

February 2015

# California Kids!

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# California Kids!

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Cover photo courtesy Steve Crowley  
[www.PhotosByCrowley.com](http://www.PhotosByCrowley.com)

**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 (Rocklin and Roseville), El Dorado (Cameron Park, El Dorado Hills, Placerville) 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](mailto:kathleen@valcomnews.com).

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# I Heart Sacramento Zoo

Bring your valentine to a special *I Heart Sacramento Zoo* day organized by the Sacramento Zoo Teen volunteers, Sunday, February 8. The event runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and features valentine-themed animal enrichments, informative talks and activity tables – all included with general admission. Sacramento Zoo Teens will also provide interactive ways to discover how you can conserve water.

Zoo Teens are 13 to 19-year-old volunteers interested in animals, the earth, and the community who spend their weekends at the Sacramento Zoo. Zoo Teens develop their own ideals, views, and passions to encourage Zoo patrons become better stewards of the Earth. I Heart Sacramento Zoo will give the teen volunteers experience communicating with the public and offer visitors an opportunity to learn more about the Zoo's unique animals.

*The Sacramento Zoo is located near the corner of Land Park Drive and Sutterville Road in William Land Park. For more information, call (916) 808-5888 or visit [saczoo.org](http://saczoo.org).*

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# Fairytale Town Events

February 7, Saturday, Sacramento Museum Day, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sacramento Museum Day returns for a 17th year with half-price or free admission at nearly 25 museums. Fairytale Town will be offering half-price admission on Sacramento Museum Day. Admission is \$2.75 for adults and children ages 2 and older. Children ages 1 and under are free. A Sacramento cultural tradition, Sacramento Museum Day is designed to encourage all members of the community to experience the region's incredible wealth of art, history, science and wildlife at little cost. This hugely popular community event is presented by the Sacramento Association of Museums. For more information, visit [www.fairytaletown.org](http://www.fairytaletown.org) or call (916) 808-7462.



February 9, Monday, Lincoln's Birthday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fairytale Town will be open on Lincoln's Birthday, weather permitting. Holiday admission is \$5.50 for adults and children ages 2 and older. Children ages 1 and under are free. For more information, visit [www.fairytaletown.org](http://www.fairytaletown.org) or call (916) 808-7462.

February 16, Monday, Presidents Day, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Fairytale Town will be open on Presidents Day, weather permitting. Holiday admission is \$5.50 for adults and children ages 2 and older. Children ages 1 and under are free. For more information, visit [www.fairytaletown.org](http://www.fairytaletown.org) or call (916) 808-7462.

*About Fairytale Town - Fairytale Town is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit children's park and educational center in Land Park whose mission is to promote the imagination, creativity and education of children. Established in 1959, Fairytale Town is home to more than 25 three-dimensional play sets based on favorite fairytales and nursery rhymes, a family of 22 rare and miniature breed animals, three interactive learning gardens and two performing arts stages. Fairytale Town is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. from March through October and Thursday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. from November through February, weather permitting and unless otherwise noted. For more information, visit [www.fairytaletown.org](http://www.fairytaletown.org) or call (916) 808-7462.*

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# Butano State Park

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[www.friendsofbutano.blogspot.com](http://www.friendsofbutano.blogspot.com) or  
[facebook.com/ButanoStatePark](https://www.facebook.com/ButanoStatePark)

Nature Walk, Sunday, February 8, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Walk along the trails of Butano State Park with Volunteer Naturalist Scott

Peden. This is a slowly-paced walk with time to discover and identify plants and flowers in the park and allow for photography if you choose. Bring water, lunch or snacks, and plenty of questions. Meet Scott at the park's Visitor Center near the entrance station. Allow 3 to 4 hours for this walk.

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# Effie Yeaw Nature Center events

## Nature of Things Seminar and Field Study Series

**Owling in the Foothills-** Instructor Rudy Darling will share his passion and knowledge on how to identify different owls by ear in this lecture and field study program. Reservations required; \$20/ARNHA members, \$25/non-members. Reservations at [www.sacnaturecenter.net](http://www.sacnaturecenter.net) or 916-489-4918.

### Free Weekend Activities

**February 1, Sunday, Critter Corner, 1:30 p.m.**

Get eye to eye with one of the furry, scaly, or feathered residents.

**February 7, Saturday, Secrets of a Wildlife Watcher, 10:30 a.m.**

Much of what we know about wildlife was discovered by just watching. Take a walk in the Nature Area and sharpen your observation skills.

**February 8, Sunday, Finding Your Way, 1:30 p.m.**

Join docent Jennifer Kerr for a guided map and compass walk. You will learn how to use a compass, take bearings, read a compass with a map and find your way around the trails.

**February 14, Saturday, Duck, Duck, Goose, 10:30 a.m.**

Winter is a great time to see waterfowl along the American River. Join a naturalist on a guided walk to look for herons, ducks, geese and other birds along the river. Bring your binoculars or borrow some from the staff. All ages welcome.

**February 15, Sunday, Pipevine Swallowtail, 1:30 p.m.**

Come learn about this beautiful butterfly and its amazing life cycle. Then take a hike with a naturalist to look for the butterfly's Pipevine plant host with its unique blossoms. All ages welcome.

**February 21, Saturday, Birding for Families, 10:30 a.m.**

Bring the family out for a birding and nature walk led by a Naturalist and special guest guides from the Sacramento Audubon Society. Birdwatchers of all levels welcomed. Make sure to bring your binoculars, or the staff can loan you a pair.

**February 22, Sunday, Owl Be Seeing You, 1:30 p.m.**

Uncover the mysteries of owls: what they eat, where they sleep, how they find food and more. Get a close-up look at a live owl. All ages welcome.

**February 28, Saturday, Tools and Tales, 10:30 a.m.**

Come join the staff at Effie Yeaw for some tantalizing tales of creatures, people, and nature. Get a chance to view replica Maidu artifacts made from the gifts of the earth and learn about their many uses.

*The Effie Yeaw Nature Center is located 2850 San Lorenzo Way, at California Avenue and Tarshes Drive, Carmichael. Donations are gratefully accepted. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee into Ancil Hoffman County Park (Free to members). For more information, call (916) 489-4918 or visit [www.sacnaturecenter.net](http://www.sacnaturecenter.net).*

# Send us your Photos!

California Kids! is looking for themed photos to use for our monthly publication.

This is your BIG chance to land a cover shot!

For more info please contact [kathleen@valcomnews.com](mailto:kathleen@valcomnews.com)

## Fabulous February!

Hey kids! February is the shortest month, but it is a month filled with holidays. Beginning with Ground Hog Day, is Spring right around the corner? Then celebrate hearts and flowers, presidents and Chinese New Year. Here's a puzzle that will test your skill at finding hidden words. Those on the list below can be spelled forward, backward, vertically, horizontally and even diagonally. Can you find the words associated with celebrating February?

