

# CAMP HSRI

## HOMESCHOOLED IN THE WOODS

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### Upcoming:

**Dec. 6** Playdate Three  
 Oaks Park  
**Jan. 3** Bricks and Bots  
 Winter Camp  
**Jan. 6** Tuesday School  
 Registration  
**Jan. 10** Playdate  
 Rutenberg Park  
**Jan. 31** Battle of the  
 Books  
**Feb. 21** Talent Show

### Medieval festival

BY OLIVIA HEILMAN

I went to the Medieval Festival in Sarasota and it was so fun. I dressed up in a fancy medieval dress. Everyone bowed to me and acted like I was a real princess. I felt special and like real royalty. We saw a dragon! He said "Don't ever buy shiny things for yourself, let other people buy them for you." My favorite thing we did was watch the jousting tournament. I never knew the lance would break! The most unexpected thing was when one knight hit the other knight, who didn't have a helmet on, in the head with their shield. My second favorite show was the Sirens. They were super duper exciting. They told a story while they sang, danced, and drummed.



I even got a picture with them! We walked past a statue and it started moving. It spooked me to death. She gave me and my sister a feather from her bird. The ring of death was a show where a guy ran in a circle while it spun around in the air. He was really funny. The craziest part was when he ran around the outside of the ring with no safety at all! Lastly, I had lots of fun in the Viking Village. It had lots of games to learn and play. My favorite game was slapping my mom in the face with a fish. It was called Jomswiking. This whole area was free! I didn't like that there were so many rides and activities you had to pay for. There were lots of booths with lots of fancy things I wanted to get - tiaras and headdresses and lots of sparkly rings. I recommend going to this when it is in town again. It's a great place for everyone!

### The Talent Show

BY THEODORO CORRADINO

The Talent Show will be featured on Feb-21-2020 at Lakes Regional Library. Performers will go on stage for 3 minutes or less; if you would like to bring a prop you must bring the prop or have another homeschooler bring it. Performers should arrive at least 10 minutes early.

These are last year the performers: The boy on the far-left is, Rafael, and David (who is standing next to him) did a tap dance act. I'm next to them, Theo and my sister Janela (in front of me) and we did a singing performance and my sister danced to Trip A Little Fantastic from Mary Poppins Returns. Next on the right is Elisa who played the piano and Diana who sang Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. Then Olivia who did a piano act and Annabeth who did a Baby Shark performance, next to them is Ethan who played the piano and Aubrey. Then Demo who showed his drawings, next to him is his brother, Case, who danced to Juju on that Beat.

For the next talent show most performers have told me what they will be doing (Some haven't made a final decision): Rafael might do a lip sync battle vs Diana. Elisa might play the piano. Olivia might play the piano or sing a song. I haven't made a complete decision. I am considering singing like last year and I was also thinking I might do Mixed Martial Arts. Also, my sister, Janela might dance to an Ecuadorian song.

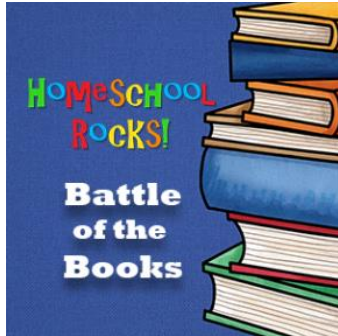
**If you want to participate please register before Feb-14.**



## Battle of the Books

BY DAVID DEL ROSARIO

Interview with Amanda, one of the organizers of Battle of the Books.



Q. What is Battle of the Books?

A. Battle of the Books is a trivia competition for students in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade.

Q. Are there teams?

A. Yes, teams are split by age group: Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 6<sup>th</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Each team can have 3-6 members.

Q. How do we know what to read?

A. The book lists are available on our website: HomeschoolRocksFM.com. Each age group has 15 books to read and study.

Q. What is the deadline to register?

A. December 20th

Q. Where do the trivia questions come from?

A. Each team gets to submit some questions, and our organizers will make some up too!

Q. How is Battle of the Books going to work on the day of the competition?

A. The organizers will ask questions, and each team will submit their answer on a special app. Teams will get points for every correct answer – there isn't a time limit. The team, with the most points at the end, wins!

Q. Why isn't there a time limit?

A. We don't want kids to feel pressured, we just want them to remember what they read.

Q. Do teams have to talk to the audience?

A. No, all answers will be submitted on the app.

Q. When and where is Battle of the Books?

A. Battle of the Books is on January 31<sup>st</sup> at the Collaboratory in Downtown Fort Myers.

## Holidays Around the World

### La Befana

BY ARALYNN WENNING

Here in America we celebrate Christmas with Santa who puts presents under our Christmas tree. In Italy kids celebrate La Befana. She was an old lady who flew her broom around looking for the child king. Now she comes every year on January 6<sup>th</sup> and brings treats and toys to kids in Italy.

### Mari Lwyd

BY: MIA DEMARTINO

My Holiday is Mari Lwyd. It stands for "Gray Mare." This is a special celebration that happens in Wales. It happens around Christmas and last for 12 days. A group of people with Mari Lwyd, a horse skull, travel from house to house and sing riddles. The people inside the house sing a riddle to the people outside. The people outside need to figure out the riddle. If they figure out the riddle they get to come inside and eat food and drink. If they don't figure out the riddle they go to the next house and start over.

