

MAY

Saturday, May 3 – Cinco de Mayo, Aquarium of the Pacific

From the web site: *Join the fiesta at the Aquarium of the Pacific's sixth annual Cinco de Mayo celebration. Families will enjoy a special day filled with traditional music, dance, and foods honoring the rich culture of our Mexican communities. Enjoy the live entertainment of folkloric and Mexican regional dance troupes, underwater dive presentations in both Spanish and English, mariachi performers and other traditional and modern Mexican music.*

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.

Saturday, May 3 – Science Day 2008, Central Library

Hands-on Science with the California Science Center, and Science in Action: Experiments and Activities.

Plus two performances of *Volcanoes in Stories and Science* in the library's auditorium. The Central Library is well served by rail and bus transit, and includes a quarter of a million books for kids; we're frequent visitors. If you're up for a weekend library trek with your grade schoolers and don't mind the crowds likely to be encountered here, this event will be a good bet. Activities are scheduled from 2:00 to 4:00.

Saturday, May 3 – Coming Home to Pio Pico, Whittier

The Pio Pico state historical park will host afternoon educational activities commemorating the birthday of Pio Pico, the last Mexican governor of California. transitpeople.org/news2005.shtml#pico introduces this great destination, which we often combine with a trip to the Whittier Museum (in turn, described at: transitpeople.org/news2005.shtml#whittier).

This trip works exceptionally well for Winter Gardens, and also for Rowan Elementary, Soto Street, Ford Boulevard and other East L.A. schools near Whittier Boulevard.

Saturday, May 10 – Up, Up and Away!, JANM, Little Tokyo

Enjoy a day of family fun with kite-making and exciting flying demonstrations. All day activities: origami wind wheel, origami swan, and Fish Kites, as well as a special mother's day craft.

For those who haven't been, "JANM" stands for the Japanese American National Museum at First and Central, a fifteen minute hike from the Civic Center subway station. Most of our visits here include a 'Common Ground' tour, which tells the tragic story of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Better suited to grades 4 and up than to primary grades.

Sunday, May 11 – Queen Anne's Cottage tour, Arboretum

Twice a year, the Arboretum opens the 120+ year old Queen Anne's cottage to visitors. If you'd like to see how the seriously well-to-do lived in days of yore, this is a good place to come.

The dictionary may define 'arboretum' as 'a place where many kinds of trees and shrubs are grown for exhibition and study' ... but if you think of this huge Arcadia facility as a kind of zoo for plant life, you won't be that far off. This is an easy trip for Farmdale, El Sereno and Sierra Park, and a long trip for the other groups we work with, via the #79 bus on Huntington.

transitpeople.org/news2004.shtml#arboretum tells about our first trip here.

Saturday, May 17 – Mariachi Los Camperos, Music Center

Natividad 'Nati' Cano is both a traditionalist and a visionary and has shaped the history of mariachi music. His band, Mariachi Los Camperos, is considered one of the finest mariachi bands in the world. Then, at the Music Center for the first time is Ensembles Ballet Folklorico de San Francisco, performing regional dances of Mexico in a visually stunning show.

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 right down the hill, so we often combine a Music Center visit with book browsing afterward.

Saturday, May 17 – Looking at People, Norton Simon

Big, small, round, skinny—discover the human form in European and Asian artworks, and then create a clay sculpture of a figure inspired by master artists from the past.

This 1:00 p.m. art workshop sounds like a nice capper to a Saturday trip to this Pasadena art museum. The Norton Simon is smaller than LACMA, but not that much smaller, and the museum's audio guides are a big plus for visiting youth groups. Best for Winter Gardens teachers, as the Atlantic #260 makes the Pasadena trip easy. Monte Vista Elementary can get here easily, too, on the Gold Line.

Sat, May 17 & Sun., May 18 – Childrens' Festival, Little Tokyo

<http://www.jaccc.org/littletokyofunfest.htm> has the details. This annual event is one of the bigger family-oriented festivals in Los Angeles, and has been popular in years past with kids and teachers alike. Scheduled activities include taiko drumming, a martial arts demonstration, Japanese classical dance, and kids' games and crafts. Where? The Japanese American Community Center plaza in Little Tokyo, a twenty minute walk from the Civic Center Red Line station.

Sat, May 17 & Sun, May 18 – Bug Fair, Natural History Museum

Be sure not to miss the 22nd Annual Bug Fair – North America's largest. Explore the world of insects and their arthropod relatives. See live spiders and scorpions, start your own collection of butterflies and stay for some great cooking tips from two world-renowned insect chefs. Over 60 vendors will be on hand with books, entomological equipment and supplies, artwork, toys, clothing and more! A variety of private collections will be offered for sale, along with an assortment of live bugs. The Los Angeles Urban Spider Survey enters its sixth year and we once again urge patrons to bring in any spider that they collect

Bug Fair has drawn a strong 'thumbs up' from past participants -- it's tailor-made for the age we work with. Highly recommended, with one small cautionary note: this is very much a Known Good Thing among Los Angeles parents. Expect big crowds.

