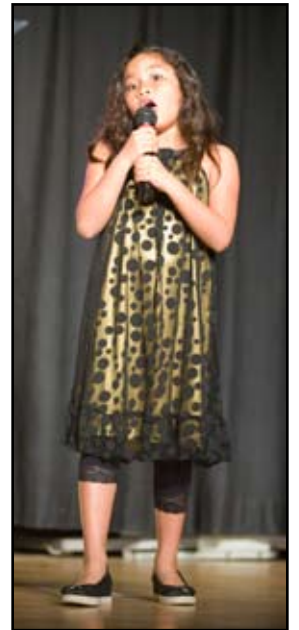


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Stars in Our Eyes

Students did everything they could -- sang, danced, hula hoop-ed, pogo sticked, joked, played instruments, and more – to entertain at the annual Talent Show. For more photos see pages 6 and 8.

Science: It's Elementary Tripi: 'With Our Dedication to Teaching Science, We Could Be A Science Magnet School'

By Donna Tripi, Principal

As I speak with prospective parents about the rich academic program La Jolla Elementary School has to offer our children, I always add, "with the amount and quality of our science program, we could be a science magnet school." Professionals from the district's Science Department, who have visited our classrooms, concur. This year that is truer than ever as our new science adoption materials require that we teach expanded science units in grades 3-5. In this issue of the Tidings, I hope to give you some insights into our science instruction, K-5.

Our teachers have received much professional development work in the area of science. Almost every teacher on our site (who teaches science) has attended a workshop run by the district in each of the science content areas (earth science, physical science, life science) at their grade level. In addition, our resident science experts, Cathy Wallace (primary grades) and Debbie Balmat (upper grades) have worked with our teachers in on-site professional development. The focus of this professional

work in science is on the inquiry-based method of teaching science. Research tells us that students will come to a deeper level of understanding of science concepts through inquiry – exploration of key questions related to large concepts we want all children to know and understand. In this model, students also develop their own

See Tripi, Page 6

Ten Reasons Why You Should Attend The Gala

1. Have Fun
2. Support Your Kids' Education
3. Meet New Friends
4. Catch Up With Old Friends
5. Win Something Big—It's Vegas Baby!
6. Purchase Your Vacation For Next Year
7. Buy Your Wife That Piece Of Jewelry She's Always Wanted
8. Buy Your Wife That Handbag She's Always Wanted
9. Reserve That Fishing Trip With The Guys For Yourself
10. Have Fun



Living History

Morgan Ezeir stands in a hut like those built by Kumayaay Indians during the 1600s. She was among the 4th graders who spent a week recently exploring Old Town. For more photos, see page 7.

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New Art Partner Program Debuts

A moody Monet? A provocative Picasso? A realistic Renoir? Who knew our kids were so talented? Well, we did!

By Sandra Munson

PTO LJES is pleased to announce the new Art Partners program. Art Partners is simple: Local businesses display LJES student artwork for sale and benefit from increased foot traffic and customer loyalty from our school families. The proceeds of the sales will be returned to the school to finance more art creation.

Mary Ann Vitale, the owner of the Sorella café, has happily agreed to fill her walls with masterpieces created by LJES artists. By doing so, she hopes to create a friendly and welcoming community feel.

The first exhibit of matted "Little Artist" pieces went on display a few weeks ago. Two walls were filled with colorful works of art. All are for sale for \$25, and several have sold already. The proceeds will be returned to the school via the LJES PTO and poured into buying more art supplies and materials.

Drop by Sorella, which is on Girard Avenue across the street from the school auditorium, for a bite to eat or a drink and enjoy the vibrant display.

Students whose work is selected for the Little Artists program will receive a letter in their folders notifying their parents that their piece has been selected for display. Make sure you pass the good news on to friends and family quickly, so they don't miss out on an opportunity to buy the art for themselves.

While you are looking at the art in Sorella, ask about the new cooking class for kids. It will be offered from 3:45 p.m. to 5:15 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays during the month of March. The first session will focus on teaching children how to cook "fast, nutritious and healthy foods." Kids will be taught



Sorella, a café on Girard Avenue, is featuring art works by LJES students. The works are offered for sale, and proceeds are returned to the school to purchase art supplies. Photo by Sandra Munson.

how to prepare simple dishes (without knives) and then be able to re-create them at home.

