

March 2015

California Kids!

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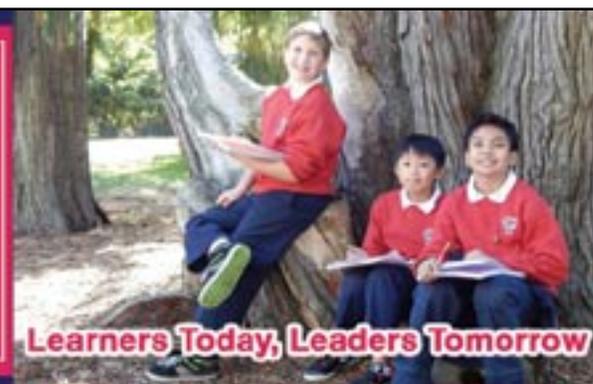


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California Kids!

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- March 7 & 8
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- April 4 & 5
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- May 2 & 3
Theater Performance:
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Programs at Fairytale Town

Spring, Summer & Fall Hours Start, Sunday, March 1, - Saturday, October 31, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Fairytale Town will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the spring, summer and fall seasons, weather permitting. Week-day admission is \$4.50 for adults and children ages 2 and older. Weekend 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 or call (916) 808-7462.

Theater Performance: "The Frog Prince", Saturday & Sunday, March 7 and 8, 12:30, 1:30 and 2:30 p.m.

The Grimm Brothers' classic fairytale "The Frog Prince" comes to life on the Children's Theater stage.

In this production by the Fratello Marionettes, a wicked witch has transformed a handsome prince into a frog, and he is destined to live out his life in the wishing well. While playing in the meadow, the Princess Ofelia accidentally drops her new golden ball into the well. The Princess promises to grant the frog three wishes if he will retrieve her ball. Will the Princess follow through on her promises, and will the frog turn back into the handsome Prince? Tickets are \$2 for nonmembers in addition to park admission, and \$1 for members. For more information, visit www.fairytaletown.org or call (916) 808-7462.



Photo courtesy

hand to answer questions and provide information on healthy childhood development. Admission is free thanks to a generous grant from Sutter Children's Center, Sacramento. For more information, visit www.fairytaletown.org or call (916) 808-7462.

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 or call (916) 808-7462.

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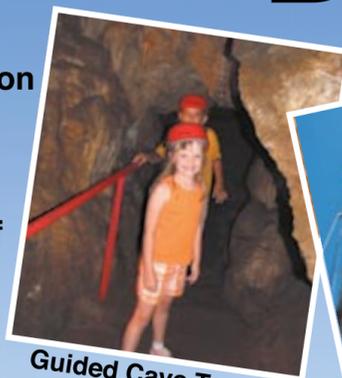
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Effie Yeaw Nature Center Activities

Nature of Things Seminar And Field Study Series

Vernal Pools: Mosaics of Life with Eva Butler. Millions of years of geology and evolution have created the spectacular vernal pools of the Sacramento Valley. These exceptional, rare wetland ecosystems are unique to California and support a complex food web as well as many rare plant species. Seminar: Thursday, March 12, 6:30 - 8 p.m. at Effie Yeaw Nature Center; Field Study - Saturday, March 14, 9 - 11, Mather Field Park. \$20/ARNHA members, \$25/non-members. Reservations required: www.sacnaturecenter.net or (916) 489-4918.

BIRD AND BREAKFAST: Join guides from the Sacramento Audubon Society and see nesting birds in the Effie Yeaw Nature Preserve, then enjoy a delicious breakfast from the American River Natural History Association. Saturday, March 22, 8 a.m.: 90 min (approx.) walk and breakfast buffet. Ages 12—adult. General admission: \$40/person ARNHA/Audubon members: \$35/person. Sunday, March 23, 8 a.m. Choose from Adult or Family walks, 90 minute walk and pancake breakfast by the Carmichael Kiwanis Club.

General admission: \$40/person aged 12 - adult; \$10/person aged 6 - 11, ARNHA/Audubon members: \$35/per person aged 12 - adult; \$8/person aged 6 - 11. Reservations required, visit www.sacnaturecenter.net or call (916) 489-4918.

Under the Oaks Nature Camps for children ages 5 - 11; \$20/day members, \$25/day non-members; Pre-registration required. www.sacnaturecenter.net for registration and info. All camps are 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Free Weekend Activities

March 1, Sunday, Fantastic Flyers, 1:30 p.m.

Meet a live raptor and learn more about these amazing hunters.

March 7, Saturday, Take a Bite Out of Nature, 10:30 a.m.

What are herbivores, carnivores and omnivores? How can you tell which animals are which? Check out the skulls and teeth of various animals and see if you can figure out what they eat.

March 8, Sunday, Endangered Species, 1:30 p.m.

Join a Naturalist and explore endangered plants and animals of our area and find out how you can help.

March 14, Saturday, Critter Corner, 10:30 a.m.

Where do our animals come from? Why are they here? Meet a couple of small animal residents at the Nature Center up close. Learn about each of their unique journeys and how they became an educational ambassador for the Nature Center.

March 15, Sunday, Seeing GREEN, 1:30 p.m.

Join a naturalist for some "catch and release" activities in the Nature Center's pond. Explore what critters are living there and see how being green makes life a little easier in the pond.

March 28, Saturday, Spring Surprises, 10:30 a.m.

Discover the surprises spring has in store for you. What's new in the Nature Area?

March 29, Sunday, Abalone Necklace Making, 1:30 a.m.

Join a naturalist in the replica Nisenan Maidu village to polish an abalone shell piece for your own unique necklace. All ages welcome; children will need assistance from an adult.

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.

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

Spring is almost here!

Hey kids! The first day of Spring is March 20, which means the renewal of nature and plants and warmer weather! Here's a puzzle that will test your skill at finding hidden words related to Spring. Those on the list below can be spelled forward, backward, vertically, horizontally and even diagonally.

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

Awakening
Barefoot
Bloom
Blossoms
Blue sky
Breezy
Bulbs
Butterfly

Buzzing
Caterpillar
Chirping
Flowers
Gardening
Green meadows

Growing
Hatching
March
New leaves
Robin
Season
Sunshine
Tulips

Safely Sleeping

By **Connie Goldsmith**
RN, BSN, MPA

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)—the sudden and unexpected death of an infant while sleeping—is a term that strikes fear into the heart of every parent. A seemingly healthy baby goes to sleep and never wakes up. Certain medical conditions such as prematurity, respiratory infections, or neurological problems may cause SIDS in infants. These may be difficult to recognize or prevent. However, many SIDS deaths are caused by the baby's sleeping environment.

At least five thousand babies died of SIDS each year as recently as 1990. Since then, more babies are properly put down on their backs to sleep during nights and at naptime. Today, about two thousand infants die of SIDS each year. SIDS remains the leading cause of death in babies between one month and one year of age. Doctors want to be sure that parents know all the risk factors for SIDS deaths. While SIDS cannot be prevented, it can be greatly reduced with safe sleeping practices.

