

March 2012

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OPEN HOUSE: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 6:30 – 8:30pm



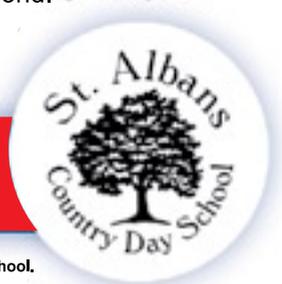
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Publisher: George Macko

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Sales Manager: Patty Colmer

Advertising: Jen Henry • 916-429-9901

Distribution/Subscriptions: George Macko

Cover Photo: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/26015375en06>

California Kids! is published monthly and distributed to more than 1,000 locations in the Sacramento Valley, including all of Sacramento County, and portions of Yolo (Davis and Woodland), Placer (Auburn, Newcastle, Rocklin and Roseville), El Dorado (Cameron Park, El Dorado Hills, Placerville), and Nevada (Grass Valley, Nevada City) counties.

Subscriptions are available for \$30/year. Mail prepaid check or money order to California Kids!, 2709 Riverside Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95818. Make sure to specify the person and address to which you wish issues to be mailed.

Deadlines for advertising and calendar listings are the 25th of the month prior to publication. Calendar listings should be mailed to 2709 Riverside Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95818, faxed to (916) 429-9906, or e-mailed to kathleen@valcomnews.com.

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Get green this Spring at Fairytale Town

As the famous American philosopher Kermit the Frog once said, "It's good to be green." Seeing wisdom in these words, Fairytale Town celebrates 'being green' in a variety of ways this March.

On Saturday, March 3, *Green Eggs and Ham* takes center stage as Fairytale Town celebrates literacy and the birth of Dr. Seuss with "Read Around Fairytale Town." Children's entertainer, Mister Cooper will bring the stories of Seuss alive with his dynamic performances at 12 and 2 p.m. on the Mother Goose Stage. Children can create and wear *Cat in the Hat* or *Thing One and Thing Two* headgear, and participate in literary fun throughout the grounds. Read Around Fairytale Town continues on Sunday, March 18, when magician Trevor Wyatt brings the magic of books alive with tricks and storytelling performances on the Mother Goose Stage at 12 and 2 p.m.

On Saturday March 10, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Fairytale Town Goes Green with exhibits, displays and activities on ecology and the environment. If we each do a little, we all do a lot; so children and families will learn about the little things they can do to create a healthier environment. Hands-on activities will focus on creating art from recycled materials. Puppet Art Theater will perform a conservation-based version of the puppet show, *The Three Little Pigs*. Exhibits from Sacramento organizations such as the Department of Utilities, Effie Yeaw Nature Center, YNOT Recycle and Solar Cookers International will share information on how families can reduce, reuse, and recycle. Eco-friendly cars will be on exhibit to showcase the latest technology in fuel-efficiency.

Beginning March 1, Fairytale Town is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily (weather permitting). For more information, call (916) 808-7462 or visit www.fairytaletown.org. Fairytale Town is located at 3901 Land Park Drive, Sacramento. Admission Fees: \$4 weekdays; \$5 weekends and holidays. Puppet show tickets are \$1 members and \$2 nonmembers.

Zoo's Bloomin' Crazy Plant Fest

The sixth annual Bloomin' Crazy Plant Fest at the Sacramento Zoo will be held March 3, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit with gardening clubs and plant experts; get inspired to start your spring gardens. The Zoo has a significant plant collection and local organizations will educate visitors about gardening and plants. Plants serve a number of functions here at the Zoo. Some are used as cover or shelter and some, such as bamboo, acacia and mirror plants, are grown as browse (fresh treats) for the animals. For more information, call (916) 808-5888 or visit saczoo.org.

Open since 1927, the Sacramento Zoo is home to over 140 native, rare and endan-

gered species and is one of over 200 accredited institutions of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Located near the corner of Land Park Drive and Sutterville Road in William Land Park, the Zoo is wholly managed by the non-profit Sacramento Zoological Society. This Sacramento treasure inspires conservation awareness through education and recreation. Open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., general admission is \$11.25; children ages 2 to 11 are \$7.25 and one and under are admitted free. Parking is free throughout the park or ride Regional Transit bus #6. For information, call (916) 808-5888 or visit saczoo.org.



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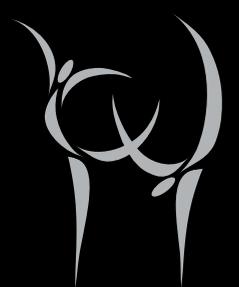
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Effie Yeaw Nature Center Events

Special Events:

A new speaker series, "Nature of Things," featuring Connie Wade on "Preserving our Oak Woodlands," Friday, March 16, 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. This talk will emphasize the importance of a healthy oak woodland ecosystem in supporting both human communities and native wildlife. Each of us has an obligation to be a good steward so that this legacy may be preserved for future generations. Pre-registration is required, space is limited. Fee: \$5/person. Call (916) 489-4918 or go to www.sacnaturecenter.net to register. Brought to you by Peggy and Bruce Kennedy and Claudia Hulbe.

