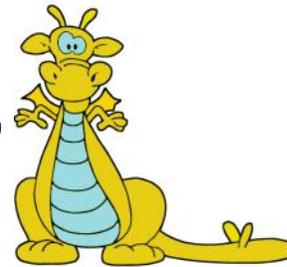


Feb./Mar. 2012

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# LA's BEST Times



## Diary of a Wimpy Kid Dog Days Opens August 3rd

By Victoria A., Alexis B., Adrian N., Gabriel V., and PressFriends

LA's BEST Times reporters went to Fox Studios in May to a pre-release screening of the third movie in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* saga. The *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days* movie will be in theaters on August 3rd.

Fox Studios is really cool about inviting PressFriends to watch movies before they come out in theaters so we

can write about them and get to interview actors, directors, authors, and other cool people for our school paper.

After the movie, LA's BEST Times interviewed actors Zackary Gordon and Peyton List. Then Jeff Kinney surprised us and stopped in the talk to us.

*Continued on page 12*



## PressFriends Third Annual Conference at Knott's

By Antonio S.

Some of the LA's BEST Times reporters went to Knott's Berry Farm for the Press Friends Conference. It

was on Sunday, May 27, 2012. It was PressFriends' 3rd Annual Conference, but it was our second. The students

received their awards and a Build a Bear for all their hard work they did. We ate delicious food they made. After the conference we got to get on the rides.

First we went on Bigfoot Rapids, then The Log Ride, and after on The Pony Express. Some of us got on Ghost Rider. We are so thankful because we were able to go to Knott's for free because PressFriends.

*Continued on page 11*



LA's BEST Times News Staff



Adrian N.



Adriana S.



Alberto M.



Alexis B.



Alondra C.



Andrea G.



Andrea S.



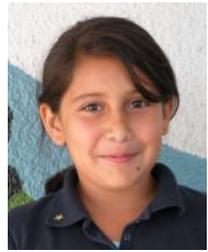
Anna I.



Ariana V.



Daniel M.



Denise G.



Evin G.



Gabriel V.



Ileana A.



Jazmin D.



Jesus U.



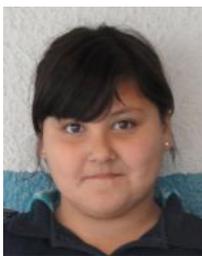
Karla L.



Kevin P.



Kevin R.



Mailean V.



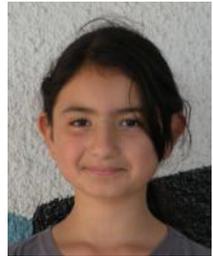
Marisol J.



Martin V.



Nerisa C.



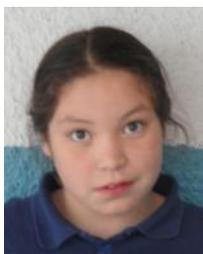
Priscila C.



Toni C.



Tre'von L.



Victoria A.



Advisor  
Cathy Villegas

Not pictured:  
Antonio S., Elizabeth I., Elvin M.,  
Justin B., Millie G., Rodolfo G., Xavier  
A., Zitaly M.

## Farewell to Mr. Kotkosky

By Rodolfo G. and PressFriends

**H**ave you ever wondered how the computers and other technological devices at our school work and what we do when they are broken or damaged? Well, in reality, without the 135th Street's technology guru, Mr. David Kotkosky, it probably wouldn't be possible! Thanks to him, the school's technology is protected and sure to always be fixed if it ever does break! Not only does he fix computers and technology, he is a teacher, too!

**LA's BEST Times:** Why did you decide to become a teacher?

**Mr. Kotkosky:** I had several jobs while attending high school and college. I decided to become a teacher because education was the most rewarding.

**LA's BEST Times:** I could not imagine being in the types of industries I worked in during high school and college after graduation.

**LA's BEST Times:** : How many years have you worked as a teacher?

**Mr. Kotkosky:** I worked two and one-half years in Connecticut and thirty-four years in Los Angeles.

**LA's BEST Times:** What are you going to miss the most?

**Mr. Kotkosky:** I will miss all the students who like to learn and school and district staff that work as a team to make a good school and district become great! I was fortunate to have worked with some of the best educators and computer using teachers in the country – this is no exaggeration!