Known Risk Factors

Although sudden infant death syndrome can strike any infant, researchers have identified several factors that may increase a baby's risk. Boys are more likely than girls to die of SIDS. For unknown reasons, SIDS is most likely to strike an infant during the second and third months of life. SIDS runs in some families. Babies who have had siblings or cousins die of SIDS are more vulnerable to it than other babies. Being born too early or having a low birth weight also increases the risk. For reasons that aren't well-understood, African-American, Native American, and Eskimo infants are more likely to develop SIDS.

Some risk factors for SIDS are linked to the mother. These include having a mother younger than twenty, or a mother who had poor prenatal care. The infant of a mother who smokes, uses drugs, or consumes alcohol is more likely to die of SIDS. Even if the mother doesn't smoke, being around secondhand smoke from other household members increase the risk of SIDS.

The sleeping environment is perhaps the most important risk factor for SIDS. Babies who become too hot while sleeping have an increased risk. Sleeping with parents, other children, or pets increases the risk for SIDS in babies. Perhaps the most important risk factor for SIDS is babies sleeping on their stomachs. Researchers have proven that back sleeping is much safer than either back-sleeping or side-sleeping. Back-sleeping helps protect the delicate airway of small babies and allows them to look around the room and to freely move their arms and legs. Additionally, babies who sleep on their backs are less likely to get fevers, stuffy noses, and ear infections. Babies should be placed on their backs at bedtime and for daytime napping.

Beware of Bedding

While most parents now put babies to sleep on their backs, some may not be aware of the hazards posed by baby's bedding. Babies should not sleep on soft surfaces, such as adult mattresses, chairs, or couches. Soft bedding, such as blankets, quilts, and pillows in the crib, can obstruct a baby's airway and lead to suffocation and SIDS. Even crib bumpers and soft stuffed toys can be potentially hazardous.



In January 2015, *Pediatrics*, the prestigious journal written by pediatricians, published a study in which 20,000 caregivers responded to questions about infant bedding. Responses revealed that a shocking 55% of infants are sleeping with potentially unsafe bedding. Study author Dr. Marian Willinger said, "Parents receive a lot of mixed messages. Relatives may give them quilts or fluffy blankets as presents for the new baby, and they feel obligated to use them. Or they see magazine photos of babies with potentially unsafe bedding items. Babies should sleep on a firm, safety-approved mattress and fitted sheet without any other bedding."

Eight Steps to Safe Sleeping

Parents should be sure that other caregivers, such as grandparents, baby sitters, siblings, and child care providers are doing it right.

Always put your baby down on his or her back for naps and at bedtime.

Use a safety-approved crib with a firm mattress and a fitted bottom sheet.

Remove all soft pillows, blankets, and crib bumpers.

Keep all soft objects such as toys and bedding out of your baby's crib.

Don't allow anyone to smoke around your baby.

Be sure nothing covers your baby's head.

Dress your baby in a warm one-piece sleeper.

Your baby should never sleep with adults, animals, or other children.

Resources: 1. About SIDS and Safe Infant Sleep. Safe to Sleep, US Dept. of Health & Human Services. <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/sts/Pages/default.aspx>.

2. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Mayo Clinic. <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/sudden-infant-death-syndrome/basics/causes/con-20020269>.

3. Safe Sleep Campaign. American Academy of Pediatrics. <http://www.healthychildcare.org/sids.html>.

Note: The information contained in this article is not intended to replace medical advice. Parents and caregivers should always contact their child's doctor for guidance with any health concerns.

Connie Goldsmith writes health and science books for young people and continuing education courses for nurses. She worked as a pediatric triage nurse on a 24/7 nurse advice line for several years. Her next book, about dietary supplements, will be published spring 2015. She maintains a health blog at www.conniegoldsmith.com.



Photo courtesy Sutter's Fort State Historic Park

Sutter's Fort event

Continuing a popular series of interactive and fun "Hands on History" activities each month, Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (SHP) will present a special "Hands on History:Hard:Working Women on the Frontier" event, Saturday, March 21, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

At this special event, visitors to Sutter's Fort, will realize that emigrant women were not well-to-do Victorian ladies with pretty clothes who lived a life of leisure. In contrast, simply getting enough hot water to wash their faces in the morning was an effort, and pioneer women were vital economic partners in families, many of whom set up their own businesses selling eggs, milk, or baked goods to neighbors and travelers. Fort guests will enjoy crowd-favorite black powder and musket demonstrations, dutch-oven cooking demonstrations, and an interactive wagon trail camp for visitors to experience what it was like to camp as part of a wagon train.

Admission to Sutter's Fort SHP costs \$7 per adult (18 and older), \$5 per youth (ages 6 to 17) and is free for children 5 and under. For more information, call 916-445-4422 or visit www.suttersfort.org

Biggest kids show ever in Sacramento!

Festival for Kids

April 11 & 12, 2015
Cal Expo

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Adults \$7, Kids \$3, Under 3 Free



"It was like he was Elvis. The Police had to escort him out." 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. Sponge Bob and his cartoon buddy **Dora the Explorer** will be on hand so kids can have a souvenir picture with their favorite character.

A true festival for the whole family!

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.

Rain Forest Alive!

A stunning rainforest exhibit. Kids get up close and personal with animals from the jungle.



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.

Lucky Starr, the 8-foot tall cowgirl. America's Funniest Cowgirl!

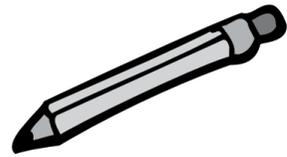
Something Ridiculous is the high-energy juggling and acrobatic act.



www.festivalforkids.net

Vendor Inquiries: (800) 787-2248

MAKE IT YOURSELF!



Handprint Shamrock

Here is a quick idea for a St. Patrick's Day craft which is bound to be a hit with the kids - and it provides a nice keepsake for the grown-ups, too.

You will need:

Green paint, paper, black pen

You will need to:

Print four green handprints in a circle, palms outwards and fingers together. (For a traditional shamrock rather than a four leaf clover, you can do three handprints). These are your leaves. Add a line with the side of your hand for the stalk. When the paint is dry, outline with black pen.

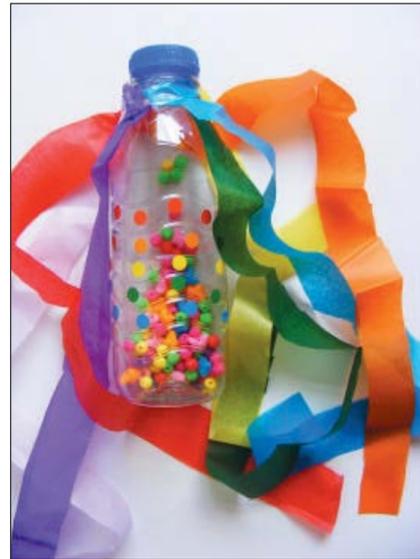


Rainbow Shakers

These rainbow shakers are fun for younger kids to make - with the added advantage that they can play with them later, too. Great for St. Patrick's Day, a rainbow theme, or any time when things need brightening up.

You will need:

A small drinks bottle, colored beads, circle stickers (in lots of different colors), tissue paper (or ribbon) in all the colors of the rainbow, sticky tape



You will need to:

Wash and dry your bottle well. Pour in some beads and fasten the bottle tightly (for younger children it could be glued in place). Decorate your bottle with the stickers. You can make circles around the bottle to create a rainbow. Be as creative as you like. Cut one strip of tissue paper in each color. Arrange them around the neck of the bottle and tape in place.

