



Mendez Minutes

Mendez Fundamental Intermediate School

Edition 4 Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Quote of the Month

By: Josue Rios & Romeo Velazquez

Journalists, Josue & Romeo, offer you this quote for the month of **March**. *"I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more luck I have."* - Thomas Jefferson

Next issue: April 2025

Meet the staff:

Teacher/Editor: Ms. Elmore

Copy Editor: Mrs. Cortes

7th Grade:

Belen Cabanas

Brandon Diaz

Noemi Garcia Haro

Elias Giron

Isaac Gonzalez Lopez

Melany Guadarrama

Santiago Huerta

Jacob Martinez

Alexandria Melgoza

Andrew Molina

Genesis Mora

Joana Ortiz

Angel Ramos

Josue Rios

Camila Santos

Romeo Velasquez

Aiden Villagomez

Jayden Zerecero

Feature Article

SAUSD Classified Employee of the Year, Mr. Hector Pena

By: Aiden Villagomez

Mr. Hector Pena is the superhero technician for all Mendez Mustangs! Mr. Pena fixes all things tech—from student Chromebooks to classroom projectors and document cameras. He loves his job as a technician as he has the opportunity to connect and network with students and adults.

Mr. Pena attended Carr Intermediate and Valley High School in Santa Ana, CA.

Mr. Pena is not all business—when he is not solving a technical issue at work, he is building Lego creations at home or going on hikes with his family. (You can check-out an array of his Lego creations in his office—it's a sight to behold!.)

The advice that Mr. Pena wants to offer to all Mendez Mustangs is, "Technology is amazing, we always use it, but sometimes it is best to turn-off the screen, acknowledge your surroundings, spend time with your family, and be outdoors."



Mr. Hector Peña, Computer Technician

Announcements

Season of Testing!

By: April Salas, Title I/Literacy Coach



We have entered the season of testing at Mendez. This is your chance to shine, Mustangs! However, for some students, testing can feel stressful because of the pressure to do well. While many people may tell you not to stress, I'm going to tell you the opposite—a little bit of stress is actually good! It can motivate you to work hard and do your best. The key is not to let stress overwhelm you.

With that in mind, here are some tips to help you manage stress and perform your best:

1. **Use available resources:** Your teachers have provided test-taking resources and there are practice tests online for ELPAC, MAP, PSAT, and SBAC.
2. **Unplug before the test:** Take a break from your phone and other devices a few days before the big test. This will help you relax and focus mentally.
3. **Get moving:** In the days leading-up to testing, make time for exercise and outdoor activities. Physical activity helps clear your



Feature Story

Mrs. Tien Tran Bueno and the Academic Pentathlon!

By: Melany Guadarrama & Angel Ramos

When Mrs. Tien Tran Bueno is not teaching science, she is one of five coaches who help 6th - 8th Grade Mendez Scholars prepare for the Academic Pentathlon. **The additional coaches are: Ms. Phan, Ms. Hyde Ms. Mohammad, and Ms. Soto.**

The Academic Pentathlon is a competition wherein students from schools across various districts compete in the area of *Fine Arts, Literature, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science.*

Our Mendez Academic Pentathlon Scholars spend hours at school and at home preparing for the competition. Mendez Mustangs practice after school on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

The theme of this year's competition is "Our Changing Climate".

If you would like to join this exciting organization, Mrs. Bueno, offers this advice, **"Come to a couple meetings and give it a try. There is no academic pressure; you are competing against yourself to get better through gameplay."**



Mrs. Tien Tran Bueno, Science Teacher

Mmmm. . . They're Here!

By: Noemi Garcia, Alexandria Melgoza, & Ms. Elmore

It's Girl Scout Cookie Time! Be sure to stock-up on your favorite cookies as sales end mid-March every year. Most

Feature Story

Meet Ms. Melinda Sandoval!

By: Santiago Huerta & Ms. Elmore

Ms. Melinda Sandoval is Mendez's kind and helpful Production Supervisor of Nutrition Services.

Ms. Sandoval was proud to share a bit of good news with me when I interviewed her last week.

After weeks of remodeling. . . the kitchen will soon be ready to make delicious homemade meals for the students and staff. While the most popular item will probably be homemade pizza, Ms. Sandoval hopes that the students will try **all** of the new recipes.

