

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Monrovia Unified School District



Volume 8, Issue 38

January / February 2022



Wild Rose School of Creative Arts recently presented Cinderella Kids at the Louise K. Taylor Performing Arts Center. Leading the cast were 5th Grade students Leela Taylor and Dylan Klingbail who played Cinderella and the Prince respectively.



Board of Education



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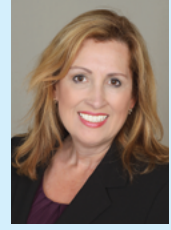
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New Year Brings Big Achievements to Monrovia Unified



Dr. Ryan D. Smith
Superintendent

2022 has already presented our district with new challenges, but I am proud to say that we successfully started the second semester of the school year this month. With the new year, we have a couple of big successes I would like to share with our community.

First, Monrovia High School Senior Tamika Samuels was awarded the Posse Scholarship for Middlebury College in Vermont. This is a full, 4-year scholarship for under-represented students traditionally overlooked in the college admissions process. Middlebury chooses a handful of students each year for this honor. Samuels is excited to join the school's Math and Science department and plans to focus her studies in biology. Her goal is to eventually attend medical school and become a pediatrician. Samuels also plans to get involved with Middlebury's Black Student Union and Tennis Club to continue some of her interests from Monrovia High School. Way to make all of us Monrovia Proud, Tamika Samuels!

The next big thing coming to Monrovia Unified is Paper Learning. Before the holidays, our Board of Education approved an agreement with Paper Learning to provide live virtual tutoring in all subject areas for students in grades 3-12. The service is available 24/7 every day of the week.



Monrovia High School Senior Tamika Samuels was awarded the prestigious Posse Scholarship to attend Middlebury College in Vermont.

We are excited to get this service up and running to help improve learning equity for all students and families in our district. At Monrovia Unified, we believe in providing as many resources as possible to our kids to make sure they have everything they need to succeed inside and outside the classroom. This is another tool to help us to provide World-Class Schools for World-Class Students!

January is already off to a hot start and we can't wait to see what the rest of the year will bring.

School News

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**Covering the
MONROVIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

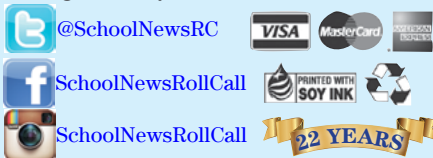
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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

Happy New Year!

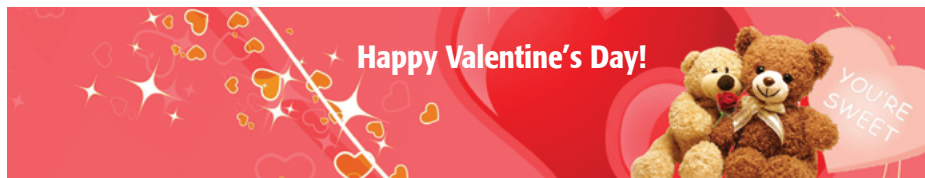
More than ever before we are all looking forward to a new year and hopes of a healthier year for everyone.

Even during a pandemic there is good news in the Monrovia Unified School District. Dr. Smith begins this issue on the preceding page highlighting achievements.

In this issue you will read about a school garden, science day, game development, and so much more...

We have included student book reviews on pages 9 & 10. If your child would like to be a guest columnist reviewing favorite books, please email me for information. It is an excellent opportunity for students to share their love of reading. They learn to meet deadlines and to review a book without giving away the ending and encourage the reader to want to read the book.

Our next issue is March 2.



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Bradoaks *Elementary Science Academy*

930 East Lemon Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2100 • bradoaks.monroviасhools.net



Dr. Jayne Nickles
Principal

Super Science Day

Bradoaks' popular Super Science Day was transformed into an event/activity that could be done while being mindful of safety measures for COVID-19. Instead of inviting family members into the classrooms, our Bobcat scientists participated in the Super Science Home Connection where each grade level had a different

challenge project that they could work on with their family. Each challenge project was based on their science unit they were studying. For example, third graders have been studying energy and motion and their challenge was a Balloon-Powered Race Car Experiment where students had to build their own race car, using specific materials, and then use air pressure to propel it across a surface. Students had much fun with their families and sharing their results with their class. Bradoaks is committed to preparing all students for the future and this activity showed one of the many ways in which Bradoaks is doing just that. Our future is bright with our Bobcats!