St. Patrick's Day Sun catcher

This St. Patrick's Day sun catcher craft really looks pretty hanging in front of the window.

You will need:

Tissue paper in all the colors of the rainbow, plus gold if possible, Laminator and two pouches (or contact film), thread

You will need to:

Cut out an arch for the rainbow from the red tissue paper. Use the red arch to help you draw and cut out an orange arch. Keep going until you have all the colors.

Lay out your rainbow on the inside of the laminator pouch, cover and seal. Cut out the rainbow making sure that you leave a sealed edge all around the outside. If you do not have a laminator you could seal your rainbow between two layers of contact film. This will be quite tricky and is probably best done by an adult. Cut out a shamrock from green tissue paper. From dark tissue paper cut out a pot and from gold (or yellow) some gold coins. Arrange these in the second laminator pouch, seal and cut out.

With a needle, thread a piece of thread through the top of the shamrock and one end of the rainbow, knotting the ends to secure. Fasten the pot of gold to the other end of the rainbow in the same way. Add a piece of thread to the top of the rainbow to hang. Hang your mobile in front of a window and let the sun shine through it.

If you do not want to laminate, here is another way: cut outlines of each object from construction paper. Then paste colored tissue on the insides of your cutouts. Works the same way as a sun catcher!



Paper Plate Shamrock

This paper plate shamrock makes a satisfying kids craft for St. Patrick's Day, with painting, cutting and sticking involved!

You will need:

3 small paper plates, green paint, green glitter glue, sticky tape, green card

You will need to:

Paint the front of the plates green and leave to dry. Cut out a "v" shape from the edge of each plate and draw on a central vein with glitter glue. When the plates are dry, arrange them into a shamrock shape and glue or tape together. Glue or tape on a green card rectangle as a stem.



Crafts courtesy of: www.ActivityVillage.co.uk - Keeping Kids Busy

Who wrote that?

The Creators of Your Child's Favorite Books

Featuring Emily Jiang

By Bitsy Kemper

Names are powerful-- they can shape how we are seen, who we think we are.

Author Emily Jiang has two "real" names. Her American name, and author name, is Emily Jiang. Most people call her Emily or Em.

Her Chinese name is Jiang Ming. "It's one of the easiest Chinese names to write," she says. "Especially Ming, which refers to Ming Dynasty, Ming vase, and Ming the Merciless." Only her family and close family friends use her Chinese name today.

Books were my childhood friends. I write books for children

looking for more friends.

As a child, Emily was a shy bookworm. The library was her second home, and she figures she read hundreds of books a year. As an adult, inspired by children's book author Janet Wong, she returned to the children's section of her library and re-read all her favorites. She pored over *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott, *Anne of Green Gables* by L.M. Montgomery, *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle, *Alanna, the First Adventure* by Tamora Pierce. "It was such a fabulous experience to return to those stories and characters that helped shape my worldview," she gushed.

"The main characters, these girls, never quite fit in," Emily explains. "They don't conform to their society's conventional standards of what a girl should be. They are



Emily Jiang

not conventionally passive, beautiful, nor ridiculously good. They are girls who act out and often cause trouble because of their individuality and stubbornness, often because they care too much. They are not the smartest and they are never the prettiest, yet in the end in spite of their flaws, and often because of their flaws, they manage to be heroes. They save their best friends, their family, their community. These girls, these gorgeously flawed girls, are my soul sisters."

When children can see themselves in books, they will see themselves in the world.

As she re-read these and other favorites, she noticed "a huge lack of Asian-American characters." That was when she shifted focus from writing adult books to children's books. "Because somewhere out there, there are shy Asian-American kids looking for books where they can see themselves," she explains. She took her mission seriously. And so has the literature industry.



Receiving awards means someone I've never met

loved what I wrote. (squee!)

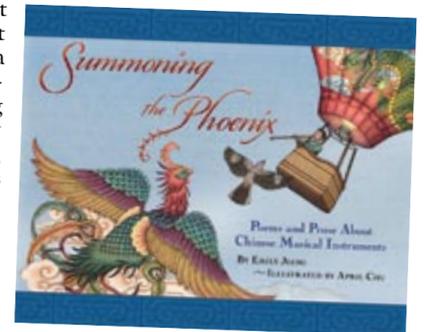
Early on, Emily earned both a writing grant and a "most promising new manuscript" award from the International Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI), the largest organization of its kind. "Receiving these awards from SCBWI gave me the confidence that I could actually become an author one day," she says in gratitude. And did she ever. Her first book received not only one prestigious *Kirkus Reviews* awards, but two! *Summoning the Phoenix* was awarded a "Starred Review" before it was even published. And, it was listed among The Best Children's Books of 2014. No easy, and rarely undeserved, feat.

Her book was well researched. She actually loves learning about little-known cultures and finding little-known facts. Stumbling upon a fact that "shines like a gem" enriches her stories. Sometimes preparation meets opportunity

at just the right time. Her manuscript got noticed by an editor who coincidentally always wanted to publish a picture book about Chinese Musical Instruments. A book contract followed.

Muses are fickle. But the sky is always there, constantly changing.

It's a great start to what she hopes is a long and successful writing career. For new inspiration, she takes walks and looks up. "The sky is always changing, so there's always something new to



WRITTEN BY EMILY JIANG:

Summoning the Phoenix, illustrated by April Chu, published by Shen's Books, an imprint of Lee & Low Books, April 2014

MORE ABOUT EMILY JIANG:

Emily Jiang is Chinese-American living in the United States. She was born in the United States and grew up in Dallas, Texas. She now lives in the Bay Area, where she enjoys watching Korean dramas and Japanese anime more than American television. As a picture book author, she likes to point out that she can't draw, but loves to paint with words and with sound.

MEET EMILY JIANG:

March 6-8, 2015 Emily will be speaking on panels at FOGcon in Walnut Creek, CA
 March 14 Emily will be Guest Author for "Authors on the Move" for the Sacramento Public Library
 March 18-22 Emily will do a reading as a Creative Participant for the International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts, in Orlando, Florida.
 In April 2015, Emily will be directing a concert of some of her original music compositions in the Bay Area, and hopes to debut some music inspired by *Summoning the Phoenix*.

Check her website for the newest updates: www.emilyjiang.com



Discovery Museum Science and Space Center activities

March 1, Seuss, Science, and Space—Oh my!, 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 time. Our craft for kids is making a Lorax mustache to take home and wear. Have fun coloring 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).



Photo courtesy Discovery Museum

March 7 and 8, Aviation Antics, Saturday and Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m. Come fly with the Discovery Museum! In our Space Quest! exhibit, little ones pretend to fly in our rocket ship play station while wearing astronaut costumes. Test your aeronautical engineering skills by building a paper airplane and aiming it through a hanging hoop. There will be a NASA Solar System Ambassador on board, presenting information about the spacecraft, Dawn. Arriving to the dwarf planet Ceres on March 6, this is the first spacecraft to ever reach a dwarf planet. It flies with a unique rocket system,

known as an Ion-Propulsion Engine. Learn how to help investigate information that comes from Dawn from your own home. Remember, your admission also includes visiting the Nature Discovery Room exhibits, and a planetarium show at 1 and 3 p.m. (for ages 4 and older only).

