

December 18, 2013

The Dolphin Splash

In our third edition of the Exploratory Writing Classes' newspaper we were inspired by the glow of waning light, the cycle of life, the traditions and rituals that give shape, meaning and delight to our lives.

Our Traditions

Thanksgiving by Nismah Ismail

Happy Thanksgiving! This is a special holiday for me because my family comes to my house and they bring yummy desserts. Thanksgiving brings my family together.

My cousins, uncles, aunts and grandparents come to spend time with each other. From the turkey, mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie and more, could Thanksgiving get any better? My mother makes everything homemade and I just hang out with my family laughing together. That's why I love Thanksgiving! Do you love Thanksgiving just like me?

What I am Doing this Thanksgiving by Connor Fagans

This Thanksgiving, my family is going to a small Oceanside town called Cambria. We are meeting with our aunt and uncle there. We are also meeting some friends there too.

On the beaches of Cambria, you can find white agates that they call "moonstones." Our family loves hunting for moonstones on the beach. If you look hard enough, you can even find big ones.

We always rent a house there. My mom likes to bring our dog, whose name is "Mae Mae" which means little sister in Japanese. The weather is pretty cold there, but it is still fun. We are leaving on Saturday 11/23/13. We are staying for four nights. I hope I have fun.

Tree Lighting by Madison Owens

On a Friday, my mom, her boyfriend and I went to San Francisco for the Macy's Christmas tree lighting. We left at 3:00, went to BART in San Bruno, and got there at 5:00. There were a lot of people there. It's just like San Francisco always is.

We made it to Union Square where a bunch of these people were there too. We found a spot by a Macy's window. We asked a lady if she knew when the tree would light up. She said, "It lights up at 6:40."

It was 6:40 when they brought Santa Claus out to turn it on. We counted down from 10 and when we were done, the tree lit up. The tree had a bunch of lights and a big red star on the top!

Christmas by Joseph Kastelic

Every Christmas break, my family and I go to San Francisco. We would stay in a hotel for two nights. Then we would explore the city. After that, we go to Lake Tahoe. We either go skiing or snowboarding. Then we would head home where we had Christmas!

We woke up the next morning and found our presents. There were so many! After we opened them, we went to my Grandma's house to open up some more! We had breakfast there and then we opened the presents. Later that night we would have dinner. We will all celebrate Christmas with our family and have fun.

Christmas Tree by Ysabella Alvarado

"This Christmas will be really fun!" I thought to myself sitting in the back of my mom's car.

My mom asked my sister and me what kind of Christmas tree we wanted.

"Red." I told my mom.

"Red?" She seemed confused. "You mean a red Christmas tree?"

"Of course! We have to get a plastic one since there is no such thing as a red Christmas tree!"

"We can get one flocked white, if you like?"

“No! Only red...can you get it flocked red?”

“Of course not. I don’t think they flock trees red,” she replied.

“Why not? We can even get green ornaments and white tinsel. It can be a reverse Christmas tree!” I said.

“No.”

“Why not?” I pestered.

“No, and that’s final!” she said.

I began to give up on my dream of a red Christmas tree. “Fine.” I said.

I didn’t complain with our plain green tree, because we have a lot of multicolored ornaments.

The Art and Science Appreciation Corner

Reflection on *Marine Life*, a Roman mosaic from Pompeii, by Lydia Perrone

In the mosaic, *Marine Life*, there are many different sea creatures lurking in the depth of the black background. There is a large, center-of-attention octopus engulfing a quite large lobster. There is a gaping-mouthed, tan and greenish fish with a sleek and slim leopard shark gliding around him. There is a large prong at the top of the picture and a tiny tan squid hidden by all of the attention-grabbing fish clustered into a small frame. The picture uses tan and brown colors with highlights of teal and turquoise. There are red brick colors and gold here and there. I think that the artist tried to capture many different kinds of fish and other sea creatures into one picture and try to harmonize them to make them fit together in a picture; because in real life it would be a feeding frenzy if you put all of these animals together. I think the artist took a piece of that reality and used the octopus to represent that. *Marine Life* is a piece of the whole ocean to look at in one picture.

Meditation on *Harpist Playing and Singing to Anhour Kahoun, Chief Builder at Thebes and his Wife*, a 12th Century BCE funerary mural, by Toni Shinabery

As the harpist composed beautiful music for Anhour Kahoun and his wife, as they smile and clap to the beat,

Smiling with happiness and glee, clapping to the beautiful music unaware of what shall come,

The hieroglyphs tell an interesting story of Anhour's life, and the painting represents a beautiful memory full of emotion.

Response to *Rhythmic Gymnast*, an illustration by Ernie Barnes, by Uliana Vasiliev

I really love this painting, *Rhythmic Gymnast*, because it symbolizes strength and gracefulness. I think it is really great how he makes her surroundings dark, but she herself is the spotlight.

This painting expresses gracefulness because of the twirling baton that swirls around her, and the position she is in, with her legs and arms straight as a pencil.

This painting represents strength. You have to work really hard to be a professional gymnast, and she shows that she is really strong because of her arms, legs, and the splits she does in the air.

The source of much of our oxygen and the details of the marine food chain inspired this piece.