Saturday, March 3, 10:30 a.m., Nature's Symphony

Listen for a drumming woodpecker, a sweet soprano songbird and the deep bass notes of a bullfrog on this guided walk to discover the sounds of Nature. All ages welcome.

Sunday, March 4, 1:30 p.m., Living in Water

Discover the hidden world of water insects and polliwogs through activities and games. Using catch and release activities you'll see these amazing little animals that live in our pond. All ages welcome.

Saturday, March 10, 10:30 a.m., Bird and Breakfast

Fee: \$35 per person. Pre-registration required by March 5. Call (916) 489-4918 or reserve through PayPal at www.sacnaturecenter.net. Enjoy a guided bird walk in the Nature Area followed by a hearty breakfast. Bring binoculars, walking shoes, friends and a healthy appetite. A silent auction will be held. This event is a fundraiser for the Nature Center's educational programs and is appropriate for ages 12 years and older.

Sunday, March 11, at 1:30 p.m., Nature Story Time

Join a Nature Center naturalist to hear a tale read aloud from some of our favorite Nature Storybooks. All ages welcome.

Saturday, March 17, 10:30 a.m., Map and Compass Walk

Learn about map and compass basics during a walk around the nature area. Docent Jennifer Kerr will explain how to read a map and use a compass, then send participants out on an easy walk to find specific spots on a "treasure" map. Suggested for ages 6 and above.

Sunday, March 18, 1:30 p.m., Nature Myths Debunked

Will a toad give you warts? Does a porcupine shoot its quills? Can you tell a rattlesnake's age by the length of its rattle? Learn the truth about these myths and more. All ages welcome.

Saturday, March 24, 10:30 a.m., Beaks, Claws and Jaws

Discover and learn about the unique adaptations of birds, mammals, and reptiles. Participate in games and activities and get a close-up look at some of the Nature Center's animals. All ages welcome.

Sunday, March 25, 1:30 p.m., Ssssnakes

Where do these scaly creatures go when the sun does not shine? Learn about the life of a snake and get a chance to meet one up close. All ages welcome.

Saturday, March 31, 10:30 a.m., Basic Birding

Enjoy a walk in the Nature Area looking for the birds most commonly seen in our area. Bring your binoculars or we can loan you a pair. All ages welcome.

Donations gratefully accepted. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee into Ancil Hoffman Park (Free to members). Please note: The Nature Center may be closed due to stormy weather. Please call to confirm. The Effie Yeaw Nature Center is located at 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. For more information, call (916) 489-4918 or visit www.sacnaturecenter.net.

Annual Pig Day in Davis!

Pig out at the 21st annual Pig Day, Davis Farmers Market's big pig gig on March 3, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event will be held at the Davis Farmers Market in Central Park, 4th and C Streets. Come celebrate pigs, food and local agriculture. For more information, visit www.DavisFarmerMarket.org.



African Safari!

Let's fly to Africa and go on a safari. I bet you'll see a lot of animals, birds and reptiles! Better bring the camera so you can share your adventures with your friends. Have fun searching for words related to Africa. Look carefully, words can appear vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backwards, and upside-down. Have a great trip!

A D N E L I D O C O R C D T Z
D T G K H A T E E H C K A P E
T T I K C E T A R Z A N O P T
X T R L O N Y O L A F F U B R
Z P A E L E P H A N T A O Y S
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G A F A S S D M G A R B O C R
O V E L I V G H O A S E G Z A
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| crocodile | Lizards | Vulture |
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Discovery Museum Science and Space Center Events

Geology with Dr. Bekah, Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4

You have seen her on TV, now come and meet her in person! Dr. Bekah is presenting a geology demonstration at noon and 2 p.m. Join her with fun earth science hands-on activities in the classroom. Planetarium shows are at 1 and 3 p.m. for ages 4 and older.

Crystals – the Original Bling, Saturday and Sunday, March 10 and 11

Crystals are nature's original bling: learn more about their interesting shapes and other fascinating facts. Make your own glittery paper crystal! Remember to bring your camera for the many photo opportunities available in the "Blast from the Past!" exhibit, featuring rocks, crystals, dinosaurs, and fossils. Planetarium shows are at 1 and 3 p.m. for ages 4 and older; live animal presentations at noon and 2 p.m. for all ages.