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

Abe Lincoln  
Be Mine  
Bow and Arrow  
candy  
candy hearts  
cards  
Chinese New Year  
chocolate

Cupid  
Family  
Flags  
Flowers  
Ground Hog Day  
Hearts

Holidays  
Kisses  
Love  
Parades  
Presidents Day  
Sweetheart  
Valentine's Day  
Washington's Day

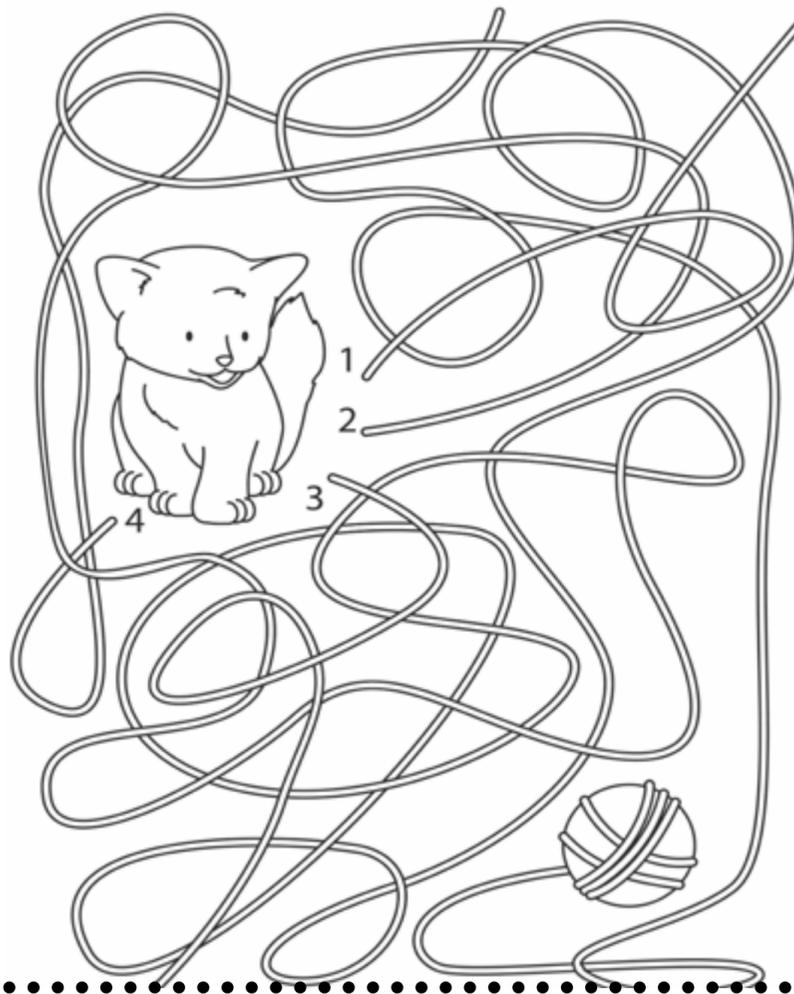


Photo courtesy Amanda Walters

## Sacramento Zoo Swells with Pride over its new Pride

The Sacramento Zoo's three African Lion cubs, their dam and sire can now be seen on exhibit. Both parents are keeping a close eye on the trio as they romp around the exhibit between lengthy cat naps.

The cubs were born the morning of Friday, October 24. Prior to their introduction to the outside exhibit and then their sire, the lioness was taking excellent care of her charges in the behind-the-scenes dens as they learned to follow her (which is important in lion society as prides are often on the move) and develop all their skills. The cubs will now continue to learn important group social skills from both parents.

Unlike other cat species that are fairly solitary, lions live in groups or "prides." If multiple females in a pride have cubs, they will pool them into a larger cub communal group called a "crèche."

Lions usually spend 16 to 20 hours a day sleeping and resting, devoting the remaining hours to hunting, courting and protecting their territory. They are highly territorial and keep in contact with one another by roaring loud enough to be heard up to five miles away. African Lions are excellent hunters. Although they are mostly nocturnal, they are opportunistic and will hunt anytime, day or night. Females do 85 to 90 percent of the pride's hunting while the males patrol the territory and protect the pride.

Lions are considered regionally endangered in West Africa and an estimated 42% of major lion populations are declining. Their habitats are now only in game reserves in Eastern and Southern Africa. Loss of genetic diversity from inbreeding, fragmentation, diseases and habitat loss are all problems that continue to threaten this species. Diseases from domestic cats and dogs have also made an impact on wild populations.

The Sacramento Zoo participates in the Lion Species Survival Plan® (SSP). The Lion SSP works with captive populations to increase awareness of the problems that face this big cat.

Sacramento Zoo is near the corner of Land Park Drive and Sutterville Road in William Land Park, Sacramento. For more information, visit [saczoo.org](http://saczoo.org).



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Find us on Facebook at Northern California Egg Artist

**Biggest kids show ever in Sacramento set for Cal Expo**

# Festival for Kids April 11 & 12, 2015



*"It was like he was Elvis. The Police had to escort him out."*

**A True Festival for the Whole Family!**

He's **Sponge Bob Squarepants**, America's favorite cartoon character, and he's coming to Sacramento to be a part of THE SACRAMENTO FESTIVAL FOR KIDS, Saturday and Sunday, April 11th and 12th, 2015. The Festival For Kids will encompass 8 buildings at Cal Expo, sight of the California State Fair, and will be jam-packed with activities for kids AND their moms and dads.

**Child Safety Building:** Allows families to fingerprint their kids to help law enforcement in case of an emergency.

**Sports for Kids:** Learn about all the unique opportunities and activities for kids and their families.

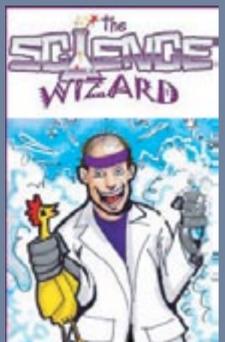
**Celebrity stage:** Jugglers. Magicians. Wild animal acts. Continuous entertainment.

**Pets, pets and more pets!** A whole building dedicated to our favorite furry friends.

Sponge Bob and his cartoon buddy **Dora the Explorer** will be on hand so kids can have a souvenir picture with their favorite character.

**Special Guests**

**THE SCIENCE WIZARD** will anchor the kids science building with his hilarious and educational shows.



**Pacific Animal Productions** is back with up close and personal displays.

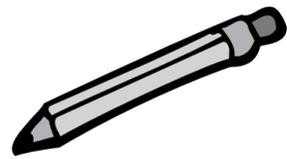


**Rain Forest Alive!**

**Pacific Animal Productions** will construct their stunning rain forest exhibit. Kids get to up and close and personal with animals from the jungle.

[www.festivalforkids.net](http://www.festivalforkids.net) | 800-787-2248 | [bridaljl@cox.net](mailto:bridaljl@cox.net)

# MAKE IT YOURSELF!



## Foam Heart Photo Frame

This quick and easy foam heart photo frame uses pre-cut bought foam hearts. It is a quick and easy gift idea for all sorts of occasions, and if you stick a magnet to the back, looks great on the fridge.

### You will need:

Pink, red and white craft foam hearts (you can cut your own but it is easy to pick up bags of die-cut shapes), pink craft foam, glue, small photo, card, magnet, double sided sticky tape, glue



### You will need to:

Cut out a heart shape from the pink foam. Now cut out a smaller heart from the middle. Don't worry too much about the shape as it will be covered up. Glue the foam hearts to the heart frame, overlapping them and covering all of the frame. Leave to dry. When the glue is dry use double sided sticky tape to stick your photo to the back of the frame. Cut a piece of card the same size as the frame and stick it on to the back with double sided tape. Finally glue a magnet on to the middle of the card.

## Heart Boxes

You can use pre-made papier mache or cardboard heart-shaped boxes from the craft store and decorate them for Valentine's Day - an easy valentines craft for kids. Perhaps you could get the kids to decorate these themselves and then fill them with special treats.



### You will need:

Heart boxes, paint, glue, stickers, gems, glitter, ribbons, buttons, to decorate

### You will need to:

Paint the boxes and leave to dry. Decorate with stickers, gems, glitter and anything else you have in your craft box.

Crafts courtesy of: [www.ActivityVillage.co.uk](http://www.ActivityVillage.co.uk) - Keeping Kids Busy

## Heart Choker Necklace

Give a special friend this personalized heart choker necklace as a very special present.