When I Grow Up by Fanny Sanchez

In the ocean there are floating clouds that are called phytoplankton which absorb the sun's energy and get carbon dioxide from the water. They combine the two compounds to create sugar, which is food for them. They then get eaten by another plankton called zooplankton, and the food chain begins.

In the twilight zone, which is the dark zone in the ocean, there is this fish called the angler fish. It attracts its prey with a glowing light on its head. The glowing light on its head is actually glowing bacteria and it is trapped inside a small sack.

In the twilight zone there are these shrimp, called deep-sea shrimp, whose defense is to shoot out a glowing glue which confuses its predator.

Another darker zone is the midnight zone and sometimes there are active volcanoes.

The Advice Corner, Ask Mike

Dear Mike,

I'm having a lot of trouble with making friends. I am having trouble because I'm really shy. What should I do?

*Sincerely,
Someone*

Dear Someone,

A good way to make friends is to talk to a seat partner. And if you don't have a seat partner in any of your classes, then you should ask people if you could hang out with them, or play with them.

Sincerely,
Mike

Dear Mike,

I really like this boy, but I can't ask him out. I am really scared that he won't say yes. What should I do?

*Sincerely,
??*

Dear ??,

A good time to ask a guy out is when there is a school dance. If you think he likes you back, then you should go ahead and ask him out. And if you decide to ask him out, then good luck!

Sincerely,
Mike

Dear Mike,

I have to perform in front of a big group, but I'm too nervous to perform. I'm afraid that would mess up or get too scared, and I would not be able to go. But I have to. Any advice?

*Sincerely,
Nervous*

Dear Nervous,

I suggest that you face your fear of stage fright (something very common even among actors and public speakers). A good way is to look at one person (maybe a good friend) in the audience and focus on them. Then slowly, add another person, until you see everyone.

Sincerely,
Mike

My name is Mike. I am really good with advice. So send in your questions to the shoebox next to Rm. 31.

Poetry Corner

As some of our readers face their fears, Adan Medina was inspired to write about the cause of one type of fear.

Snake or Not, Here I Come

The snake had some scales
It went through the trails
It stopped & paused
It went through a log
Then it almost bit the animal's
tail

Adan's note: There are 2,000 types of snakes in the world. My favorites are the boa and the anaconda. There was a snake that was bigger than the snakes of today. It was called Titanaboa. It was as big as three buses and it had the crushing power of two school buses. Some scientists found the jaw of this creature which was as big as two people put together!

An untitled atmospheric poem by Irene Katakis

The moon circles around sadness,
The soulless night whispers as the wind blows
Comforting the lonely stars that hide behind the fog

The Hawk a haiku by Talia Clogston

The hawk is searching
He is looking for his prey
The hawk is hungry

Play Announcement by Cameron Martin

Will you be coming to see the school play, *Aladdin*? If you do come to see the play, watch for the second prince. That would be me. There are about 10 or more songs and about 8 dances. The characters from the movie, *Aladdin*, that we don't have are Rasha (the tiger), nor Abu (the monkey). Hope to see you there!

So far we have memorized half the play. We have learned 4 dances and mastered 5 songs. My song isn't my favorite, but it is catchy. The main character is played by Soren, who is Aladdin.

Tech week is the hardest week of all. First, we deal with costumes and the actual size of the stage. Then, we have to adjust to microphones and lights. And on top of that we have to accommodate the tech crew and learn to include the props. Although in the end it is really fun!

A Personal Reminiscence

R.I.P. by Damian del Rio, a eulogy for his mother, Teresa Del Nino de Jesus Montejano Vega

It was a hot Spring day and it was March 5, 2009. I was at TIG class, when you switch classes based on your grade. I was working on my packet and then I realized that my mom was ill. She had had a lot of headaches. My mom's name is Teresa. I could just remember her suffering from all the headaches in the hospital. She had visited the hospital with migraines frequently.

All I can see is her presence. I dropped my pencil and all I can hear is silence, wind flashing through my hair like if someone was telling me to come. I closed my eyes trying to refresh my memory as I got a drink of water. I heard, "Damian, Damian, can you please come to the office?" over the P.A. system. As I walk through the silent hallways, I see my dad. He says, "We're going to the hospital."

As my dad and I got to the hospital, I said, "What are we doing here?"

My dad said, "You'll find out."

I was pretty nervous. The smell of hospitals makes me anxious. I saw my aunts, *tio*, cousins and all the family talking. I wanted to know what they were talking about. I eavesdropped. I know that it's not nice, but I just wanted to know and all I heard was she might not make it.

As we all went in, all five, we all gave my mom a flower and said what we loved about her. I told her how well she cleaned my cuts and how each time I looked in her eyes, I'm in a new world with hearts and nice people. And each time I get a bad grade, how she cheers me up and reminds me that life is full of mistakes and to remember that there are going to be many mistakes in the world, *hijo*.

At the end of our visit it was my mom's turn and she was saying wonderful things about all of us. And mine was, "If it is hard, don't give up. It shouldn't knock you down. You are a boy with delight and that is all I wanted from a child like you."

I know if my mom were here, she would say some things to my teachers, especially you, Mrs. Garcia: You are a teacher with delight and I wouldn't have it any other way.

As I say in my head, if you aren't here with me, I have a place for you everywhere, but especially in my heart.

