

## MARCH

### **Sun, March 2 – Los Angeles Marathon**

The route has changed, but we can still ride the Red Line to observe the race at various points along the route. Proximity to the subway also would make it easy to finish up with a Central Library visit ... perhaps to browse sports-related books in the childrens' section.

If your school is close to a rail station, please feel free to book this trip. The trains may get heavier than usual traffic, at some stops, but shouldn't be otherwise affected.

No rail access? Better skip this one. MTA issues many, many bus detours on Marathon Sunday.

### **Sun, March 2 – L.A. Heritage Day, Heritage Square**

From the web site: *Come visit with Historical Societies and Museums from all over Southern California presenting their communities and Los Angeles' heritage. This special event is the first time LA's diverse historical communities have been brought together to preserve and share the past.*

If you think of this unique Mount Washington site as a kind of graveyard for Los Angeles mansions, you won't be that far off. A stately Queen Anne, a genuine octagon house, a carriage barn – they're all here.

### **Saturday, March 8 – Ocean Tech Day, Aquarium**

From the web site: *Discover how technology has enabled scientists to make remarkable advancements and discoveries in the world of marine life, as well as some of the challenges that scientists and manufacturers have overcome to understand and address environmental concerns. Ocean Tech Day features special presentations, interactive exhibits, and demonstrations highlighting current technology used to monitor, study, and protect the ocean.*

Pro: Aquarium programs are always well run. If you're interested in a weekend aquarium trip, this is a great day to book one. Con: It's tough to compete with sea lions and sharks for a kid's attention. We're often on hand for aquarium special events, but usually devote most of our visiting time to the every-day-of-the-year attractions.

## **Sat., March 8: *Family Activities, JANM, Little Tokyo***

*Celebrate shared traditions and family fun activities within the Asian American community.*

Past JANM events have been excellent, and the museum is a fifteen minute walk from the Civic Center Red Line station. We could combine a visit here with a stop at the Central Library.

## **Sat., March 8: *Bonsai Festival, Huntington Library***

*Discover the fascination of this ancient horticultural art as the California Bonsai Society will present its 51<sup>st</sup> annual show, featuring more than 100 beautiful specimens created by bonsai masters. Traditional trees such as Japanese black pine and California juniper will be displayed alongside outstanding examples of non-traditional bonsai.*

Farmdale and Sierra Park have exceptionally good transit access to the Huntington, and other groups can get here, albeit with a longish bus ride. This event might be a better bit for the big people than for elementary schoolers. (Third graders rarely get excited about bonsai.)

## **Sat, March 15 – *Salaam Ensemble & Hahbi'Ru, Music Center***

*Salaam, an Arabic word meaning peace, brings together five renowned musicians of the Persian, Armenian, Turkish and Arab-American music world in this outstanding performance of vocal and instrumental music from the Middle and Near East. In their Music Center debut, Hahbi' Ru Dance Ensemble presents a diverse repertoire of Middle Eastern and North African folkloric style dance including the syncopated hip movements of belly-dancing, as well as dances with props that are skillfully twirled or balanced..*

Performances are at 11:00 a.m. and 12:30, in the downtown Music Center's outdoor amphitheater, with craft activities likely afterward. Expect a bravura performance -- but if it's a hot day, be prepared to do some suffering in the amphitheater, which offers little protection from the sun.

The Central Library is ten minutes downhill on foot, so it would be easy to follow-up with a library visit.

## **Sat., March 15 – *Extreme Animals*, Natural History Museum**

*From deep in the ocean, to the burning, rocky deserts – animals have ways of surviving and thriving. At the Extreme Animals Family Fun festival, we'll share the secrets of some of the planet's most extreme survivors.*

Likely to be a 'can't miss' trip for teachers who book this date. One, the museum has plenty to offer kids' groups year round – dinosaurs, Insect Zoo, World of Birds, North American and African Mammals, Marine Life, and so on. Two, transit access is good – most everyone can get here. And three, the NHM gallery interpreters understand kids – today's special presentations are likely to be age-appropriate crowd pleasers.

## **Saturday, March 15 – *Paper Magic*, Norton Simon**

*Twist, turn, fold, cut—see how imaginative you can be with a simple sheet of paper. Participants will learn the methods and techniques of the ancient art known as origami as they create a three- dimensional still life inspired by artworks in the Museum's collections.*

Norton Simon workshops for kids make a nice bonus to our visits to this Pasadena art museum. Norton Simon is smaller than LACMA, but not that much smaller, and the audio guides are a big plus for visiting youth groups.