Terrific Triceratops!, Saturday and Sunday, March 17 and 18

Everyone loves the triceratops, and today you can make one to take home: one of the most popular crafts, the paper triceratops pillow! Craft this little beast to take home as a souvenir. You can even color it green to make it a St. Patrick's Day dinosaur! Learn about the triceratops in the "Blast from the Past!" exhibit. Planetarium shows are at 1 and 3 p.m. for ages 4 and older; live animal presentations at noon and 2 for all ages.

Hoppin' into Spring, Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25

Celebrate the first weekend of spring learning all about the Museum's froggy friends in the classroom and lab. Make a fun spring craft – a frog mask with tooter- to remember your day. Visit with Bud, the Giant African Bullfrog, at the noon and 2 p.m. Creature Feature. Enjoy the grounds – bring a picnic, explore the acreage, look for flowers and wild critters. Planetarium shows are at 1 p.m. 3 p.m. for ages 4 and older.

Something's Fishy, Saturday and Sunday, March 31 and April 1

Something is fishy at the Discovery Museum. Fish have existed for millions of years and this weekend the Museum will be highlighting them in their exhibit, lab, and classroom. View fish fossils in the "Blast from the Past!" exhibit, visit live fish in the Nature Room, make a fish print in the classroom, get close-up views with microscopes, and more! (Find out why sharks are not fish.) Planetarium shows are at 1 and 3 p.m. for ages 4 and older.

The Discovery Museum Science and Space Center opens at 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Science Discovery activities are from 12:30 to 4 p.m. The Museum is located at 3615 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento. Admission is \$8 adults (18+), \$6 seniors (60+), \$6 teens (13-17), \$5 children (4-12), \$0 children (3 and under). Exhibits are ages appropriate for 4 to 12 years old (916) 808-3942 or visit the website at www.thediscovery.org.

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Are your children ready for summer water activities?

Courtesy of Sea Otter Swim Lessons

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention drowning is the second-leading cause of unintentional injury deaths in children aged 1 to 14 years.

How to keep your kids safer

Swim Lessons- Enroll them in swim lessons. Participation in formal swimming lessons can reduce the risk of drowning among children aged 1 to 4 years.

Supervision- Always have a designated water watcher close enough to respond. Never designate young swimmers or non-swimming adults to be water watchers. Even if your child can swim, they should never swim alone.

Other important safety tips- Fence your pool and spa, learn CPR, avoid the use of alcohol around the water, do not use air filled toys to keep swimmers safe or afloat – these can deflate or pop. And clear your pool deck of toys when not in use so children are not tempted to enter the pool area unsupervised.

Swim programs are available at Sea Otter Swim for ages 4 months to adult, including those with special needs. Lessons are Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. There are continual lessons year round in an enclosed heated pool. Enroll either once a week continual lessons or in one of the 2-week spring or summer sessions. Private, semi-private and parent/tot lessons are also available. In addition to learning to swim and water safety skills, a non-competitive swim team is offered, instructors with expertise in stroke refinement and more.

For beginners, Sea Otter Swim recommends to start with a 2-week session and then enroll into a monthly program for continual maintenance and progression. Making a commitment to your child's safety and swim lessons means seeing it through, and that could take some time.

Sea Otter Swim Lessons is located at 6151 Brace Road, Loomis. For more information, call (916) 660-9492 or visit www.seaotterswim.com.

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9 AM to 1 PM**

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Who Wrote That?

The Creators of Your Child's Favorite Books

Featuring **David Ezra Stein**

By **Patricia M. Newman**

David Ezra Stein says, "Before I could read, I would make people read to me. I had this little toddler bed with an orange-stripey pillow. We would sit there and read." He recalls his grandmother's voice saying, "I think I can I think I can" from *The Little Engine That Could*—a strong auditory memory even today. Books grabbed hold of Stein from a young age, pushing him to read more and more. He didn't discriminate in his choice of readers, either, sometimes drafting friends of his parents—relative strangers really. "Want to go to my room? Read books?"

In addition to books, nature was another strong influence in Stein's life. Together with his sister and cousins, they played in the backyard and "made up games in nature. Our backyard became this immense place as big as our imaginations," he says. Sometimes they explored a big oak forest near Stein's home, or his cousins' pond, and made up stories about the squirrels and frogs. "I always had this idea that I was going to maybe grow up to live under a tree or a bush. I would survive on berries like Robinson Crusoe." Currently, Stein lives in a conventional New York apartment with his wife and son, but dreams of one day building a tree house for a studio. His connection with nature continues through an interest in foraging through Central Park (thanks to



walking tours with The Wild Man who teaches fellow foragers what is safe to eat).

