sister who has been chosen. Along with Katniss is Peeta. Although they are both strong, only one of them will make it. Who will have the odds in their favor?

I give this book 4.5 stars. I really like how the author describes the scenes and uses the five senses. In my opinion, book 1 was the best of the series. However, I suggest you add all three to your reading list to complete your Hunger Games experience.

Bailey is a 7th grader who loves being with her friends and reading. When she isn't doing these things, she's dancing ballet or lyrical.



Christina's Book Review

Futuristic Series



Christina J.

Scarlet The Lunar Chronicles

By Marissa Meyer

This is the second book of the very popular series. There is a continuing story of a Cinderella-type character named Cinder from the first book, and it introduces a Red Riding Hood character named Scarlet. There is a lot of intense action and suspense in the book. The story is based in Dystopian future, where Cyborgs and Androids exist, along with Lunars, who come from Luna, a country on the Moon. The story takes place after World War IV and the world is nothing like we are used to. I like how well the story is written, and it reminded me a bit of Harry Potter-style of writing. I recommend the book to those who aren't fans of science fiction, because it might actually change their opinion about the whole genre. I give this book 5 out of 5 stars.



Christina J. is an 9th grader. Christina is an avid reader, who enjoys a good book about some great adventure, mystery or action. She is a hard-working student and a young author herself. In 5th grade she wrote a book *Melody's Stories: I Am a Spy Now*, published by Studenttreasures Publishing (PIN #3582798).

Isabella's Book Review

Truly Inspiring and Touching



Isabella A.

Heidi by Johanna Spyri

Heidi is a sweet young girl that is taken to live with her sour uncle. While Heidi resides in the Alps, she meets the young shepherd who loves food.

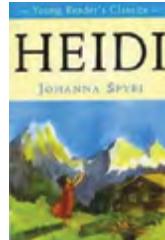
Heidi loves the Swiss Alps but is suddenly sold to a wealthy family in Germany. She is to be friends with Clara, a girl who is paralyzed and is lonely.

On a quest to attempt to see the Alps in a German city, Clara and Heidi escape from the house, landing Heidi in deep trouble. Heidi is sad and attempts to run away. When she is caught and denied permission to return home, Heidi becomes depressed.

When Heidi begins to sleepwalk and go outside at night, the doctor says it is because of her depression. The doctor says that she needs to go home.

Will Heidi be allowed to go home? Or will she find a home in Clara's house?

I would Give Heidi 5 stars. I hung on to every word and anticipated every page



Isabella is a 7th grader and just published her first short story in a school anthology of young authors after winning first prize with her work. She rates books on a 5 star scale.

Richard's Book Review

Sibling Rivalry



Richard J.

The Lemonade War

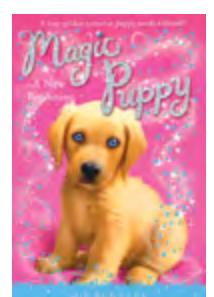
By Jacqueline Davis

The is a book about the difficulties of a brother/sister relationship. The older brother Evan and his younger sister Jessie are complete opposites of each other. The brother is people-smart and the sister is math-smart. They start a



competition on who could make the most money selling lemonade after Evan gets mad that Jessie is going to skip a grade and be in the same class with him. He feels that not only his kid sister is too smart for her age, but being in the same class with him she will embarrass him in front of his friends. The battle is on! However, after all this they both end up learning a good lesson about the undeniable value of teamwork. I like this book because it kind of relates to me and my sister. We often disagree with each other, but we always work better together. I give this book 4 out 5 stars.

Richard J. is a 4th grader. Richard likes math, playing sports, physical activities like bike-riding, swimming, diving and running. He is a hard-working student who enjoys reading, seeing and leaning new things and spending time with his family and friends.



Jenna's Review

Magical Adventure



Jenna C.

