

FREE

# School News

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Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 67

JUNE 2016

## Celebrating Gold!



Dr. Sherry Kropp

Los Alamitos Unified School District is a Gold Ribbon District! Every school in our District has been recognized by the State of California as achieving Gold Ribbon Distinction. Ongoing

recognition takes the outstanding efforts of the entire school community: students, teachers, staff, parents, families, business partners, community members, alumni, and retirees. In addition, LAE received the Title I Academic Achievement Award and McGaugh received the Excellence in Arts Education Award. Last year, all of our secondary schools were recognized, which makes Los Al a Gold Ribbon District!

Our motto is Igniting Unlimited Possibilities in Academics, Athletics, Activities, and the Arts. To dream this big and prepare students to achieve their goals following graduation, we have to have a continued quest for excellence and ongoing improvement.



Representatives from all six of our elementary schools being recognized as Gold Ribbon Schools at County celebration.

We also need to continually celebrate our exemplary teachers, support staff, and student results:

- All schools California Distinguished Schools
- One of five Districts in the United States on the College Board's AP Honor Roll six years in a row
- Ninety-three National Merit Scholars in the last five years
- Ninety-two percent of graduates enroll in post-secondary education
- Over 160 Scholar Athletes in the last five years
- National Champion Song Team
- 277 Sunset League Championships and 19 CIF Championships
- Six-time National Champion Show Choir

- Hundreds of our students complete 100+ hours of community service before graduation

The list includes just a few of our students' accomplishments. We strive to have unparalleled preparation for college and career; provide safe, nurturing school environments; and help develop students' unique talents and abilities. We are fortunate to be led by visionary Board of Education members who believe that Los Al is a special place for kids and to be joined in our efforts by the entire District Community.

Thank you for creating a "one-of-a-kind experience" for our students.

## Serving Our Adult Students

By Karen Russell, President Board of Education

The Los Alamitos Unified School District Board of Education is committed to the vision of igniting unlimited possibilities for all students, including the full range of students we serve in Special Education. I have the additional privilege of serving as a representative Board Member for the Greater Anaheim Special Education Local Plan Area (GASELPA), which supports a consortium of five school districts' Special Education programs.

Twenty of our Los Al students are enrolled in our Adult Transition Program (ATP). This program is for students ages 18-22 with moderate to severe disabilities who do not earn a traditional high school



Sergio, Oscar, and Ryan learning on the job.

diploma. Our focus in ATP is to meet the students' individual needs in the area of community-based vocational skills, life skills, social skills, and functional academics. Our district classroom includes a simulated home environment to help students learn to take care of a home, cook, do laundry, etc. We also have a classroom at the Auxiliary, where students learn basic job skills.

One of the most exciting aspects of the program is the real-world work experiences our students receive within 10 local business and nonprofit settings. We appreciate our partnerships with these groups as they help students transition from public education to the world of adult life, college, and career.

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LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**SCHOOL NEWS ROLL CALL, LLC**  
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**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



Congratulations Class of 2016!

As this school year comes to a close I want to thank you for including *School News* among your reading choices. When you email your answers to our contests, I enjoy your comments and the pride you take in your schools and the community. The contests are open to all ages. We publish 30 *School News* publications posted on our web site [www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com) and you are welcome to enter all of the contests.

Our next issue is October 12.  
Have a wonderful summer!

## Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach

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### Understanding Minimally Invasive Surgery



**Fombe Ndiforchu, MD, MPH, MBA**  
Medical Director,  
Henry L. Guenther  
Foundation  
Pediatric Surgical  
Center,  
Miller Children's &  
Women's Hospital  
Long Beach

The possibility of your child requiring surgery can be daunting. Understanding the type of surgery your child needs and how it will benefit them is important. A number of procedures never thought possible are now minimally invasive, including surgeries done on the esophagus, hernia, tumors and more.

Traditionally, surgical procedures were performed through large incisions using "open" incision techniques. Whenever possible, surgical procedures are now being done through tiny incisions, often less than an inch long, using minimally invasive surgery, or "keyhole" techniques.

In most minimally invasive surgeries, a flexible camera and light-weight surgical instruments are introduced to the area requiring surgery through tiny incisions. Guided by greatly magnified images on a television monitor, surgeons may perform complex procedures less invasively.