When I asked her to share words of wisdom with me for our Mendez Family, she had this to say, **"Everyday is an opportunity to shape your life into what you want it to be".**



Ms. Melinda Sandoval, Production Supervisor

Feature Story

Meet Ms. Mayra Alvarez!

By: Jayden Zerecero

Ms. Mayra Alvarez is a site clerk at

mind and keeps you feeling refreshed.

4. **Prioritize rest and nutrition:**

Get a good night's sleep and eat a nutritious breakfast each morning before testing. Avoid sugary foods—they can drain your energy and make you feel sluggish.

5. **Set realistic goals:** Write down your goals and use your Mendez Student Agenda to track them (there are goal setting forms in your agenda for your use). Planning ahead can help you stay focused and motivated.

Remember, a little stress is normal, but don't let it take over. Let it push you to do your best. You're not expected to be perfect—just give it your all.

We believe in you and wish you the best of luck.

Happy Testing! 🎉

Mustang Scholars are Diamond Winners

Marjorie Martinez, Grade 6

Daisy Fernandez, Grade 7

By: Brandon Diaz & Joana Ortiz

Both Marjorie and Daisy are just two of many of Ms. Elmore's ELA students who accepted the challenge and entered the Writing Contest, "Why My Mom Deserves a Diamond".

The rules of the contest were simple: **In 25 words or less explain why your mom deserves a diamond.**



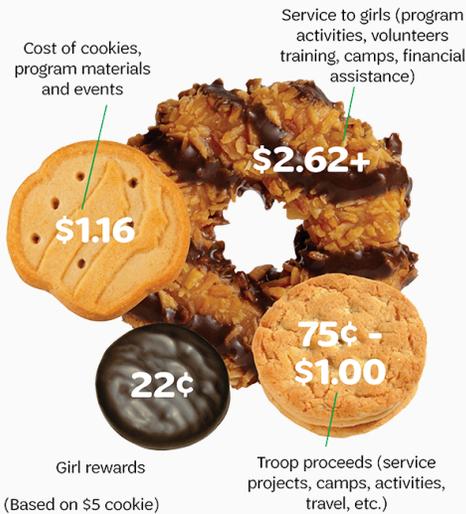
Several entries were received on November 14, 2024 at the Gallery of Diamonds store in Santa Ana, CA. Then, on January 30, 2025, Ms. Elmore received an email from Mr. Mike Diamond, the owner of the store, who informed her that two of her Mendez Scholars, Marjorie and Daisy, wrote award-winning entries.

cookie boxes range in price from \$6.00 to \$7.00.

If you don't see a Girl Scout table outside of your favorite retail or grocery store, you can go to www.girlscoutcookies.org to find the nearest sales booth/table.



By the way... if you've ever wondered where your money goes after you've bought a box or two of Girl Scout Cookies, here's what we found...



Mendez Sports Corner Undeclared—Let's Go!!!!

By: Andrew Molina

The Mendez Boys Basketball team is planning to end the season as champions! The team has won every game they've played so far and they only have one more game against

Mendez Fundamental. Ms. Alvarez has been a site clerk for five-years and she can do her job with her eyes closed. From answering all incoming calls to assisting students, staff, and visitors—she is a super site clerk!



Ms. Alvarez attended Willard Intermediate and Santa Ana High School in Santa Ana, CA.

In her free time, Ms. Alvarez loves to listen to Spanish music.

Two fun facts about Ms. Alvarez are that she loves to collect Funko Pop figurines and is a huge fan of sneakers.

We are so thankful for you and all that you do, **Ms. Alvarez.**

Did You Know?

By: Jacob Martinez

March has so many neat days!

March 19th is **National Chocolate Caramel Day!** What's your favorite chocolate and caramel treat? Snickers?? Rolo?? Chocolate and Caramel Cheesecake?? 😊



March 23rd is **National Puppy Day.** If you have a puppy or dog at home, spend a lot of extra time with it. Remember that there are a lot of puppies and dogs in animal shelters that could definitely use a good home!

Next month these two scholars and their mothers will be able to go to the diamond store and receive their prizes.

Congratulations, Mendez Scholars! We are very proud of you! 😊

Ádh mór (Good Luck)

By: Camila Santos & Genesis Mora



We asked teachers and staff this question: **"Do you have any good luck charms that you wear during the month of March?"** Here is what some Mendez faculty and staff shared with us:

Mr. Hoffman: "I always try to wear some green on March 17th. I do have some shamrock cufflinks so I may wear them!"