### You will need:

Polymer clay in several shades of pink (bright pink and white and then you can mix them), heart cutter, ribbon



### You will need to:

Roll out your clay and cut a heart for each letter of your name. Form tiny letters from the clay and press them on to the hearts. Make a hole through each heart with a toothpick, wriggling around to get a big enough hole. Bake according to the manufacturer's instructions. Thread the first heart onto the ribbon. Tie a knot in the ribbon around the top of the heart. Add the second heart, leaving a space between the second and first hearts. Tie a knot around the top of the second heart. Repeat until all the hearts are on your necklace.



## Heart Flower

This heart flower makes a quick and easy Valentine's Day craft activity for kids.

### You will need:

4 large craft foam hearts, 1 small craft foam heart in a contrasting color, 2 large and 4 small craft foam hearts in another color, glue

### You will need to:

Arrange the 4 large hearts so the points are touching. Glue the contrasting small heart to the middle where they join. To make the stem, stick the remaining four of the small hearts in a column overlapping the top of one heart over the point of the heart above. Glue the flower to the top heart of the "stem". Stick the remaining two large hearts to the back of the stem as leaves.



## Who wrote that?

The Creators of Your Child's Favorite Books

Featuring Todd Tuell

By Bitsy Kemper

Inspiration for author Todd Tuell comes from so many different places. His first picture book *Ninja, Ninja, Never Stop!* illustrated by Tad Carpenter (Abrams Appleseed) came out last year. It's already received recognition, being selected by the American Library Association for a national READ campaign poster featuring his book's design and illustration. The poster's message is "Sneak up on a Book. READ like a ninja!"



Like his main ninja character, Todd finds ideas sneak up on him when he least expects it. "When inspiration strikes, I start jotting down notes right away," Tuell explains. "I have to cultivate that curiosity. Grow it. It keeps me thinking about 'what ifs.'" He likes to look at things from the perspective of a kid. He calls upon emotions (both good and bad) of his own childhood adventures, and it's the pure joy, heightened fright, and even raw terror that he draws from.

Tuell uses those emotions when writing different kinds of stories, whether fiction or non-fiction, picture books up to Young Adult novels. Sometimes his ideas come from an interesting word or phrase that sparks an idea for a great title. Sometimes it's a question or reaction from his kids. He's even been inspired by odd-ball news stories.

Probably the biggest source of his inspiration is reading great works by other writers.

He counts many well-known writers responsible for his love of literature. But he counts his son as the inspiration for writing books that appeal to kids who otherwise wouldn't be reading. Called "reluctant readers," kids with a lower reading level get frustrated with books they don't understand without help. "Baby books" are of no interest them, even if the reading level is a match. So they tend to stop reading.

Tuell knows this first hand. When his son was about eight, he wasn't interested in books. One exception was Guinness World Record books and comic-strip books. The main reason was the format allows readers to flip through pages, as well as start and stop reading in short bursts. In most classrooms, though, this was not considered "real" reading.

His son was getting discouraged. One day, Todd was passing his room after school and heard him laughing, then quiet, then laughing again. He went in and asked what was so funny. The son said it was the book he was reading, a series of funny, gross-out poems. Suddenly, books were cool again.

Together, father and son discovered reading and literacy skills can be honed by following one's own reading interests, rather than being forced into reading what others deemed "real." He found many other parents had the same experience and struggles. He thought back to his own childhood and realized he used to be a reluctant reader too. Todd now writes a blog helping other reluctant readers, especially boys, at [www.Books4Boyz.org](http://www.Books4Boyz.org). "Connecting with my own childhood perspective of what makes a ninja so cool, helped make my book so interesting for so many kids. I want that interest to take hold and stick."

When not focusing on his blog, Todd writes for the magazine *FACES*. It takes readers age 9-14 around the world and back to get an honest and unbiased view of how children in other countries and regions live. He pours hours and



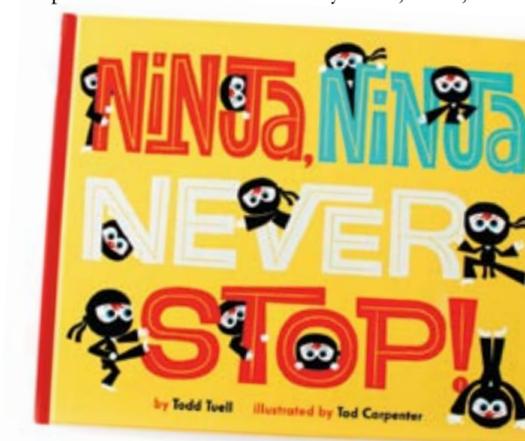
hours of research into each article, including interviews with experts. One article was so interesting that he ended up with over 20,000 words for a story that needed to be fewer than 800 words.

Research is fun for him. "The very best material doesn't come from Internet searches," Tuell has found. "It typically comes from the experts I interview and the literature that they recommend for the subject."

It was later in life when Todd realized writing was his passion. He has an under-

graduate degree in history, and a master's studies in international economics. Ending up with a career in technology, he got laid off in his early thirties. He then became a stay-at-home dad for his young children.

"During that time with my kids, seeing how much they loved books, I gained a new appreciation for children's literature," Tuell says proudly. He was inspired to make a career of writing. And boy has he ever! It wouldn't be surprising to hear his readers say Todd, Todd, never stop!



### WRITTEN BY TODD TUELL:

*Ninja, Ninja, Never Stop!*  
Tad Carpenter, illustrator;  
Abrams Appleseed, 2014

### MORE ABOUT TODD TUELL:

Todd lives in Aurora, Colorado, with his wife and three children. His quiet country-like home office offers the babbling of a small river and daily views of wandering deer. He can't imagine a better place for writing. When not creating new stories, he writes a blog about reluctant readers ([www.Books4Boyz.org](http://www.Books4Boyz.org)) where he discusses the significance of reading and offers strategies for developing a love of reading with reluctant-reading children. Find out more about Todd the author at [www.ToddTuell.com](http://www.ToddTuell.com)

# Fun Gift Ideas!

## Cupcake Race from Endless Games

**C**upcake Race from Endless Games is the board game that will satisfy your sweetie's sweet tooth. There's a party tonight, and you (and your opponents) have been asked to bring the cupcakes. The Race is on! Be the first player to MIX, BAKE, FROST, and TOP your cupcake by visiting all 4 corners, and collect sprinkles along the way. The first player to reach the party with a completed cupcake and a sprinkle of each color wins the cherry to put on the top! "Mix it, Bake it, Frost it, Top it! So Much Fun, You Just Can't Stop It! Ages: 4 and Up. Other great family and kids board games available at Walmart, Toys "R" us and Amazon.com. For more information, visit [www.endlessgames.com](http://www.endlessgames.com).



## Exciting Glow-in-the-Dark track

**E**verything about Max Traxxx's glow-in-the-dark racing systems screams FUN! Both boys and girls will love putting together their own unique tracks that light up when a Tracer Racer zooms across it! Tracer Racers utilize Light Trail Technology as they blaze streaks of light on Skullduggery's patented Glow-in-the-Dark track. Each set can be assembled alone or put together to make an even longer, more exciting track for the Tracer Racers. Each Tracer Racer beams down purple light rays from its undercarriage onto the track that your child has built. It's pretty awesome to watch the track light up as your car or truck races down the track. There are several sets to choose from, including the Tracer Racer 16 Foot Dual Racer Set, Max Traxxx Dual Loop, Tracer Racer 24 Foot Dual Loop Set, Tracer Racer 16 Foot Dual Truck Set, and more! Available at Toys "R" Us. For more information, visit <http://www.mcssl.com/store/skulduggery/max-traxxx/tracer-racers>

## Scooby-doo! Moon Monster Madness

**W**arner Bros. Home Entertainment brings you "Scooby-Doo! Moon Monster Madness." Zoinks! Get ready for some hilarious high jinks in outer space with Scooby-Doo! The lovable Great Dane is on a mission to deliver big laughs as he and the Mystery Incorporated gang take off on a super stellar adventure in *Scooby-Doo! Moon Monster Madness*, available in stores February 17. This all-new, feature length animated adventure will be sold on standard DVD, which retails for \$19.98 SRP (DVD) and is available on Digital HD.