The advantages of minimally invasive surgery are many, including:

- Less pain
- Shorter/eliminated overnight hospital stay
- Improved recovery times
- Minimized scarring

It also is important for your child undergoing surgery to understand what they will be experiencing. You can help by:

- Asking questions of your child's surgeon, anesthesiologist and nursing staff to better understand what your child will experience
- Speaking honestly about what will happen
- Listening to your child's concerns about surgery
- Touring the surgical unit with your child
- Encouraging your child to participate in medical play

Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach offers tips and a virtual tour of its Pediatric Surgical Center at [MillerChildrens.org/Surgery](http://MillerChildrens.org/Surgery).



## Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach

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From tip-top head to itty bitty toes, Miller Children's is the leader in getting kids better.

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Our specialty:  
**Minimally Invasive Surgery**

Elia's specialty:  
**Singing Sensation**

**Elia, 9-years-old,**  
Miller Children's  
Minimally Invasive  
Surgery Patient



# Leading the Robotics Charge!

By Carrie Logue, Executive Director

Did you know that the brand-new Los Alamitos High School Robotics Team won the Orange County FIRST Robotics Competition in April, which was the first competition they ever entered? The win qualified them for the 2016 FIRST Robotics Championship in April in St. Louis! Incredible news, but it created a problem for the team: How in such a short time would they be able to raise the funds to get there?

LAEF heard about the situation and happily stepped in to help. LAEF's board of directors approve a donation of \$10,000 to fund the team's trip to the championship tournament, which was supported by a local at \$1,000, a charity at \$1,000 and an eye-care business at \$500.

In addition, the Robotics Team was in desperate need of tools. A steel supplier stepped up in a huge way by providing the team with nearly \$1,000 in brand-new tools! A hardware store invited the team on a shopping trip to acquire additional tools and supplies free of charge!

"I am so excited for the Robotics Team's trip to the championship tournament! This is an extremely talented group of students who are establishing a team that will endure at LAHS for many years to come," said LAEF executive director Carrie Logue. "I am thrilled with the LAEF board's decision to provide funds and with the amazing local businesses and organizations that heeded the call to support the Robotics Team!"



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### A High-Quality Preschool Program



**Kelly Rowe**  
Child Development  
Coordinator/  
Early Learning  
Specialist

All preschool programs are not created equal. In order to know if the preschool you have chosen is a high-quality program, check for the following factors.

Does the preschool follow developmentally appropriate curriculum and practices that are based on knowledge of the stages of child development? The preschool should emphasize several aspects: active exploration of the environment; self-directed and hands-on learning activities; a balance between individual and group activities; regular and supportive interaction with well-trained teachers; positive interaction with peers; and a balance between active movement and quiet activities.

Research shows that young children learn best through active, engaged, and meaningful learning. To maximize their learning, preschool environments should allow students to manipulate real objects and learn through hands-on, direct experiences. The curriculum should provide opportunities for children to explore, reflect, and interact with other children and adults.

Varied instructional strategies should be used to meet the learning needs of all children. By providing a wide variety of ways to learn, a preschool program can help children with various learning styles to develop. This also allows children to view learning in many new ways.

There should be a balance between teacher-directed and child-directed activities. Teacher-directed activities involve the teacher as a facilitator who models learning strategies or gives guided instruction in a large or small group setting. Child-directed activities allow the child to be responsible for his or her own learning through play and direct experiences.

An integrated curriculum combines many subject areas into a cohesive unit of study that is meaningful to children. Quality programs use a thematic approach that motivates children to investigate interesting ideas from several perspectives, which becomes a catalyst for developing concepts, generalization, and skills.

A high-quality program will provide learning centers set up as independent stations throughout the classroom and adequate time for outside play, where children can engage in learning activities. Learning centers provide children with opportunities to choose and be responsible for their own learning. They also learn to cooperate with others, do real-life problem solving, and engage successfully in activities at their developmental and skill levels.

In a high-quality preschool program, there is an understanding that each child is unique and each child's experiences should match his or her developmental abilities and understanding. The Los Alamitos Child Development Center has all these qualities and can provide your child with a successful transition from toddlerhood to kindergarten. If you are looking for a wonderful preschool experience for your three- or four-year-old, please contact us at (562) 799-4585 for more information.

