**Fall Fest**

By: Emily Chachagua and Inaya Robinson

This year our Fall Fest was extravagant. For example, there was a haunted maze that left people terrified. There was also a scavenger hunt that gave out tasty treats for all who entered. This was a wonderful way for our school to raise $5000.

Also, the more raffle tickets you bought the better chance you had of winning. And if you bought a certain amount of tickets you got prizes even if you didn’t win the raffle (but only if you made it on time)! The wipeout jumpers left people jumping for hours. The jumpers were a fantastic way for people to have fun and get active at the same time.

The face painting and hennas were all the rage throughout the Fall Fest. The people who helped make these beautiful designs are what made the Fall Fest one step closer to another great year of good vibes. The microsoft gaming center place gave many kids and their family’s a chance to compete against each other.

Overall, the Fall Fest was a hit and all the people there made this Fall Fest a fantastic and incredible experience for everyone!

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**OUSD Water Crisis in Schools**

By: Noemi Grascoeur

Who doesn’t drink water? According to the results posted on the Oakland Unified School District website, lead water has contaminated seven Oakland schools: Glenview Elementary School, Burckhalter Elementary School, Joaquin Miller Elementary School, Brookfield Elementary School, American Indian Charter Elementary School, Fruitvale Elementary School and Thornhill Elementary School.

Drinking lead water can be toxic. In some elementary schools, the recorded levels were four times what is allowed under federal health standards. Some of our Montera students have previously attended the concerned elementary schools so it’s rather troubling news. The district first found a contaminated water fountain at McClymond High School in August. After a new fountain was replaced, new tests proved that the problem was solved. After this accident the district began testing the water at other schools. Administrators and the board president James Harris contacted the San Francisco Chronicle and told them that they were not told about the unusually high levels of the lead in the tap water until they were notified by the media. The board president decided to contact all the parents of the children attending the schools with positive testing results so that they could be aware of the issue until it is fixed. Lead water contamination is a national issue. One example is the water crisis in Flint Michigan, where a whole community has been deprived of drinkable water for months. This is a serious issue that the nation will be held accountable for until it is safe to drink water anywhere in America.

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**Cazadero: The Ultimate Music Experience**

By: By Roman St. Gerard, Nathan Pompean and Katie Jackson

This year in the Monteria music program, a very special experience was offered to 7th and 8th grade students in Advanced Band and Orchestra. During a weekend in October, students in the music program had the opportunity to participate at Cazadero Music Camp. Students from several OUSD middle and high schools participated at Cazadero. This year, 60 musicians were selected from Montera! Musicians enjoyed a weekend full of music and fun while meeting new people and increasing their musical knowledge.

In the evenings, students slept on open roof decks with friends and students from other schools. Everyone enjoyed sleeping under the stars although temperatures dropped into the low 40s! One night, all of the students gathered around a campfire, ate s’mores and joined in a sing-along. Students enjoyed the beauty of the redwood trees, and the amazing food. When they had free time, they hung out at their bunks and played with friends. On certain days, the camp shop was open and the students were able to buy candy/snacks, and camp gear.

At Cazadero, the band and orchestra played two pieces together. This was the first time that this has ever happened! The band played four very enjoyable songs as well as the orchestra. During rehearsals, high school mentors played along, and helped the young musicians perform and understand the pieces. There were also a few conductors from the different OUSD schools. Each conductor had a different style of conducting and how they wanted the musicians to play the piece.

On the last day of camp, parents came to watch the students’ performance. By the end of the weekend, the students were reluctant to leave, but were amazed by how much music they had learned in such a short period of time. Overall, Cazadero was a really exciting, fun and great learning experience for all of the young musicians. The musicians played around 13 hours of music in a little less than 3 days! This is an experience the musicians will never forget!

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**Letter from the Editor**

By Emily Birchmore, Noemi Grascoeur, and Catherine Obrien

Hello and welcome to the first issue of the Toro Times! This year we’ll be covering many topics such as the Fall Fest and other school activities. We are always looking to include more contributors to our staff, so feel free to stop by P-14 on Mondays or “A” Wednesdays to learn more about our upcoming issues. Thank you all so much for reading and supporting this year's Toro Times! See you in a few weeks!

Good things happen in class!
Toro Sports

By: Emily Barajas

Current and upcoming sports at Montera middle school are:

• Flag football
• Girls Volleyball
• Girls basketball/Boys basketball
• Baseball
• Girls soccer/Boys soccer
• The Montera dance team
• Cheerleading

- Our girls volleyball team won a game on October 22, 2017. They played against Edna Brewer’s volleyball team.
- The Montera girls volleyball team have said that their opponents were easy to defeat.
- Flag football and girls basketball have started practicing so when they have a game they will be confident that they won’t let us down!
- The dance team and cheerleaders just started with a lot of sixth graders joining the team, they kick up the school spirit by practicing fun routines!

Our Montera sports are a chance to grow friendships with some of our classmates by not only working hard in the gym or on the field but hanging out with each other after school! If you are interested in upcoming sports updates make sure to keep reading the Toro Times!

A Day in the Mind of Principal Avent

By Olivia Cowgill and Lucas Wohl-Sanchez

“I think the IB program is a great addition to Montera because it allows us to embrace our diversity.” That’s what Mr. Avent said about our new schedule, fully supporting it. In fact, he had to fight for the financial needs exceeding the district’s budget. Our principal describes it as one of the most challenging experiences of his career, taking much negotiation. But in the end, it proved to be worth it – the schedule change has affected culture, and, shorter time between classes means less contact between students; therefore less drama (one of the main changes he wants to see).

In order to have this career, Mr. Avent went to three universities; he earned a bachelor’s degree at Norfolk, and graduate degrees at the University of Massachusetts and Seton Hall. Before being a principal, he was a teacher, teaching history to middle and high schoolers. “I was a teacher for a long time and I decided to become a principal because I wanted to do more than just have students in my classroom, I wanted to try to give students a better experience...”. He was also Vice Principal for seven years before his principaling at Kaiser Elementary, then Montera.

That was an insight into the simply fabulous mind of Mr. Avent.

Toro Times Staff

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Noemi Grascouer - Editor
Catherine O’Brien - Editor
Emily Barajas - Writer
Emily Chachagua - Writer
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Nathan Pompeani - Writer
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Leah Tannenbaum - Writer
Lucas Wohl Sanchez - Writer

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Happy Thanksgiving to the entire Montera Community! We hope everyone had a safe, fun, and relaxing break!

Good things happen in class!