March 14 and 15, Spinning into Spring!, Saturday and Sunday, 12:30 to 4 p.m. Since the 1800s, a favorite spring toy for children

has been the pinwheel. Bring that fun to your kids this weekend by visiting the Discovery Museum. Each child crafts a spring spinner to take home as a souvenir. Test it out by running around on our acreage after visiting the Space Quest! exhibit. 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.

March 21 and 22, Amateur Radio Weekend, Saturday and Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.



Photo courtesy Discovery Museum

Did you know you can talk around the world without the Internet? Learn more about amateur radio, also called "ham radio," a system you can use when your cell phone dies or the Internet is down. Amateur radio operators can talk through satellites and with astronauts too. This technology is useful for weather spotters and can support recovery efforts in emergencies. Try your hand at being an amateur radio operator in our laboratory—set up on both Saturday and Sunday—and put radio to work! Remember, your admission 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).

March 28 and 29, Meet A Scientist!, Saturday and Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m. Visit the Discovery Museum this weekend to meet some amazing scientists. Multiple scientists are available each day to interact with your family, sharing their research and offering a hands-on activity to connect you with current science in our community. Children 12 and younger receive a souvenir pin once they complete a "science passport." This is a wonderful opportunity to have

children meet a real scientist. 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).

March 30 - April 3, NanoDays, Monday - Friday, 12:30 to 4 p.m.

NanoDays is a nationwide festival of educational programs about nanoscale science and engineering and the potential impact on the future. The Discovery Museum is a member of the Nanoscale Informal Science Education Network and is offering a nano-celebration this week. The classroom is full of hands-on activities to help your family understand the nano-world and its importance to our society. Remember, your admission also includes visiting the Space Quest! and Nature Discovery Room exhibits.

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.

one of the Biggest Kids Shows Ever!

Sponge 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 your calendars to attend this festival for the whole family! For more information, visit www.festivalforkids.net or call (800) 787-2248.



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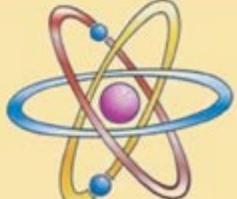
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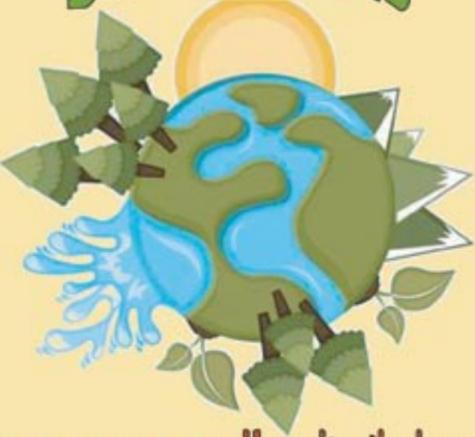
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Middle Grade Novels

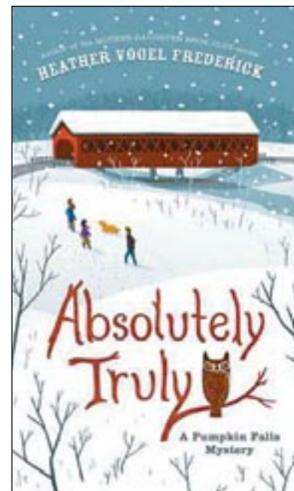
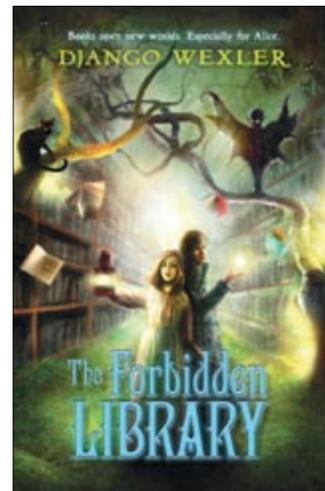
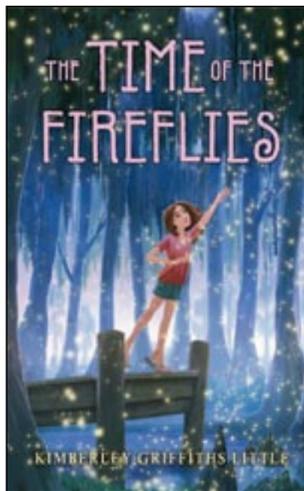
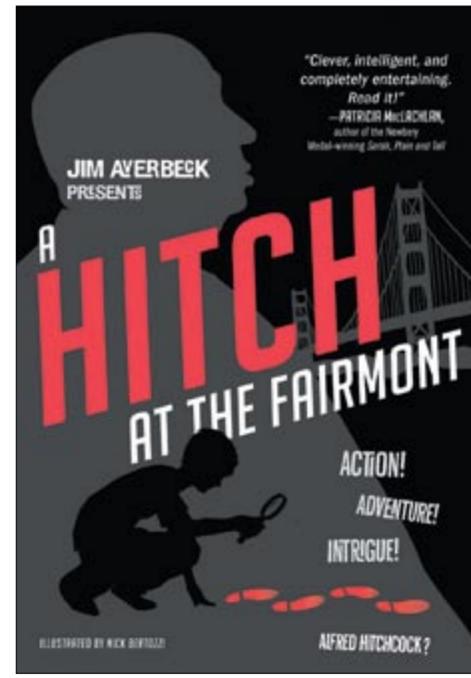
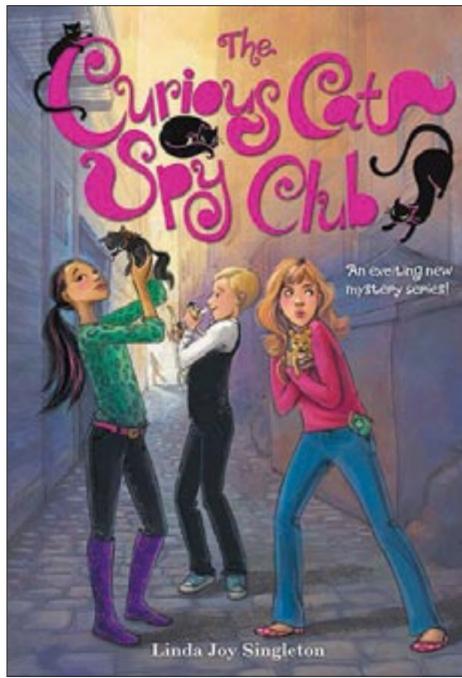
By Connie Goldsmith

Middle grade novels are aimed at the voracious preteen readers from eight to twelve. Some of today's best writing is found in these books. Check out the titles below to find one that will appeal to your child. If your young reader isn't quite up to the task, the stories are ideal for family read-aloud time.