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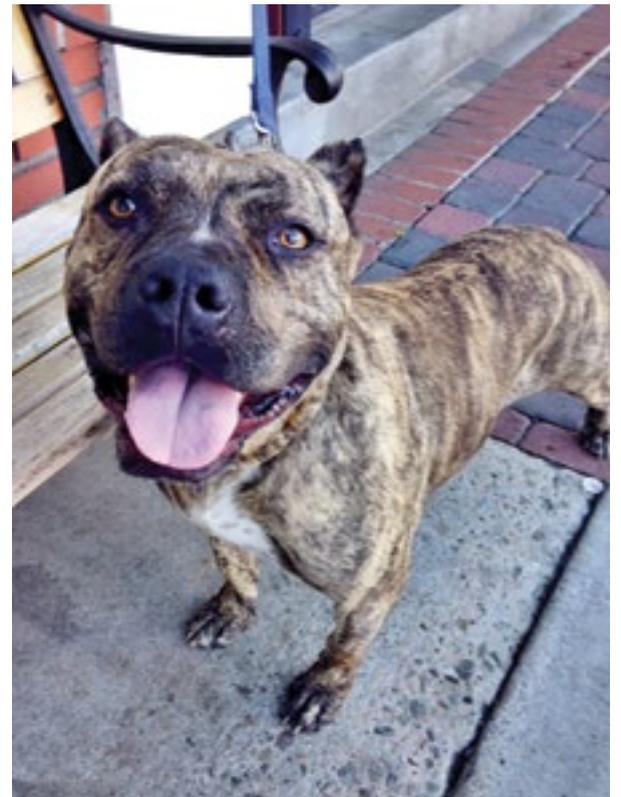
### Tiger Lilly Needs a Home

By Murlyn E. Burkes, Cat Committee Liaison

Tiger Lilly is just about one of the sweetest dogs ever. She was adopted by a gentleman from a high kill shelter but had to be returned because his parents wouldn't allow a dog in the home. She was then rescued out by a volunteer and brought to Seal Beach.

Tiger Lilly gets along well with other dogs, loves kids, car rides and squeaky toys. She will clean your face with lots of licks and she loves a belly rub anytime that she can get one! She will make a wonderful companion and will keep you company while watching TV. She might even let you share the remote once in a while.

Drop by the shelter and look for the stunning brindle-looking sweetie! She won't disappoint you.



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# Hopkinson *Elementary*

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**Evelyn Garcia**  
Principal

## Spreading Kindness

Hopkinson's Fifth-Grade Leadership Council made a huge impact on our school community by hosting "Positive Post-It Wednesday" for the four Wednesdays in May. In an effort to spread kindness among our school community, we encouraged everyone to participate. Our hope is that this will serve as a lesson that demonstrates the ease of increasing kindness in our world.

Post-It stations were available before school in the Upper Grade, Lower Grade, and Kindergarten Playgrounds for parents, staff members, and students to write a kind note! The notes were placed on doors, desks, or even handed to individuals.

This project has served to support our students during state testing, thank teachers and staff members for their hard work, and bring smiles to many. What our Huskies have discovered is that it is not only rewarding to receive a note, but writing one is just as gratifying. This is a small gesture that goes a long way!



Hopkinson students writing positive notes

# Lee *Elementary*

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**Amy Laughlin**  
Principal

## Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Creativity, design, innovation, and entrepreneurial endeavors captivate the students at Lee Elementary School. Each spring, fifth-graders participate in a problem-based learning activity, collaborating in teams to design and produce innovative products to sell at Business Day.

Students work through the engineering process to imagine, plan, create, and improve their ideas and make them into reality. During this process, students conduct market research by interviewing staff and students about their needs and preferences. Cost analysis is completed to identify potential risks and gains that will come from their venture. Business Day also brings the Lee community together, as all students have the opportunity to visit booths and buy student-created items.

Business Day has added both rigor and relevance to our curriculum. Students discover the concept of supply and demand in a market economy, develop persuasive skills, enhance their communication abilities, and improve their ability to calculate percentages. Business Day delivers an exciting challenge and sparks enthusiasm that is remembered for years to come!



# Los Alamitos *Elementary*

10862 Bloomfield St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 714/816-3300 • www.losal.org



**Dr. Sunghie Okino**  
*Principal*

## The CUE National Conference

Dr. Trisha Callella (director of educational technology), Dr. Sunghie Okino (principal), Mrs. Denise Fielden (fifth-grade teacher), Mr. Alex Ordonez (Media Center teacher), and Mrs. Wendy Perrizo (first- and second-grade teacher) presented Los Alamitos Elementary School's Maker Space model at the national CUE conference.