This started many, many years ago. There was a gray mare what was pregnant with a colt. She lived in a stable but was forced out because people needed room for a mother to give birth to her baby. I think the gray mare is going door to door to find a home.

### St. Nicholas Day

BY MIGUEL REYNALDO-CASANOVA

A long time ago, during the fourth century, a man named Nicholas was a pastor in the country of modern-day Turkey. Back then it was called Lycia. Nicholas was kind, generous, and reminded people of God's love for them. Stories of his generosity spread. He was known as Father Christmas in Europe and became a patron saint of Russia. Nicholas's feast day is December 6. Many families observe St. Nicholas Day in honor of the love and kindness he demonstrated toward others.

### St. Lucia Day

BY XANDRA BODIOT

They eat food and dress up for St. Lucia Day. It's in Sweden on December 17th. It's close to my birthday! They eat red lobsters. The girls wear red belts and a white dress with candles on their heads!



Holidays around the World, cont.

## Hanukkah: Festival of Lights

BY: SOPHIA FOLCARELLI

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that is celebrated for eight days and nights, sometime in the months of November or December. The dates change every year because the Jewish religion follows a different calendar called the Hebrew calendar. People that celebrate Hanukkah play a game called Dreidel and feast on foods fried in oil, like donuts and potato pancakes called latkes. The oil for frying foods represents oil they used to light a menorah to purify their temples. The menorah has four candles on each side and one in the center that is used to light the other candles for each night of Hanukkah. The country of Israel is where it all began thousands of years ago, but Jewish families in all parts of the world celebrate this holiday that represents an ancient victory giving them freedom from religious oppression.



## Three Kings Day

BY: ETHAN RESENDIZ

Three King's Day is popular in Latin populations. It is celebrated 12 days after a traditional Christmas on January 6th. They are celebrating the three wise men or the three kings who brought gifts to baby Jesus. Kids get most all of their gifts on this day instead of Christmas. Some kids get a shoebox and fill it with grass or hay. They write a toy they want and put it on a piece of paper inside. The hay is for the three kings' camels to eat. It is believed that the three kings come at night and they leave what the kids asked for as a reward for feeding their camels. People throw big parties to celebrate this day. Part of the tradition for these parties is to bake bread ring with fruit on top and a figurine of baby Jesus inside the bread. It is in the shape of a ring to stand for the crown. The person who gets the figure is expected to throw a party on February 2nd for another holiday called Dia Calendaria.

## New Year's Eve in Ecuador!

BY THEODORO CORRADINO

In Ecuador around New Year's, people make piñata type of characters called Año Viejo (Old Year) then on New Year's Eve, at midnight they burn the Año Viejos to represent burning away the old year.

I interviewed Mario Xavier Garcia, who is a family member and also, he creates año viejos as a hobby.

*The following answers will be translated and summarized from the original interview.*

Q. What materials do you use?

A. The materials we use are wood, nails, newspaper, flour, water, and cardboard. We use the wood and nails to make the skeleton, then we use newspaper, that we put together by using flour and water to make the glue, after it dries, we use cardboard to give it more detail. Once we have it dried, we start to paint it. And if we want to give it even more detail then we would use foam.



Q. How is the price estimated?

A. Depending on how much we spend on materials and what we paid for labor. For example, if we paid \$30 on materials and \$20 per day of labor and we take 3 days then for labor it would be \$60, it would add up to \$90 and then we add the amount we want to make.

Q. Is this like a job?

A. Well, yes, some people use it as a profession; and they improve with the years. In my case I use it as a hobby that gives me more money.

Q. How long does it take to make it?

A. Well, a big Año Viejo\* around 3 meters (almost 10 ft) takes at least a month; and a smaller one would take a week.

Q. How big is the largest you made?

A. The largest I have done was 3 meters (9 ft) tall and 1.5 meters wide (5 ft)

Q. Did you work alone or in a team?

A. I work in a team so I can work quicker and make more Año Viejos at the same time. Each person has a job.

Q. Where do you store them?

A. A big warehouse.

Q. Are the materials you use healthy for the environment?

A. *Most* of the materials are being reused because the goal is to save money, but the paint could harm the environment.

Holidays around the World, cont.

## Christmas in America

BY RAFAEL DEL ROSARIO

Christmas in America is celebrated on December 25th. We eat food, open presents, and decorate our Christmas tree and house.

On Christmas, Santa, our family, and friends give presents. We hang stockings for toys and candy. We get candy canes in them from Santa.

Before Christmas, we put up a Christmas tree and wreaths and lights outside. We decorate our tree with ornaments and a star on top – or sometimes an angel or other decoration – and more lights.

Santa has flying deer that pick up his sled and he puts all the presents in his sack. Some people visit Santa before Christmas so he knows what we want, if we've been a good boy or girl. And he comes on his sled into people's chimneys or doors.

We also celebrate Christmas by singing songs called Christmas carols. Sometimes we watch Christmas movies, like "The Grinch."

## Christmas: Christ Mass

BY SOPHIA FOLCARELLI

With the Christmas music starting to play in the stores and lights and decorations going up around my neighborhood I was wondering what this holiday season was really about?

While it's easy to get confused by the story of Santa Claus and Frosty the snowman, Christmas is actually a Christian holiday celebrating Jesus's birthday. He is believed to be born December 25th to Mary and Joseph in a manger in Bethlehem, Israel.