It's one giant step for dog-kind as Scooby-Doo and the gang blast off for an epic journey into outer space in this must-own, original, new film. After winning the last five seats in a lottery, Scooby-Doo, Shaggy, Fred, Daphne and Velma are off to space in billionaire Sly Barron's brand new ship, the Sly Star One, a space tourism vessel setting off on its inaugural voyage. It's all gravity-free fun until a mysterious alien begins to destroy the ship! As the vessel breaks down, the crew is forced to land on Sly Baron's base - located on the dark side of the moon! Will the gang unravel this alien mystery? Will Scooby and Shaggy find snacks on the moon? Fans will want to hop on board, fasten their seat belts and journey to the outer limits with Scooby-Doo to find out!

[www.valcomnews.com](http://www.valcomnews.com)

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# California Kids!

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the popular Summer Guide!

# one of the Biggest Kids Shows Ever!

**S**ponge Bob Squarepants, America's favorite cartoon character, will be coming to Sacramento to be a part of **THE SACRAMENTO FESTIVAL FOR KIDS**, Saturday and Sunday, April 11th and 12th, 2015. The Festival for Kids will encompass eight buildings at Cal Expo, sight of the California State Fair, and will be jam-packed with activities for kids AND their moms and dads.

Sponge Bob and his cartoon buddy Dora the Explorer will be on hand so kids can have a souvenir picture with their favorite character.

### Rain Forest Alive!

Pacific Animal Productions will construct their stunning rain forest exhibit. Kids get to be up close and personal with animals from the jungle.

### Child Safety Building

The Child Safety Building allows families to fingerprint their kids to help law enforcement in case of an emergency.

### Sports for Kids

Sports for Kids will help families learn all the unique opportunities and activities for kids and their families.

### Celebrity Stage

At Celebrity Stage enjoy jugglers, magicians, wild animal acts and continuous entertainment.

### Pets, pets and more pets!

A whole building dedicated to our favorite furry friends!

### Special Guest

THE SCIENCE WIZARD will anchor the kids science building with his hilarious and educational shows.

*So, mark you calendars to attend this festival for the whole family! For more information, visit [www.festivalforkids.net](http://www.festivalforkids.net) or call (800) 787-2248.*



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# Picture Book Potpurri

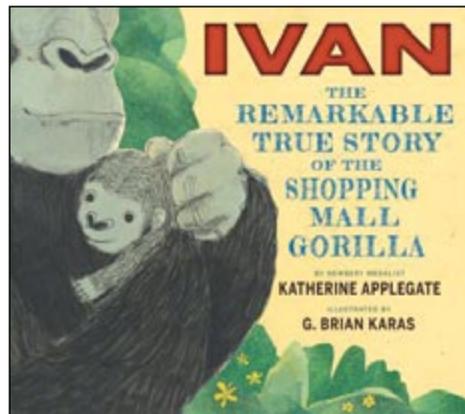
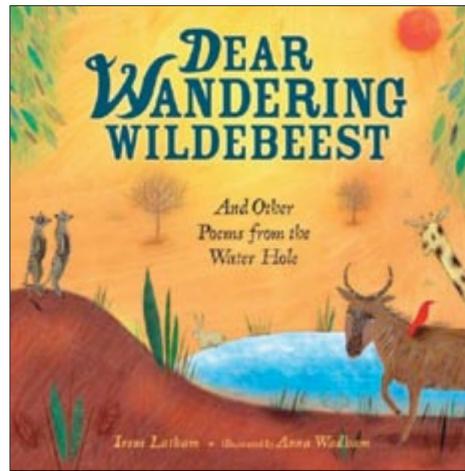
By Connie Goldsmith

While children's literature contains as many genres as adult literature, many books published for children are picture books. The simple words and colorful art continue to beguile young listeners. Picture books must be visually appealing to the adults who purchase them and must stand up to the ritual of repeated readings that children demand. Take a look at the selection below and find the book that's just right for your child.

"Dear Wandering Wildebeest: and Other Poems from the Water Hole," by Irene Latham, illustrated by Anna Wadham. (Millbrook/Lerner Press). Spend the day and night at an African water hole. Meet animals and snakes, bugs and birds, as they trek to the one place where all grasslands creatures meet. Impalas explode into action: "Long leaps. Athletic feats. Flawless flight. Dancer's delight." Meerkats keep watch. Opeckers groom wildebeests. Elephants drink, then take dust baths as the sun goes down. This delightful book entertains on two levels. While rhymes sparkle with diamond-sharp clarity on one page, a factual paragraph gives details of the animals that older listeners will listen to with open-mouthed wonder. The soft smudgy art glows in pastel colors, especially "Dust Bath at Dusk," and "Impala Explosion."

"Birds," by Penelope Arlon and Tory Gordon-Harris. (Scholastic). Colorful bird photographs fill each durable page to entice the very youngest birders. The text is easy enough for an early reader to manage, while being scientifically accurate at the same time. Learn about bird colors and feathers. Watch how birds use their wings to fly and how each bird's beak is perfect for the job it must do. Some birds have super senses. Owls can see and hear far better than people can. Vultures sniff out dead animals for dinner. A mother penguin can tell the sound of her chick from thousands of others. See birds make nests and hatch chicks. A free digital download includes fun activities and bird sounds. This book is perfect for the fledgling birder in your family! \*\* Reviewer's pick of the month\*\*

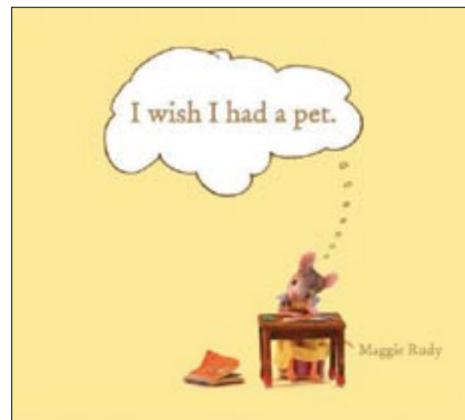
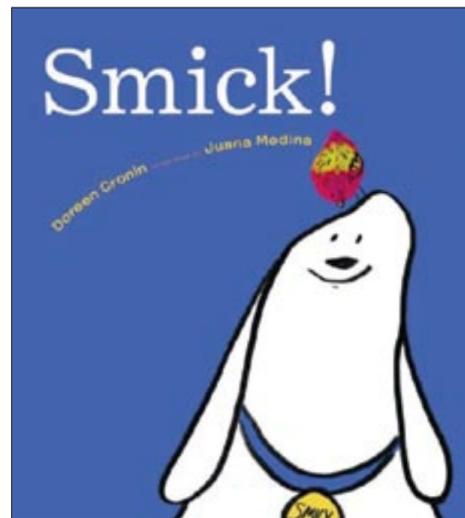
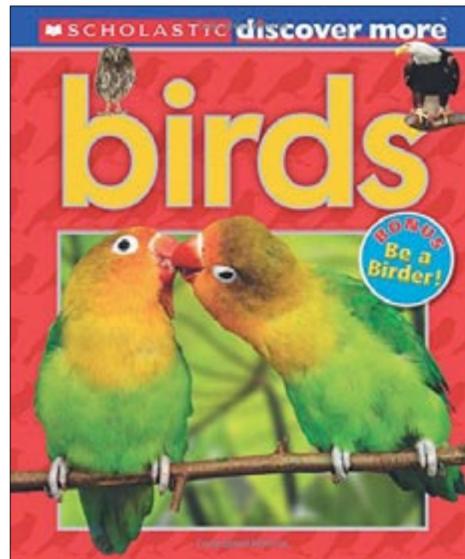
"Ivan: The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla," by Katherine Applegate, illustrated by G. Brian Karas. (Clarion). Applegate won the 2012 Newbery Award for her novel telling the true story of the gorilla Ivan, who spent 27 years in a glass cage at a Tacoma shopping mall. Here, she adapts the story to a picture book format. The words are few, their impact powerful, as we meet Ivan as an infant gorilla in Africa. Poachers captured Ivan and another baby gorilla (who died shortly after arrival). "A man who owned a shopping mall had ordered and paid for them like a couple of pizzas, like a pair of shoes." Ivan lived in a human home until he grew too large. His next home was a cage in a mall. Over the years the public protested against his lonely life. Finally, Ivan began a new life at Zoo Atlanta,



where he met other gorillas, and learned once more the joys of friendship and nature. The pencil drawings and pastel washes are beautifully done, clearly depicting Ivan's gentle personality.