Stein's interest in foraging also feeds his work. In his upcoming book that features a squirrel as the main character, Stein says, "I can write about a squirrel better knowing what an acorn tastes like." Although many of his stories are influenced by his adult experiences, his childhood memories are strong. "I'm still in touch with what it feels like to be a small person. I know when I write something that it will be appealing to the kid, because I have that sense of what will tickle the kid and what makes me feel good as a former kid."

During his senior year at the Parsons School of Design in New York City, Stein registered for a children's book class without knowing why. In the first few meetings, he realized his instructor wrote children's books for a living—something

that had never occurred to him. Stein conceived the idea for his upcoming book, *Because Amelia Smiled*, in this class and his instructor helped introduce him to editors at publishing houses. "I sent [*Amelia*] to an editor at HarperCollins, but couldn't settle on a style of art I wanted to use," he says. The book required an artistic style combined with research that challenged Stein at the time—an unpublished author/illustrator. Now, after eight books, one of them a Caldecott Honor, Stein felt he had the experience to pull it off.

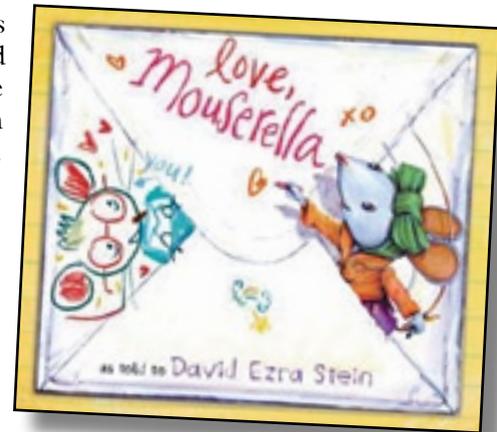
In each book, Stein explores a new facet of his art, picking a technique that works for the story. For instance, in *Leaves and Pouch!*, he mixed water colors with pencil and ink pen lines to achieve softer illustrations. "I think of myself as an artist, not an illustrator," he says. "I keep trying new things to keep developing as an artist." *Love, Mouserella* required a level of detail not in his other books, so he used a combination of water color and opaque white paint to accentuate Mouserella, her city, and the cultural references in the book. "The light and shadow is more sophisticated, too," Stein says. In *Interrupting Chicken*, Stein's Caldecott Honor book, he invented a new technique: painting dark purple backgrounds before adding the details to each page. *Because Amelia Smiled* is Stein's first book illustrated all in water soluble crayon. "The crayon becomes water color with water," he says. "It's the best of both worlds." He created ball point pen lines of different colors with a new technique he invented that uses the crayon as carbon paper. "The lines come out really crisp and transfer well," he says.

Stein recalls several artistic influences in his life. The work of famous author-illustrators, such as William Steig and Dr. Seuss, plus "everyone I read as a kid." He also credits television commercials because of their sparse directness and almost poetic form. "They say a lot with a little," he said. "*The Reading Rainbow* was a really big influence on me now that I think back. Seeing books on T.V. made them that much more interesting. I feel like I really got into the pictures by seeing them on T.V." he says. "Ironically, T.V. got me into books."

Stein's books celebrate love and relationships. He searches for the truth in each story, and tempers that truth with respect for the world and other people. "I hope people find my books helpful and inspiring," he says. "I hope my books do something that other books don't do."

Next month: Lori Mortensen

Patricia Newman is the author of *Jingle the Brass* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), recommended by the Smithsonian National American



History Museum. Her newest book, *Nugget on the Flight Deck* (Walker), received the California Reading Association's Eureka! Silver Honor Award for excellence in children's nonfiction. Visit her website at www.patriciam-newman.com to watch the trailer.

MORE ABOUT DAVID EZRA STEIN

How to Contact DAVID EZRA STEIN

Website: www.davidezra.com

DAVID EZRA STEIN'S LIBRARY

Love, Mouserella, Putnam, 2011.

Interrupting Chicken, Candlewick Press, 2010.

Pouch!, Putnam, 2009.

The Nice Book, Putnam, 2008.

Leaves, Putnam, 2007.

