

SPECIAL SECTION

Summer Camps & SCHOOLS



PALISADES NEWS

April 15, 2015



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Areté Academy Offers Unique Classes

Areté, a deliberately small (45 students) high school focused on critical thinking and philosophy, is sponsoring the Chamber of Commerce Community Expo and Classic Auto Exhibit on May 17 on Via de la Paz and Antioch.

Although Areté's is not a traditional business, this school prides itself on offering an intensive and challenging educational experience, which is different from what one finds at many high schools. The average class size is five, and gifted students can finish high school in three years, allowing them a year for research and/or classes at UCLA.

"We founded Areté Preparatory Academy to create a new kind of high school that helps kids rediscover the joy and adventure of learning while preparing them for colleges and universities of their choice," said founders Jim and Elizabeth Hahn. "Students are expected to reach beyond easy explanations and unexamined assumptions to seek in-depth understanding."

The name of the school is from the ancient Greek term Areté, often translated as "virtue" or "excellence." It is a broad term encompassing the most prized traits in Greek society, including the classical ideals of courage, wisdom, temperance, sophrosyne, piety and justice.

Head of School Hahn earned a master's degree in anthropology at UC San Diego. Upon completing his doctoral coursework, he received a Fulbright grant for medical anthropology research on the island of Yap in Micronesia. He taught at Crossroads before leaving in 1999 to join the faculty at New Roads School.

In 2007, he co-founded Areté, which offers an idea-driven curriculum in a small, supportive environment. The inno-



Areté Head of School Jim Hahn observes chemistry students Noah Ritter and Will Abbott and teacher Sylvia Puglisi.

Photo: Clark Brandon

native Great Ideas curriculum combines history, philosophy and the social sciences to address the perennial questions of human existence.

This carefully planned cross-disciplinary program introduces students to the important issues in Western and non-Western thought, encouraging the use of historical and contemporary examples to support students' own emergent philosophical positions.

In December, Areté students took first place in the inaugural Southern California High School Ethics Bowl Competition, held at USC.

Fourteen teams from 11 high schools, in-

cluding Harvard-Westlake, Wildwood and Glendora High School, participated in the event, which required students to analyze both real and hypothetical ethical scenarios. Students were challenged to analyze each case and identify underlying ethical principles, responding to questions from the opposing team and the judges.

"It was fun to share ideas with the other students and judges," said senior Calvin Klyman. "Our school's focus on philosophy gave us a real boost. I'm excited to see what our team can do in the nationals."

Nationals were held April 9 to 11 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina (results were not available at press time).

The Hahns were not surprised by the team's success because "Our quarterly Symposium Program mirrors the college-level challenges of developing meaningful questions, exploring relevant sources, and writing and presenting to an academic audience."

The school emphasizes critical reading, writing and argumentation. The foreign-language programs focus on conversational fluency and academic support, work time is built into the school day and flexible schedules are designed around students' passions and needs.

"Our school serves a population of bright students eager to participate in shaping their own education," Hahn said. "We value curiosity and the desire to explore, rather than the over memorization of facts, and we assess our students by these standards rather than by test scores."

Students are accepted into top colleges across the country including Vassar, Skidmore, Northwestern, Reed, Columbia, Emory, the University of Chicago and Cornell.

Admissions decisions to Areté are based on a written application, teacher recommendation, and personal interviews with prospective students and their parents.

Last June, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges granted Areté a six-year term of accreditation, lauding the school for providing "an instructional emphasis on critical thinking within the humanities integrating various themes, and offering courses that contain multiple, diverse concepts."

The school is located at 11500 W. Olympic, between Barrington and Sawtelle. Call: (310) 478-9900 or visit: aretéprep-academy.org.

EGGstravaganza Fun at the Park



Left: One-year-old Valentina Pietroiaco was properly attired for an egg hunt at the Palisades Recreation Center on April 4. More than 1,000 parents, kids and grandparents came out for the event which included a petting zoo, face painting, egg hunt and an appearance by the Easter Bunny. Center: Talluah Lindsey, 14 months, chose to crawl her way through the egg hunt in the area set aside for the youngest children at the park. Right: Teddy Peterson, 2, used careful powers of observation for selecting an egg.