"Smick," by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Juana Medina. (Viking). Smick is a good dog. He sits on command. He fetches a stick. But soon something else captures his attention. A chick. He gallops madly toward the cheeping chick. "No, Smick, no!" warns his worried owner. But Smick's intentions are honorable. Soon Chick and Smick are best of friends. They play together. They nap together. Smick. Chick. Lick. The artist portrays Smick with simple heavy black lines, while Chick is a burst of colored feathers in the otherwise black and white book. Appealing and uncomplicated, Smick is a story of an unexpectedly happy friendship.

"I Wish I Had a Pet," by Maggie Ruddy. (Beach Lane Books). "Do you wish sometimes that you had a pet?" What pet-less child hasn't had that wish? These adorable mice are open to just about any kind of creatures. Roly-poly. Frog. Grasshopper. Bumblebee or lady bug. Kindness and wisdom inhabit the spare text that provides advice about pet-ownership. The quirky scenes will amuse and delight the child in your lap. The author/artist photographs unique combinations of felted mice, torn paper, and familiar household objects to tell her story. A dollhouse parlor. Postage stamps as wall hangings. A pencil for a perch. A button for a Frisbee. Cleaning up after a caterpillar. Crabs in buggies. The miniature lives shown on the pages invite further inspection and discussion. This witty book cries out to be read over and over.



Connie Goldsmith ([www.conniegoldsmith.com](http://www.conniegoldsmith.com)) lives in Carmichael where she writes for adults and children. Her newest nonfiction juvenile books, "Bombs over Bikini," and "Traumatic Brain Injury: from concussion to coma," are now available. Other books include: "Batting Malaria: on the Front Lines Against a Global Killer," and "Influenza," one of the USA Today Health Reports series. Her books can be found in school and public libraries, and at online booksellers.



Photo courtesy California Automobile Museum

## Sacramento Museum Day

Imagine. Explore. Discover. To the delight of the greater Sacramento area community, nearly twenty-five local museums will offer free or half-priced admission from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, February 7, 2015, during the 17th Annual Sacramento Museum Day! Coordinated by the Sacramento Association of Museums (SAM) and the Sacramento Convention & Visitors Bureau, Sacramento Museum Day is a popular Sacramento cultural tradition designed to encourage all members of the community to experience the Capital City's incredible wealth of art, history, science and wildlife -- at little or no cost.

### Participating Museums for Sacramento Museum Day 2015:

- Aerospace Museum of California
- California Automobile Museum
- California State Capitol Museum
- California State Railroad Museum
- Discovery Museum Science and Space Center
- Don & June Salvatori California Pharmacy Museum
- Fairytale Town
- Heidrick Ag History Center (Woodland)
- Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park
- Maidu Museum & Historic Site (Roseville)
- Museum of Medical History
- Old Sacramento Schoolhouse Museum
- Old Sacramento State Historic Park
- Roseville Utility Exploration Center
- Sacramento Children's Museum
- Sacramento Historic City Cemetery
- Sacramento History Museum
- Sacramento Zoo
- Sojourner Truth Multi-cultural Arts Museum
- State Indian Museum
- Sutter's Fort State Historic Park
- Verge Center for the Arts
- Wells Fargo History Museum (Capitol Mall)
- Wells Fargo History Museum (Old Sacramento)



Photo courtesy Discovery Museum Science & Space Center

For more information, call (916) 808-7777 or visit [www.sacmuseums.org](http://www.sacmuseums.org).

**RESERVE YOUR SPACE**  
IN THE UPCOMING  
**California Kids!**  
CALL (916) 429-9901 TODAY!

## Warehouse Book Sale

Sheet music will be added to the more than 100,000 "gently used" books, videos, and audio books offered for prices from fifty cents to \$2 at the Saturday, February 7, sale at the warehouse of the Friends of the Sacramento Public Library.

The warehouse is at the rear of the Friends' Book Den at Suite E, 8250 Belvedere Avenue, just south of 14th Avenue, between Power Inn Road and Florin-Perkins Road. Plenty of parking is available, but be careful not to park between the "No Parking" signs on the south side of Belvedere.

Sale hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will also be a preview for Friends members only on Friday, February 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. (You can join at the door for \$15).

Income from the sale helps pay for programs, equipment, and materials local libraries need but can't afford. With most items priced individually from \$3 up, the Book Den will be open throughout the sale as well as weekly on Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call (916) 731-8493 or go to [bookden@saclibfriends.org](mailto:bookden@saclibfriends.org).

### Book Sale

The Friends of Arden-Dimick Library will hold its next Book Sale, Friday, February 6, 1 to 6 p.m. and Saturday, February 7, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Community Room at the Arden-Dimick Library, 891 Watt Avenue, Sacramento. Funds from this sale will be used for local library programs. Thousands of books will be offered at incredibly low prices, which makes this an excellent, affordable opportunity for adults and children to stock up on reading materials.

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# Discovery Museum Science and Space Center activities

• **February 1, Mars Madness!, Sunday, 12:30 to 4 p.m.** Get ready to learn about Mars—its past, present and future. The 1 and 3 p.m. planetarium shows (for ages 4 and older) are highlighting the geology of Mars and what it tells us about

Mars' past. A NASA ambassador will be visiting to show rockets and models of Opportunity and Curiosity. You can even try navigating your own mini rover with Parallax Robotics. Learn about the upcoming NASA and ESA Mars missions and what

the future holds for Mars exploration. During all this fun, don't forget to craft a Mars Diorama to take home (ages 12 and younger). Your admission also includes visiting the Space Quest! and Nature Discovery Room exhibits and an all-ages animal

presentation as the noon and 2 p.m. Family Feature.

• **February 8, Valentine's Day Banner, Sunday, 12:30 to 4 p.m.**

Celebrate Valentine's Day by offering a fun banner craft for kids 12 and younger. Use decorations to add some pizzazz to your home for the month of February. Remember, your admission also includes visiting the Space Quest! and Nature Discovery Room exhibits, an animal presentation as the noon and 2 p.m. Family Feature, and a planetarium show at 1 and 3 p.m. (for ages 4 and older only).

• **February 14, 15, 16, Calling all Astronauts, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, 12:30 to 4 p.m.** Visit the Space Quest! exhibit—out-of-this-world fun for the entire family. A variety of activities are being offered to keep your little astronauts busy, including an astronaut finger puppet craft and stations where kids complete "astronaut tasks." Bring your camera to take a picture of your child in an astronaut costume. Remember, your admission includes visiting the Space Quest! and Nature Discovery Room exhibits, an animal presentation as the noon and 2 p.m. Family Feature, and a planetarium show at 1 and 3 p.m. (for ages 4 and older only).

