

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Tehachapi Unified School District



Volume 3, Issue 7

January–March 2022

TUSD Athletes Back in Action and...



Having a Great year!





Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

Happy New Year!

More than ever before we are all looking forward to a new year and hopes of a healthier year for everyone.

Even during a pandemic there is good news which you will read about in this issue.

This is our third year publishing the excellence from the Tehachapi Unified School District. Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

Be sure to enter our Word Search Contests on page 11 (all ages may enter). Our next issue is April 20, 2022.

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation
www.schoolnewsrollcall.com
Covering the
TEHACHAPI UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SUPERINTENDENT



Stacey Larson-Everson

It is hard to believe that we have already begun the second half of this school year. Although there have been changes and challenges for students, staff, and families, we are very happy that students have been back in the classroom with their teachers.

Many strategies and educational tools have been implemented this school year, aimed at supporting students in their academic achievement and overcoming learning challenges that may have emerged

due to the pandemic. Significant resources and layers of support have been added to increase social and emotional support for students. Some of the ways in which TUSD has enhanced services to students for the 2021-2022 school year include:

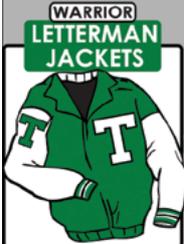
- Addition of a School Social Worker at every TUSD school
- Addition of two full-time Music Director, one for JMS, one for THS
- Educational technology upgrades in classrooms across the District, including voice amplification systems, Smart Boards, and Chromebooks
- Expanded summer learning programs and before/after school interventions
- Professional development for certificated and classified staff
- Addition of instructional coaches in the focus areas of technology, English Language Development, and First/Best Instruction
- Implementation of Elementary Pump it Up PE Program
- Implementation of Outdoor Hands-on Science Camp for 3rd-grade students
- Increased student supervisory staff at all TUSD school campuses

I am excited about all the additional support and opportunities that the above strategies are providing to TUSD students. In California, each school district creates a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), and through that plan, set goals and actions into place by leveraging resources to improve student outcomes. These plans are updated annually and later this spring, the TUSD administrative team will begin collecting data related to the specific strategies we have implemented this year. I hope parents and guardians will take an active role by providing feedback to us through surveys and LCAP feedback sessions.

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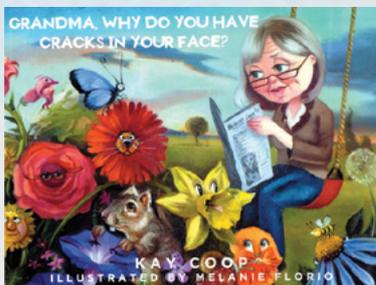
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GRANDMA, WHY DO YOU HAVE CRACKS IN YOUR FACE?



Grandma, Why Do You Have Cracks in Your Face?

By Kay Coop
Illustrated by Melanie Florio

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Business Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Hojat Entezari
Chief Administrator

State & Federal COVID Support

At the October 12, 2021 Regular Board Meeting the District presented plans to use federal funds to modernize and grow the District's capacity to meet students' educational needs. The U.S. Congress most recently passed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act, which was signed into law on March 11, 2021. This federal stimulus funding is the third act of federal relief

in response to COVID-19. The main funding source for schools in the ARP Act is the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief III (ESSER III) Fund. The ESSER III Fund accounted for nearly \$122 billion of funding for education. California's total allocation was \$15 billion with Tehachapi Unified School District receiving an award of \$8,157,766. The District is currently looking to use these funds to continue enhancing student services,

modernize existing schools, and potentially expand available classroom space both at the Claude L Wells Education Center.

The District has also received non-financial support from the State of California to address school safety needs during the pandemic, most notably the receipt of the rapid COVID-19 tests that can be taken at home. This was part of a state-wide initiative to provide families the ability to self-test their children before sending them back to classrooms after the holidays. On January 5th the District held a drive-thru to disburse over 5,000 COVID-19 rapid-tests to TUSD families. The District continues to participate in the California Department of Public Health COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) lab testing that has been made available to staff, students, and household members. We are proud to be a leader in the community offering testing at no cost and supporting the efforts to move beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professional Development

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Jennifer Butler
Coordinator of
Instructional Support
and Improvement

Third Grade Science Camp

Tehachapi Unified School District in partnership with Kern County Superintendent of Schools offered a two-day outdoor hands-on science camp experience to all third grade students this fall. Students participated in multiple fun and exciting

activities. To prepare students, a phenomenon video was shared demonstrating how

ants build bridges with their bodies. Students were asked this guiding question, "Why do some animals live alone while others live in large groups?" Lively discussions followed.