I had classes and grade levels put on plays, science fairs, computer-based projects, and academic contests at some schools I worked at. They were always a lot of fun and students learned!

**LA's BEST Times:** What are you going to miss the least?

**Mr. Kotkosky:** I will NOT miss the ride to and from school everyday. The ride was twenty-five minutes on the "good" days and over one and a half hours on the bad days!

**LA's BEST Times:** What was one of your most memorable moments?

**Mr. Kotkosky:** I was selected to become a part of a small group of technology using teachers in Los Angeles. The talent in the room was amazing! We helped students,

teachers, principals, and district staff improve instruction using technology.

**LA's BEST Times:** What were some major challenges during your career?

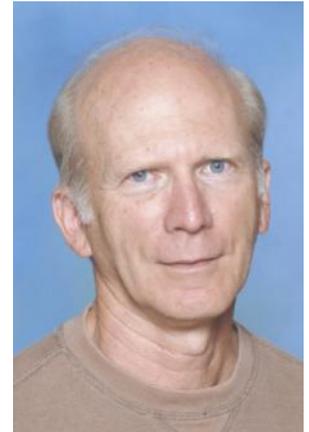
**Mr. Kotkosky:** One major change is the use of technology in the classroom. Computers and the Internet have changed the way we learn, present, communicate research, collaborate, and explore the universe we live in. A second change is how education has improved over the years. Teachers and administrators were very good when I started teaching – they are much better now because of years of great training provided for them.

**LA's BEST Times:** Do you have any advice for the future?

**Mr. Kotkosky:** This is simple... make good choices and ask intelligent questions.

In the years to come, students, staff, and parents are going to miss our school's beloved teacher, technology specialist, and role model.

Mr. Kotkosky is a remarkable educator and is sure to be missed next year and in the years to come! ❖





### South Bay Ballet presents "Cinderella"

By Alexis B. , Denise G., and PressFriends

South Bay Ballet put on The Cinderella Storybook Ballet on May 30, 2012 . It took place at James R. Armstrong Theatre in the Torrance Cultural Arts Center. In addition, to watching the ballet, the ballet company taught us sign language.

In the beginning they brought girls and boys up on the stage and taught them some ballet moves and almost at the end, when they were trying on Cinderella's glass slipper, they tried it on two little girls in the audience.

LA's BEST Times' 4th and 5th grade reporters were invited to attend by PressFriends. PressFriends, in

turn, received the invitations from South Bay Ballet . They have these events twice a year. It will be different shows and kids .

LA's BEST Times interviewed staff and students who attended. Ms. Wendy said her favorite part was everything and seeing all the kids there and being able to see such wonderful ballet.

Mr. Domingo said his favorite part was when the fairies transformed Cinderella's rags into an awesome dress , tiara, and glass slippers.

Ariana V., a 4th grader, said her favorite part was



when everybody froze at the ball and next thing you know Cinderella was dancing with the prince.

Mailean V., a 4th grader, said her favorite part was when they lived happily ever after.

Gabriel V., a 5th grader, and he said his favorite part was when the clock came out. ❖

### Our New Building

By Xavier A., Kevin R., and PressFriends

There is a new building on campus! It will house fourteen classrooms and a library. We asked our principal Mr. Camacho about the new building.

LA's BEST Times: When will the new building be ready?

Mr. Camacho: We will start to move in the 1st of July. We will host a ribbon cere-

mony on Monday, August 13th, in our new library.

LA's BEST: Who can attend?  
Mr. Camacho: We will invite

parents, students, school and district staff and community. We will be celebrating a new beginning for 135th Street School. ❖



## Star Lab

By Prisila C., Elizabeth I, Adriana S. , and PressFriends

In May, Starlab and Mr. Cho brought the magic of the night sky to 135th Street. And it all took place inside an inflatable planetarium. The students from kindergarten through fifth grade went into the Starlab and saw stars, constellations, the Mars Rover Curiosity, and the Space Shuttle Endeavour.

Many of the students were learning about the solar system, and Starlab was a fun way to learn about the stars and planets. Mr. Cho will have Starlab again next year and plans to add more science content.