## **Saturday, March 22: – *Wonderworld Puppets*, Central Library**

*Watch a terrific puppet show, then learn how to make your own puppets and stage.*

These hour long, mid-afternoon performances in the Central Library's capacious Taper auditorium make a great caper to a book browsing session in the childrens' lit department, and are a consistent booking favorite for teachers. And if you're up for a long day, consider combining this event with ...

## **Saturday, March 22 -- *Blessing of the Animals*, Olvera Street**

*Olvera Street has celebrated the Blessing of the Animals each year since 1930. It is a celebration of all that the animal world provides to humanity with entertainment and a parade of house pets and exotic animals, displays and exhibits.*

Los Angeles' first firehouse, oldest house, first church and first three story hotel are all next to the plaza. For kids not allergic to dogs, cats, horses, snakes, cows and other beasts, this is a surefire hit.

## **Saturday, March 29 – Family Festival, Getty Center**

*Explore contemporary Mexican culture on both sides of la frontera in this daylong Family Festival inspired by the exhibition The Goat's Dance: Photographs by Graciela Iturbide. Enjoy traditional folklorico dance, prehispanic indigenous instruments, and contemporary Mexican music from Los Angeles; listen to bilingual tales of ancient myths and fables, and create your own California keepsake at one of the hands-on workshops.*

[getty.edu/visit/events/family\\_festival\\_032908.html](http://getty.edu/visit/events/family_festival_032908.html) tells more. The Getty is a long trek for most of our participants, aboard the Wilshire #720 and the every-half-hourish #761, but the views can't be beat, and the \$1.2 billion dollar center is merely the flagship museum of the Getty Trust. Expect a long bus ride and an idyllic afternoon once here. The Family Festival is a major event, with a full slate of activities from 10:00 to late afternoon.

## **Sunday, March 30 – Divers Day, Aquarium**

*Divers give the world eyes with which to look under the sea. Sharing the world of seals, sea lions, dolphins, and other marine life, divers experience a dynamic relationship with the ocean that goes beyond what is known to the land-bound. It is through their adventures and explorations that those of us limited by our terrestrial boundaries have learned of the richness beneath the blanket of blue.*

Please see the listing above for March 8.

## **LACMA Family Sundays, L.A. County Museum of Art**

From the web site: *Join us every Sunday from 12:30 to 3:15 pm for programs designed especially for families. Make art, explore the museum, join a bilingual gallery tour, or take in a performance.*

The lineup for March 9, 16, 30: *Explore the newly opened Broad Contemporary Art Museum designed by architect Renzo Piano. Make art inspired by the architecture and by the contemporary art featured in BCAM. With artists Hadley Holliday, Adam Hubbard, Sean Gall, Sylvia Schorn, and Quan Yen Trang.*

Family Sundays are popular, so groups might have to wait awhile to get a seat at the craft tables. This is an exceptionally easy trip for Wilton Place and Wilshire Park, and a do-able trip for most groups.

## APRIL

### **Sat/Sun, April 5 & 6 – Cherry Blossom Festival, Little Tokyo**

The Cherry Blossom festival moves downtown! [cherryblossomfestivalsocal.org/FACT\\_SHEET.pdf](http://cherryblossomfestivalsocal.org/FACT_SHEET.pdf) has details for this event, which includes doll making, lei making, a kids' area and much more. We haven't taken in the Cherry Blossom Festival, but other events at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center have been excellent – this one is likely to be terrific, too.

We usually walk to Little Tokyo from the Civic Center subway station. Grades 4 and above should consider combining this trip with a visit to the nearby Japanese American National Museum.

### **Sat, April 5 – Pillow Theatre, Music Center**

*The ever-popular storytelling trio 'We Tell Stories' uses a unique blend of storytelling and audience participation to bring folklore, literature and mythology to life. ... especially for families with children ages 3 through 6. Imaginative artists in music, theatre, and dance engage children in lively shows that encourage creative thinking. An interactive visual arts workshop on the Music Center Plaza will follow each performance, weather permitting. Sit on one of our colorful pillows or bring one of your own. Stuffed animals welcome too!*

Please remember that the target audience is age six and under. If you're a gray-bearded second grader, you're too old for Pillow Theatre!

### **Sat., Apr. 12 & Apr. 13 – Earth Day, Aquarium of the Pacific**

*Join the Aquarium for a weekend of family fun celebrating Earth Day while learning simple, everyday tips to protect our environment. Visit booths from various earth-friendly organizations and participate in hands-on learning demonstrations for people of all ages.*

Yes, the kids are likely to spend most of their time *ooing* and *aahing* over the sharks and sea lions, but this is still an excellent venue for an Earth day celebration. Kids and teachers love the aquarium, and all participating schools can get here – easily, for South L.A. schools, or effortfully, for schools in East L.A. and the mid-Wilshire. The Earth Day offerings here are likely to be strong. And please note that the Aquarium recently earned special status as a 'climate action leader' with the California Climate Action Registry.