The Pannikin coffee shop has also committed to participate in Art Partners, and a display may be up by May.

Thank you to Mary Ann Vitale of Sorella for her dedication to this program, Jennifer Snyder for bringing this idea to life and to our art teachers, Sonya Divine, Avril Butbul and Susan Rothman, for developing the inner artist in our children.

Ms. Munson is the mother of Julia, 3rd grade, and Jack, Kindergarten.

Thank you to...

- Robin Whaley and her crew of Sandra Munson, Kelly Sinkeldam, Cindy Hickman, Jean Steel, Pilar Gimbar, Kelly Wiskus, William "Angel" Garcia and Denise Parnell for producing another amazing Talent Show.
- Gary Katz for recording the Talent Show and donating all proceeds to the LJES PTO.

Upcoming Events

- **Wednesday, March 11th**
 Readers are Leaders
 Principal's Chat, 11:30 a.m. LJES Auditorium
- **Saturday, March 14th**
 St. Patrick's Day inspired Celtic music concert for the whole family, 2 p.m., La Jolla Library on Draper Ave.
- **March 16th-20th**
 Minimum Days, Parent-Teacher conferences
- **March 28**
 LJES Gala and Auction, 6 p.m., La Jolla Marriott
- **April 17th**
 Family Science Night

Advertise in Tidings

To place an ad in the Tidings, please contact Sharon Jones at 858-456-2039 or sharonlj@san.rr.com. Rates: \$75 business card size (3.5" x 2"), \$100 quarter page (3.75" x 5"), \$175 half page (7.5" x 5"), \$300 full page (7.5" x 10"). Checks should be made out to LJES PTO, Inc., and mailed or dropped off at the school office: 1111 Marine St., La Jolla, CA 92037, attention Sharon Jones. Or you can pay via the online store on the school's website (www.sandi.net/ljes). Payment must be received PRIOR to publication. Ads must be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Submit ad graphics in digital format, either as a postscript file or a 300 dpi (minimum) raster image. Email lisastarr@cox.net if you have questions about formatting.



Teacher Feature

Have a Ball With Coach Chelsea McKellar

By Barbara Hagey

Get ready to play Commando Ball. No, it isn't the latest Nintendo craze and you won't find it on your Wii. In fact, Coach Chelsea McKellar is on a mission to show LJES kids that the games you play outdoors are every bit as fun as the ones on the screen, and a whole lot healthier. In Commando Ball, two teams try to knock down each other's bowling pins with rubber balls. It has proven to be an elementary school favorite.

Ms. McKellar grew up in Michigan in a family who loved the outdoors. She was quite active as a kid, spending her free time camping, skiing and snowmobiling. "P.E. was always my favorite subject and I really looked forward to Field Day each year," she recalled. Her father coached her childhood softball team, and in high school she played basketball, volleyball and softball. She attended Central Michigan University where she received her degree in P.E. with a minor in Health, and also played on the university softball team. "I had a fantastic coach in college," she said. "She had a positive attitude and an incredible work ethic. She taught us to work hard and to be supportive of each other – to cheer each other on." McKellar tries to instill this same sense of respectful sportsmanship in her students. When teaching gymnastics recently, she reminded the class, "It's hard for your classmates to get up in front of everyone to demonstrate a move, so be sure to encourage each other."



Coach Chelsea McKellar helps students master the physical challenges of various sports – and to support each other's efforts. Photo by Barbara Hagey.

Coach Chelsea McKellar is happy to see several LJES teachers incorporating physical activity into the daily routine with laps around the playground or races across the field on the way back from snack time.

Ms. McKellar moved to San Diego from Michigan this past August. She teaches at LJES on Wednesdays and Thursdays and at Lee and Longfellow elementary schools the remaining days of the week. She is happy to see several LJES teachers incorporating physical activity into the daily routine with laps around the playground or races across the field on the way back from snack time. "There are so many benefits to physical activity, including increased alertness

and mental focus," she said. The most important things she tries to convey to her students in the limited time she has each week are safety, good sportsmanship, and to "just get out there and have fun."

In addition to coaching, McKellar works at the Outback Steakhouse in Mission Valley. This leaves her with little free time, but when she does have time off she enjoys relaxing with friends, playing volleyball and going to the beach. "I'd love to coach a softball or volleyball team at some point," she said.