"*The Curious Cat Spy Club*," by Linda Joy Singleton. (Albert Whitman.) "What's black and white and runs through traffic? A runaway zebra. This isn't a joke—it's really happening!" So begins the roller-coaster ride of this charming mystery. When Kelsey, Becca, and Leo rescue three kittens cruelly discarded in a dumpster, they form the Curious Cat Spy Club to find out who did such a dastardly deed. In the meantime, they take care of the kittens in a secret club house. They notice lots of pets are going missing in the small town of Sun Flower—far too many to be a coincidence. With bravery, determination, and help from Leo's high-tech brain, the trio puts together the puzzle pieces to solve the mysteries of the kittens and the missing animals. Pets, mysteries, and a secret club—a perfect combination for young readers.

"*The Time of the Fireflies*," by Kimberly Griffiths Little. (Scholastic Press). "The second day of summer was a flapjack-and-bacon morning with enough sweet cane syrup to make your teeth ache." Larissa doesn't realize something strange is going on. She feels like an ordinary girl, despite the scar on her face that burns when her mamma's old doll looks at her. Then an antique telephone rings in her parents' store—a phone not connected to anything. A girl's voice begs for help. She tells Larissa to "Trust the fireflies." So begins the generations-old mystery that involves Larissa's ancestral estate in the bayou, the spooky doll, and a servant's child. A wrong is righted. With believable characters, a bit of time travel, and a haunting story, this tale will keep readers guessing until the satisfying conclusion.

"*A Hitch at the Fairmont*," by Jim Averbeck. (Atheneum). "No body meant no casket, so they used her headshot instead. This was a Hollywood funeral, after all." If this book wasn't black and white, it would be in sepia, reminiscent of the old Hollywood it portrays. Eleven-year old Jack is a new orphan, sent to live with a grumpy aunt at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. Said aunt is kidnapped, not too terrible from Jack's point of view, but he doesn't want to end up in foster care. Instead he teams up with Alfred Hitchcock who also happens to be staying at the Fairmont. It turns out there are two kidnappings and two mysteries to solve. Each chapter begins with a movie-like story board hinting at what's to come. Younger readers will be entertained by the complex—but not too difficult—mysteries.



"*The Forbidden Library*," by Django Wexler. (Kathy Dawson/Penguin Books). "Much later, Alice would wonder what might have happened if she'd gone to bed when she was supposed to." This slightly creepy and altogether entertaining story is like a mashup of Alice in Wonderland and Harry Potter. Alice is a new orphan, sent to live with her mysterious Uncle Geryon. Strange things go on in his labyrinthine mansion. Food appears just as she needs it. She meets a talking cat and a boy named Isaac who dares her to do the one thing her uncle banned—to open a book from the forbidden library. Once she opens the book, she's trapped inside, left to fight her way out. This eerie yet charming supernatural adventure is perfect for readers who love libraries, books, and good stories well told. ** Reviewer's pick of the month**

"*Absolutely Truly: A Pumpkin Falls Mystery*," by Heather Vogel Frederick. (Simon & Schuster.) "A week before the January thaw finally arrived in February, I found myself hanging like a bat from a rafter inside a church steeple, face-to-face with a bell made by Paul Revere." Truly

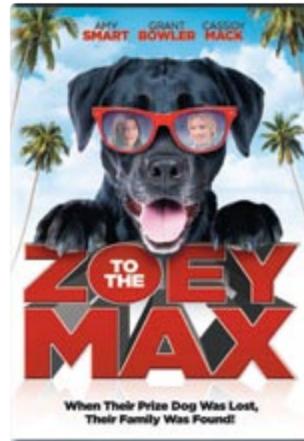
Lovejoy and her family moved from Texas to Pumpkin Falls, New Hampshire when her dad couldn't find work after losing an arm in Afghanistan. Truly hates it at first, but her dad and aunt take over the family bookstore in the tiny town. As time goes on, she makes new friends. When she finds an unsent love letter in a rare first edition of *Charlotte's Web* in the bookstore, the hunt is on to find out whom it belongs to. Making friends. Chasing clues. Finally fitting in. Readers are sure to identify with some of this lovely story's themes.

Connie Goldsmith (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: "Battling 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.

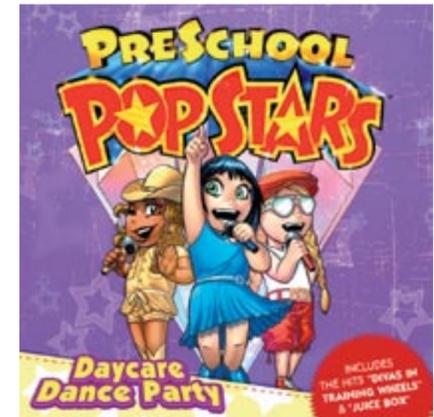
Fun Gift Ideas!

ZOEY TO THE MAX | Preschool Popstars

Filled with excitement the whole family can enjoy, *Zoey to the Max*, is on DVD and Digital HD from Cinedigm (NASDAQ: CIDM) and Brand Inc. Zoey, a thirteen year old foster child, watches helplessly as her new family's dog Max gets stolen while she's in charge. The criminals, a pair of Home Alone-Like thugs are after Max because he's become an infamous show dog. Zoey, with the help of her new techy friend, set out across the desert in order to track down Max and save the relationship with her new foster family. Faced with this new challenge, Zoey must dig in and fight for the life she's always wanted, undergoing sudden personal growth in the process. *Zoey to the Max* can be purchased on Amazon.



Creative Child Magazine has awarded the children's music album "Daycare Dance Party" by Preschool Popstars with the 2014 CD OF THE YEAR AWARD in the Kids Music & Dance CDs category. Creative Child Magazine is a national bi-monthly publication that provides parents with the latest information on how to nurture their child's creativity. The album "Daycare Dance Party," which contains an exciting mix of pop, hip-hop and country music styles, is available on iTunes and Amazon.com. It was produced by Charles Fulp, a Wilmington, NC-based song writer/producer with singles that have appeared on the charts of Billboard, MusicRow and DJ Times magazines, and it was mastered by Grammy winning engineer Gene Grimaldi (Lady Gaga, Akon, Nicki Minaj, etc.). Preschool Popstars are consistently in the Top 10 on ReverbNation's National Children's Music Chart, and though fictional group members Hailey, Bailey and Jazz are still in preschool, their clever brand of music



appeals to children of all ages. So grab a juice box and send in your RSVP to the "Daycare Dance Party" today! Connect with Preschool Popstars at: www.facebook.com/pspopstars - www.twitter.com/pspopstars - www.reverbnation.com/preschoolpopstars.

100 Percent Natural Easter Egg Dyes Made from Plants

Glob Colors, the leading producer of eco-friendly art supplies specializing in craft paints and dyes made from fruits and veggies, launches the 100 percent pure and Natural Easter Egg Coloring Kit made from plants. Glob Colors offers vibrant natural colors made from radish, cabbage, and annatto extracts. When mixed, these three natural colors make a rainbow of combinations, creating pastel to deep oranges,

purples and blues. The easy-to-use kit colors eggs within seconds and includes creative ideas such as leaf print and other Easter egg decorating instructions. Glob's Natural Easter Egg Coloring Kit includes enough color for one to two dozen eggs, containing three color packets and three bamboo mixing brushes. The kit is available at retailers like Whole Foods, Nordstrom and KiwiShophonline.com for a suggested retail price of \$14.