## **Saturday, April 19 – Earth Day, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium**

*A morning beach cleanup, followed by a day of free fun for all ages, with activities for children, guided walks to the nearby Salinas de San Pedro salt marsh, entertainment, displays, and information from a variety of local and national environmental groups and government agencies. Vendors will offer food and beverages, environmentally-conscious items, books, and more.*

The Cabrillo has rolled out the red carpet for us every time we've visited – but, unfortunately, the transit here is prohibitively long for most groups. If you're close to the Avalon #52 line, or a South Los Angeles Blue Line station, then maybe – but for East L.A. or mid-Wilshire, it's just too far away for a TransitPeople trip.

## **Saturday, April 19 –South LA Earth Fest, Crenshaw Plaza**

*Come join the 2008 SouthLA Earth Day Festival at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza. Visit the many green vendor booths displaying products and services for both home and office. Attend seminars on emergency preparedness, urban gardening, health care, environmental activism, and much more. Enjoy cultural entertainment, prizes, and fun for the whole family.*

We've never been and can't vouch for this one, but it sounds promising. [southearthfest.org](http://southearthfest.org) has details. A relatively easy trip for some South L.A. schools aboard the #40 and for Wilshire Park via the Crenshaw #210.

## **Saturday, April 19 –Splash! Festival, UCLA Fowler Museum**

*In conjunction with the exhibition Mami Wata: Arts for African Water Spirits, come to the Fowler Museum for a day of live music, parades, art workshops, and more!*

*Splash! A Festival of Art, Water, and the Environment* is the festival's full name. Prepare for a long trek here aboard the #20, and a great time at UCLA once here, if our limited past experience here is a guide.

## **Sat., Apr. 19 & Sun., Apr. 20 -- Cherry Blossom Festival**

[ci.monterey-park.ca.us/home/index.asp?page=812](http://ci.monterey-park.ca.us/home/index.asp?page=812) has the details. This is an exceptionally easy trip for Winter Gardens, as a Winter Gardens group can ride the Atlantic #260 here. Please note that we haven't been to this festival and thus can't vouch for it. (Although it does sound promising.) If you sign up for this trip, you'll be a pioneer.

## **Sat, April 26 – Taiwan Acrobatics Troupe, Music Center**

*In a dazzling and eye-popping performance, the Taiwan Acrobatic Troupe will delight audiences with circus feats including the floral plate dance and Dance in the Cloud, in which performers balance upon stacked chairs. On tour directly from Taipei, the company makes its West Coast premiere.*

Please see the listing above for March 15.

## **Saturday, April 26: – Parrot Tales, Central Library**

*Parrot Tales brings together comedy, magic and seven beautiful parrots for an experience you won't forget.*

These hour long, mid-afternoon performances in the Central Library's capacious Taper auditorium make a great caper to a book browsing session in the childrens' lit department, and are a consistent booking favorite for teachers.

## **Sat., Apr. 26 & Sun., Apr. 27 – L.A. Times Book Festival**

[latimes.com/extras/festivalofbooks/](http://latimes.com/extras/festivalofbooks/) has details. We were here with three groups in 2001.

On the positive side: children attending will be surrounded by oceans of adults on hand for books, books and more books. Just navigating the grounds and browsing the exhibits will show by example that reading is a lifelong pleasure, and not something to be done just in school. At least today, UCLA will be the country's biggest bookstore.

On the negative side: a difficult transit trip for any group except Wilton Place and Wilshire Park in the mid-Wilshire, and a fairly difficult trip for Wilton Place, too. In 2001, the kids' area was swamped, and kids who arrived without money to buy books were likely to leave empty-handed.

## **Sunday, April 27 – *Día del Niño*, Aquarium of the Pacific**

*In celebration of Día del Niño (Children's Day), the Aquarium of the Pacific will host a special festival for kids featuring arts and crafts, storytelling, dance performances by kid's groups, live music, and more.*

Please see the listings above for other aquarium special events.

## **LACMA Family Sundays, L.A. County Museum of Art**

Please see the listing above for March. The lineup for April 6, 13, 20 & 27: *Does size matter? Check out LACMA's sculpture created by artists Chris Burden, Richard Serra, Tony Smith, Jeff Koons, Robert Therrien, and Charles Ray. Repond to art through dance with L.A. Contemporary Dance Company and make your own ginormous inspired art with Andy Doherty, Heather Conyers, Jenny Ly, and Quan Yen Trang.*