Canyon Early Learning Center

1000 South Canyon Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2001 • celc.monroviасhools.net



Tom McFadden
Director

Cubtastic Assembly

Canyon Early Learning Center celebrated its first "Cubtastic" Assembly on December 15th. The Cubtastic Assemblies were

held in the morning for all AM Classes and in the Afternoon for all of the PM classes. CELC students were surprised and excited to see their parents, grandparents and relatives on hand at Canyon Early Learning Center to celebrate the students selected as the Cubtastic Student of the Month. The students each received certificates, prize cards and recognition from the entire school.



The Canyon Early Learning Center's Cubtastic Assemblies recognize students and staff who are modeling the Canyon Early Learning Center's approach to the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support initiative. The PBIS initiatives are district wide and each school has their own unique development of the PBIS behavior expectation's and interventions. Their teachers based the award on achievement in the following areas selected students: being an amazing friend, being super respectful, showing outstanding kindness and displaying tremendous academic effort in the first semester. The Cubtastic Assembly was huge success!

Canyon Oaks H.S./Mountain Park/Monrovia Community Adult

930 Royal Oaks Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-3000 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Flint Fertig
Principal

The Gift of Giving

On November 19th, 2021, the staff at Canyon Oaks High School and Mountain Park School hosted their annual Thanksgiving Feast under the lunch patio. The Feast has become an annual tradition at the alternative programs that

began over a decade ago inspired by Mr. Fil Lujan while he was a teacher at COHS. Since 2008, the staff has continued the tradition of preparing massive, warm, and tasty meals for all of their students.

Last month, the adult school hosted a job fair for students ages 16-18. There were over 200 individuals in attendance and many were hired to jobs that pay up to

\$17 an hour! Later this month, the school will open the new career tech labs for students to learn essential skills that are necessary to enter several growing employment sectors. These and other opportunities offered to students truly embody the motto: "Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Earn!"



Clifton Middle School

226 South Ivy Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2600 • clifton.monroviaschools.net



Scott Moses
Principal

Showcasing our Talents

The school spirit that is found on our Clifton campus is truly incomparable. There really is something for every student here on their academic journey. Many of our recent holiday activities well showcased our many talented musicians, thespians, and vocal talents. We really had some incredible performances for our site programs and the community at large.

We kicked off the season with our orchestra performing at the Monrovia Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony in early December. Our band and color guard represented amazingly at the Monrovia Holiday Parade, and our String Orchestra entertained hundreds while performing at the Santa Anita Mall. The concluding performance included all of these talented groups at our Winter Concert. It was a truly memorable time for our Clifton families and staff members.

In athletics, our boys and girls basketball teams really showed great spirit in their competitions throughout the season, and our soccer teams have been steeped in practice for the opening of their season.

In our arts news, we are off to a great start! We are inviting local talent to offer greater opportunities for

discovery, and are encouraging our own students to also become more aware of the different community partners that are available. Every Tuesday we showcase these community partners through individual artists, acting troupes, video production and design, flag ceremonies, and much more.

The response to this has been very positive and uplifting, with many more events still scheduled into the spring. Every Wednesday our students also have the opportunity to learn more about a new subject area, such as the culinary, visual, or the fine and performing arts, where professionals in the business can also share their wisdom and strategies in small-class groups.

In other events, our Robotics Club is hard at work preparing for their competitions, and our student leadership continue to develop new ways to keep our school spirit soaring, from weekly after-school offerings to a lunch-time DJ and live music. Many of our students are also beginning the rehearsals for their spring production in collaboration with Centre Stage.

A final shout-out to our own Mrs. Gina Ayala for being recognized as the 2021 Public Health Teacher of the Year! Congratulations to an incredible individual! Clifton is truly an amazing place to learn, celebrate, and showcase talent in many forms.

Mayflower *Elementary*

210 North Mayflower Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2200 • mayflower.monroviashools.net



Michele Costarella
Principal

School Garden

Mayflower Elementary continues to provide students with unique hands-on learning experiences in our school garden! Thanks to a partnership with Enrich LA and support from our PTA, students have access to a beautiful, edible garden located here on campus. The garden contains six raised beds and a drip irrigation system. Three years ago, Mayflower families and Enrich LA staff

worked together to take an unused space on campus and transform it into the beginnings of a lush, inviting, outdoor garden where students learn. Along with the structure and foundation of the garden, Enrich LA provides a “Garden Ranger.” The trained Garden Ranger not only provides students with interactive and interdisciplinary, NGSS aligned lessons, they also visit campus weekly to help care for the garden. Our students relish spending valuable time outdoors and enjoy the garden-based learning opportunities centered around topics such as nutrition and environmental stewardship.