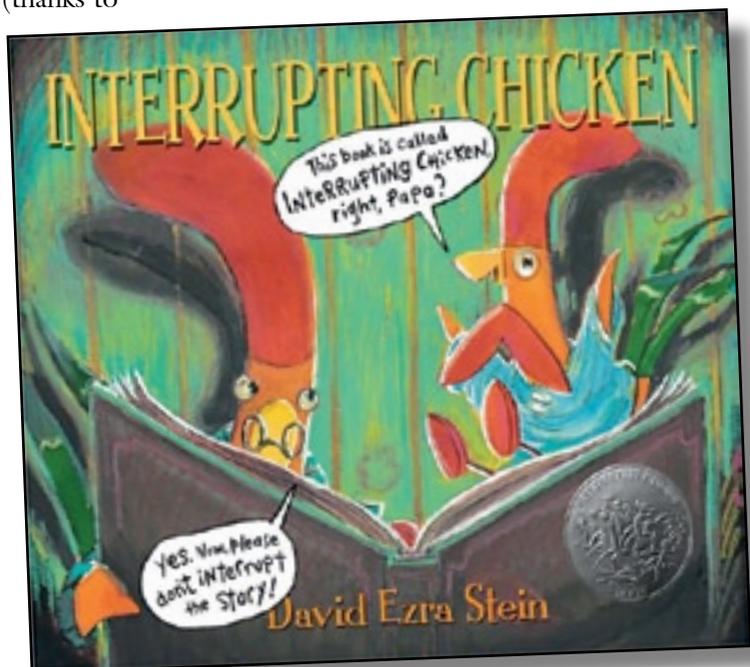
Monster Hug!, Putnam, 2007.

Cowboy Ned & Andy: Ned's New Friend, Simon & Schuster, 2007.

Cowboy Ned & Andy, Simon & Schuster, 2006.

UPCOMING

Because Amelia Smiled, Candlewick Press, Fall 2012.



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A Ukrainian Easter Egg Workshop offered

Have you ever seen those really cool Easter eggs that are hollow but painted wonderful colors? Well on Saturday, March 10, the Carmichael Recreation and Park District will host a workshop on how to make those very eggs—Ukrainian Easter Eggs.

Taught by members of the local Ukrainian Club, this art form is steeped in tradition and cultural history. Called “Pysanka” in Ukrainian and derived from the verb “Pysaty”, meaning “to write”, this ornate yet surprisingly simple process dates back to the pagan days before Christianity.

The art is based on coloring the eggs using wax-resistant dyes. Although motifs tend

to be traditional art reflecting colors and themes from historical Ukrainian culture, any type of decoration or pattern works. More advanced egg artists develop their own style and themes.

The class is scheduled just in time for folks to show off their one-of-a-kind Easter eggs for the holiday on April 8. The workshop is scheduled from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at La Sierra Community Center in Room 800. It is open to adults and the cost is \$20 with a \$5 materials fee due at the class. Space is limited though so people should pre-register. Call the Carmichael Recreation and Park District at 485-5322 for more information.



Camellia Symphony orchestra performs free family concert

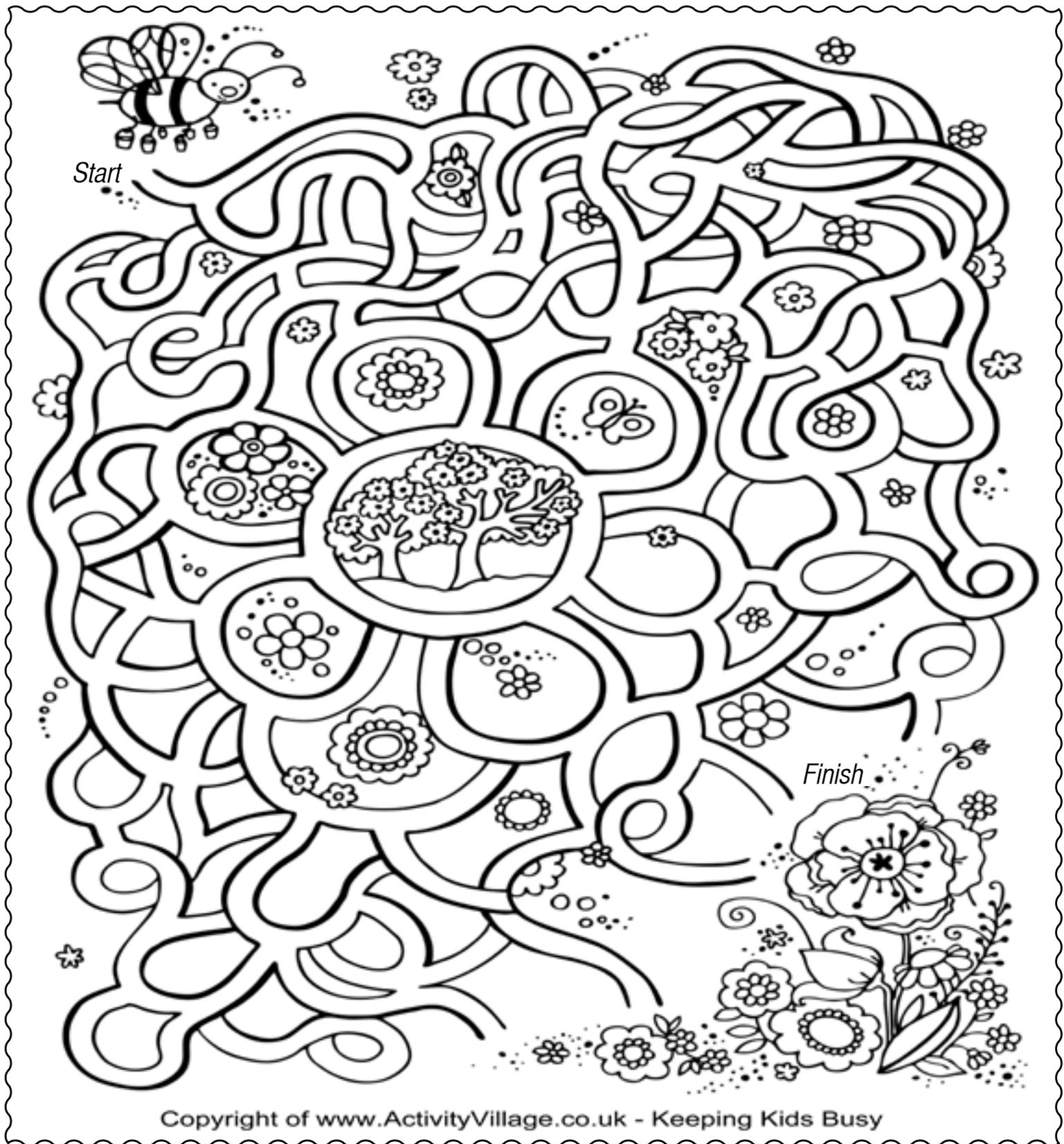
The Sacramento Public Library and the Camellia Symphony Orchestra will present a free concert designed to introduce children and their families to the world of classical music on Sunday, March 25 at 2 p.m., in the Tsakopoulos Library Galleria at the Central Library, 828 I Street, Sacramento.