After many, many years of debate and arguments between different religious groups, the date December 25th was chosen to be the universal celebration of Jesus's birth. December 25th is the Winter equinox and also the shortest day of the year. It also happens to be exactly 9 months after the Spring equinox, which is when many religious leaders believed was the day that Mary was visited by an Angel and told that she was pregnant with a very special son. Now I know why my parents put an Angel on the top of our tree!

The earliest recorded Christmas celebration for his birth was in the year 336 in Rome, Italy. The word Christmas also has more meaning than many people might think. It is short for Christ Mass which is the communion service for Jesus on the eve of his birth. Christ Mass is a church service that is held at midnight on Christmas Eve because the early Christian church said the services were not allowed to start until after sunset and had to end before sunrise the next day. So typical Catholic Christmas Mass is held at Midnight on Christmas Eve.

So while many people love to listen to their favorite Christmas songs while eating tasty holiday treats for this time of year that is celebrated with gifts and family gatherings, it is easy to forget that the reason for the season is to celebrate the birth of a little baby that changed the world!

## Jamaica's Christmas

BY DEMO BODIOT

How does Jamaica celebrate Christmas? Well, I will tell you all I know. Some people like to party all night at what is called the Grand Market. The Grand Market is a place where people have fun, they dress really nicely, they shop and have really yummy food. Some of the food they make, and sell are jerk chicken, boiled corn, and sweets like candy canes and sugarcane.

There is one special part that you might like, partying all night! Around 6pm everybody, including their children, dress up really nice and they party all night until the morning. Some people go to a church at midnight because they like God.

Jamaica sounds like a fun place to be on Christmas. Next time, you should go there on Christmas Eve and stay until Christmas is over!

## All About Thanksgiving

BY DAVID DEL ROSARIO

The first Thanksgiving in 1621 was a 3-day festival celebrating the Pilgrim's first successful harvest. There was no turkey, potatoes or pumpkin pie at the first Thanksgiving. Instead, they probably ate venison, corn and cranberries, whole not in a sauce. There wasn't another Thanksgiving until 1789, when George Washington made it a national holiday. But it still didn't happen every year, until Sara Josepha Hale. Sara, the writer of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," campaigned to make Thanksgiving an annual holiday because she read a book about the Pilgrims. It took her thirty years! And now, every year on the fourth Thursday of November, we eat turkey and stuffing, with pumpkin pie because Sara published the recipes.

One of the weirdest traditions started in 1989. Every year, the President pardons a turkey, so instead of being dinner, he goes to live happily on a farm.



## Advice from the Experts

Dear Jozi,

I just joined a new co-op, and I have struggled to make friends. I have tried my hardest to make everyone happy, but they all seem to think I am weird. I didn't have such problems at my old school, and I am out of ideas for what to do.

--New Kid

Dear New Kid,

You should not try to get them to like you, you should just be yourself. If that doesn't work, you should tell them that you have no friends, and maybe they'll want to be friends with you. If they still don't want to be your friend, you can maybe tell an adult, and the adult can suggest some people who may act like you and like your style.

With Support,  
Jozi

Dear David,

I heard my uncle asking my parents about homeschooling, like "How will she make friends?" and "Don't you want your kid to have a normal school experience?" These questions are very confusing. I don't think homeschool is like that at all. Do you think these things are real? Do I have anything to worry about?

Confused

Dear Confused,

No, I don't think those things are real at all. Your uncle probably doesn't know that homeschoolers have a lot more ways to make friends than just sitting in a classroom. For example, you might meet with a really cool co-op every week. You could also do some sports teams or dance classes to make friends.

"Normal" isn't really a thing. By my standards, I'm homeschooled and so are a lot of the people I know! Every year, our co-op has activities that are "normal" like Field Day, a Talent Show and a Science Fair. Even if you don't do any of those things, there's still no such thing as normal and your experience is normal for you.

Have fun homeschooling!

David

Dear Milla,

I am very friendly and chatty with my friends, but when I have to stand in front of a group, I get scared. I am afraid of speaking on stage or speaking up in a class or group. I really wish I could. Do you have any advice?

--Voiceless

Dear Voiceless,

When I was going to a piano recital, my dad told me to pretend everybody was naked. It made me feel like I could do it, because if you pretend the audience is naked, it's silly, so you can keep playing, and it makes me feel not so scared. If you pretend everybody is naked, they're being silly, and you're not being silly, because you're doing what you're supposed to be doing, so it's not so scary. If that doesn't work, ask your teacher if she can sit next to you between you and the audience, so you can't see them.

With Kind Regards,  
Milla

Dear Aralynn,

My brother has autism, and it's hard to play him sometimes. When he does something wrong, he yells at me and I don't like it. He always takes my toys, and he likes to draw in my workbooks. I need help on how to respond to him.

— Anonymous, 12

Dear Anonymous,

If my brother had Autism and he was messing with my stuff I would tell him to stop and if he didn't, I would get an adult. If he gets out of control I would have him use the EMWAVE to calm down. It tells you if your heart beats are too fast and helps you slow them down.

Signed,  
Aralynn

Dear Diana,

Lately I have noticed that when I want to stay up past my bedtime, like an extra half hour, my mom and dad will sometimes say yes, and then change to no. They always do that, and it's not fair. Why can't I stay up later? They only seem to say yes when they are not tired, but what if I am not tired? I am not ready to go to bed, but they say I have to. What can I do?