While at Tehachapi Mountain Park students participated in a nature hike and explored tree bark that was effected by termites and woodpeckers. Students also decorated a wood slice and added it along with beads to create a name tag/ necklace. Each of the two days they played a game that helped them answer the guiding question. The first game, Oh Deer, demonstrated how deer populations

increase or decrease due to limited or abundant resources. The second game, Savannah Tag, demonstrated how adult animals protect their young so they are not captured or eaten by predators.

TUSD will offer day camps to fifth grade students this Spring. We are excited to continue making learning engaging and hands-on for TUSD students!



Majestic Mountain Park of Tehachapi

Instructional Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Andrea Paxton
Chief Administrator

New Programs to Help Students

Tehachapi Unified School District is grateful to have students back on campus this year. To boost the effectiveness of our instruction and address learning loss that students may have experienced during COVID, TUSD has embedded additional programs within our instructional program to increase support for students. Beginning this school year, all students at elementary school sites and Jacobsen Middle School are using a diagnostic to measure our student growth throughout the year. Students take a brief assessment three times during the school year; August, January, and May in the area of math and reading. Teachers use the performance data from these assessments to identify individual instruction needs to support students in meeting grade-level standards. Data from these diagnostic assessments are used by the classroom teacher to guide lesson plans and develop appropriate interventions. Data allows teachers to be more aware of the needs of their students before introducing new material. Although assessment is one component of the diagnostic platform, the platform provides students with academic support in reading and math through the use of the teacher toolbox and digital learning games. When in class, students are given opportunities to use the platform to target each student's exact instructional level and increase student performance in reading and math. Lessons within the platform strengthen students' automaticity, pre-teach material so that students are more familiar with material when lessons are covered by the teacher, and strengthen previously taught skills that build into deeper concepts. Tehachapi High School will introduce a similar program, in January 2022. Students will participate in a brief assessment twice during the 21/22 school year to measure student progress in the areas of math and reading. Programs at both the elementary and secondary levels will help to ensure that our students are making positive gains throughout the school year. We are excited to expand our repertoire of tools to best meet the needs of each of our students.

District Nurse

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/979-6596



Jenna Burgess,
RN BSN
*Credentialed
School Nurse*

School Immunization Laws

One of the many roles the District Nurse, health staff, and school office team members serve, include following and enforcing the California school immunization laws. We work together to receive immunization records from parents before entry into school, maintain immunization records of all children enrolled, and submit reports to public health agencies. In recent years, the state developed the California Immunization Registry (CAIR). Through the registry schools can verify some students' records for parents/guardians that do not have a copy of them. Students are mandated to have all required immunizations before enrollment. However, some children can be enrolled without all doses if their next vaccine dose is not yet due, or they have a temporary or permanent medical exemption for a shot or shots. Students enrolled without all their doses completed are on conditional enrollment status and are required to submit the next appointment date for the missing shot(s).

January 1, 2021, Senate Bills 276 and 714 required new medical exemptions be issued using the State database and a standardized medical exemption form. The website is called the California Immunization Registry – Medical Exemption (CAIR-ME), schools can only accept exemptions by this format when students enter the next grade span (kindergarten or 7th grade) when requirements are due.

Before 6th grade students begin 7th grade, they are required to have a Tdap booster shot, and their 2nd Varicella shot. The spring is when we begin encouraging families to complete this requirement. August is usually a very hectic time for everyone, and we can see this year being even more challenging. Please contact the District Nurse or Jacobsen Middle School if you have a 6th grader and you have specific questions related to your student's immunization status and what he or she may need for 7th grade.