This conference is the largest and oldest education technology conference in California, and among the largest in the United States. As the lead Maker Space school in Los Alamitos, the LAE team shared their learnings with almost 400 attendees in their session.

LAE students are creating prototypes and experiencing the engineering design process as well as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) both in the classroom and in Maker Space in new and different ways. As other schools and districts look to establishing Maker Spaces of their own, LAE's model is of high interest to educators.

"In exchange," commented Dr. Okino, "the team walked away from the conference with some exciting new thoughts and ideas to share and try."



# Los Alamitos *High School*

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**Dr. Brandon Martinez**  
*Principal*

## A World-Class Education

The school year is coming to a close, and Los Al continues in full "Four A" mode!

Several hundred students have signed up to take over 2,000 AP exams. Our teachers have been preparing them to demonstrate their mastery of a wide range of AP courses, topics, and content. Students in the performing and visual arts have been busy with drama by performing a production of *Animal Farm*. The Show Choir has also been winning nationals in Nashville, Tennessee, and Chicago, Illinois.

New clubs have formed as well, including Robotics, Coding, and 3D Printing. Several students in photography will have their work on professional display for a special exhibit, and our students in dance are preparing for their final shows.

Softball also continues to be ranked in the top ten in Orange County and nationally. Varsity track and field, swim, golf, and tennis earned several individual Sunset League Championships, and the varsity boys swim and varsity girls track teams won league titles.

Among the many club activities, Los Al's very own Model United Nations Club (MUN) hosted a first-ever MUN conference and competition called GriffMUN that featured over 40 schools.

We are proud of all of our students, and thankful for all of our teachers as well. This goes especially for the seniors, who have had a world-class education and will be graduating on June 16 to begin the next stage of their lives.

# McGaugh *Elementary*

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**Dr. Jerry Gargus**  
*Principal*

## An Award-Winning Year

This has truly been a spectacular year at McGaugh Elementary School, and I am thankful for this opportunity to share some of our accomplishments. Earlier this spring, the McGaugh community was excited to learn that our school had earned recognition by the California Department of Education (CDE) as a 2016 Gold Ribbon School, as were each of the elementary schools in Los Alamitos Unified School District (LAUSD). We would like to congratulate all of our sister schools in LAUSD, as well as the other schools receiving this award across the state.

McGaugh received supplemental recognition for having an exemplary arts program, and we were honored to be invited by CDE to perform the National Anthem and two pieces from the 34th Annual Pageant of the Arts program at the Southern California Regional Gold Ribbon School Awards Reception on May 10. These two awards are reflective of the commitment that our teachers, community, and leadership team share in providing students with an education that ignites unlimited possibilities.

In addition to these state-level awards, McGaugh's PTA recently recognized a number of community members with Honorary Service Awards (HSA). Our parents and community members volunteer countless hours, and I am thrilled to share that this year's HSA recipients are Brian Buchholz, Bob Kunkel, the Seal Beach Police Department, Megan Sorenson, Leanne Voigt, and Jane Westall. These special honorees contribute to our school by volunteering in classrooms, running and supporting PTA programs, and helping to make McGaugh a special place for students.

I couldn't be prouder of our many successes this year!



## Congratulations Class of 2016!

# McAuliffe *Middle School*

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**Ann Allen**  
*Principal*

## Jazz Festival

The McAuliffe Middle School Jazz Band, under the direction of Mr. Chuck Wackerman, has participated in the prestigious Reno Jazz Festival for over forty years! As part of the middle school division, our students rose to the challenge by competing against twenty-nine bands from across the country.

Combo II students placed 5th, with Outstanding Musicianship awards given to Nathan Mai and Justin Rush. Combo I students placed 4th, with Outstanding Musicianship awards given to Max Guardi, Grace Ingram and Henry Ross. And McAuliffe's Big Band, in 5th place overall, earned special recognition for both the Flute and Rhythm Sections in addition to Outstanding Musicianship awards being given to Rahul Chavan, Max Kass, and Nathan Mai.

These incredible results would not be possible without the support and dedication of students, staff, and parents. Kudos to McAuliffe Jazz!