~Not Tired

Dear Not Tired,

You can just say you're going to go to bed but stay up and play quietly. You should talk to them and ask if you can play quietly while they go to bed. If that doesn't work, you could go to bed and wait until you fall asleep and play with your hands or bring a toy into your bed so you don't wake others up.

Sincerely,  
Diana

Advice from the Experts, cont.

**Dear Elisa,**

I have some friends that go to public school. When they found out I was homeschooled, they asked why I didn't go to "real" school. This bothered me a lot. They had a lot of questions, like do I have recess or homework. How should I respond to other kids when they ask me these questions?

--Homeschooled

Dear Homeschooled,

You should tell them the truth. Let them know that homeschooling is still school, and there is no such thing as "real" school. Homeschooling is just the same as traditional school, you're just home and not in a big building with 1,000 people every single day. You could invite your friends from traditional school over to your house for one day, so they could see what it's like to be homeschooled.

Sincerely,

Elisa

**Dear Sophia,**

Sometimes I feel weird because I like to learn with music. I can memorize anything if I sing it or listen to it in a song. My friend told me this is crazy because he can't learn like that. He has to write everything down. My sister plays all day with my mom; and my mom says she is teaching her. I get jealous sometimes, but I don't get to do this. So, I am wondering is there only one way to learn? Or are all these people, right?

~Learning

Dear Learning,

I can totally understand feeling weird about something, especially when other people are telling you that it is crazy. It's never a fun thing to be told that you are different and made to feel like it is a bad thing. But the truth is, the way you learn isn't actually that weird at all. There are many different ways to learn and learning with music and sound actually has a name. It's called auditory learning. Auditory learning is when you learn by hearing or listening to things like lectures where experts talk about a subject or learning about different subjects by repeating them in a song. There are even other ways of learning, like reading and writing learners easily learn by reading things like textbooks and writing book reports.

Visual learners are able to watch someone do something or watch a movie or video about a subject to learn. Then there is another type of learning called kinesthetic learning. Kinesthetic learners learn by doing hands-on activities like Lego building for engineering or learning to play an instrument. This sounds like the way your sister is learning with your mom, right now.

When I was in 2nd grade I had to memorize new spelling lists every week, and I had a really hard time with remembering the right order of letters and spelling the words the way my teacher was teaching us. I would get really frustrated every week and it would be so hard to keep up with my classmates. Finally, my mom came to the rescue and we worked out a new way to learn and memorize the spelling words every week. We would sing or cheer out the spelling of every word, over and over, until I finally got it and it was a lot more fun for me to learn that way. I knew it was a goofy way to remember the correct spelling, but I felt really proud of myself every week that I would take a spelling test! So I think all of those people telling you it's crazy are wrong. Learning by singing and listening to songs sounds like a way more fun idea than just reading it out of a book. So, keep doing what works best for you, and be proud of yourself for all the hard work you do. Keep singing, I'm rooting for you!

Sincerely,

Sophia

**Dear Hannah,**

I will be starting middle school in the fall, and I am not ready. My best friend has moved away and now I feel lonely. I only know of a few kids that are attending the same co-ops as me, but most of them aren't my best friends, and I only talk to a couple of them. My best friend has tried to get me to talk to people that will be in middle school too, but it puts so much pressure on me because they are saying things like, "You need to find more friends!" It makes me feel like I should feel bad because I won't know that many people in middle school. Help!

— Concerned Homeschooler

Dear concerned home-schooler,

I was homeschooled for the first time in sixth grade and I was worried about making friends too. However in the second week, I made a friend who helped me understand the co-op. Just focus on studies and you'll make friends in no time. Starting a new co-op can be intimidating, but trying new things often lead to new opportunities. Work hard and stay optimistic. It helps to be positive!

Signed,

Hannah

Advice from the Experts, cont.

Dear Hannah,

I'm going to be in middle school next year, and I'm excited about all the new opportunities, privileges, and clubs! Unfortunately, there's a problem, too. I feel like middle school is a sign of growing up and leaving your childhood, something I don't want to ever have to do. I feel like people might expect me to become more serious—a mature adult with too many responsibilities and lots of work. Will there ever be time for fun? Will I still be a little kid? Please, I need some help!

— Maturity Madness

Dear maturity madness,  
Getting older is difficult, you are not a kid or an adult it's confusing! You may have new responsibilities but there's plenty of time for fun! New clubs, bands and opportunities. Focus on the good 'cause there's a lot of it. Enjoy being older!  
Signed,  
Hannah

Dear Miguel,

Sometimes I get stressed out over one simple little thing. Sometimes is a big thing, but usually its just a small thing. My stomach gets achy and my head starts to spin.... Is this normal? Should I take yoga? What should I do?  
~Stressed

Dear Stressed,

Yes, it is normal to feel this way sometimes. If you are worrying about something you need to do, just do it first and be done. You could also do an activity that you like to do to get your mind off being worried. I would try going outside to play, reading a book, drawing a picture, or listening to music.

Signed,  
Miguel

## Interviews

### The Interview of a Firefighter

BY DEMO BODIOT

I interviewed my dad (Ryan), a firefighter with the Iona-McGregor Fire Department to find out more about his job.

Q: Do you like your job?