Food Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Hortencia Tapia
Supervisor

Meal Participation

A national free meal waiver for school year 2021-2022 has increased student participation all around the nation in the national school lunch program. While we have encountered supply chain issues, this challenges have not stopped us from serving nutritious well balanced meals to students here in TUSD. Our participation has increased significantly at our secondary schools. Tehachapi high went from serving 26,612 meals from August to November 2019 to 47,658 over the same time period this school year. We have served almost 50,000 more meals this school year in all of our five schools combined. The staff in the Food Service Department has been working very hard not knowing what menu changes might have to be made after each delivery. There have been last minute menu changes due to supply chain issues but they have kept working very hard and have been creative to generate new menu ideas.



Personnel Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Dr. Roxane Romero
Chief Administrator

Join our Team

The Personnel Department is continuously looking for talented and student -centered people to join our TUSD team. Please feel free to visit the following link <https://www.edjoin.org/tusd> to see open positions within TUSD. Open positions are also posted at the District Office on our reception area bulletin boards. Our COVID-19 testing team is available during the following hours to test TUSD students and household family members at the District Office, Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 9:30 am and 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm (south end of building).

Technology

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Ryan McKay
Director

Replacement Plan in Action

With the increase of technology across the District; from chrome books to interactive LCD boards, the Technology Department has increased its staff to include a technician for each school. This allows us to have a quicker response time to issues that arise at the school level. Our technicians have been a fantastic addition to the department and I am very proud of the work they have done so far.



We are currently sending upgraded computers to the schools as part of our yearly Replacement Program. This program sets aside funding to allow us to upgrade the technology in the classroom on a set schedule. Through TUSD's Replacement Program, teachers and staff are provided with technology that will be able to integrate with the newer technology that is in the classrooms, such as the interactive LCD panels. The Replacement Program refreshes a certain number of computers and other technology per year to keep the District technology up to date with the needs of teachers and students.

Student Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Dr. Bonny Porter
*Director
Student Services*

Positive Changes; Tehachapi Adult School

As the Director of Student Services, I am proud to introduce the TUSD Adult Education team. Stephanie Teodosio recently became our Program Manager. Stephanie graduated from CSUB with a Bachelor's

Degree in Liberal Studies and a Master's in Student Affairs. Stephanie's goal is to enhance our Adult Education Program. Sandy Ransom serves as our Adult Education teacher. She works with adults to help them earn a diploma or a GED certificate. Sandy is inspired when her students learn a new concept. Angela Nary works as a WIOA Technician. WIOA helps disadvantaged youth transition into the workforce. Angela enjoys encouraging participants to become successful members of our community. Elizabeth Roberts teaches English as a Second Language (ESL) classes designed to help adults improve their English skills.



Angela Nary, Sandra Ransom, Stephanie Teodosio, Bonny Porter, Nicole Guzman

The classes are held from 5:00 PM-7:00 PM on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at the Adult Education building behind TILA. Adults may enroll any time in the ESL classes.

Transportation

401 East H. St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2115

Denise Berry, Supervisor

Winter Weather Driving

This time of year, the roads pose many hazards, with heavy snow, sleet and ice. These conditions can be dangerous to drive in. Our drivers are trained to drive defensively, cautiously and are able to adapt to the ever-changing conditions around them. The school bus is still the safest way to transport students to and from school. We ask everyone to help keep our students safe by staying alert and using extra caution around our schools and school bus stops while loading and unloading. The yellow flashing lights on a school bus warn motorists to slow down and be prepared to stop. Once the bus comes to a complete stop, the school bus driver will activate the flashing red lights and stop arm signal. At that point all motorists must stop. Our student's safety comes first, and we take great pride in transporting Tehachapi Unified School District students.



Cummings Valley *Elementary*

24220 Bear Valley Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2190 • cv.tehachapiusd.com



Traci Minjares
Principal

Holiday Cheer Challenge

In an effort to make new friends and spread holiday joy, the students of Cummings Valley School recently issued a “Holiday Cheer Challenge” to their peers at Golden Hills and Tompkins Elementary Schools!