Glob's Natural Easter Egg Coloring Kit does not contain any artificial food coloring or synthetic dyes, and comes in sustainable packaging with post-consumer waste (PCW) paper, printed with vegetable inks. Note: Glob will also be launching all-natural food coloring kits for icing, baked goods and holiday decorating later this year.



RoosterFin games!

Board Games for kids are the building blocks to fun. **Monkeys Up™** is a game that will have you going bananas! Players compete to get the best score by flipping, switching, and stealing monkeys. Each monkey has a value hidden under its feet that is only revealed when flipped. Victory will come to the player who switches, steals, and flips the best. You will find yourself laughing head over heels until all of your monkeys are up! \$19.99. And, **PongCano™, The Game of Sacrifice!** This fast-paced skill game will keep players erupting with laughter! The task is simple—bounce the ball into the PongCano™ volcano. Players must control their nerves and hold their laughter until the ball lands safely in the bottom of the PongCano™ volcano! Ages 8+. \$15.99; <http://www.roosterfin.com/Games.php>.



The best places for RoosterFin game shopping is on their website: <http://shop.roosterfin.com>, and also through their storefront via Amazon: [Click Here](#).

Tap, tap, SLAM!

With all the feverish action and giggle-inducing fun of one of the world's most popular sports, **GAME TIME PING PONG** set is a hit with kids everywhere. It's a snap to set up on any table, thanks to suction cups on the two net posts. Players stand at opposite ends of the table, using the two paddles to swat the balls back and forth, using underspin, topspin, sidespin, delicately placing shots just over the net or going for the corners. For ages 3 and up. Package Dimensions: 10.5" x 6" x 2.13"

Three sports are currently available for kids: Ping Pong, Basketball and Football. These sports sets create entertainment for kids, and are available whenever, and can be set up wherever desired. All 3 sets are easy to set up and play, and each set comes with a traveling case. Geo-Flux and the GameTime Sports Sets are available from Geospace for \$11.99 at www.geospaceplay.com.





2015 Children's Summer Art Classes

FOR ALL LOCAL YOUNG ARTISTS! JUNE 22TH THROUGH JULY 31ST, 2015

Learn basic techniques in Fine Arts & Sculpting: Drawing, painting, collage, pastels, printmaking and sculpting.

Grades 1-6 Fine Arts Classes: Weekdays 9:30-11:30am
Two groups: Grades 1-3 & 4-6
Tuition: \$65.00 per week

A different class each week - no repeats!

Group "A"

Grades 1-3

- Week 1** June 22 - 26
- Week 2** June 29 - July 3
- Week 3** July 6 - 10
- Week 4** July 13 - 17
- Week 5** July 20 - 24
- Week 6** July 27 - 31

Group "B"

Grades 4-6

- Week 1** June 22 - 26
- Week 2** June 29 - July 3
- Week 3** July 6 - 10
- Week 4** July 13 - 17
- Week 5** July 20 - 24
- Week 6** July 27 - 31

Mid-morning juice & snack break

Limited space - Register early! By mail or at the Sacramento Fine Arts Center. Registration includes all art supplies and snacks.

Come Visit our Center: We have ongoing gallery exhibits free to the public; art classes, workshops, art clubs to join that offer free day and evening demonstrations. We have many brochures and information you can pick up at the center!

If interested:
Call the SACRAMENTO FINE ARTS CENTER
916-971-3713
5330-B Gibbons Drive - Carmichael, CA 95608
www.sacfinearts.org



Photo courtesy: California State Railroad Museum

Railroad Museum Announces Tuesday Train Rides

As an expansion of the well-established weekday train ride program for local school groups, California State Parks and the California State Railroad Museum are once again offering excursion train rides to the general public on 14 pre-determined Tuesdays in Spring 2015. Tuesday Train Rides are available on the following dates: March 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31; April 7, 14, 21 and 28 and May 5. Two train ride times will be available at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on the scheduled Tuesdays when the trains are running.

Excursion train rides are normally available on weekends and some holidays (once the season officially starts in April) but now weekday guests can also delight in the sights, smells and sounds of an authentic, working locomotive as it rolls along the levees of the Sacramento River. Appealing to all ages, the

experience offers guests with the chance to relax and enjoy train travel from an earlier era. Passengers are treated to a six-mile, 45-minute roundtrip excursion along the levees of the Sacramento River. The train features a combination of vintage closed coaches with comfortable seats and open-air "gondolas" with bench style seating.

All excursion trains depart from the Central Pacific Railroad Freight Depot in Old Sacramento (on Front Street between J and K Streets). Tickets cost \$10 for adults, \$5 for youths (ages 6-17 and are free for children ages 5 and under. Weekday train ride tickets are only available in-person on a first-come, first-served basis starting at 10:30 a.m. the day of the train ride at the Sacramento Southern Railroad ticket office. For more information, call 916-323-9280 or visit www.csrnf.org

Pig Day!

Saturday, March 7, is Davis Farmers Market's 24th annual Pig Day, celebrating local agriculture, local farmers, local food and pigs. The Market opens at 8 a.m., and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., shoppers and visitors will find baby pigs to pet, people in pig costumes to dance with, and pig-out eats at Davis Farmers Market in Central Park at 4th and C Streets in Davis.

Davis Farmers Market food vendors will offer a wide array of pig-themed eats. Visitors can pet baby piglets from Woodland farmer Jim Neilson's farm. Kids can also make free piggie crafts at booths sponsored by Davis Parent Pre-School (piggie noses), Davis Community Church Nursery School (piggie masks), University Covenant Nursery School (piggie puppets) and



Photo courtesy

UC Davis Campus Rotaract Club (piggie tails). Greenwich's Acres offers pony rides and a petting zoo (both for a fee).

For more information, visit www.davisfarmers-market.org or call (530) 756-1695.

Teens: come get a free dress!

Several of the branch libraries are taking donations of dresses, accessories, and other formal wear. There are two ways to participate:

- **Adults:** If your old dress(es), tuxedo or other prom accessory is clean and in decent shape, bring it by one of the participating libraries. Please note, each location will stop accepting new donations after their giveaway day (until next year, that is).
- **Teens (Ages 13-19):** Visit one of the participating library locations listed below and get a FREE prom dress or other formalwear.

Staff are taking donations at the locations listed below and giving it all away to local teens during the month of March.

A few tips to teens before you come "shop":

- You can try dresses on. But please don't wear makeup on dress giveaway days. It can get on dresses and ruin them.
- There will be limited changing space/privacy. Please wear clothing that you can pull dresses over to try them on, such as yoga shorts, sports bras and leotards.
- Please bring your school ID.

March 5, Thursday, 4 to 6 p.m., Sylvan Oaks Library, 6700 Auburn Blvd., Registration is required to attend.

March 7, Saturday, 2 to 3 p.m., South Natomas Library, 2901 Truxel Road March 10, Tuesday, 1 to 7:30 p.m., North Highlands - Antelope Library, 4235 Antelope Road March 14, Saturday, Noon to 4 p.m., Valley Hi - North Laguna Library, 7400 Imagination Parkway, Registration is required to attend. March 26, Thursday, 2 to 4 p.m., Fair Oaks Library, 11601 Fair Oaks Blvd.