• **February 21 and 22, Discover Engineering, Saturday and Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.** Blast off this weekend into the world of engineering. As participants in National Engineering Week, the museum is focusing on the engineering involved with space suits—past, present and future. The Family Feature (noon and 2) focuses on



Photo courtesy Discovery Museum  
Make your own Lorax mustache!

EVAs (extravehicular activities) and the role space suits have in them. Children 12 and younger may try out their own engineering skills in our craft room. Remember, your admission also includes visiting the Space Quest! and Nature Discovery Room exhibits and a planetarium show at 1 and 3 p.m. (for ages 4 and older only).

• **February 28 and March 1, Seuss, Science, and Space—Oh my! Saturday and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.** Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday at the Discovery Museum. Share the stories of Dr. Seuss with your children by bringing them in for story times, taking place at noon and 2 p.m. Family Feature. The craft for kids is making a Lorax mustache to take home and wear. Have fun coloring some Dr. Seuss themed pages. Bring a camera to get some photos with our Seuss inspired photo board. Remember, your admission also includes the Space Quest! exhibit and planetarium show at 1 and 3 p.m. (for ages 4 and older only).

*The Discovery Museum Science and Space Center is located at 3615 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento. Admission is: \$8 adults (18+), \$7 seniors (60+), \$7 teens (13-17), \$6 children (4-12), \$0 children (3 and younger). The exhibits are age appropriate for 4 to 12 years old. For more information, call (916) 808-3942 or visit [www.thediscovery.org](http://www.thediscovery.org).*



## Young Actors Stage presents Mulan JR.

Almost one hundred students from Crocker-Riverside and Holy Spirit Elementary Schools will be performing in the Young Actors Stage productions of *Mulan JR.* the last weekend of February at the Twenty-Fourth Street Theater, 2791 24th Street, Sacramento.

The musical *Mulan JR.* is based on the Story, "Fa Mulan," by Robert D. San Souci and the 1998 Disney film "Mulan" about a young girl in ancient China who takes up arms to defeat the Huns and disguises as a boy in order to spare her father from serving in the army again.

Young Actors Stage also puts on Main Stage and summer productions every year, which get its performers from all over the Sacramento

area and often includes older children with more musical theater experience. Recent summer and Main Stage shows have included *Mulan JR.*, *Music Man JR.*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Beauty and the Beast JR.* and *Little Mermaid JR.* Ms. Singerman and her staff are also preparing for their upcoming spring performance of the *Sound of Music* in May, also at the Twenty-Fourth Street Theatre.

*Young Actors Stage has moved into its own studio near Sacramento City College. The upcoming show times for Mulan JR are Friday, February 27 at 7; Saturday, February 28 at 1, 4, and 7; and Sunday, March 1 at 1 and 4.*

## Maidu Museum Events

**17th Annual Sacramento Museum Day:** On Saturday, February 7, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission, free guided tours and free children's activities all day.

**Night Out at the Museum:** Please join the staff for a very special Night Out at the Museum on Saturday, February 21, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The Maidu Museum & Historic Site is celebrating the 5th anniversary of its Grand Opening. There's an opening reception and artists talk for "Let's Fix Our World", a new exhibit from artist Charley Burns and "Framescapes: Images from the Construction of the Maidu Museum", the black and white photography of Wayne Olts. Charley Burns is a Yurok artist from the Humboldt County, Klamath River area. Wayne Olts is an inveterate photographer and a Professor of Anthropology at Folsom Lake College. Museum doors open at 6:30 p.m. Program starts at 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be available. FREE Event.

*The Maidu Museum is open: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 3rd Saturdays 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Guided Tours Saturdays at 10a.m. Self-guided tours on weekdays. Admission Fees: \$4.50 Adults, \$4 Senior/Child, \$16/Family of Four, \$2 after 2 p.m. The Museum is located at 1970 Johnson Ranch Drive, Roseville. For more information, call (916) 774-5934 or visit [www.roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum](http://www.roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum).*

Include your flyer and/or postcard inside the next issue of California Kids!

Call (916) 429-9901

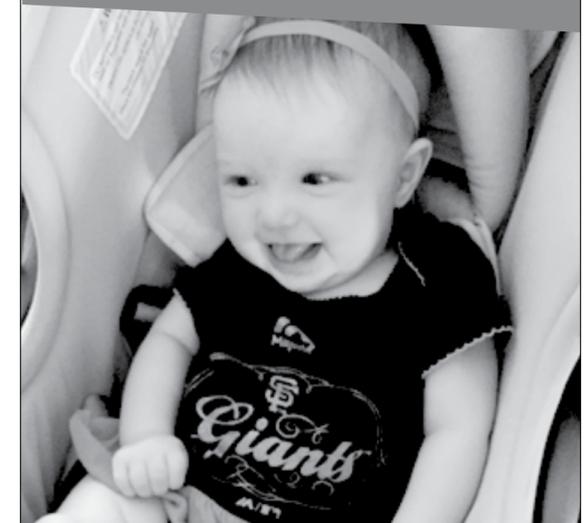


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[DisneyOnIce.com](http://DisneyOnIce.com)

# Calendar of Events

## Arts & Crafts

Bring binoculars or borrow a pair from the staff. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

**February 1, Sunday, 1:30 p.m., Groundhog Day Craft, 828 I St., Sacramento.** Families are invited to join the staff at Central Library in Kids' Place for a craft celebrating Groundhog Day. Craft supplies will be provided and street parking is free. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

## Critter Events

**February 1, Critter Corner, 1:30 p.m. 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael.** Get eye to eye with one of the furry, scaly, or feathered residents at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

**February 14, Duck Program, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael.** Winter is a great time to see waterfowl along the American River. Join a naturalist at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center on a guided walk to look for herons, ducks, geese and other birds along the river. Bring your binoculars or borrow some from the staff. All ages welcome. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

**February 21, Birding for Families, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael.** Bring the family to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center for a birding and nature walk led by a naturalist and special guest guides from the Sacramento Audubon Society. Bird-watchers of all levels welcome.

## Special Events

**February 3, 10, 17, 24, Tuesday, Baby Lapsit, 10:30 a.m., 2443 Marconi Avenue, Sacramento.** Come to this program at the Arcade Library designed for you and your baby (0-18 months). We will encourage early literacy development and parent/child interaction through stories songs rhymes finger plays and more. Stay afterwards (until 11:20 a.m.) for play time with age-appropriate toys and a chance for caregivers to socialize.

**February 3, 10, 17, 24, Tuesday, Toddler Storytime, 11:20 a.m., 2443 Marconi Avenue, Sacramento.** Enjoy stories, songs, rhymes, and fingerplays at the Arcade Library, designed for children ages 18 months to 3 years. Join the staff for play time before the program (at 10:50 a.m.) which gives toddlers a chance to play with age-appropriate toys and caregivers a chance to socialize. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

**February 3, 10, 17, 24, Tuesday, 12 p.m., Baby Storytime, 8900 Elk Grove Boulevard, Elk Grove.** Looking for a fun, fabulous, and educational program for you and your baby (ages 0-18 months)? Join the library staff at the Elk Grove Library for an interactive experience focused on babies from birth through 18 months. This program encourages early literacy development through movement songs and shared reading followed by stay and play activities. Additional parking is available south of the library at Journey Church, which is located at 9645 Elk Grove-Florin Road. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

**February 3, 10, 17, 24, Tuesday, 12:30 p.m., Baby Storytime 5600 South Land Park Drive, Sacramento.** Join the staff at the Belle Cooledge Library for nursery rhymes, fingerplays, simple stories, and songs, designed to encourage a range of early literacy skills. This program is for children up to about 18 months old or until they are ready for toddler storytime. Each child must be accompanied by a participating adult. Following the program babies and their caregivers are invited to stay and play with

activity learning toys. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

**February 3, 10, 17, 24, Tuesday, 10 a.m., Preschool Storytime, 2112 22nd Street, Sacramento.** Please join the staff at the McClatchy Library every Tuesday at 10 a.m. for books, songs, stories, and fun. Miss Lindsey and her guitar always make this story time a fun event. Everyone is welcome to "stay and play" after with our fabulous toys. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

**February 3, 10, 17, 24, Tuesday, 10:15 a.m., Baby/Toddler Stay and Play, 7335 Gloria Drive, Sacramento.** "Stay and Play" is an unstructured social time for babies and toddlers (ages 0 and up), older siblings are welcome and their caretakers. Developmental toys and board books will be available at the Robbie Waters Pocket-Greenhaven Library. These informal play sessions will be immediately followed by a storytime for babies and toddlers (ages 0-3 years) and their caretakers/families, except on the last Tuesday of each month, when there will be a special performance by Mister Cooper instead.