Monrovia *High School*

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



Flint Fertig
Interim Principal

Game Development Class

Monrovia High School students have garnered the top award in Congressman Napolitano’s congressional App Challenge. Students in the Game Development class, which is a Career Technical Education (CTE) program at MHS, allows students to develop their skill sets in making an IOS based video game. This year-long project challenges students to design a video game

from the ground up, requiring skills of design, computer programming, and project management. This year about 100 entries were submitted and MHS students scored on

top! The writing and design team for Andy’s Donuts is led by Andy Smithwick, Matthew Hui, Julia Heatherly, and Aizellah Sorra. Their teacher Anthony Carlson says “This team embodies a great sense of perseverance. They do not shy away from challenges. Making games requires a lot of hard work and I’m incredibly proud of the maturity and skill that these students displayed as they managed the production of Andy’s Donuts.” The team from Andy’s Donuts wanted to include the Monrovia community as part of their creative process. Levels in the game feature local businesses.

Download Andy’s Donuts today on your mobile device and see what level you can make it to!



Monroe Elementary

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



Amanda Noriega
Principal

Knowledge Posadas

The Mighty Monroe Lions ended the 2021 year with a celebration of holidays around the world with a schoolwide STEM activity called Knowledge Posadas. The celebration combined reading informational text and building brick STEM challenges with holidays around the world:

Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Las Posadas, La Befana, Christmas, Diwali, Ramadan, and Lunar New Year. As a school, we recognize that not all of us celebrate holidays. One of our students researched and presented on why some of us do not partake in celebrating holidays. It was a great experience for us all! As we kick off the new year, we will celebrate kindness with a spirit week to commemorate the Great Kindness Challenge. The Challenge is an SEL-focused bullying prevention program that improves school climate and increases student engagement. We will use a kindness checklist, students will accept the challenge and show the world that kindness matters at Monroe Elementary School!



Plymouth Elementary

1300 Boley St., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2400 • plymouth.monroviashools.net



Dr. Greg Gero
Principal

Relaunching the Plymouth Makerspace!

This winter, our PTA relaunched our amazing Plymouth Makerspace—a place where students are provided with the inspiration, access, and tools to explore and create things with their own two hands.

Last year, due to distance learning, our PTA designed and distributed *Mini Maker Kits*, an innovative program which provides students with all of the necessary materials to participate in fun, STEAM-based, hands-on experiences at home. Now that we are back to school in-person, students are once again able to set foot inside a space that inspires creativity, innovation, and collaboration!

Plymouth Makerspace builds upon our school-wide focus on developing students' 21st century skills, with activities designed to promote creativity, problem solving, teamwork, and critical thinking. We are eternally grateful for the generosity of our sponsors and the unparalleled dedication of our PTA who have made the Plymouth Makerspace a reality!



Santa Fe *Computer Science Magnet School*

148 West Duarte Rd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2700 • santafe.monroviaschools.net



Dr. Geoff Zamarripa
Principal

Mandarin Dual Immersion Program Tackles Middle School

After many years at Plymouth, the first group of Mandarin Dual Immersion Students have arrived at Santa Fe. Most of these students have been studying Mandarin together since Kindergarten. This past fall, they arrived on Santa Fe's campus ready to take on the rigors of middle school while continuing to learn both Mandarin and English. Dual Immersion programs require students to use both languages every day. The cognitive load is significant yet the students in Mr. Cecil Chee's class continue to thrive.

Mr. Chee is also in his first year as a teacher here in Monrovia. He brings with him a lifetime of experience that includes teaching in California as well as his native Singapore. The Mandarin students have already benefited from his rich experiences. Winston Chin, who is a new

student to Santa Fe and Monrovia explained, "I like that I learn a lot and I do not feel that I am falling behind. Santa Fe is a big school. I enjoy my classmates, they are fun to work with." Isla Terrell, who has been in the program since she was in Transitional kindergarten at Plymouth has been taking full advantage of her time at Santa Fe. "It's going great at Santa Fe. I really like learning Chinese—both the language as well as the way we learn more about Mandarin through social studies."