The Maidu Museum and Historic Site Events

March 21, Night Out at the Museum, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Every 3rd Saturday, through November from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Museum doors open at 6:30 p.m. Cultural programs start at 7 p.m. FREE event. Light refreshments will be available. Opening reception for "The Lettered Life of a Mountain Maidu Woman: An Archival Portrait of Marie Mason Potts", presented by guest curator Terri Castaneda, Professor of Cultural Anthropology at CSU Sacramento. This exhibit, on display through May 9, documents the uncommon life story, adventurous spirit, and political activism of Marie Mason Potts (1895-1978). From her birth in Big Meadows (now Lake Almanor, in Plumas County) to the final decades of her life, when she gained state and national prominence as a writer, newspaper editor, and spokesperson on behalf of Maidu, Native Californian, and American Indian cultural traditions and rights.

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.

OPENING DAY MARCH 29!

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ONLY
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Must present printed, physical coupon at any open ticket window at Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park to receive \$20.00 off each adult single-day general admission (ages 3 & up), up to six (6) people. Valid for single day general admission only, which includes use of all rides, shows and attractions in operation on day of use except pay events/concerts and pay-per-play attractions. Coupon is valid 3/29/15-11/29/15 during 2015 public operating days only. Parking not included. Not valid with any Membership promotion. Not valid with any other offer, discount, coupon or promotion. Not valid on park company rentals or special events, including but not limited to Holiday Lights. Call (408) 840-7100 or visit www.gilroygardens.org to confirm public operating dates and hours as they are subject to change. PLU 75150875



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Calendar of Events

Arts & Crafts

March 3, Artful Tot, 10:30 a.m. to Noon, 216 O Street, Sacramento. Toddlers explore art-making with different materials in new ways, from printmaking and color mixing to clay and fabric. Families are welcome to arrive anytime during this drop-in program at the Crocker Art Museum. Dress for mess. For children 19 to 36 months. For more information and fees, call (916) 808-1182.

March 14 and 15, Spinning into Spring, 12:30 to 4 p.m., 3615 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento. Bring the kids to the Discovery Museum Science and Space Center to craft a spinner to take home. Test it out by running around on the Museum's acreage. For more information, call (916) 808-3942.

March 15, Sunday Crafternoon, 1 to 3 p.m., 216 O Street, Sacramento. Come to the Crocker Art Museum and make simple crafts that celebrate the season, using a variety of beautiful materials. For ages 4 and up with adult participation. Space is limited, advance registration is required. \$5 museum

members and \$7 for nonmembers. For more information, call (916) 808-7000 or visit crockerartmuseum.org.

March 29, Abalone Necklace, 1:30 p.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Join a naturalist at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in the replica Nisenan Maidu Village to polish an abalone shell piece for your own unique necklace. All ages welcome. Children will need assistance from an adult. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

Critter Events

March 1, Fantastic Flyers, 1:30 p.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Come to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and meet a live raptor and learn more about these amazing hunters. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

March 7, Take a Bite Out of Nature, 10:30 a.m. 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. What are herbivores, carnivores and omnivores? How can you tell which animals are which? Check out the skulls and teeth of various animals at the Effie

Yeaw Nature Center and see if you can figure out what they eat. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

March 8, Endangered Species, 1:30 p.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Join a naturalist at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and explore endangered plants and animals of our area and find out how you can help. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

March 14, Critter Corner, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Where do our animals come from? Why are they here? Meet a couple of small animal residents at the Nature Center up close. Learn about each of their unique journeys and how they became an educational ambassador for the Nature Center. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

Nature Events

March 28, Spring Surprises, 10:30 a.m., 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael. Come to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and discover the surprises spring has in store for you in the Nature Area. For more information, call (916) 489-4918.

Special Events

April 5 and 19, Kids and Company Tour, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 216 O Street, Sacramento. Amusing and educational, this tour is the perfect way to introduce art to children ages 5 and older in a fun and playful manner. Tour will be held at the Crocker Art Museum. Free for members and free with general admission for nonmembers. This program takes place every first and third Sunday of the month. For more information, call (916) 808-7000.

Storytime & Puppet Events

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Sunday, Baby Storytime, 12:10 p.m., 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.

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Tuesday, Baby Lapsit, 10:30 a.m., 2443 Marconi Avenue, Sacramento Come to the Arcade Library for this program designed for you and your baby (0-18 months). The staff 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. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Tuesday, Toddler Storytime, 11:20 a.m., 2443 Marconi Avenue, Sacramento. Bring the kids to the Arcade Library and enjoy stories, songs, rhymes, and fingerplays, designed for children ages 18 months to 3 years. Join us for play time before the program (at 10:50 am) which gives toddlers a chance to play with age-appropriate toys and caregivers a chance to socialize.

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Tuesday, Baby Storytime, 12:30 p.m., 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.

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

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Tuesday, Baby Storytime, Noon, 8900 Elk Grove Boulevard, Elk Grove Looking for a fun, fabulous, and educational program for you and your baby? Join the 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.

March 4, 11, 18, 25, Wednesday, Baby Storytime, 10:30 a.m., 601 Alhambra Boulevard, Sacramento Babies from birth to 18 months old and their parents/caregivers can enjoy great books, lively songs, and rhymes, and meet other babies in the neighborhood at the McKinley Library. For more information, call (916) 264-2920.

March 4, 11, 18, 25, Wednesday, Toddler Storytime, 10 a.m., 8900 Elk Grove Boulevard, Elk Grove Toddlers and their caregivers will enjoy fun songs, stories, and fingerplays at the Elk Grove Library. Additional parking can be found south of the library at Journey Church located at 9645 Elk Grove-Florin Road.



Bring Books To Life With Interactive Reading

A Message from First 5 Sacramento

When children are actively part of the storytelling experience, it helps their brains to develop and prepares them to read independently later. And they like it better! So when you read with your children, try asking them questions that will help them to think about the story and relate the stories to their life experiences.

The best questions don't have one right answer. Ask questions that prompt your child to think about the story and express an opinion. Doing this helps children to practice language, develop bigger vocabularies, and develop a love of books and reading aloud together.

Try these interactive reading tips and watch stories come to life for your child:

1. Before you read the book, look at some of the pictures and ask, "What do you think the story will be about?"
2. While you read the book, stop occasionally and look at the pictures. For example, if you were reading "The Three Little Pigs," you might stop and ask "Look at this picture! How do you know that the wolf is having a hard time blowing down the house?" (e.g., the wolf's face, the brick house is standing, the pigs are laughing...) or you might ask "Can you remember a time when you tried to blow something?" (e.g., bubbles, birthday candles).
3. When you finish reading the book, you might ask, "What would you use to build your house?" Then take it a step further, "Tell me more about why you chose to build your house out of that."

Spend quality time together while encouraging the magic of reading at the Library. There are 26 libraries in Sacramento County. See locations at www.saclibrary.org.

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 or #first5sac.



Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park

Located on School St. off of Mission and Emmet Street in Santa Cruz (831) 425-5849
March hours: Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays noon to 4 p.m.

• **Archaeology Demonstratio, Saturday, March 7, 1 p.m.**

How do artifacts give us clues to the past? Follow the archeological process from the dig to the display, and participate in hands-on activities to discover the stories told by the artifacts. FREE. Rain Cancels.