The entire student body sang “We Wish You a Merry Christmas” and sent a video to the other schools, with a challenge to their students to “send it right back” with

some holiday spirit in any manner of their choice. Golden Hills responded with a great dance video to “Candy Cane Lane”, and a supply of Christmas treats was delivered to the school by Santa himself! The students of Tompkins responded with a great flash mob dance, which everyone at CV really enjoyed. Right before break, CVS was able to respond back to both schools with candy canes for everyone

Everyone at Cummings Valley School wishes all of TUSD a very happy and healthy 2022!



Golden Hills *Elementary*

20215 Park Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2180 • ghe.tehachapiusd.com



Kendra Bailey
Principal

Social-Emotional Learning

A priority for Golden Hills Elementary for this year and for the years to follow is to increase our capacity to respond to the varied social and emotional needs of our students. To accomplish this, we have added a School Social Worker in addition to our Behavior Interventionist.

Our School Social Worker sees

students in groups according to identified needs and also visits each of the classrooms to teach Social-Emotional Lessons. In addition, teachers and classified staff are working on strategies to create an environment of safety and trust, along with helping them to learn to resolve conflict and develop strong social skills. Mrs. Rhea and I are sharing in this effort by being intentional about greeting and welcoming students in the morning and making connections with as many students as possible. Our mission is to help our eagles soar!



Jacobsen *Middle School*

711 Anita Dr., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2150 • jms.tehachapiusd.com

Eric Loe, Principal

Band Concert

Jacobsen Middle School Band Concert is a Big Success!

Thursday, December 2, was the date for the first combined band concert for JMS for the 2021-22 school year! Students from the introductory Band class, as well as the Advanced Band class, came together in the JMS cafeteria for an impressive evening of music.

JMS Band teacher, Nick Olmos, has been working hard with his students all year and their work certainly appears to be paying off! The Introductory Band students started the evening with their rendition of Haydn's, Surprise Symphony. They moved on to Donkey Round, and Holiday Sampler, before completing their portion of the evening with Cardiff Castle.

The Advanced Band then took center stage, opening with Canterbury Christmas! Their performance included Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious, Mythos, and Santa Claus is Coming to Town, as well as a trombone solo of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer by Phillip Mengelsdorf and flute



solo of Sleigh Ride by Kiernan McCormick, before closing the night with the theme song to Pirates of the Caribbean!

The audience was thrilled by the performance, and we are looking forward to more performances in the future! Congratulations to the JMS Band students!

Tehachapi *Adult School*

400 S. Snyder Ave., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2112 • adult.tehachapiusd.com



Dr. Solomon DeFrancis
Director SPED

Students First

The Tehachapi Unified School District's Special Education Department is motivated and prepared to serve student needs. As the new Director of Special Education, I'm excited to introduce our new Program Specialist Heather Ringle, who comes with a wealth of experience within Tehachapi Unified School District as serving previously as an SDC teacher. Although our secretary Suzie Onufrak is not a novel addition, she is unquestionably a pillar of the department and vital in the success of our programs. Our department is devoted to effective service,



communication, and developing relationships with all stakeholders. We are dedicated to the students, families, and colleagues we serve. Presently, the Special Education Department is overhauling programs to see how they can effectively be enhanced with further support.

Respectively, we are also creating training opportunities for classified and certified special education staff members. From the continued development of action plans to the implementation of new services providers, the TUSD Special Education Department is on a mission for success.

Tehachapi *High School*

801 S. Dennison Rd, Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2130 • ths.tehachapiusd.com



Cristina Libatique
Principal

PARENT UNIVERSITY

Tehachapi and Monroe High School Counselors are teaming up to provide TUSD's first ever PARENT UNIVERSITY. This is an opportunity for parents and caregivers to strengthen skills for one of life's most important roles; coaching and guiding teens through their academic journey. High School Counselors and guest speakers will be providing educational parent meetings once a month to topics relevant to parent advocacy and student success. We are excited

to announce that Crime Prevention Specialist, Laurie Meza, presented at the January 5, 2022 session, "Staying Plugged In: A Parent's Guide to Teaching Digital Citizenship and Online Safety." In addition, she will be our guest presenter for February's topic, "D.A.R.E to Raise Substance Resilient Teens." Other topics for this school year include; Parenting the Whole Teen, Preparing to Launch: Parents' Guide to Career Pathways, and Aeries, Whaaa?!?! Becoming an Aeries, Edmentum, & ParentSquare Guru. Visit the THS website for meeting dates, times, and location. Contact Christine Clark, MHS School Counselor, at (661)822-2137 for more information or to sign up for classes.