After students complete their three years here in Santa Fe, these students will continue with their dual immersion initiative at Monrovia High School. Learning a new language has multiple benefits related to brain development and learning competency, confidence, and motivation. Further, these students are learning the two most widely spoken languages in the world. As residents of Monrovia, they are in a fertile region ripe with global economic, cultural, and business opportunities that will play a role in their future endeavors.

Wild Rose *School of Creative Arts*

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



Paige Ramos
Principal

Bear News

Lights... Camera... Action! Wild Rose School of Creative Arts proudly presented Disney's Cinderella Kids with three outstanding performances on stage at the Louise K. Taylor Performing Arts Center. One of the most popular Disney princesses of all time, Cinderella was played by our very own 5th grade student, Princess Leela Taylor. Leela was joined on stage by another

Wild Rose 5th grade student, Prince Dylan Klingbail as well as over 100 students from Wild Rose School of Creative Arts. It was the largest cast we have had in the history of our school and it was outstanding!

A special thank you to Mrs. Velez, Ms. Naugle, Mrs. Lomelin, Mrs. Meloserdoff, Mr. Medina, and all of the volunteers who helped make this show possible. This adventure began back in 2020 before the pandemic and we are grateful that we had the opportunity to finally perform on stage. Keep an eye out for our next performance coming soon!



The cast of Wild Rose School of Creative Arts' production of Cinderella Kids

Student Book Reviews

Daniel's Review



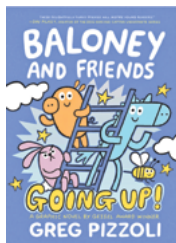
Daniel H.

Funny Friends!

Title: *Baloney and Friends: Going Up!*

Author: Greg Pizzoli

Baloney the pig and his friends Peanut the horse, Bizz the bee, and Krabbit the crabby rabbit do funny things and have fun in the many short stories of this second book of the Baloney and Friends series! You'll laugh about the things they do, like finding a lost sneeze, using a ladder, and appreciating trees. My favorite story is when Baloney and his friends make up a silly theme song for their group and everyone helps out in their own way. Baloney is my favorite character because he is a good friend. I felt happy when I read this book and I think you should read it too!



Daniel is in second grade and he likes to spend time with his family playing board games, reading, and playing sports like tennis, soccer, and basketball.

David's Review



David H.

The Aliens

Title: *We're Not From Here*

Author: Geoff Rodkey

We're Not From Here is about a kid named Lan and his family who travel from their human colony on Mars to a faraway planet Choom to start a new human population. Unfortunately, once they get there, the aliens on Choom tell them to leave immediately. Now they have a big problem that they have to figure out because they don't have enough fuel in their spaceship to go back to Mars. What do they do? Read and find out! I really liked this book and I recommend that you should read this book too if you like action, suspense, and humor.



David is in fourth grade and he loves to read and play piano. He likes math and outdoor activities such as rock climbing, tennis, and basketball.

Katie's Review



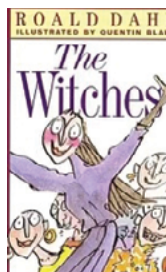
Katie C.

Witch is Which?

Book Title: *The Witches*

Author: Roald Dahl

Think of a group of women, gathering to speak at a convention in a hotel. Nothing out of the ordinary--except they wear wigs and gloves, don't have toes, and turn children into rats. That is the premise of "*The Witches*," by Roald Dahl. In this fantastical story about witches who hate children, there is no end to your imagination. From the drawn out, shrill voices of the vicious women to the very magical potions they concoct, there is no doubt that you will find the missing piece to all the supernatural myths of the world. A grandson is warned from a very young age about these mystical, mysterious women--but can he face the dangers that creep upon him? If you like a suspenseful story, "*The Witches*" is a perfect book for you.



Katie is a senior in high school. She likes reading and writing. She loves to read to younger kids. She provides book reviews to kids who want to find more good books.

Kailani's Review



Kailani T.

Do You Have An Imaginary Friend?

Crenshaw by Katherine Applegate

Crenshaw is about a family with very little money for rent and even less money for food and toys. When Jackson's dad lost his job, his sister, mother, and the family dog have to move from place to place. When there was no more money for rent, the family has to live in their minivan. Jackson has an imaginary friend named Crenshaw. Crenshaw is a huge fluffy cat. Crenshaw always comes into Jackson's life whenever Jackson needs help.