Magic Puppy-A new beginning

By Sue Bentley

Do you like puppies? Then I think you will enjoy this book. Lily was riding Bandit,

the horse. Suddenly, she fell down and found herself in front of a puppy. The puppy asked her, "are you okay?" Lily was surprised that the puppy could talk. Storm, the puppy told Lily about Shadow, a wolf that wanted to be a leader of the Moon-claw Pack (a secret world). Storm is a wolf too. Shadow already attacked Storm's family. Storm disguised himself as a puppy and asked Lily if she can help him hide from Shadow. Lily agreed and brought Storm to her house. Will Storm keep hidden from Shadow and come back to his home safely? I like this book because it is series of mysteries and keeps me reading to solve them.

Jenna is a third grader. She likes art and soccer. She likes imaginary stories and someday she wants to be a book illustrator.

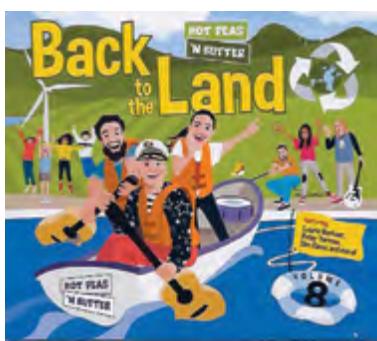
Note-ables

Folksy, Earthy Collection

"Now don't get me wrong—it takes more than a song." This lyric from the title song of Hot Peas 'N Butter's latest CD is a call to action to everyone on Earth.

At first listen, *Back to the Land* is a folksy, earthy collection for children, but the songs travel beyond music to mentorship. The title song is a twangy anthem for sustaining the mother planet. The vocalists invoke Arctic glacier melting and rising tides and count off the ways to help: clean, renewable energy and saving coral reefs are just a couple of them.

As with all their recordings, the Peas sing out a theme with a diversity of musical genres. The selections comprise a lively, "rootsy" mix of bluegrass, African and American folk, Dixieland and jazz. They're performed by master musicians, including Peter Yarrow, whom some of you will remember from Peter, Paul and Mary.



"Come and Go with Me to That Land" is a New Orleans jazz spiritual of hope; "Rainbow in Your Eyes" introduces colors to very young children and early English-language learners, and is a guaranteed earworm; "Little Fox," which is catchy as all get-out, is a bluegrass-fiddle mountain ballad about a fox whose dinner plans are foiled, albeit temporarily. "Funga Alafia" is a Nigerian song of welcome, sung in the Yoruba language by gospel vocalist Marcelle Davies Lashley, who was raised in New York by her native African parents.

Back to the Land tells listeners that every day must be Earth Day, both for the survival of the planet and harmony among everything on it.



Kate Karp

Quiet Harmonies

Vocal group Ladysmith Black Mambazo had long been cultural-music heroes in their native South Africa when musician Paul Simon made them world famous by weaving their quiet yet powerful harmonies into his unforgettable *Graceland* album and the subsequent tour. Today, parents, grandparents and teachers can pass the group forward to younger generations in *Songs of Peace and Love*.

Ladysmith's latest children's collection, a 2017 Grammy nominee, carves a restful, thoughtful space into a world that has been too full of noise and confusion for both children and adults. Both lyrics and vocals are sung in a spirit of humanity and harmony and in tribute to late South African president Nelson Mandela.

"We know firsthand how hard it is to raise children in a world of conflict, in a world where children need positive role models and positive words," group member Albert Mazibuko said. "We hope our songs can be an important part of the lessons of peace and love that all parents want to impart to their children."

"Everything's So Stupid" lays out the honest frustration in parent-child communication—from both sides. "Different Colors Mean Nothing to Me" tells of how different races and languages are not things to be overcome but part of the world's beauty. And there's a Zulu version of "Old MacDonald."

The overall message of Ladysmith is that talking to one another can pave the way for communication and, hopefully, peace. Let these songs move you along—they'll put diamonds on the souls.



Kate Karp is an editor for *School News Roll Call* and a freelance writer and editor.

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1. Offered during June, July and August. Members must contact SchoolsFirst FCU to confirm eligibility and to take advantage of interest-only payments. 2. Automatically offered during January billing cycle to qualified Members. Interest will continue to accrue during the skip payment period.

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