# Oak *Middle School*

10821 Oak St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4740 • www.losal.org



**Erin Kominsky**  
*Principal*

## First As Makers!

In May, students Owen Ryan and Sajaad Samed won the first-place level 4 prototype at the OC Maker Challenge, a competition designed to promote engineering and innovation. Contestants from middle school through community college participated; a level 4 project was at the highest level of competition—and our students triumphed! The students and their teacher, Seann Schiele, were honored at a local science center.

Our team of engineers went from design through videotaping their working prototype: the RADI (Radiation, Amplitude, Detector Implement), a portable device that measures the amount of light radiation that people are exposed to daily. This award solidifies Oak's Engineering and Makerspace as an innovative classroom where students can create new products, collaborate, problem-solve, and pursue dreams outside a traditional classroom setting.

This is Project Lead the Way and Maker Space curriculum's first year. The program is equipped with tons of tools to help our students make their ideas come to life!



## Rossmoor *Elementary*

3272 Shakespeare Dr., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4520 • www.losal.org



**Kiva Spiratos**  
Principal

### Celebrating and Supporting Others

A large focus for Rossmoor School is the acceptance and inclusiveness of all individuals. April was Autism Awareness Month, and our Rossmoor Knights used this opportunity to celebrate and bring awareness and education about the broad range of individuals with autism. They also celebrated individuals who have any circumstance or behavior which requires additional compassion, acceptance and support.

Students engaged in education and conversations centered upon individuals with autism. They also discussed disabilities which are visible and not visible, and the need of those with different abilities to be accepted, supported, and included in the classroom and the community.

In addition, our Rossmoor Knights supported the Bronze Medal campaign for one of our Girl Scout troops by collecting travel toiletries for a neighboring program to assist families who are homeless. The Rossmoor Knights are leaders, and we strive to build leadership through acts of understanding, compassion, and inclusiveness within our community.



## Weaver *Elementary*

11872 Wembley Rd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4580 • www.losal.org



**Robert Briggerman**  
Principal

### Keep Cognitively Fit During Summer!

It's that time of year again! Summer is a great time to relax and enjoy going to the beach, camping, barbecuing, and spending time with family and friends. It's also a great time to keep your child's brain active. Take a book with you to the beach. Spend some time at local museum while visiting with family out of state. Practice a foreign language when traveling abroad. There are all types of fun activities to keep the mind active when relaxing during the summer months, and research indicates that students transition to the next grade much more quickly and successfully when their minds have been actively engaged over the summer.

If you're looking for more formal learning activities, you may want to consider some of the following suggestions:

This summer, the Los Alamitos Unified Summer School will be held at Los Alamitos Elementary. The Los Alamitos Educational Foundation is offering their Summer Enrichment Institute at Lee Elementary for all students.

Endless learning opportunities are available for students through parks and rec classes and individual student camps. In addition, many local colleges and universities provide summer learning programs for elementary students.

Summer is also an opportune time to complete the annual PTA Reflections Art Contest. Projects will be due in early September. This year's theme is "What Is Your Story?" Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/PTA-Reflections-Art-Contest> for specific details.

No matter what your summer plans are, keeping students cognitively active as part of your routine will support a healthy transition to the next grade level.

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## Note-ables

# Explorer of the World



Kate Karp

One fine day—and in her world, every day contains something fine—children's singer/songwriter Frances England packed up her family and drove around San Francisco, her home town, to play a game that involved counting everyone looking down at their mobile devices instead of up and around at the neighborhoods. Unsurprisingly, the players lost count.

But there was a winner—it's this collection of original songs about looking and seeing, hearing and listening, and feeling in every literal sense. *Explorer of the World* is an invitation, perhaps even a dare, to connect in a real way to the real world. It's also a template to do your own projects with children in your life—there's a book available at frances.England.com.

The collection is a commingling of sounds England “found” after two years of street and sidewalk searching; sprightly, catchy melody lines; and instrumentation from the expected to the uncommon, like bucket drums and melodicas. Know what a beatboxer is? If you've seen people on the sidewalk looking like they're lip-synching to a percussion ensemble and it turns out that the sounds are actually coming from their own lips and larynges, you'll know and will appreciate England's “Ballad for a Beatboxer,” backed up by rhythms from her friend and accomplished beatboxer Carlos Aguirre. “All the Things I've Found” describes the wonder of familiarity in cast-off objects like bottle caps and shopping lists; “Street Life” sings of the less-tangible things.

Ever wish for wonder in your own world? It's there for you. First, put down the phone.