"This year, we added the Mars Rover Curiosity launch and the Space Shuttle Endeavour. Next year...it'll be a surprise!" said Mr. Cho.

LA's BEST Times interviewed some teachers and students and asked them what they liked about Starlab.

Ms. Buffington said, "My students enjoyed viewing the constellations and learning about stars. It has sparked their

interest to learn about the solar system."

Mrs. Aicher, who teaches third grade, said, "We enjoyed viewing the constellations. My students had a great experience in the Starlab. It was almost like a journey into the Milky Way!"

Third grade student, Jayloni F., said, "The constellations were my favorite. I like Leo, but I'm not Leo, I'm Aquarius."

Alexis B., a fourth grade student said, "I liked that we got to lay down and look at all of the constellations and stars."

Antonio S., who is in 5th grade, said, "I liked the stars. It was relaxing and fun and I learned a lot of the constellations." ❖

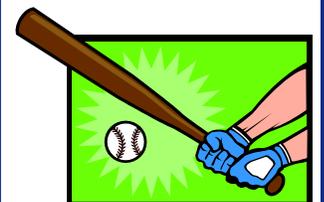


## Girls' Softball Team

By Karla L., Anna I., and Ariana V.

The sport is softball. On March 31, 2012 and April 14, 2012 we went to a softball games. At Curtiss middle school is where we went for the game. The name of our team was the Dragon Divas.

We won the first game on March 31st. We lost the second game on April 14th. The best players are Sarah V. and Nerisa C.. Sarah V. hit a home run. Nerisa C. is a really good pitcher. ❖





## Family Brunch in Beverly Hills

By Nerisa C. and PressFriends

Who says that writers are not considered celebrities? I'm not talking about Stefanie Meyers or JK Rowling, I'm talking about local authors in our own school! Second grader, Amaria W., and Kindergartener, Steven E. are our own local celebrities because they wrote essays about "How LA's BEST makes me feel special."

Amaria and Steven and won an opportunity to go to The Beverly Hilton Hotel in



Beverly Hills, and have brunch with two guests. Not only that, they also got to meet iCarly's, Jennette McCurdy and American Idol's Carly Smithson!

All of the winners had their essays on display at the brunch for all of the family's to see and enjoy as well as an award and a gift bag.

The family brunch sounds like one fun party and anyone at our school can participate

next year! Each school is asked to turn in 5-10 essays, so there is always a chance that you could be the next lucky winner! Be sure to enter next year! ❖

## 135th Street's Recycling Program

By Evin G., Elvis M., Kevin P., and PressFriends



Reuse, Reduce, and Recycle- these three words are also known as the "R"s of recycling, as many people have taught us before.

At 135th street Elementary School, Mrs. Pavageau, one of the SRLDP teachers from our school, is in charge of the recycling program. The program started in April of 2012. The goal is to collect bottles and cans and help our school. The top class gets a pizza party. It is important to recycle because resources are limited and we need to

recycle.

We started the recycling program in our school because it was an opportunity to raise money for the school and to teach the students how to take care of the school. We inter-



Mrs. Pavageau

viewed Mr. Rosales, a teacher and Edward M., a 5th grade student from our school.

We asked Mr. Rosales why the recycling program is good for our school.

"It is good for our school because it teaches kids the value of conserving resources," said Mr. Rosales.

We asked fifth grader Edward M. if he thinks it is good to recycle.

"Yes, it is good to recycle because it can help raise money for our school and we help the planet," said Edward M. ❖

## Memorial Day

By Tre'von L. and PressFriends

Memorial Day this year took place on May 28, 2012. This tradition began on May 30, 1868 in the United States. It was after the Civil War ended. Memorial Day use to be called Decora-

tion Day. Memorial Day began as a day to remember the fallen soldiers of the Civil War, and is always celebrated on the last Monday in May.

By the 20th century Memorial Day, also started hon-

oring all the American soldiers who died in all the wars. It is important to remember how brave soldiers are, and recognize all of the parents, family members, and staff who were soldiers. ❖



Ms. Anderson at Fort Jackson, 1992

## Mrs. Anderson and Armed Forces Day

By Daniel M. and PressFriends

Did you know that we have a patriot in LA's BEST? Ms. Alma Anderson, one of LA's BEST's Program workers, used to be in the U.S. Army. She worked as a heavy duty vehicle maintenance mechanic (63B). She choose being a heavy duty mechanic, because she thought that it would be fun and she wanted to work outdoors.