Music to be performed includes a variety of classical music selections from movie scores including *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Spider Man*, as well as highlights from the Season Concert Series.

Prior to the concert, youngsters can enjoy the Instrument Petting Zoo at 1 p.m. in the library’s West Meeting Room. Children will see various musical instruments and meet musicians who will demonstrate how the instruments are played.

Also at 1 p.m., in the library’s first-floor lobby, children can create rain sticks, rumba shakers and musical note cards at various art and craft stations with artists from Very Special Arts - I Can Do That!

For more information, call (916) 264-2920 or visit www.saclibrary.org.



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Calendar of Events

Arts & Crafts

March 10 and 11, Crystals, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 3615 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento. The Discovery Museum Science and Space Center invites families to make their own glittery paper crystal. Crystals are nature's original bling: learn more about their interesting shapes and other fascinating facts. Remember to bring your camera for the many photo opportunities available in the "Blast from the Past!" exhibit, featuring rocks, crystals, dinosaurs, and fossils. For more information, call (916) 808-3942 or visit www.thediscovery.org.

March 17 and 18, Terrific Triceratops, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 3615 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento. Craft this little beast to take home as a souvenir from the Discovery Museum Science and Space Center. Everyone loves the triceratops. You can make one to take home; one of the most popular crafts, the paper triceratops pillow. You can even color it green to make for St. Patrick's Day. For more information, call (916) 808-3942 or visit www.thediscovery.org.

March 24 and 25, Frog Mask, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 3615 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento. Celebrate the first weekend of spring learning about the Discovery Museum Science and Space Center's froggy friends in the classroom and lab. Make a fun spring craft—a frog mask with tooter—to remember your day. Visit with Bud, the Giant African Bullfrog, at the noon and 2 p.m. Creature Feature. For more information, call (916) 808-3942.

Critter Events

March 18, Nature Myths Debunked, 1:30 p.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Will a toad give you warts? Does a porcupine shoot its quills? Can you tell a rattlesnake's age by the

length of its rattle? Learn the truth about these myths and more. All ages are welcome to attend this program at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, located in Ancil Hoffman Park. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

March 24, Beaks, Claws, and Jaws, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Discover and learn about the unique adaptations of birds, mammals, and reptiles. Participate in games and activities and get a close-up look at some of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center's animals. All ages are welcome to attend this program. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

March 25, Snake Program, 1:30 p.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Where do these scaly creatures go when the sun does not shine? Learn about the life of a snake and get a chance to meet on up close. This program is offered at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center located in Ancil Hoffman Park. The program is free, although there is a \$5 per car entrance fee to the park. For more information, call (916) 489-4918 or visit www.sacnaturecenter.net.

March 31, Basic Birding, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Enjoy a walk in the Effie Yeaw Nature Center's nature area looking for the birds most commonly seen in our area. Bring your binoculars or the Center will loan you a pair. All ages are welcome to attend. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

Magic Events

March 18, Noon and 2 p.m., 3901 Land Park Drive, Sacramento. Trevor Wyatt the Magician will pay a visit to Fairytale Town. Read Around Fairytale Town continues when Trevor brings the magic of books alive with tricks and storytelling performances on the Mother Goose Stage. For more information, call (916) 808-7462 or visit www.fairytaletown.org.