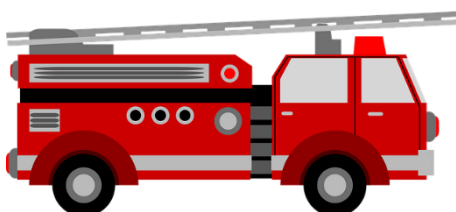
A: Yes, it is the greatest job on Earth because I get to help people and do exciting things.

Q: What is your duty?

A: My official duty is to save lives and property, but I also get to train with ropes and heavy machinery and get to do cool stuff. Like next month, I get to repel down the side of Golisano Children's Hospital dressed as an elf and get saved by Santa Clause!

Q: What is your favorite thing about being a Firefighter?

A: My favorite thing is helping people in their greatest time of need. It makes me feel like I'm making a difference.



### Interview with a Dog Breeder

BY ETHAN RESENDIZ

I know her because we got our husky puppy from her.

Q. What is your favorite part?

A. The smiles, the tears and the happiness our fur babies bring to people.

Q. What is your least favorite?

A. When a puppy is born forever sleeping

Q. Have you rescued dogs?

A. Yes, I have rescued and kept a few and rescued and placed some in wonderful homes.

Q. What does a breeder do?

A. Myself as a breeder I always work to improve my program, proper care, health testing, grooming and socialization. It's very important to me to produce happy, healthy, and loving puppies.

Q. What is something scary that has happened?

A. Scariest part for me so far has been one of my mommy dogs got sick after having babies and she went downhill quickly. We had to rush her to the vet, and she had an infection that could have killed her, but she pulled through and is our spoiled fluffy, fixed, chunky princess :)

Q. How long do they stay with their mommy?

A. Puppies should stay with their mommies for 8 weeks before they leave

Q. How do you know if it's a boy or girl puppy?

A. Boys have a little bump below their umbilical cord and females have a little opening closest to her bottom before her tail.

Q. How do dogs get sick or act when they are sick?

A. Dogs are like humans. They have allergies, can get colds, vomiting, diarrhea, fevers, cancer etc. And many human foods can make dogs sick like chocolate, onions, grapes, and many more. Every owner should know and make a list. So, with any of the symptoms listed or weird behavior it better to be safe than sorry and get them to a vet and get checked out.

## Interview with police officer

BY OLIVIA HEILMAN

I interviewed my grandma, Ladona. She is a police officer. Before she was a police officer she had A LOT of different jobs.

Q. What is your specific job title and what do you have to do?

A. I am a police sergeant at the Miami Dade police department. I have a supervisor position where I guide, assist, and direct officers working the road.

Q. Do you have to have any special training?

A. When you first get hired, no. They train you. And they continue training you throughout your years working there. But if you get higher education, this will help you get promoted.

Q. What tools do you use for your job and what do they do?

A. Police car; Handcuffs; Radio, to communicate; gun; taser (to stop somebody by putting electricity into their body); computer, use it daily; gun belt; and an AED, it jumpstarts a heart

Q. What is an AED?

A. It's a defibrillator. You hook the pads up to a person and restart their heart.

Q. Does the taser hurt them?

A. No it doesn't, it causes the muscles to lock up. Immobilizing them.

Q. What is on your gun belt?

A. Gun, extra ammo, flashlight, taser, handcuffs, radio, extra set of car keys, so you don't get locked out at a call, Asp,

Q. What's an Asp?

A. It's a stick. And it is used to help control a violent subject, by striking them in specific locations.

Q. Does it hurt?

A. Yes. So, we do not use it very often. We prefer to use a taser which doesn't cause injury.



Interviews, cont.

Q. Do you have a little or a lot of paperwork to do?

A. We have a lot

Q. What is the scariest thing you've seen on the job?

A. One of the scariest things I've done is driving at a very high rate of speed while chasing down a bad guy. Also fighting with subjects and running into a house after shots are fired are pretty scary.

Q. What is the funniest thing you've seen on the job?

A. A person needing assistance from the police, because she was locked INSIDE her car.

Q. What is the best thing about your job?

A. Being able to help people.

Q. What were your other jobs you have had before you were a police officer?

A. I worked as a soldier in the army, at Wendy's, babysitting, bank teller, bartender, Cutco seller, and private investigator. I also sold Grit the newspaper as a kid, I about froze that year.

Q. You've had a lot of jobs!

A. When you get to be my age you have a lot of jobs. Oh, and I was a professional basketball player.

Q. Really?!

A. Nope just kidding!

Q. Have these jobs helped you with your current job?

A. Absolutely. Everything in life has brought me to where I am.

Q. What is your favorite color, food, drink, and animal?

A. Green just like my mom. Pasta and chips. Sweet tea. I think monkeys are pretty cool, but I don't think I'd want to own one.

Q. Do you have any pets, and if so, what are they and their names?

A. I do, 3 cats, Boots, Baby, and Bear and a dog named Buddy. And I lizard-sit for Remy occasionally for my granddaughter.

Thank you for letting me interview you MaMa



## An Interview with Mrs. K

BY ARALYNN WENNING

Hi Mrs. K, I have some questions for you.

"Ooh, I would love to answer them."

Q. What is your job title?

A. My job is a Behavior Specialist at an elementary school.

Q. What is your day like?

A. Well, my day changes every day which keeps me from getting bored. Some days I go to work and before I even clock in my radio goes off. And that means someone is having trouble with a child. It's usually a behavior problem, sometimes they are crying because they are upset, sometimes they are afraid of something, so I have to go help them.