Tompkins *Elementary*

1120 S. Curry St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2170 • tpk.tehachapiusd.com



Rebecca Castellanos
Principal

Student-Centered Library

Tompkins is excited to showcase our library that underwent a bit of a facelift over the summer. Jami Butler and Shelly Marks made it their goal to create a more student-centered library where kids can enjoy books as well as a quiet space away from the noise of the playground. The library was updated with new paint, carpet, and some fun furniture. To allow

our students to fully enjoy the beautiful new library, Nicole Swanson, our librarian, welcomes students during their weekly class visits as well as during recess and gives them a safe space to hang out. She offers a variety of engaging activities for them. Students now have the option to go to the library during their recess to read, draw, color, create on the Lego wall, or use the computers. The refreshed library is quickly becoming the place to be during breaks for many students at Tompkins.



Toy Store Items–Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put Tehachapi in the subject line.

Entries must be received by March 15, 2022

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

BIKE	MARBLES
DOLL	CRAYON
TRIKE	PENS
BOOK	COMPUTER
LEGOS	DOLLHOUSE
SOLDIERS	BUGGY
BALLS	KITCHEN
BUBBLES	TEA SET
CROQUET	BAT
BLOCKS	BALL GLOVE
KITES	

B	U	G	G	Y	S	R	C	E	X	J	Y	J	F	C
N	A	V	L	T	R	E	W	Z	S	W	D	A	Q	X
U	B	L	N	E	E	T	L	N	X	U	S	P	K	R
E	O	X	L	O	I	U	E	B	L	P	R	M	Y	C
D	F	N	C	G	D	P	Q	E	B	C	T	Z	S	A
L	W	K	B	U	L	M	G	O	K	U	J	C	K	T
K	N	Y	L	B	O	O	K	C	R	I	B	S	E	Z
N	I	Z	A	E	S	C	V	X	F	C	B	A	T	R
H	Y	T	A	K	B	R	B	E	S	U	S	R	F	N
J	A	S	C	W	M	A	R	B	L	E	S	Q	V	D
V	E	W	B	H	D	Y	L	Z	T	Y	T	E	Z	D
I	T	R	I	K	E	O	B	L	P	Z	E	I	M	Q
G	M	X	X	Q	C	N	R	Z	S	D	Q	H	K	L
M	Z	M	N	K	C	S	X	E	W	Q	W	V	S	C
O	V	K	S	F	X	G	V	N	B	R	P	A	U	Y

Word Search Contest Words Associated with School

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

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Achievers	Focused	Principal
Character	Homework	Recess
Classrooms	Instructors	Reunion
Curiosity	Integrity	Student
Discipline	Learning	Success
Educators	Mentors	Technology
Encourage	Nutrition	Thinkers
Excellence	Parents	Workers

Congratulations to **Colin Meadows** winner of our last Word Search.

S	R	E	V	E	I	H	C	A	F	T	L	L	F	D
R	R	H	M	E	C	N	E	L	L	E	C	X	E	E
E	S	O	O	T	E	C	H	N	O	L	O	G	Y	S
K	U	E	T	Y	C	H	A	R	A	C	T	E	R	U
N	C	N	Q	C	F	S	I	S	W	Y	A	N	M	C
I	C	I	S	U	U	G	S	E	A	Y	Q	C	E	O
H	E	L	X	R	B	R	N	E	T	X	S	O	N	F
T	S	P	K	I	O	S	T	I	C	T	G	U	T	C
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E	R	C	M	S	S	G	A	E	N	R	R	A	R	B
D	E	S	R	I	E	L	R	C	I	I	A	G	S	M
U	K	I	T	T	K	A	F	T	U	F	Z	E	E	B
T	R	D	N	Y	P	G	I	P	G	D	Y	E	L	R
S	O	I	Y	X	X	O	K	R	O	W	E	M	O	H
T	W	P	R	I	N	C	I	P	A	L	B	V	U	X