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

# Curious George Goes to the Zoo—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](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) (Please put LAUSD in the subject line)

Entries must be received by July 15, 2016

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

- |         |              |           |
|---------|--------------|-----------|
| Amazing | Giraffe      | Water     |
| Animals | Headquarters | Wild      |
| Climbed | Hippo        | Wonderful |
| Curious | Leaves       | Zoo       |
| Danced  | Park         | Zookeeper |
| Fun     | Party        |           |
| George  | Rhino        |           |

Congratulations to  
**Jamisen and Emily Penick**  
 Winner of the April Word Search Contest!



## Indian Hills Camp



**Marissa Aldegarie**

In April, Girl Scout Troop 602 attended the Indian Hills Camp in Jamal for two nights. We participated in many cool activities, like zip lining, hiking, making crafts such as Dream Catchers, and playing human foosball.

The Camp even had a petting zoo and an awesome 50-foot slide!

Our troop created a funny skit, and we performed it at night during the campout. We also roasted marshmallows and made s'mores over the fire pit while we told stories and sang songs.

There were 122 Girl Scouts at the Camp. We traded small tokens of friendship called SWAPS (Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere). It is a tradition to exchange these tokens when meeting other Girl Scouts while we travel. It's a fun way of meeting new people. Overall, we had a blast at Camp, and it was a great outdoor experience!



**Lauryn, Savannah, Phoebe, Summer, Marissa, and Payton**

## Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Branch Library

12700 Montecito Rd., Seal Beach CA 90740 • 562/430-1048 • www.ocpl.org

### Are You Up for a Challenge This Summer?



**Sean Whittle**  
Branch Manager

It's that time of the year again. Summer reading! And for the first time we are introducing an online aspect to the program. Traditionally the program is paper-based, and that isn't going anywhere, but we've added an online aspect that functions like a game in which you complete sections, achieve goals, and receive rewards. What we're encouraging is for everyone to participate in both aspects of the program. They complement each other and provide rewards in unique ways.

In addition we've rebranded our program as the "Summer Reading Challenge". We're inviting the public to take part in a challenge. The question is, will you rise to the challenge?

On that theme of challenge, I want to challenge all our adults out there to encourage summer reading and use of the library amongst their friends, family members, and online contacts. First, do this through personal example. Actions speak louder than words, right? We also have an adult summer program that is simple and yet an enjoyable way to read and try for prizes. Next, just spread the word and mention how fun it is. This is how the reluctant are reached. Really, if you're reluctant to read, the library is the best gig in town during the summer. Everything is geared toward fun with no coercion involved. Many have started their journey of imagination during a summer reading event.

So to sum up, we're kicking off our Summer Reading Challenge on June 20th. We're going to have programs, prizes, and fun galore. Who is for? For "kids from one to ninety-two" (or older!), in the words of Nat King Cole. We've got an online aspect we're encouraging you to do as well <http://ocpl.readingbydesign.org/>. Participate. Spread the word. Read, have fun, and enjoy your summer. See you at the library!

## Keira's Book Nook

### An Emotional Adventure

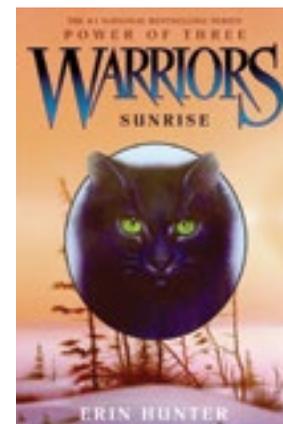


**Keira**

*Power of Three Warriors Series:  
Sunrise* by Erin Hunter

I really recommend reading the Warriors series. This amazing adventure filled book is about three cats, Lionblaze, Jayfeather and Hollyleaf who want to learn who their real parents are. However when they do, the lies being unfolded

is not good news! One or more warriors may be lost forever in the drama of battle. Hollyleaf is so frustrated she strikes out at someone she used to admire. Jayfeather and Lionblaze have their parents to worry about and worry if they are still the three from the prophecy. Yet one question has not been answered, and the answer may destroy the clans altogether. This is a great book in the series! I rate it 5 out of 5 apples.



Keira Fukuwa is a fourth grader. Besides reading, she enjoys soccer, jazz dance, crafts and cooking. Keira rates books 1-5 apples with 5 the best.

**Have a fun summer and remember to include reading among your activities!**





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