Q. What do you do?

A. I have to go into the classroom and help deescalate a child who are throwing desks or punching teachers. I type reports, do case studies and talk to parents to help them understand their children better. Sometimes I have to calm the adults down because they get very upset when they have lots of kids that don't listen.

Q. Do you teach kids?

A. I don't teach kids at school like I teach you. I don't teach them math or reading or writing. I teach them behavior.

## Life in Peru: An Interview with Monica Rodriguez

BY: ELISA ALICE LUND

Q. What is it like to live in Peru?

A. Monica told me that in Peru people speak Spanish, so when many American people come there, they do not know what Peruvians are saying. She also said that it's really, really colorful. When they take baths, they have a little cup of water. They take it, and they pour it all over themselves. The houses are made out of sticks, leaves, and reeds. This is what Monica told me, pretty much, I think.

Q. How hot is Peru compared to Florida?

A. I learned that Peru is a country in South America, and every single year, when it's winter here, it's summer there. When it's summer there, it's winter here. Also, Peru is not as hot as Florida.

Q. How old were you when you left Peru?

A. Monica was 5 years old. She could not speak English when she first left Peru.

Q. Why did you come to the United States?

A. Monica's dad wanted to go.

Q. What do you teach?

A. I teach those kids how to calm down, how to talk to their teachers respectfully, how to advocate when they need help or need a break. I teach them yoga and mindfulness.

Q. Do you help kids?

A. I would like to think that I help kids all of the time.

Q. How?

A. Sometimes they just need a hug or somebody to listen.

Q. How old are the kids you work with?

A. Pre-k to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, age 4-11

Q. How did you learn your job?

A. Well that is an interesting story. I didn't start out wanting to be a behavior specialist. I was a teacher and I saw all the kids at the school always in trouble and they put them in this big room, and nobody was helping them. They were just in trouble all of the time. So, I went to my boss and I said that next year I wanted those kids and I wanted to create a different kind of room. So, I did and I won a national award for it. And then they offered me a position as a behavior specialist.

Q. If you could do any other job in the world what would it be?

A. I would be a famous author like JK Rowling. I would have a large house on the beach with a rescue facility for animals and foster children. I would help find wonderful homes for them and write and publish stories about their struggles.



Q. What are the schools like in Peru?

A. Every single school in Peru, you have to wear the same uniform. It's a hot uniform, but Monica didn't go to school there.

Q. Where in Peru did you live? The Amazon?

A. Monica was born in Cajamarca and lived in Chiclayo. These are small cities. They are not in the Amazon.

Q. How are Peru and the United States similar?

A. They are similar because they have lots of beaches.

Q. How are they different?

A. They are different because Peru has lots of colors.

## Local Destinations

### The Peace River Wildlife Center

BY MIGUEL REYNALDO-CASANOVA

Here in Punta Gorda, FL, we have a place called the Peace River Wildlife Center. The volunteers there take care of injured animals. Some animals are able to return to the wild and others are not able to and make their permanent home at the center. The most well known animals at the PRWC are Luna, a Screech Owl, Bella, a Great Horned Owl, and Orion, a Barred Owl. The center also has: Bald Eagles, Sandhill Cranes, American White Pelicans, a Marsh Rabbit, Nine-Banded Armadillo, Box Turtles, and Gopher Tortoises. The Peace River Wildlife Center is a fun place to visit because you get to see many different animals. It is nice to have a place that will take care of injured animals in our area. It is open to the public for tours from 11 AM until 4 PM. There is no admission fee to enter the center, but they do appreciate donations. Donation needs, hours, and more information can be found on their website: <https://prwildlife.org/>

### Veterans Park

BY THEODORO CORRADINO

Veterans Park offers two playgrounds, a basketball area, a lake, an archery range, a baseball stadium and much more. One of the playgrounds is set to look like a mountainous climbing wall; on the other side of the park there is another playground that has two sets of monkey-bars, a blue climbing dome, a large swing set (for toddlers little-kids and further in age.) There is also a staircase that leads to a platform containing a slide, an outstretched monkey bar set and climbing tube.

The recreation center also features many classes, including: S.E.M.B.A.C.T Martial Arts Academy, Dance & Tumble, Soccer Practice, and many more. If you are trying to go to a class you will have to register, luckily some classes are free!

If you want to take a walk this is a great place to do it! Veterans park has a path, *but* the path has many turns and forks making it quite a bit longer than a straight line.

When you're having a hot day and you want a breeze try riding a bike! Bikes are permitted to be rode and it is a very good place to ride! Another way to cool off is to go to the splash-pad, a small area with a few water toys and sprinklers.

### Manatee Park

BY: ETHAN RESENDIZ

Manatee park has a lot of things. There is a butterfly garden which was my favorite thing. I saw so many butterflies. There was a lot of signs and education on manatees. They had a really cool manatee pirate statue to take pictures with. In months that the weather is not hot, there is a lot of manatees. I have seen them before but this time it was too hot. There are three trails we walked on. One of them said Mangroves. It has a pier you could fish off of and a lot of water. I thought it was cool that you can see a little island from there. Another one showed how you can use different plants that people grow. At the end of that trail they have kayaks you can rent. The last one walks along the water where you can feel the breeze, see the water, the butterfly garden and see manatees when they are there.