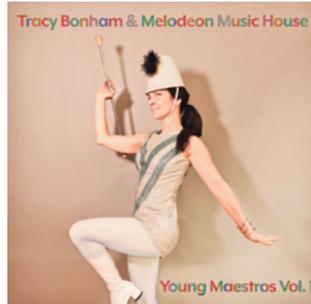
Kate Karp

Young Maestros

Tracy Bonham's Grammy-nominated compositions might be familiar to some—Google “Mother Mother” if you’ve never heard it—but her gifts extend on beyond “Billboard.” Her classical training and devotion to developing a passion for

music in very young children created the [Melodeon Music House Curriculum](#), which teaches music fundamentals to preschool youngsters.

You don’t need a spoonful of sugar to get children interested in music, but Bonham knows a most delightful way anyhow. “Young Maestros,” a collection of songs and games from Melodeon, opens with “Me Symphony,” in which Bonham laments how she misplaced her instruments everywhere—her tuba in Aruba, her shaker in Jamaica. But hey, she has her fingers, mouth, nose, feet and a beat as substitutes! Take heed, teachers and parents—there’s a great maps lesson in there.



Bonham puts the “fun” in “fundamentals” with “Beats to a Measure,” a pleasant, rapid-fire lesson in rhythm. “All the Blackbirds” gives flight to the black keys, and “Feelin’ Pretty Major” explains major and minor keys and how the upbeat feel of the former and the mournfulness of the latter comprise the music of life.

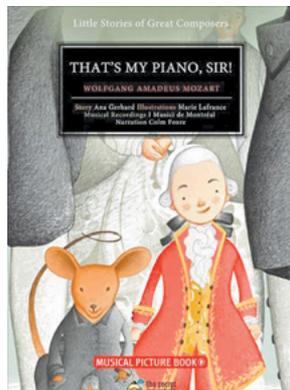
“Background Singers” is my personal favorite. Like the documentary “Twenty Feet from Stardom,” it pays homage to the unsung singers who provide the bones and body of a song. “Background Singers” tells what happens when a lead singer is unkind and unappreciative to them. Let’s say that she learns about harmony the hard way!

The final track on the collection is “A Song Without an Ending,” only 32 seconds long with an abrupt stop, but no satisfactory end. Bonham seems to be telling the Young Maestros, “You pick up from here!”

Little Stories of Great Composers Series

What better way to introduce children to great composers than with beautifully illustrated storybooks coupled with recordings of read-alouds and enhanced by tidbits of Tchaikovsky, morsels of Mozart and little Vivaldi victuals? Even better, a cheese-and-music-loving mouse narrates the tales!

Minim is the fly on the wall—rather, the mouse in the house—who gives young listeners slices of the composers’ lives as he scrounges for slices of cheddar. In “A Delicious Taste of Mozzarella!,” Minim slips out of a crack in the wall to eavesdrop on “Uncle Petya” surprising his niece and nephew with a gift: a musical score. The children are at first disappointed; then, their uncle teaches them how to play the composition on the piano. They realize how music can bestow magic on the spirit. Uncle Peta is, of course, Pyotr Ilyitch Tchaikovsky.



In “That’s My Piano, Sir!” Minim is hoping for leftover goodies after voyagers leave a boat on a busy dock. A sudden crash shatters the briny air. An exhausted dockworker has dropped a huge crate, which turns out to be a folded piano. The customs officer is cranky and not in the mood for any tomfoolery until a nicely dressed, polite child says, “That’s my piano, sir!” The lad sits down, plays, and charms away everyone’s ill humor with “A Little Night Music.” Minim finds his cheese, and we discover Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart!

Concert pianist Ana Gerhard authored the books, and Marie Lafrance illustrated them. Canadian stage actor Colm Feore was the cultured voice of Minim, and Canadian chamber music orchestra I Musici de Montreal played the score. A wonderful introduction to great composers and, as Minim shows, just what the spirit needs today!

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