The story is full of excitement and sadness. I learn more about homelessness and friendship from this story. Reading this book makes me understand why my parents always tell me to appreciate everything we have, to share when we can, and not to take anything for granted. This book also shows how important it is to have a good friend, even if they're imaginary. I give this book 5 out of 5 stars.

Kailani is a 4th grader who loves to read. When not playing with her brother, Kailani likes to listen to music, ride horses, and play board games. Hope everyone stays well and healthy.

Student Book Reviews

Jenna's Review



Carry Us Away

Book Title: *Stargirl*
Author: Jerry Spinelli
Change is a big word and is something a lot of people do so that others will like them. Stargirl is a character that differs from everybody else. Leo



Jenna C.

the narrator always tells himself that Stargirl is weird but, do you think that? Your opinion may change throughout the book because of Stargirl's choices. Stargirl is new to the school and catches attention quickly for being unique such as singing with her ukulele in the cafeteria. She becomes the good luck charm at the football game because she starts singing which motivates the players to try harder. She becomes the Queen of the school, but does she maintain her popularity with her quirkiness? Read to find out!

Jenna is a 6th grader. She enjoys playing soccer and drawing. She likes to read fiction novels. Someday she wants to publish a book.

Tegan's Book Review



Moments of Hope

In this tragic but wonderful story, *The Boy on the Wooden Box*, author Leon Leyson shares his emotions of fear, confusion, and anger. With his early childhood shattering into pieces as



Tegan

he is taken away and transported to a fatal concentration camp, separated from his friends and relatives. However, even as depression and pain surrounds his life, Leyson experiences unforgettable moments of hope that are unexpectedly injected, reminding me that through this pandemic that I am fortunate to have friends, family, and freedom. A bonus was reading that Leyson had lived his last few years in Fullerton, making me feel connected to his story more.

Tegan Y. is a fourth grader who enjoys art, mountain biking, tap, writing and reading.

Yoona's Review



Countless Wishes

Book Title: *Wish*
Author: Barbara O'Connor
Have you ever been sent somewhere without your parents? Have you had so many wishes you would just wish would come true? I read a book called



Yoona C.

Wish. The main character is named Charlemange Reese, Charlie for short. Charlie and her family lived in Raleigh. Her mom and dad fought a lot. Charlie's dad fought so much, it led to him going to jail. Her mom just lay in bed all the time in the darkness. Charlie also had a sister named Jackie. Her family wasn't working out, so Charlie had to go to her mom's sister, Bertha and Bertha's husband, Gus. Charlie made wishes lots of times--making a wish at 11:11, when she finds a four-leaf clover, etc. At the end she gets letters from her mom and dad, who never did so before. What do you think the letter says? Will it make Charlie feel something?

Yoona is a 4th grader. She likes to read books and create stories. She also enjoys playing soccer.

Taeyoung's Book Review



A Secret Society

Title: *The Mysterious Benedict Society*
Author: Trenton Lee Stewart
Reynie Muldoon is a very intelligent boy. He is an eleven-year-old boy and lives at an orphanage. One day, he finds an advertisement in the newspaper. It says



Taeyoung K.

that if you pass the test, it will let you into a school. Reynie finds the test asking strange questions. He passes the test and meets three other children, Sticky (George) Washington, Kate Wetherall, and Constance Contraire who pass the test like him. Then, they meet Mr. Benedict. He tells them that "The Emergency" is coming from a secret institute that makes the world in danger. Now, they are on the mission to stop it. Will the four be able find the secret of "The Emergency" with Mr. Benedict? This book is written in third person perspective. I feel intrigued in the story more as it progresses. I recommend this book to those who have a thirst for adventure.

Taeyoung K. is a 6th grader. She loves reading books and writing her own stories. Also, she likes to draw and play video games.

Parent To Parent



Jodie Lynn

Research Tutor Options

Q. My fifth-grader is struggling in math and I'm not sure why. Before the pandemic, he made good grades in math. My sister has two middle school kids who are also having a difficult time in math. We've looked into tutors but they are expensive. What are some other alternatives to getting them help without breaking our budget?