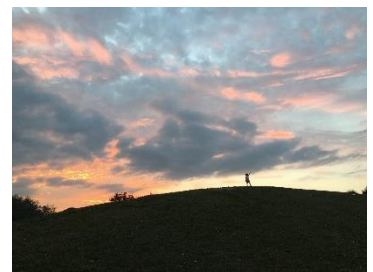
The coolest part was two playgrounds, one for little kids like my baby sister and one for bigger kids. Mom said she liked how much shade there was a pretty garden. My sister loved that they have clipboards with bingo pages for the park. I had a lot of fun and would recommend it for kids. All kids would have fun, but my mom liked it too and said it was pretty, so I will recommend it to everyone.

### Peace River Camping

BY: MILLA SODERQVIST

When we were far away, the campground was so cool to look at, because it had all these big tents, and they looked like dots. When we got the camping area, the first thing we saw was a rope swing that dumped into the water. I tried it, and it was fun. When we arrived, we met some of the people. We wanted to go camping with them, and so we did. They were super nice and funny. One of them taught me how to make a crown out of plants. I thought it was fun to go there.

Later that night, we had s'mores, and we did fun stuff. We tricked one of my dad's friends into thinking there was a real bald eagle. We actually did that. It was so funny. It was fun to do that at the campground. You could watch out for alligators. There was a lake with alligators that we were right next to, so we could look out for alligators. We did not see any at first, but when we left the campground, we saw one baby and one grownup alligator. I want to go back so badly that I am sweating right now. You should go there. Go tomorrow.



Want a shady spot away from the sun? Then go to the right of the Recreation Center, there will be a hung net (canopy). There are also picnic tables where you can eat.

TIPS:

1. Keep a lookout for the archery range.
2. If you have any questions ask the front-desk.
3. If you are learning how to ride a bike without training-wheels, try it there!

## Shaker's Acres

BY JACKSON SOFFIAN

Ms. Torie is the teacher for ceramics classes at Shaker's Acres in North Fort Myers. The class I go to starts around 11 a.m. and ends around 12:30 p.m. on Thursdays. It is mostly boys who are 9, 10 and 11 years old. There are some 6-year-old girls. There's around 15 children in it. I like it. There are other classes at the farm on other days and for other things, like science. There are classes for adults, too.

Ceramics is clay art. Clay art means making sculptures out of clay. You use your hands and other tools to form the clay into what you want it to look like. You feel accomplished when you're done with it. You get to bring it home when you're done with it.

You have to go through multiple days to get your sculpture. First you have to make it, or form it. Then you have to put it in an oven called a kiln. Ms. Torie puts it in the kiln. Then when you come the following week, you paint it. After that it's put in the kiln again. Then you can get your sculpture once it comes out of the kiln a second time. Ms. Torie is kind and helpful. She's good at what she does.

First I made a black cat. You don't have to make it black. You can make the colors whatever you want. And then I made a monster. I also made the colors whatever I wanted. I made the cat with two colors, orange and sort of a dark green. I mixed blue and purple for the monster. I also made part of it a lighter green and the rest was orange. I like them.

At the beginning before class you get to pet animals. There are four that you get to pet and/or feed. There are pigs, chickens, goats and cows. My favorite are the goats. They're just the most fun. I don't know why. We feed the goats small amounts of lettuce and leaves. The pigs get large amounts of lettuce. The chickens get corn, and the cows get hay or straw. One time we gave the pigs pumpkins. The pigs are a mix of cute and weird. They're about the same size as the adult cows. Sometimes the chickens let you pick them up. It depends on what chicken you choose. Feeding and/or petting the animals is fun. That's a fact.

## Origami

BY OLIVIA HEILMAN

I have chosen the restaurant Origami because it has a fun name and I love eating there. The food is Korean and Japanese. It is beautiful inside and out. I went with my mom, grandma, and sister.

I ordered a Bento Box. It came with a California roll, white rice, chicken bilogi and Beef bilogi. The chicken bilogi was delicious and so tender. The Beef bilogi was sweet. I also had a miso soup, which is a soup with tofu and seaweed, and a salad with ginger dressing. My Grandma ordered Jop Chae. It had extraordinary flavors. The clear noodles were my favorite part of this dish. My sister loved them too. My mom ordered the Bibambap. Bibambap has rice with lots of things on top; like an egg, meat, mushrooms, and much more. It was flavorful but I didn't like it with the spicy bean paste. The Korean dishes come with Korean samples, so we tried spicy kimchi, pickled radishes, and pickled cucumber. I got to try all the food from everybody. My favorite dish was Jop Chae and my favorite side dish was Miso Soup.

Some waiters aren't very nice, but others are. Kids and adults get enormous servings of food. The water is definitely not very good, and I recommend ordering a different drink than a water. I recommend this place for everybody! I give the restaurant 5 stars!

Local Destinations, cont.

## Chuck E. Cheese Review

BY JOZI RODRIGUEZ

Chuck E Cheese has arcade games, a tunnel, and a mini restaurant. When you win at the arcade games you get tickets. You can buy things with the tickets. The tunnel is like a maze. But I have done the maze so many times I know which way to go. I give this place 5 stars. It's fun for families and friends.

## Food

### Buffalo Wings and Rings

RAFAEL

I went to Buffalo Wings and Rings. I picked it because it is one of my favorite places to go. When you walk into the place, you stand on a black rug that has their symbol, a buffalo, on it. On the wall you see a buffalo with googly eyes. It has a lot of TVs. You can get a tablet for every person at the table to play video games. I like the funny stuff on the TVs too. They have cheeseburger, salad, French fries and other stuff. The food is great. This a good restaurant for families. Everyone should go there so you can see the games they have, the silly stuff on TV and try the foods there.