Nature Events

March 3, Nature's Symphony, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Listen for a drumming woodpecker, a sweet soprano and the deep bass notes of a bullfrog on this guided walk to discover the sounds of nature. The hike will be held at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. All ages are welcome. The center is located in Ancil Hoffman Park. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

March 4, Living in Water, 1:30 p.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Discover the hidden world of water insects and polliwogs through activities and games. Using catch and release activities you'll see these amazing little animals that live in the Effie Yeaw Nature Center's pond. All ages are welcome. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

March 17, Map and Compass Walk, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Learn about map and compass basics during a walk around the Effie Yeaw Nature area. Docent Jennifer Kerr will explain how to read a map and use a compass, then send participants out on an easy walk to find specific spots on a "treasure" map. This program is suggested for ages 6 and above. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

Special Events

March 3, 21st Annual Pig Day in Davis, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Central Park, Davis. The event will be held at the Davis Farmers Market in Central Park. Come celebrate pigs, food and local agriculture.

March 3, Worm Composting Workshop, 2 to 3 p.m., 7400 Imagination Parkway, Sacramento. The Sacramento County UC Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners will host a Worm Composting Workshop. Worm composting is easy, fun, and an activity for everyone. The workshop will cover the basic of worm composting, the

bin, the worms, feeding worms, and harvesting worm castings. Bring the entire family to this free workshop held at Valley High Library. No advanced registration is required. For more information, call (916) 875-6913.

March 3, Stage Performance, Noon and 2 p.m., 3901 Land Park Drive, Sacramento. "Green Eggs and Ham" takes a center stage as Fairytale Town celebrates literacy and the birth of Dr. Seuss with, "Read Around Fairytale Town." Children's entertainer, Mister Cooper, will bring the stories of Seuss alive with his dynamic performances on the Mother Goose Stage. There will also be literary fun activities throughout the grounds. For more information, call (916) 808-7462.

March 3, Plant Clinic, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 3901 Land Park Drive, Sacramento. UC Master Gardeners will hold a plant clinic at the Sacramento Zoo at the "Blooming Crazy" event. The public is encouraged to bring samples from problem plants or insects that need to be identified.

March 4, Plant Clinic, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 205 Serpa Way, Folsom. UC Master Gardeners will hold a plant clinic at Green Acres Nursery. The public is encouraged to bring samples from problem plants or insects that need to be identified.

March 10, Bird and Breakfast Event, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Enjoy a guided bird walk in the Effie Yeaw Nature area followed by a hearty breakfast. Bring binoculars, walking shoes, friends and a healthy appetite. A silent auction will be held. This event is a fundraiser for the Nature Center's educational programs and is appropriate for ages 12 years and older. The fee is \$35 per person. Advanced registration is required by March 5. Call (916)

489-4918 or reserve through PayPal at www.sacnaturecenter.net.

March 10, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Fairytale Town Goes Green, 3901 Land Park Drive, Sacramento. Fairytale Town Goes Green with exhibits, displays and activities on ecology and the environment. Hands-on activities will focus on creating art from recycled materials. PuppetArt Theater will perform a conservation-based version of the puppet show, "The Three Little Pigs." Eco-friendly cars will be on exhibit to showcase the latest technology in fuel-efficiency.

March 21, Food Preservation Public Demonstration, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., 4145 Branch Center Road, Sacramento. The Sacramento County UC Cooperative Extension Master Food Preservers will hold "Spicing Up Spring: Condiments, Herb Jellies, and Extras" demonstration at the Sacramento Cooperative Extension Office. There is a \$3 fee and no advanced registration is required. For more information, call (916) 875-6913.

March 24, Plant Clinic, 9 a.m. to Noon, 11549 Fair Oaks Boulevard, Fair Oaks. UC Master Gardeners will hold a plant clinic at the Horticulture Center. The public is encouraged to bring samples from problem plants or insects that need to be identified.

March 24, Gardening Program, 9 a.m. to Noon, 11549 Fair Oaks Boulevard, Fair Oaks. Learn from UC Master Gardeners how to select water efficient plants for your site and prepare for spring plant sales; control the top three fruit tree pests; and evaluate and improve your irrigation. Master Gardeners will be available to assist the public in diagnosing and solving garden problems. For more information, call (916) 875-6913.

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Safari Birthday party ideas!

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Safari Party Invitation Ideas

On invitations that are plain on the outside place stickers of different safari animals. Or draw on footprints of several different safari animals such as zebra, giraffe or lion on the outside of the cards and on the inside say something like "Everyone's on their way to _____'s Safari party!"