Sunday, May 18 – Museums of the Arroyo day

Heritage Square. The Lummis House. Gamble House. The Southwest Museum. The Pasadena Museum of History. The Police Historical Museum. What do they have in common? All will be open and free to all comers on the annual *Museums of the Arroyo*

day. MOTA offers a free shuttle service that boards at the Heritage Square Gold Line station, but we're probably better off doing our MOTA visiting aboard year-round transit lines. (Our groups are big, and MOTA shuttles are small.)

Sun., May 18 – Rancho Spring Festival, Rancho Los Cerritos

Explore 1930s America – its art and culture, politics, technological inventions, and leisure past times – through hands-on activities and live performances. Dance to Big Band music by Bobby Brent Connection; enjoy a hilarious radio show by the RLC Players; Meet “Will Rogers”; listen to stories and songs of the Dustbowl Era; take an architectural tour; games and crafts for children.

Hours are 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.. We haven't booked a trip here, but this site made a strong impression during a 2005 scouting expedition, especially for teachers who want a trip related to California history Transit: Blue Line south to Long Beach, and then a short ride on the LBTransit 51 line. This should be a good trip for South L.A. schools, as you can get here pretty easily. Teach in the mid-Wilshire or East L.A.? You'd be looking at a loooong travel schedule to get here.

rancholoscerritos.org/index.html introduces this destination.

Saturday, May 24: – Stories and Song, Central Library

Entertainer Ken Frawley presents puppets, music, magic and more.

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.

Sunday, May 25 – Family Storytelling, Getty Center

Join storyteller Debra Weller for a lively tale inspired by a painting about an unruly group of brawling musicians.

getty.edu/visit/events/storytelling_spring_2008.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. Story times are at 11:30, 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30.

Sat, May 31 – Pacific Islander Festival, Aquarium

Discover the rich and diverse cultures of the Pacific Islands through traditional craft demonstrations, ethnic cuisine, educational programs, storytelling, and an ocean of entertainment, including music and dance performances. Watch hula performances, listen to Tahitian drumming, try out ancient Hawai'ian games, enjoy island cuisine, and admire artisans as they create traditional weavings. The Pacific Islander Festival will feature various cultures, including Hawaiian, Marshallese, Chamorro, Tahitian, Samoan and Maori.

Program continues on Sunday, June 1. Pro: If it's at the aquarium, it's going to be good. Con: Please see the listing above for May 3. It's tough for a dancer or storyteller to compete with a shark for a child's attention.

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

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

The theme for May: *Picasso, Matisse, Degas*

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.

JUNE

Sunday, June 1 – Pacific Islander Festival, Aquarium

Please see the Saturday, May 31 listing above for this two day festival.

Sunday, June 1 – Lummis Day, Mount Washington

Former L.A. Times editor, city librarian and Southwest Museum founder, Charles Lummis was one of Los Angeles' best known residents a hundred years ago. He even built his own house, *El Alisal*, near Figueroa and Avenue 43. ("Any fool can write a book, but it takes a man to make a dovetail door," said Lummis, about the project.) This day long celebration includes activities in El Alisal and in nearby Sycamore Park. We probably can combine a Lummis Day trek with a visit to nearby Heritage Square.

Sat, June 14 – Living History Day, Pio Pico State Park, Whittier

Please see the listing above for May 3. Today's activities include adobe and break making demonstrations, guided tours and more, from 11:00 to 3:00.

Saturday, June 14 – Drawing from Nature, Getty Center

Join us for a close-up look at drawings of exotic plants and animals by artists/explorers Maria Sibylla Merian and daughters; then try your hand at drawing from nature in the Central Garden.

Please see the listing above for May 25. The drawing hour is from 3:30 to 4:30.

Saturday, June 14 – Drum Downtown, Music Center

Drumming outdoors on a beautiful Saturday morning... fun, vibrant, and energetic. Hand drums, shakers, tambourines, and other percussion instruments are provided.

Drum Downtown starts at 10:00 a.m., wraps up at 11:30, and was popular when we dropped by in 2007. Consider combining this offering with a visit to the nearby Central Library, or, most likely ...

Saturday, June 14 – Toy Theatre, Music Center

Toy Theatre is a genre of puppetry in which plays are enacted using two-dimensional rod puppets in a small model theatre. The art form dates to the 19th century in England where printed sheets of characters and scenic elements were cut out and mounted on heavy paper or wood to enact miniature versions of popular plays. The Music Center's Toy Theatre Festival will present puppet productions in both traditional and contemporary styles of classic and innovative works for family audiences.

This event will be a first for the Music Center ... and for TransitPeople, too, if anyone books it. If it's anything like World City, expect big crowds and an excellent show. Hours: 10:00 to 6:00.

Saturday, June 28: – *Reading is Magic*, Central Library

Magician Tony Daniels proves that with books and imagination, you can do magic.

Spend a leisurely afternoon among the Central Library's quarter of a million childrens' books, **and** cap the visit with a free magic show. We've seen Mr. Daniels many times in library visits past; he's excellent, and popular.

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

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 theme for June: *Sightings from L.A.*