## Culvers

BY LAO CASTILLO-HAYLES

It was very easy to order and they were pretty quick from the time I paid, maybe like a 5 minute wait, but there were no other customers in the drive-thru.

The employees are really nice and the food tastes amazing. I ordered a crispy chicken sandwich. It came with fries and a drink but I substituted it for a concrete mixer (ice cream), and got two extra sides, one of them cheese curds, and the other queso (cheese dip). They have vegetarian options but sadly no vegan options.

In my opinion the place is great and I recommend you try it!

Food, cont.

## The Melting Pot: An uncommon dining experience

BY: SOPHIA FOLCARELLI

I chose to review The Melting Pot because it has a different eating experience unlike most restaurants. The Melting Pot is located in Fort Myers, set back into a small discrete shopping plaza. It has a lot of other specialty shops that sell anything from comic books to handmade chocolates to specialty furniture.

Low lighting and simple decorations give The Melting Pot a fancy feel, even though my parents said I didn't have to dress up. Reservations for dinner were strongly recommended due to the size of the restaurant being on the smaller side, and the dinner experience takes longer than a normal restaurant. The hostess found our reservation and led us to our table. It was a nice booth with a flat stove burner in the middle of the table. I could already tell this was going to be a different kind of dinner.

Manny, our server, arrived and asked if this was our first visit. My dad told him that it was my first time there so Manny explained that, unlike other restaurants, we would be doing the cooking ourselves. My parents ordered a cheese fondue to start. Manny turned on the burner and brought a plate of different cheeses and spices, which he mixed into a bowl and heated until everything was melted and creamy. Manny brought dippers made up of breads and vegetables. Everyone had a different color skewer that we used to dip our dippers! The creamy cheese made everything taste amazing!

After the cheesy fondue, Manny came back and went over the different menu choices for the main course and explained how each food had to be cooked in a seasoned broth for different lengths of time. I tasted a little bit of all of my family's food. We each had a little bit of everything including fish, shrimp, steak and pork. It was tricky at first figuring out when it was ready to eat, but soon I got the hang of it. After a while, the hardest part was getting everyone's food into the same pot to cook. For dessert we chose the chocolate smore fondue which Manny topped with marshmallow and lit on fire to toast. This dish came with a dipper made up of different fruits, marshmallows, graham crackers and little cakes. Everything tasted amazing covered in chocolate and toasted marshmallow.

If you are looking for a new dining experience with great service, I highly recommend giving The Melting Pot a try. Just remember, reservations are strongly suggested and ask for Manny for the most exceptional service!

### First Watch

BY: MILLA SODERQVIST

When we got to First Watch, the first thing we saw was a kids' menu with coloring stuff on it. This made me feel happy, and I was hungry. Then we went to our table and started doing what the coloring page said. Inside First Watch, it was warm, and the seats were comfy. The waitress asked what we would like to drink, and Elisa, Diana, and I all said, "hot chocolate." It was warm, at first, and I waited so long, that all the whip cream melted into it. It still tasted good, but I couldn't drink it all, because I was drinking from a tiny spoon.

We had chocolate chip pancakes, and our food came in a couple minutes. It was SO good that I couldn't eat it all. My favorite thing was the chocolate chips. Addie and Miss Allison were having good food too, delicious, good food. Everyone was happy. When we left, we got a mint.

I liked it all. When we said goodbye to First Watch and all those delicious pancakes, I thought, "I want to come back every single morning."

### El Patio

BY: ELISA ALICE LUND

I am studying Peru, so I popped into El Patio in Fort Myers to see if I liked the cuisine - which is a word I just learned. When we got there, it was a small place, but it was very neat and clean. On the walls, I noticed pictures of the hummingbird and monkey Nazca Lines. I think it's cool they had them because they're Peruvian. The waitresses were very, very nice.

We had a whole group with us, so we got the party room. My friend's mom is Peruvian, so I asked her to help me pick out my food. She ordered for me. I got chicken, rice, french fries, and patacones, which are fried plantains. The patacones were flat. My friend suggested I put salt on them, but I didn't. I liked them a lot. The rest of my food was good, and it tasted a lot like American food. I also tried chicha morada and mango juice. The mango juice was just plain mangoes, squeezed. I liked it. The chicha morada is purple juice made from purple corn. I liked it, and I tried to ask for more, but my mom didn't hear me.

Everybody else loved their food. Some people got green spaghetti for some reason. They offered me to try it, but I said no, because I had my own food, and I didn't want to try it. Next time I go there I will.

I want to go there again. I asked my mom to go there again every night since, but she says no, but I'll be back. I recommend El Patio for kids and families.

### The Garden Room Cafe

BY JOZI RODRIGUEZ

Me, my mom, and my aunt drove one hour to Sarasota and stayed for two days. On the second day we went to a tea-house called The Garden Room Cafe. When we got there a nice lady greeted us. There was a garden patio which was closed but we got to walk around it. It was pretty. First we ordered our drinks. I got a berry drink. It was delicious. Next we ordered our food. I got the crepes. I didn't like it so I traded with my mom's quiche. I liked it. I give it 5 stars. I recommend it and think everyone should check it out.