**February 3, 10, 17, Tuesday, 11 a.m., Baby/Toddler Storytime, 7335 Gloria Drive, Sacramento.** A combined toddler and baby storytime in which babies and toddlers (ages 0 to 3 years) and their caretakers are invited to join the staff at the Robbie Waters Pocket-Greenhaven Library for songs and rhymes in this language enrichment program designed to boost brain development. Also, on the last Tuesday of each month, there will be a special musical performance by Mr. Cooper instead of storytime. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

**February 4, 11, 18, 25, Wednesday, 10:30 a.m., Preschool Storytime, 828 I St., Sacramento.** Join the youth services librarian at Central Library for a rockin' storytime full of songs fingerplays and books galore. Designed for children ages 3-5. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

**February 6, 1 to 6 p.m., February 7, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Book Sale, 891 Watt Avenue, Sacramento.** The Friends of Arden-Dimick Library will hold a book sale in the Community Room at the Arden-Dimick Library. More books from the large Frank Rose donation will be included in this sale. Thousands of books will be offered at low prices.

**February 28, Tools and Tales Event, 10:30 a.m., 2820 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael.** Come join the staff at Effie Yeaw for some tantalizing tales of creatures, people, and nature. Get a chance to view replica Maidu artifacts made from the gifts of the earth and learn about their many uses. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

## Storytime & Puppet Events

**February 1, Sunday, 12:10 p.m., Baby Storytime, 828 I Street, Sacramento.** Bond with your baby and make new friends at the Central Library. Baby Lapsit Storytime is designed to encourage early literacy development through shared reading, songs, games, and movement. Recommended for birth through 24 months, but older kids are welcome. In Kids' Place on the lower level.

**February 3, Tuesday, 6 p.m., LEGO Block Party!, 828 I St., Sacramento.** First Tuesday of every month it's a Lego Block Party for kids ages 6 to 12 at the Central Library. The staff will supply loads of Lego and Duplo blocks - you supply your imagination. Come build with the staff in Kids Place at Central Library, street parking will be free after 6 p.m.

## Nature Events

**February 7, Nature Hike, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael.** Much of what we know about wildlife was discovered by just watching. Take a walk in the Nature Area at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and sharpen your observation skills. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

**February 8, Nature Hike, 1:30 p.m., 2820 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael.** Join docent Jennifer Kerr at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center for a guided map and compass walk. You will learn how to use a compass, take bearings, read a compass with a map and find your way around the trails. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

**February 15, Pipevine Swallowtail, 1:30 p.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael.** Come to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center to learn about this beautiful butterfly and its amazing life cycle. Then take a hike with a naturalist to look for the butterfly's Pipevine plant host with its unique blossoms. All ages welcome. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

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## A New Way to Understand Your Baby's Crying

A Message from First 5 Sacramento

The "Period of PURPLE Crying", more commonly known as "colic", is the new term used to describe the developmental stage of increased crying during the first few months of a baby's life. The phase typically begins at about 2-weeks-old and may continue until about 3-4 months of age.

When told their baby has colic, many parents feel confused and concerned because it sounds like an illness or something is wrong, when actually it is a normal developmental phase. Thus, the term "Period of PURPLE Crying" provides an easier way to help parents understand what their babies are experiencing. PURPLE is an acronym to describe the characteristics of the stage:

**Peak of crying** - Your baby may cry more each week; the most at 2 months, then less at 3-5 months.

**Unexpected** - Crying can come and go and you don't know why.

**Resists soothing** - Your baby may not stop crying no matter what you try.

**Pain-like face** - A crying baby may look like they are in pain, even when they are not.

**Long lasting** - Crying can last as long as five hours each day, and on some days more.

**Evening** - Your baby may cry more in the late afternoon or in the evening.

During this period of a baby's life, many parents or caregivers often feel frustrated and discouraged. In fact, the Period of PURPLE Crying is the number one trigger for parents shaking and abusing their babies, likely to cause bodily injury and even death. To avoid such feelings, the best thing parents



and caregivers can do is to ask a loved one to take care of the baby for a while. If someone is not available, place your baby in a safe place and take a minute or two to calm down in another room.

The Sacramento Crisis Nurseries also offer free parent respite care for just a day or up to 30 days. Being a parent is not easy, but just remember, you are not alone. Call the confidential parent hotline 24-hours a day at: 1-888-281-3000.

Additional information is online at [www.purplecrying.info](http://www.purplecrying.info).

*About First 5 Sacramento - Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on tobacco products to support programs for expectant parents and children ages zero to five. In the last year, First 5 Sacramento distributed approximately \$14 million a year in Prop 10 revenues to programs and services that meet local needs. Each county has a First 5 Children and Families Commission providing unique local services for that county. Surrounding First 5's include: First 5 Yolo: 530-669-2475; First 5 Placer: 530-745-1304; and First 5 El Dorado: 530-672-8298. More information at [www.first5sacramento.net](http://www.first5sacramento.net) or #first5sac.*



## Disney on Ice presents Let's celebrate!

Feld Entertainment invites families to turn an ordinary day into an extraordinary one at its new ice extravaganza, **Disney On Ice presents Let's Celebrate!**, February 11 to 16 at Sleep Train Arena, One Sports Parkway, Sacramento, CA 95834.

Audiences will experience the ultimate celebration of celebrations as they join Mickey Mouse and friends on a delightful tour of festivities jam-packed with fun surprises, spectacular skating and vibrant costumes. The production's original storyline transports audiences to exciting events with their favorite Disney characters, including a Valentine's Day Royal Ball with Princess Tiana; a Very Merry Un-Birthday Party with Alice and the Mad Hatter; Jack Skellington's frightfully festive Halloween party with the Disney Villains; and a Hawaiian luau with Lilo and Stitch.

Shows scheduled: February 11, 12, 13 at 7 p.m.; February 14 and 15 at 11 a.m., 3 and 7 p.m.; February 16, 12 and 4 p.m.

Prices range from \$17, \$23, \$42 (VIP), \$70 (Front Row); Kids tickets available for only \$10 each on weekday shows (only valid for February 11, 12 and 13 shows). Special opening night discount tickets available for only \$12 each (not valid for VIP/Front Row levels). Tickets available for purchase online at Ticketmaster.com, charge by phone at 800-745-3000 or in-person at Ticketmaster retail outlets or the venue Box Office.

*Presented by YoKids, Let's Celebrate! is an incredible party that will inspire families to celebrate year round.*

## Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park

Located Off Hwy 9 in Felton (831) 335-7077

**Basket Making Workshop: Learn how to make a basket with local pine needles, February 6, 2 to 4 p.m. and February 28, 10 a.m. to Noon**

Meet at the Visitor Center via the Parks main entrance off Hwy 9 in Felton. Join Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park docent Cheryl VanDeVeer for a fun, free, family workshop learning how to make a basket from local pine needles. No experience necessary and all materials are supplied. Children should be accompanied by an adult. Program is free, parking fee \$10.