Ms. Contreras: "I don't really believe in luck, but I do believe in blessings. One of my biggest blessings right now is my fiancé who is always there for me."

Mrs. Garneri: "My good luck charm is my prayers."

Ms. Zurita: "I don't have any good luck charm. God is the only one who will give me good luck."

Mrs. Ngo: "My good luck charm for St. Patrick's Day would be my daughter because she always makes me happy."

Ms. Rubio: "I don't have an actual good luck charm, but my brains have always been helpful to me so I guess that will be my good luck charm."

Santiago before the tournament on Saturday March 15, 2025.

One player who deserves a shout-out is 8th Grader, Julian Gonzalez. Julian is an amazing point guard who enjoys leading his teammates.



Julian Gonzalez, 8th Grader

Let's wish the best of luck to the team and to their coaches, Eddie Gallardo, *History Teacher* and Ed Sharar, *Math Teacher*.

Mendez Girls' Soccer Team is FIERCE!!!!

By: Elias Giron & Ms. Elmore

Mendez Girls' Soccer Team is on the FIERCE train and headed full-steam ahead to the tournament!

Three of the awesome players on the team are: Aileen Medina, Ashley Santana, and Delilah Ramirez.

Aileen Medina, 8th Grader, plays **defense** and that is her favorite position because she likes how fast she has to be.

Ashley Santana, 7th Grader, plays **forward** and she gets revved-up each time she steps on the field as she loves scoring goals for her team.

Delilah Ramirez, 8th Grader, plays **stopper** and that's her wheelhouse as she has to have her eye on the whole field.

When I asked all three girls why they loved the sport so much, their answers were unanimous: "...we have



There's a birthstone for every month of the year! **March's** stone is **aquamarine**, which ranges in color from light blue to sea blue. If your birthday is in **March**, wearing an **aquamarine stone** has been reported to give people **good luck** in the month of **March**.



Oooh, where will you be going?

By: Belen Cabanas & April Salas



Sixth Grade (half) will be going to the Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch on **Wednesday March 12, 2025**.

Seventh Grade will be splitting-up their Field Trip to the Natural History Museum between two days: **Tuesday, March 11, 2025** and **Wednesday, March 13, 2025**.

Eighth Grade is going to Knott's Berry Farm on **Friday, May 23, 2025**.



Mrs. Green: "My good luck charm is my faith."

Mrs. Ornelas: "My good luck charm is wearing green."

Events Happening at Mendez Intermediate

By: Isaac Gonzalez Lopez

March 10 - 14, 2025

Monday: Crazy Sock Day

Tuesday: Wear all Black or Camouflage

Wednesday: Wear Green or Pink

Thursday: Wear Attire from your Favorite Decade

Friday: Renaissance Assemblies and the Under the Spell Dance

Community Events

What can you and your family do in March?

By: Isaac Gonzalez Lopez

Here are a couple events happening in our Santa Ana community this month.

MainPlace Mall

Easter Egg-stravaganza

Where: 2800 N. Main Street Santa Ana, CA 92705

When: March 29, 2025

12:00PM to 3:00PM

Details: Check-out Easter fun at the mall

Price: FREE

More Info: Go to:

<https://www.travelsantaana.com/e>

developed a beautiful friendship in a short period of time and we love to make our school proud.”



From left to right: Aileen, Ashley, and Delilah

March = Testing Time at Mendez

By: Angel Ramos

Mendez students will take assessments this month. Here is a list of the upcoming assessments.

MARCH TESTS 2025

- Summative ELPAC Reading, Writing, and Listening**
March 3 - 7
Grades 6 - 8
- Math MAP Test**
March 17 - 21
Grades 6 - 8
- ELA MAP Test**
March 24 - 28
Grades 6 - 8
- Physical Fitness Testing**
February 1 - May 30
Grade 7

[vent/easter-egg-stravaganza-at-mainplace/818/](#)

Annual Free-For-All So-Cal Museums

Where: Bowers Museum

2002 N. Main Street

Santa Ana, CA 9

When: March 16, 2025

10:00AM to 4:00PM

Details: Over thirty museums with art, cultural heritage, film, and natural history.

Price: FREE

More Info:

<https://www.travelsantaana.com/event/socal-museums%3a-annual-free-for-all-day/824/>