If you have a question or suggestion, Coach McKellar would love to hear from you. You can contact her at cmckellar@hotmail.com. Or you can try to catch her when you see her on campus. Just be ready – you might get recruited for Commando Ball.

Ms. Hagey is the mother of Carolee, a second grader. To submit an idea for a Teacher Feature, email her at bhagey@pisces.cts.com.



Need a Vacation?

If you attend the March 28th gala, you will have the opportunity to bid on live auction items such as these two vacation homes. On the left is the view from a waterfront home in the Mayan Riviera. Jack and Jill Nooren have donated four nights in this villa, which sleeps up to 10. Retail value is \$3,720. For more info, see www.villa-paradise.com. On the right is the view from a two-level,



three bedroom, three bath (sleeps 9) vacation home right off Zicatela Beach in Puerto Escondido, home of the famous Mexican Pipeline. Donated by Phillip and Erica Baltazar, this home features an open living room with views of the Pacific, the Point surf break and in the distance, the town of Puerto Escondido. The home is part of a private resort and sits on an ecological reserve. The estimated cost for a week's stay is \$3,500.



Interested in Politics? Get Active at Your School or Church and Find a Cause

By Paola Avila
Political Consultant

On the heels of the inauguration of our new president, excitement is replaced with continued concerns over the economy, budget deficits and possible cuts to education funds. This has increased our awareness of the issues and how our elected officials' decisions directly affect us. We have all received emails asking us to contact our elected officials to advocate for continued funding for our children's education in hopes that we will be well represented and they will make the right decisions, but do you want to do more?

Do you have an interest in politics? Have you ever thought about running for office and having the power to ensure that what you believe in is protected or change what you see needs changing?

There are several leaders at our school who would be great elected officials. If you think it is not possible, think again. Many elected officials got their start by getting involved in their local

'Many elected officials got their start by getting involved in their local planning group, school board or PTA/O Board.'

planning group, school board or PTA/O Board. We may have a future school board member, councilmember, assembly member or mayor, among us!

If you have thought about getting involved in local politics but don't know where to start, here are just a few ideas to get started.

First, you must obtain the ingredients to be a good candidate: Experience, Record of Accomplishment, A network of support, A platform (what do you stand for?).

Then you will need to obtain or increase your government experience, build a base of support, create or increase name recognition; beef up your track record of accomplishments (both personal and professional), and build relationships with current elected officials and other civic and community leaders.

How do you do this? It's quite simple. Start attending local planning group meetings, become a member first then work on getting elected to one of the seats. If you live in La Jolla, you may want to attend the following: La Jolla Community Planning Association: <http://www.lajollacpa.org/>

You could also attend your local Town Council meetings, become a member and then serve on the Town Council. La Jolla Town Council's website is: www.lajollatowncouncil.org

You might volunteer to serve on a City Board or Commission (go to Boards and Commissions page at www.sandiego.gov)

You should attend government meetings (City Council, San Diego Unified School District Board) and testify on issues you care about.

What groups do you belong to already or can you join or increase your participation in? Here are a few examples: PTO, playgroups, parent clubs; non-profit boards/organizations; ethnic or cultural associations; alumnae associations; church/parish/temple groups; professional associations; business and political associations (Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, Soroptimist Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, Lincoln Club, SD Democratic Club, SD Taxpayers Assn, etc.); and environmental associations, such as Sierra Club, League of Conservation Voters, etc.

Build relationships with elected officials and community leaders by volunteering in a political campaign; attending civic events, rallies, community forums, fund raisers; and helping out in politicians' pet community projects.




Paola Avila

Even if the highest elected office you seek is a seat at the local planning group or even our PTO, you are making a difference.

'You will need to obtain or increase your government experience, build a base of support, create or increase name recognition; beef up your track record of accomplishments (both personal and professional), and build relationships with current elected officials and other civic and community leaders.'

Ms. Avila is mother of Simona, in Kindergarten, and Isabella, who is in 5th grade at another school. She is the founder of AB Consulting and Development and runs political campaigns for individuals as well as ballot initiatives, locally and statewide. She also is a lobbyist for various clients in land use, zoning and entitlements.

She can be reached at avilaavila_7@msn.com.

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District Faces Deep Budget Cuts for 2009-2010

San Diego Unified will lose \$33.2 million in expected funding for the current fiscal year, according to the latest estimates from the San Diego Unified School District.