Ms. Anderson first knew that she wanted to be in the Army when she saw her uncle

wearing an Army uniform. She told her mom she wanted to be in the Army. She liked the teamwork and the adventure, but didn't like being dirty!! Sometimes she had to wait 3 days before she could take a shower.

We asked Ms. Anderson if there was a subject hat is good to study If someone was interested in being the Army what did she or he had to study?

Ms. Anderson said that when she joined the Army all she needed was a diploma, to pass

a physical, pass the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) exam, and do one good push up! It might be different today. The person who influenced her the most was a sergeant in her platoon, because he treated her like a soldier and not as a woman.

When asked what she'd like to accomplish in 10 years, Ms. Anderson said, "I want to know more than I do know so I can keep having fun with all the kids in LA's BEST." ❖



Fort Hood, Texas 1993

## Drill Team at Cal State LA

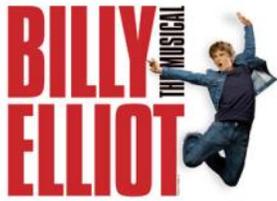
By Andrea G., Denise G., Ariana V., and PressFriends

LA'S BEST Drill Team went to Cal State LA on May 5, 2012, to participate in a drill team competition. LA's BEST Drill Team wore a

tank top with a white undershirt and sweat pants and danced to the song, "Can't Touch This" by MC Hammer.

The LA'S BEST girls who were involved were from grades 1-5. We plan on attending next year with a new routine and a new song. ❖





## Billy Elliot: The Musical

By Justin B. and Mailean V.

**B**illy Elliot is a fun musical that was playing at the Pantages Theater. The story is about a boy named Billy Elliot who gives up boxing to become a dancer without his dad knowing about it. His dad was upset when he found out, but ended up supporting Billy at the end. A few second through fifth grade

LA's BEST students, staff, and parents attended the musical in April.

Mailean said, "I like the part when he chooses ballet instead of boxing. My favorite character was Billy."

Justin said, "I like the part when Billy starts to tap dance. My favorite character was Billy."

Zitlaly said, "I like the part when the grandma ate something and Billy's best friend wore a tootoo."

Mr.Domingo said, "It had a lot of funny moments, like when Billy and his friend danced in dresses."

Adrian said that his favorite part was when Billy and his friend wore a tutu. ❖

## Educational Games for the Computer

By Toni C, Adrian N.. and PressFriends



**E**veryday, after we finish our homework we play educational games on the computers, while we wait for the rest of the class to finish their homework.

Educational games are games where you learn some-

thing, for example in math games we can play games where we learn to multiply, or we can read the Diary of a Wimpy Kid on funbrain.com. Some examples of educational website are funbrain.com, pbskids.org, and yucky.discovery.com.

Educational games are a good way to learn and have fun at the same time.

Alberto M. in 5th grade says the educational games help you learn and they are fun. ❖

## Healthy Eating

By Alberto M. and PressFriends



**E**ating healthy foods will make you feel good, give you energy, and make you feel better about yourself, because you won't have as many health problems.

It is not good to gain weight because it's bad for your heart.

If there is a problem with childhood obesity, eating healthy snacks instead of foods with empty calories will help kids lose weight. Playing outside more and playing less video games helps too, unless it's games like the Wii because

it has games where you move a lot, play sports, or dance.

Examples of healthy snacks are apples, oranges, and tomatoes. Carrots with peanut butter and raisins are also a good snack. Try them and you'll feel better or doing so. ❖

## Chivas USA versus Kansas City

By Martin V., Kevin R. and PressFriends

The Chivas game, against Kansas City, happened on April 1st at the Home Depot Center in Carson, also being the home for the LA GALAXY soccer team. This particular game on April Fool's Day was ninety, exciting minutes long, keeping the audience engrossed throughout the entire hour and half of enthralling play.