• **Wool, Spinning, and Weaving at the Santa Cruz Mission, Saturday, March 14, 1 p.m.**

How did an isolated settlement clothe the hundreds of people who lived there? Take an in depth look at the cloth industry of Mission Santa Cruz. Follow the path of wool from the sheep to the shirt. You will have the chance to try your hand at a drop spindle and spin your own wool. FREE. Rain or Shine.

• **Building Methods at the Mission, Saturday, March 21, 1 p.m.**

Come and see how the oldest building in town was made. Look at the materials used by the Ohlone to build their homes and then at the materials used by the Spanish to build Mission Santa Cruz. You will have the chance to get your hands dirty and make your own mini abode brick. FREE. Rain Cancels.

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Shark Party

Use these fun and easy ideas for shark themed games, activities, decorations, invitations, favors, food and a lot more to make your next party something everyone remembers.

Shark Party Invitation Ideas

- Print out party information and details onto note cards and then at one of the corners of the card cut out a shark shaped bite so it looks like a shark took a bite out of the invitation.
- On white note cards glue a piece of blue tissue paper on the bottom 2/3 of the cards to

look like water. Cut out grey shark fins and place them at the top of the water.

Decoration Ideas

- Decorate the mailbox with blue streamers and attach a large shark fin made with grey poster board so it looks like there is a shark swimming around the mailbox - you can also do this with the trees and bushes that are in front of the party venue.
- Place sand and seashells on the walkway to the party.
- On the front door hang a large sign (like you see on the beach) made from poster board that says "No Swimming!" or "Beach Closed

Due to Sharks" with a picture of a large shark underneath.

- Hang light blue and dark blue strips of crepe paper from the entrance so guests will have to walk through the paper - you could also use long strings of blue beads.
- To make the party look like it is underwater fill blue and white balloons with helium and instead of tying them down let them rest on the ceiling. Attach curling ribbon to some of the balloons and at different heights tie on paper sharks or other sea creatures to make it look like they are swimming.

- To make waves or to cover a wall in water use yards of tulle in different shades of blue - attach at the top of the wall with Command brand hooks or attach a string from one wall to the opposite wall and drape the tulle over the string.
- Decorate the party table with blue tablecloths and green, white or dark blue plates, flatware, cups and napkins. In the middle of the table attach shark fins so it looks like the sharks

are circling the water under the table.

Shark Party Games

- **Shark Frenzy** - Teams use only the paper island pieces to hop across the water and not be eaten by a shark. Cut out five large shapes out of green poster board - these are the islands. The kids will have to use the islands to avoid the sharks in the water. The object is to get the whole group across the ocean and back using the island pieces. The group puts the island pieces in the ocean in a straight line and each player stands on one of the pieces (give them 1 more island then the total number of kids playing) then the piece is passed towards the front of the line and they all start moving forward together and then process repeats until they have made it across the "ocean". Play as a group or split them up into teams and play as a relay race.

- **Shark Tag Games** - Kids love to play tag games (one person is "it" and if they touch

or tag another person then that person becomes "it") and there are many variations that adapt to a Shark party theme.

- **Shark Base Tag** - Use sheets of art paper and cut out large shark fin shapes. Lay about 5 down on the ground of the play area - these are the bases. The children can stand on the bases for 5 seconds and not be tagged by the person who is "it".

- **Shark Freeze Tag** - When a child gets tagged by the shark ("it") they must freeze until they are unfrozen by another player. When "it" freezes everyone they get to pick the next shark.

Party Foods

- **Shark fin cupcakes** - bake and frost cupcakes with blue icing. Roll out blue fruit roll-ups and cut out shark fin shapes. Place the fin standing up in the middle of the cupcake.

Lots of food can be cut into triangle shapes (shark fins!) ... tortillas chips, quesadillas, triangle cheese crackers, slices of cheese cut in half, pizza, etc.

Party Favors

Shark tooth necklaces, shark plastic or stuffed toys, sunglasses, bubbles, sea Shells

Goody/Loot Bag Ideas

- **Sand pails** - wrap up party favors in blue tulle and tie with a ribbon - then place in the pails. **Blue paper bags** - cut a gray shark fin and attach to the top of the bag with hot glue.

Western Theme Party

Party Invitations

- Print out party information on large address labels. Then stick the labels on colorful bandanas and pass them out to party guests as an invitation. On the invitation ask the guests to wear the bandana to the party.

Example Western Party Verse:

Ya Hooo! Party time in the _____ (last name of birthday child) corral.

Ranch address: _____

Branding time: _____

RSVP by _____ so we'll know to be expectin' ya!

Party Decorations

- Boots, Hats, Spurs, Bales of hay, and Rope are great items to use to decorate a Western Theme party. Use Bandana printed fabric for the tables and / or tie them on the back of the party chairs with rope. Bandanas can also be used as placemats or napkins. White tablecloths with bandana printed napkins, plates and cups.
- Place non spiny cactus plants on the table in terra cotta pots.
- Make covered wagons easily using a wagon, two hula hoops and white muslin.

Attach the hula hoops standing up inside the wagon. Then cover with the muslin.

Western Party Games

- **Cowboy Hat Toss** - Tie a bandana around a golf ball or other small ball and have party guests try and toss the bandana into the cowboy hat. Instead of one hat you could line up five hats in a row and have the kids try and get the bandana into the hats one at a time starting with the hat closest to the starting line.

- **Relay Races Western Style** - Make up several relay races and let the children run them with their mop horses. Or buy two stick horses and let the kids trade off with each other.

- **Western Dress up relay** - Gather two sets of western themed clothes including overalls, cowboy boots, cowboy hat, sunglasses, flannel shirt, etc. and place them in two separate piles a good distance from where the teams will start. Divide western party guests in teams. The teams first person runs across to the pile of their teams western clothes, put everything on, run back to tag their team - then back again to the pile and take off the items.

They then run and tag the next team member in line and that person continues the relay until everyone takes a turn.

- **Horseshoes** - Teach the guests how to play the game of horseshoes. The rules and set up are easy and it is a lot of fun to play at a party. You can find the rules online.

Food

Franks and beans, tortillas chips, salsa and queso dip, quesadillas - 2 flour tortillas grilled in a little butter with cheese in the middle. Cut with a pizza cutter into triangles. Cookout burgers, Sloppy Joe's and chili are other ideas. If possible to have a campfire - roast hot dogs and make smores' over the fire.

Party Favors

Tin cups filled with candy wrapped in cellophane tied with a small piece of twine, cactus with no spines, Twizzler ropes, cowboy hat, bandana, sheriff badges, small horses.

Goody Bags

Lay a bandana flat and place the party favors on top. Fold the sides of the bandana around the party favors and then tie with raffia or ribbon. Cowboy / Cowgirl hats, Star shaped box.

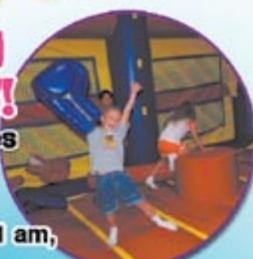
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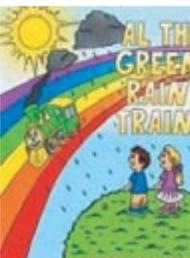
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