The estimates were based on final budget reductions approved by the state legislature on Feb. 18 and signed by the Governor on Feb. 20.

"We are hopeful that President (Barack) Obama's economic stimulus may provide some relief during the next two years but, until Congress acts, we cannot count on a federal stimulus to bail us out of this very difficult budget situation," Terry Grier said in a news release issued Feb. 19. "Three actions have been directed by the Board which will

help the district manage our finances during the remainder of the budget year. The Board and the Superintendent are committed to this process as a way to avoid staff reductions."

The cuts approved by the San Diego Unified Board on Feb. 10 will cover the estimated \$33.2 million reduction in state funding for the remainder of the school year. These cuts included a hiring freeze, delaying purchasing major items from the district's general fund, and adjustments to the workers' compensation fund and reserves.

The Board is currently holding public workshops on the budget for the next school year, which must be submitted to the state by July 1. Current

estimates are that the district will experience an additional \$63.1 million cut for the 2009-2010 school year.

"Our goals are to keep these cuts as far away from the classroom as possible," said Sheila Jackson, President of the Board of Education. "We are looking at innovative ways to become more efficient and protect our children's education. Our contribution to the local stimulus package is to keep our San Diegans working.

"We want to make this district a lean, mean, education machine."

This article is based on a SDUSD news release.

What Can You Do To Help Public Schools?

- Let local legislators know that you oppose cuts in education.
- Organize community events to speak out against budget cuts.
- Send letters to the editor of local newspapers.
- Attend school board meetings and let trustees know what programs you support.
- Explain to your friends/neighbors/parents why public schools need support.



Students line up according to their last name at pickup, part of new procedures aimed at improving safety.

Kelly's Column

Sugar: It's Everywhere

By Kelly Wiskus
P.E. Teacher

February was a month filled with Fitness through various games that focused on cardiovascular endurance (including listening to each other's heartbeats through paper towel-roll stethoscopes), muscular strength and flexibility. For Valentine's Day students made heart cards that expressed their favorite physical activities and what part(s) of the body benefitted the most from that activity. In March the 5th graders will be taking the district wide Fitnessgram test and we will also be working on manipulatives across all grade levels, which means we get to play with paddles, scoops and street hockey!

Sugar: It's everywhere! Did you know that there are 20 different kinds of sugars that are added to many of the foods we eat? Sugar also comes in the forms of: raw sugar, invert sugar, brown sugar, corn sweetener, fruit juice concentrate, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, malt syrup, rice syrup, crystalline fructose, dextrose, maltodextrin, fructose, maltose, glucose, sucrose, molasses and honey.

The recommended daily allowance (RDA) for natural sugar is 8 teaspoons per day, however most Americans consume about 30 teaspoons of added sugar (not natural) every day. That number translates to an extra 500 calories per day and 100 pounds per year-yikes! Besides sweets, added sugars can be found in other foods such as frozen dinners (2 teaspoons), whole grain cereals (5 teaspoons) and flavored yogurts (8 teaspoons).

A diet high in sugar has many negative health effects including decreased brain function & energy and increased risk for diabetes.

Here are some tips for decreasing your sugar intake: Check the food labels. If sugar is listed as one of the first 3 ingredients or has several of the disguised names for sugar in the list, that is an indicator of a food high in sugar. You can also cut your intake by reducing the amount of sugar used in cooking. If you have a "sweet tooth" don't be afraid to treat yourself, but remember to monitor portion size and, of course, keep up with regular exercise and eating a balanced diet, too.

Ms. Wiskus can be reached at kwiskus@sandi.net.



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► Tripi: Don't Miss Family Science Night

continued from page 1

questions based on their experiences and generate their own continuing research and experimentation. As we begin a unit, students will be asked to access their prior knowledge on a topic. They will then embark on a study in which they research and explore key questions on broad science concepts. Experiments build the knowledge base day by day. Students are asked to extend their learning through further questions, research and experimentation. Students learn to articulate science concepts orally and write about them in their science notebooks.

All students in grades K-5 experience three science units each year. The units are designed to address the California Science standards in earth science, physical science and life science. Teachers utilize Foss (Full Option Science System) kits for hands-on experimentation, science texts provided with the system and other nonfiction texts and Internet resources for their work with the students on these units. At lower grades the science units are approximately 4-6 weeks in duration and alternate with social studies units throughout the course of the year. In grades 3-5, the units have been expanded and are closer to eight weeks in duration.