The score resulted as 1 - 0, with Kansas City coming out as the victor. Unfortunately, Chivas USA lost, even though many fans and spectators alike were hoping that they would win. Even with this shortcoming, the match was awesome!

A significant play in this masterful competition was when one of the players made

a highly skillful goal with his head. Dan Kennedy, the goalkeeper, was named the MVP.

Luckily for a couple of people, Mr. Camacho got some students tickets to go to the soccer game, making those select few, ecstatic! It was a great day, and I hope we can go again. ❖



## Learning in a new way on clevercrazes.com

By Jazmin D., Anna I., and PressFriends

Learning in a fun way, is what teachers help students do best, but there is now a new way to do this without a teacher. This may come across as a daunting task, to learn without some guidance, but clevercrazes.com does exactly this, by teaching students everywhere about various topics.

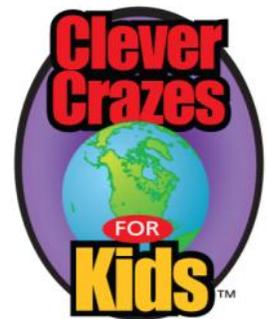
There are nine different topics, instructing students on practical and educational subjects, including, but not limited, to money, space, the earth, voting, sports, and history. With bright colors and intriguing characters, this great website provides kids with a stronger backing on these multiple themes,

though what is learning without some healthy competition? Every week, the website donates \$500.00 to the school with the most students using the clevercrazes.com; meanwhile, also donating \$500.00 to the classroom with the most points earned, along with an additional \$100.00 to an afterschool program, by a weekly drawing.

Besides all of these great prizes, which benefit the school greatly, thirty-six individual students can win \$10.00 gift cards to iTunes, by being the top score-earners on the website. However, the most attractive feature of this website is that Nike agreed to donate 108 shoes and 108

pedometers, with flashlights on them, to the top 108 point-earning kids who play on this website, making an attempt to promote physical fitness.

Multiple fourth and fifth graders at 135<sup>th</sup> Street Elementary already frequent this website, though it is not limited to them, as it is accessible through any computer in the school's computer lab. This is a great way to learn and even win prizes, so there is nothing to lose by trying it, making it a wonderful way to learn highly beneficial and practical knowledge bases, to assist anybody for the rest of their lives. ❖



**Connecting For Success**

**Connecting for Success**

By Ileana A., Alondra C., and PressFriends

Connecting For Success is an LA's BEST program for fifth graders at 135th Street that is run on Mondays and Wednesdays after school. Connecting for Success helps students open up and express themselves, as well as, learn about events happening in other places around the world.

In Connecting for Success, we write our emotions, we have outside activities, group activities and staff only activities. The goal of the program is for students to have a better sense of what it is to have an opinion and be more aware about things from around the globe. It allows students to have a voice and for them to know



they have a voice. LA's BEST Times interviewed LA's BEST staff person, Ms. Wendy, who runs the Connecting for Success program, and some fifth grade students.

**LA's BEST Times:** What did you like about Connecting for Success?

**Ms. Wendy:** Getting to see the participants really get in-

involved and open up, as well as, becoming closer to them, emotionally.

The comments from fifth graders were:

**Nerisa C.:** I like that I can do fun activities with the class.

**Tre'von L.:** That you get to express your feelings.

**Alberto M.:** All the projects we do. ❖

**Souvenirs World Travel Board Game**

By Jesus U. and PressFriends



Are you bored of the same old boring board games? If you are, there is some good news! In March of 2012, Kelly Day dropped off a cool new game at 135th Street Elementary School. This awesome new game is called Souvenirs; it is an educational game for the 4th and 5th graders of the school.

The game Souvenirs lets you learn about many new countries around the world, not to mention the people, places, things, and sights there.

To play the game, all you have to do is grab a friend, then start answering questions about each continent in the game.

To win, collect souvenirs from each continent before anyone else does and then return to the HOME space as fast as you can.

There are over three hundred questions in this game, so it should last for a very long time, and you will also learn a lot from playing this game. ❖

## LA's BEST summer

By Karla L., Andrea S. and PressFriends

Do you have no summer plans? Do you want to see your friends over the summer? If you answered "yes" to both questions, we have just the thing for you to do this summer! Starting this summer, 135th Street Elementary School will no longer be a track or year round school. More simply put, this means

that all students will have the same school year and vacation time.