A. There are several options to choose from that may help to keep you within your budget. For example, there are some brick and mortar facilities, online companies and even personal tutors that will give a group discount for two or more kids who sign up for their professional services. Asking the kids' teachers for their input should be a good place to start. Research your choices before making the best one. Unless you know someone who has personally used a company or a one-on-one tutor and can vouch for them, check references. Don't forget to also ask teachers at each school if anyone there tutors or if they have a friend that does. Recommendations from friends, family and professionals are almost always a good way to find just about anything you need. You might also call local colleges, specifically the junior colleges. After the kids start their tutoring, give it a little time to work out before rushing in and thinking that it's a lost cause. Once they connect with the new person, the new regimen will become the normal one and hopefully they'll be able to catch up.

No More Excuses

Q. We have three kids ages 7 to 10 that have weekly chores but are either too lazy to do them or have too many excuses or don't care about them. We are extremely tired of trying to get them to stay on a schedule and to get them motivated to be responsible for their assigned chores. How can we get them to follow through on what they're supposed to be doing around the house?

A. Write chores on "coupons," then fold and place them in a bowl or box. Let them choose a coupon to see who does what. It's a fun way to break the ice and get them started. Coupons can be worth a certain amount of points. Once they reach a total of a specific amount of points, they can choose an activity, treat or whatever.

Make a chore "spin" chart out of construction board or an old box. Write chores on the chart that you know each child can handle. Add a spinner, which would have a pointer that can be made out of various types of materials. Let each child spin to see which chore they will be responsible for.

Your kids probably use WiFi for their digital devices. Change the password until all chores are done which will inspire them to get their chores done pretty quickly.

These ideas will not only teach responsibilities but also math as well as perseverance.

You could even consider asking them for suggestions.

Allergies and Asthma

Q. We have three kids under the age of 10 who seem to always be coughing and sneezing and sometimes have a runny nose. We've asked their pediatrician about it but his answers are different during various times throughout the year. Other than taking them in for allergy shots, which two of the three have done to no avail, what's the difference between an air purifier and a humidifier, which he's also recommended?

A. Two of my children had allergies and asthma when they were younger. Both went to allergy specialists for four years each, so I've been through it and understand your concerns.

One required a cold air humidifier and the other a hot mist humidifier. Both had to have an air purifier.

As far as an allergy specialist not working for two of your children, it may be time to try a new one before giving up.

Allergist Dr. Clifford Bassett of New York, NY, is well aware that there has been an increase in allergies and asthma over the past several decades due to a wide array of possibilities including the "hygiene hypothesis," where children and parents are over-sanitizing their environment which leads to a decreased disease resistance, as well as many other attributes. His book, *The New Allergy Solution: Supercharge Resistance, Slash Medication, Stop Suffering*, may have information that would be helpful to you and your family.

In today's society, one of our challenges is the higher use of sanitizing, plus, there seems to be quite a bit more pollen each year in just about any state or city people live in; some are more prevalent than others.

With these two elements of change, it would only make sense that you should be constantly talking with your children's doctors to help get the best help for each one.

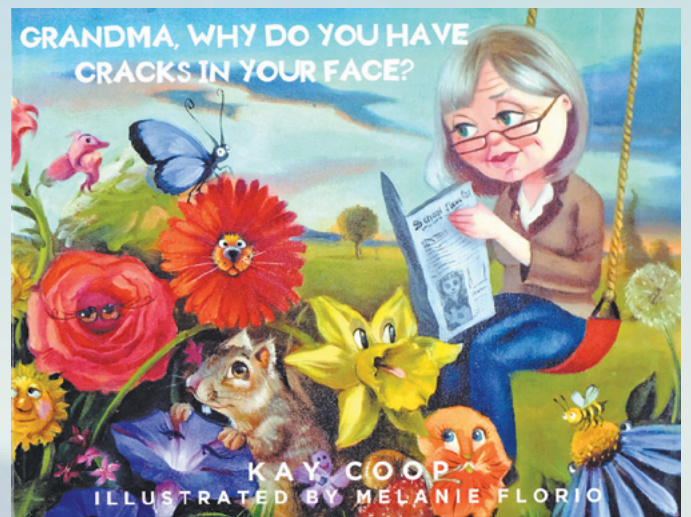
Jodie Lynn is an award winning, internationally syndicated family/health and education columnist and best selling author.

www.ParentToParent.com



Grandma, Why Do You Have Cracks In Your Face?

By Kay Coop
Illustrated by Melanie Florio



NOW AVAILABLE ON
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Grandma, Why Do You Have Cracks In Your Face? Is a question many grandmothers have heard from their grandchildren. When a grandchild finds her beautiful lost doll, she understands beauty is more than skin deep.