Four years ago, we added a fourth unit at all grade levels. The MARE program, developed at UC Berkeley, Lawrence Hall of Science, is designed to teach students a life science unit on marine biology. All of our students explore an area of aquatic life (ponds, rocky seashores, sandy seashores, wetlands, kelp forest or open oceans) at the end of the school year for a three-week period.

Students in all grades keep a form of science notebook. In Kindergarten, this may be a whole class book on what the students learned in their unit or booklets that go with each unit. From first grade through fifth grade, the students are asked to keep documentation of their experimentation, observations, conclusions and extension questions. Teachers also have assessments through each unit designed to measure the students' acquisition of key concepts and district benchmarks at the end of each unit. Teachers use performance measures as well – setting up new experiments and asking students to apply concepts and explain their thinking. Teachers at grades 2 and beyond also require students to research and present topics in science throughout the year.

We have had a partnership with Rendezvous Science Center for the last two years and have been fortunate to be able to bring after school science programs to students who enjoy the challenge.



Members of the LJES staff opened this year's Talent Show with a hilarious dance routine led by coach Kelly Wiskus. For more photos, see page 1 and 8.

Each year approximately 75 students take extra science at their grade level on Tuesday afternoons throughout the year. The past two years, we have offered a summer science program as well.

Each year for the last six years, we have hosted a Family Science Night as a PTO Family Event. Our love of science emerges even in our family events! Organized by teacher, Debbie Balmat, this year's event, scheduled for April 17th, promises to be another wonderful experience. We will be doing favorite experiments from all different areas of science and students will have fun doing these experiments with their families.

Please continue supporting science at home through:

Nature hikes and walks.

Vacations (during vacation times only) to national parks, science and technology museums, etc.

Monitoring TV so that children watch worthwhile programming, e.g. Discovery Channel, Disney, Animal Planet.

Allowing students to do extension experiments at home.

Encouraging questions, questions, questions – allow students to keep a notebook of wonderings that they can research when they have "down time".

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Ms. Tripi can be reached at dtripi@sandi.net.



Open Air Market

10th anniversary

Every Sunday 9am-1pm, rain or shine

La Jolla Elementary School, upper playground
Girard Ave. & Genter St.

Think globally. Shop locally.

Always in season, shop your local farmers' market for:

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- homemade baked goods
- delicious food court
- jewelry, clothing & art
- live music, massage & pilates
- and much, much more!



4TH Graders Go Native at Old Town



LJES 4th graders spent a week at Old Town Historical State Park as part of a districtwide program that extends the regular fourth grade course of instruction in social studies.

While at Old Town, 4th graders participated in "integration activities that support race/human relations" and experienced field studies on location at the Old Town Historical State Park, Heritage Park and Presidio Park," according to the Old Town Program website.

Here are a few of their comments about what they learned or liked about their experience:

Riley McCormick, room 8: "Old Town is a place where kids can learn about San Diego in a fun way."

Julia Walton, room 4: "The Kumeyaay used the blood of the cochineal bug they found in cactuses for dye."

Asha Alagiri, room 8: "In Old Town, history ties into our social studies book."

Arman Hamrah, room 4: "It was a great experience to get a Kumeyaay name. I'm Brave Dragon."

Matthew Clewley, room 8: "In Old Town you can experience history coming to life."

Patrik Kjos, room 4: "We learned about Jose Aguirre who shared everything with his neighbors."

Parker Repp, room 4: "My favorite part of the experience was going to the Whaley house because you learned about the Whaley family."

--Quotes and photos submitted by 4th Grade Teacher Debbie Balmat



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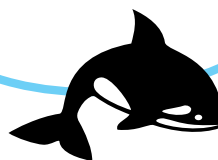


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see page 2 for details



What Talent!

The annual Talent Show did not disappoint. First there were the teachers, with their entertaining dance medley (which included the Macarena, Twist, Electric Slide, Saturday Night Fever disco...). Then Blaise Gimber made us laugh with his comedy routine. And then Monica Liu kicked off the singers with her rendition of **"Let me entertain you."** And entertain they all did, whatever their talent. Congratulations to all the performers.