During vacation time, LA's Best will be hosting the Summer Program. Beginning on July 2nd, 2012, and going through to August 3rd 2012, LA's BEST Summer Program will be here at 135th Street Elementary School if you'd

like to participate. The school will be themed, and each grade level will be doing activities based on that theme. All of LA's BEST Students and staff will be involved.

This is a great opportunity for everybody to have fun over the summer while still learning, so make sure to come over and check it out! ❖



## Book Review: Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days

By Millie G., Marisol J., Zitaly M., and PressFriends

“**D**iary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days is a really good book. It is written by Jeff Kinney, who is also author of many other *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* Books.

This one is about the main character, Greg Heffley, who is trying to be Holly's friend but his dad wanted him to go to summer camp. But, that didn't stop Greg

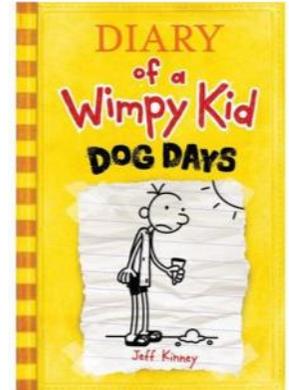
because he said he already got a job, when but he didn't.

Most of the book takes place at Greg's house and at the country club.

Our favorite characters are the dog and Greg's little brother Manny because they are cute and funny. Our favorite part of the book is when Manny goes to the boys restroom and takes a

bath and Greg says "Nooooooooo!"

The book is good because it's funny, awesome, and cool because it's easy to read, it has funny pictures, and it is very entertaining. We believe that boys and girls of all ages will enjoy this book, even adults! The *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* books are books anyone at any age can enjoy! ❖



## PressFriends Third Annual Conference at Knott's

Continued from page 1

We will have this event again next year, but it will be with mostly different reporters and at a different location. Ms. Brenda liked the bears and certificates we received for

their hard work. Ms. Wendy loved seeing the kids really excited about the rides and just being a part of their experience. Gabriel, 5th grade, liked Ghost Rider because it

was bumpy, it went really high and down really fast. Mailean, 4th grade, liked it when she got on Pony Express. Adriana, 3rd grade, liked the food and the Build a Bear. ❖





## Diary of a Wimpy Kid Dog Days

Continued from page 1

**LA's Best Times:** Do you get nervous when you act?

**Peyton List:** Sometimes. Doing a movie is different because you're not doing it in front of an audience or live so I feel a little bit more relaxed than if I were to be in a play, then I would be a little bit more nervous. And I'm also on a TV show called *Jessie*, so I definitely get a little more nervous when I am doing it in front of a live audience because I know that I can't mess up. But on a movie, I feel more relaxed so I don't really get nervous.

**Zachary Gordon:** There definitely is a lot of pressure when filming, so that can make you a little anxious sometimes, I finished filming a TV series'



pilot last week and it's definitely a huge difference between a live audience and working in front of cameras. You cannot do as many takes as you need to get the scene right. Like Peyton was saying about a play, you only have one take and that would give you a lot of pressure and I would be really nervous.

**LA's Best Times:** Did you read the *Diary of Wimpy Kid* books before acting in the movies?

**Zachary Gordon:** Yes, in fact I had read the three books

that were out when I was ten years old, and I actually told my mom I wanted to make my own movie out of it. I wanted to direct it, produce it, and play every single role.

When my agent called me and said she had an audition to play Greg Heffley in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* movie, and I'm like "Yes, that's awesome!" But I was a bit upset that my dreams were crumbled when I couldn't direct it and I couldn't play every single role, which probably would have never happened anyways. I was glad I had an opportunity to go out for Greg Heffley.

**LA's Best Times:** What is your favorite book other than *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*?

**Zachary Gordon:** There's a book called *The Candy Shop Wars*. It's a great book. I highly recommend it. It's like *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* where you can't stop reading.

**Peyton List:** I just read the series *The City of Bones*. It's pretty cool: it's about magic and a lot of mystical creatures so it's a lot of fun. And also, like everyone else, I have read the *Hunger Games*. ❖