Attach a pair of plastic binoculars to the invitation and on the inside say "See you at _____'s Safari party!"

Zebra or giraffe patterned cards.

Safari Party Decoration Ideas

Tie black, brown and green helium balloons to the mailbox to let guests know where the party is located. Draw zebra, lion and giraffe foot prints on the sidewalk outside the party with sidewalk chalk.

The party table can be decorated in any color (solid colors work best for this idea ... orange, yellow or blue are great colors) and for a safari twist place zebra or giraffe print placemats under the plates. Buy or make large giraffe and zebra cutouts and use them for a center piece. You can also place toy jeeps and sand along with the safari animals for the centerpiece. Place a safari or camouflage hat at each place setting along with a pair of binoculars. Have adults that are helping at the party dress up in khaki shorts and shirts and wear a name tag that says "Safari Guide" and their name.

Safari Party Activities

- Animal themed bounce house
- Face Painting- Paint the party guests faces and turn them into zebras, elephants, giraffes and lions!

Safari Party Games

- Safari Treasure Hunt - Hide plastic animals, footprints cut from paper or candy around the

party area for guests to find. Let them use binoculars to search for the items you've hidden. If your party will be at night give guests small flashlights to search for the animals. Let the children keep the animals and candy they find or turn them in for prizes.

- Safari Scavenger Hunt - In a safari scavenger hunt teams race and either find objects on a list or perform the "to do" things on a list. Collect items around the neighborhood for your local Animal Shelter and have fun too!

- Elephant, Elephant, Giraffe - Children sit in a circle on the floor. The birthday child starts by walking around the outside of the circle and patting the head of each child. Every time they pat a head they call out "elephant." Then they choose one person to be the giraffe and yell "GIRAFFE!" when they pat their head. The "patter" then runs clockwise around the circle and tries to sit down in the place of the giraffe before they are tagged. If the giraffe tags the patter then the giraffe sits back down and the patter starts again. If the giraffe doesn't tag the patter then the giraffe becomes the patter and the game starts again.

Safari Party Food Ideas

Lion burgers, giraffe kabobs - skewer fruit onto wooden skewers and place standing up in a glass jar, use safari themed cookie cutters to cut out safari shaped animals in brownies, cookies, or sandwiches.

Jungle Party Favor Ideas

Plastic lions, zebras, elephants and giraffes, binoculars, compasses, boxes of animal crackers, entrance ticket to the zoo, jungle goody/loot bags, safari hats, small boxes decorated to look like safari jeeps.

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Cheetah Party Invitation Ideas

Buy note cards with a cheetah print on the front. Print out party information on brown or white cardstock - print out 4 to a sheet of cardstock. Cut them out and paste to the front of the cheetah cards making sure that they are an inch smaller on all four sides so that the cheetah print shows through.

Buy pre-printed blank invitations with a cheetah pattern and then print the party information on the inside with your home printer.

Cheetah Party Decoration Ideas

There are several ways to decorate for a cheetah themed birthday party. You can decorate for a little diva and make the party upscale and classy or use a safari theme (see our safari themed page for ideas) and include all kinds of safari animals to use as your inspiration. For a posh cheetah party think "luxury" and cover tables with cheetah print fabrics. Solid color party plates, cups and napkins look elegant against the cheetah pattern. Choose an

accent color such as pink, aqua or turquoise and add helium balloons around the party area tied with cheetah print ribbon. Add groupings of candlesticks or a candelabra to the party tables for a special touch. Serve sparkling cider in plastic champagne glasses.

Cheetah Party Games

Cheetah Racing Games - Cheetahs are known for their speed so why not have some relay style racing games! Race by teams or use a stopwatch and have the kids race individually and compare times. Some fun ways to race like a cheetah are by:

- Running through an obstacle course
- Running backwards
- Running and jumping over orange cones
- Running and twirling in a circle
- Running on feet and hands (like a cheetah)
- Running backwards on feet and hands

Cheetah Party Food Ideas

- Chocolate fountain with fun food to dip into the chocolate such as: strawberries, marshmallows, pineapple, cookies, etc.
- Veggie trays with Ranch dip
- Cheetos

Cheetah Party Favor Ideas

Small bags of Cheetos, cheetah nail polish, orange feather boas, cheetah print items such as pencils, pens, coin purses or notebooks, Chester the Cheetah posters or stuffed animals

Cheetah Goody / Loot Bag Ideas

- Wrap party favors in a cheetah print bandana or square of printed fabric and tie the ends together.
- Place party favors in a safari hat and tie with a cheetah print ribbon.
 - Cheetah print boxes or bags can be tied with a pretty ribbon to hold party favors.

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