**Old-Growth Redwood Walks, Every Saturday in February, 1 p.m.**

Meet at the Visitor Center via the Park's main entrance off Hwy 9 in Felton. Experience a guided forest adventure on a docent-led walk through the magnificent old-growth coast redwood forest. This .8 mile long stroll begins at 1pm and lasts about 1.5 hours. The trail is wheelchair and stroller accessible. Program is free, parking fee is \$10. More information is available at (831) 335-7077.

**Exploring the Mysterious Sandhills, February 20, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Do you know there are 5 endangered species in the Santa Cruz Sandhills? Or about the fragility of this rare and unique ecosystem? Join a walk around the restoration area of the Henry Cowell Sandhills to find the answers to these questions and more. Meet at the Juvenile Hall Parking Lot located off Graham Hill Road, across from Henry Cowell. Dress in layers and bring water to drink. More information is available if you call (831) 335-7077.

# Wish Upon a Star Party

www.birthdaypartyideas4kids.com

Wish upon a star is a great birthday party theme for kids of all ages. Out of this world ideas that will make a birthday party that your child could only wish for.

## Invitation Ideas

- Stick silver star stickers on a dark blue invitation. Print party information on the inside and include silver star shaped confetti inside. Inside the invitation write "We wished upon a star that you would be at \_\_\_\_\_'s (insert birthday child's name) party!"

## Decoration Ideas

- Decorate with blue, black, silver and white. Use helium balloons with stars printed on them or draw stars on black balloons with a white paint marker. Buy a large light up star and place it high in the trees of the party venue so everyone can see it when they arrive. Have a sign in the front yard that says "Wishing Star ... Make a Wish!" so they can stop and wish on the star before they enter. Hang strings of smaller lights in all the trees and bushes to make it look like it is a starry night.
- Use a blue table cloth on the party table and put glitter down the center.

- Hang strings of lights from the ceiling and around the party table.
- Make star shaped wands and place them at each place setting.
- Make smaller star shaped wands and print out the name of the foods you are serving in the center and place in or near the bowls/plates of food.

## Activities

- **Wishes for a Star** - Set up a table in the party area with star shaped paper (about 4" x 4") and different colored markers and pens. Ask each guest to write a birthday wish or blessing for the birthday child. After the party take the birthday wishes and make a scrapbook page or frame them.
- **Crafts- Star Dust Art** - Make stardust art with sand art necklaces, paintings or containers. Find kits in fun colors and let guests make a necklace, painting or container to take home as a party favor.

## Party Games

- **Star Tag** - Played like traditional tag except the player who is "it" holds a star shaped wand. They must tag the other players with the wand. Once players are tagged they must freeze and can't move until another player comes by and tags them. When everyone is frozen a new "it" is chosen.



- **Star Hop** - To play this relay race game guests are divided into two teams. Each team is given two large star shapes that are cut out of poster board. At a distance from where the party is being held. When it gets dark give each child a flashlight and tell them to search for the hidden items. Provide sacks or bags for the kids to hold their treasure (use black or dark blue paper bags and let the kids decorate them with stars during the beginning of the party when guests are arriving). Write numbers on the stars that correspond with prizes. After the treasure hunt the party guests can trade their stars for prizes that match the number on the back of their stars.

- **Star Treasure Hunt** - Before the party hide lots of star shaped items (make from cardboard or use plastic stars) all over the backyard or area where the party is being held. When it gets dark give each child a flashlight and tell them to search for the hidden items. Provide sacks or bags for the kids to hold their treasure (use black or dark blue paper bags and let the kids decorate them with stars during the beginning of the party when guests are arriving). Write numbers on the stars that correspond with prizes. After the treasure hunt the party guests can trade their stars for prizes that match the number on the back of their stars.

## Party Food Ideas

Bake large star shaped cookies and let the kids decorate them with icing and different types of sprinkles. Star shaped pasta is fun with several different sauces that the kids can choose from.

## Party Favors

Pretty star ornament, star themed notebook or journal to write down their wishes, star themed pens

## Goody / Loof Bag Ideas

Chinese food containers in blue - draw on stars with a white paint marker, star shaped container, party bags with star stickers all over them,

# Under The Sea Birthday Party Ideas

www.birthdaypartyideas4kids.com

## Invitation Ideas

- **Print the Under the Sea** party information on pretty paper (about 4 invitations per page) and cut them out. Punch a hole in one corner of the invitation and string a ribbon through the hole. Tie it onto a pretty shell and hand out to guests.
- **Write party information** on 1/2 sheets of paper and roll up like a scroll. Place inside a recycled water bottle that has the label removed for a message in a bottle. Decorate the outside of the bottle with sea life stickers and put sand or shells inside the bottle with the invitation.
- Buy or make salt water fish shaped cards

## Party Decoration Ideas

To make the party look like it is under the sea buy plastic or paper fish and hang them around the party room. You can attach them to fishing line and hang them from the ceiling to make it look like they are swimming, or simply attach them to the strings of helium balloons that are place on the ceiling. Sand and shells can be placed on party tables along with pieces of coral, treasure chests and plastic fish. Treasure chests and large conch shells can be used to hold snack foods.

## Under the Sea Party Games

- **Under the Sea Treasure** - Kids dig through sand to find "Under the Sea" treasures. You will need a small plastic wading pool filled with sand and lots of Sea themed items like polished rocks, shells, jewelry, coins and wrapped candy. Give each child a plastic shovel and pail with

their name on it and let them dig through the sand to find the treasure. When they find something they can place it in their sand pail.

- **Octopus Tag** - This game of tag has a great Under the Sea twist. Choose who will be "it" and have them stand in the center of the playing field. Use tape or if you are outside spray paint a line around the field that the players can't cross. All other players will line up on one side of the field. When "it" or the "octopus" shouts "go!" they players must run past the octopus to the other side of the field. The octopus tries to tag as many players as they can while the players are running from one side of the field to the other. When a player is tagged they have to hold hands with the person who tagged them and they become part of the octopus. Keep playing until the last player is tagged - then they become the new octopus.

## Food Ideas

For starfish use a star shaped cookie cutter and cut star shapes from different food items such as

sandwiches, cookies or brownies. You can also use a fish shape cookie cutter.

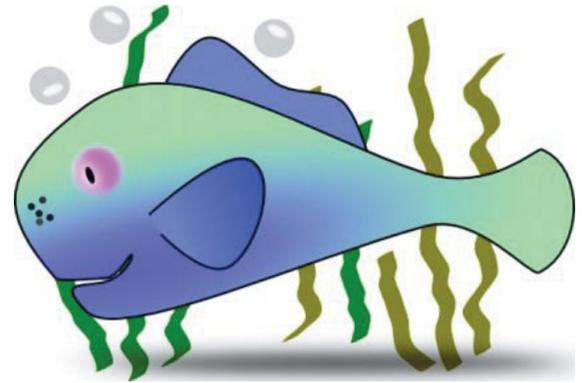
- Macaroni and cheese can be made with shell pasta for a fun Under the Sea dish.
- Chex Mix made with Oyster and Goldfish Crackers
- Clam Cookies - Take two sugar cookies and place icing in between them. In the middle place a small marshmallow or yogurt raisin for the pearl. Attach two chocolate chips with a small amount of icing on the top edge of the cookie for eyes.
- In clear plastic cups pour Jell-O and right before the Jell-O sets push fish gummies into the Jell-O to make it look like the fish are swimming.

## Party Favor Ideas

Wrap gummy fish in small plastic bags and tie with a blue ribbon, sea shell jewelry, shark, octopus or fish themed items such as notepads, cups, pens or stickers

## Goody / Loof Bag Ideas

Sand buckets, plastic fish bowls, wooden or plastic treasure chests



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