Photos: Shelby Pascoe

Blanck's Camp Kicks into Action

Beginners to Black Belt, there is no place better to learn and perfect skills than Gerry Blanck's Martial Arts Center dojo at 881 Alma Real.

Most recently, Pierce Mayer (11) from Corpus Christi earned a first degree black belt; Ryan Zaid (12) from Paul Revere Middle School was awarded his second-degree black belt; and moving up to his third-degree black belt was Daniel Allen (16) from Palisades High School.

Blanck has had more than 100 students receive their black belts since he moved to the Palisades in 1982. His students range in age from 3 years to a person in his 80s, and he's coached professional athletes such as Sugar Ray Leonard as well as the actors Tom Hanks and Steve Guttenberg.

Thousands have gone through his doors as they learn the athleticism and discipline necessary for karate, kickboxing, jiu-jitsu, judo and self-defense.

In addition to classes six days a week, Blanck also hosts karate-kid birthday parties at the dojo or the birthday boy/girl's home. "The parties are for children ages 5 to 12," Blanck said. "They consist of exciting demonstrations and fun martial arts games."

About one party, a parent wrote, "He kept the kids busy for the next two hours, running, punching bags, kicking and breaking boards, which culminated with our son getting to cut the cake with a real sword. How can you top that?"

Every winter, spring and summer there are karate camps at the dojo for kids ages 4 to 12. Activities include karate, kickboxing, video games, weapons training, games at Palisades Park and field trips to a bowling alley and the Palisades High School swimming pool. The camp runs from June 15 to August 14, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sensei Lise Borja, who has been the playground supervisor for Marquez Charter Elementary for 20 years as well as the

STAR Enrichment karate teacher at Marquez and Palisades Elementary for 20 years, is the camp director. Borja has also been a physical education teacher at Marquez for the past four years.

"Martial arts help build confidence and improve discipline," Blanck said. "Parents often enroll kids in my classes because the teacher becomes a mentor and a figure of discipline. A lot of times I'm asked to talk to the kids to remind them they are supposed to set an example outside the dojo as well."

Blanck, a native of Pensacola, Florida, was a teenager when he began practicing karate. He became serious about the martial arts as a student in Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida, when Grand Master Yamamoto, a tenth-degree black belt who founded Yoshukai Karate, visited the school from Japan. Blanck received his black belt in 1977 under sixth-degree black belt Hiroaki Toyama and under Master Yuki Koda.

Kickboxing was becoming popular at this time, and Blanck began training in the sport. One year later, he had his first match and won. Later, he became the number-one contender in his weight class. In 1982, he moved to California to fight for a world title in martial arts; and a year later he won the titles of World Karate Association Super Featherweight Champion and International Kickboxing Association Junior-Lightweight Champion. He retired from fighting in 1985 with a record of 23-2. Blanck is now the West Coast Director of Yoshukai Karate.

In recognition of his active involvement in the community, he was chosen as Fourth of July parade marshal in 2012. He and his students have participated in the parade for 19 years.

Blanck has been a member of the Chamber of Commerce for 28 years, where he was recognized with the Mort Farberow Businessperson of the Year award in 2013.



Sensei Gerry Blanck (left) and Sensei Marc Lamaze (right) introduce black-belt recipients (left to right) Pierce Mayer, Ryan Zaid and Daniel Allen.

Blanck is also an enthusiastic supporter of the Pacific Palisades Baseball Association, and has sponsored a team every year, since opening his business in town. Visit: gerryBlanck.com or call: (310) 454-7457.



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6.22	WELCOME TO GAN IZZY 2015	ICE SKATING	PAJAMA PARTY	BOOMERS	MAD SCIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SKATE DOGS ART PROGRAM COOKING HIP HOP SURFING JEWELRY MAKING
6.23	TZEDAKAH TREASURES	PADDLE BOATING ECHO PARK LAKE	BRING A FRIEND DAY	SCOOKIE JUNGLE	REPTACULAR ANIMALS	
6.24	WACKY HAIR DAY	SKY HIGH	CERAMICS	ISRAEL DAY PARADE	HIP HOP PERFORMANCE	
6.25	MITZVAH FAIR	DISCOVERYCUBE	MOCK WEDDING	LA SPARKS	G.I. SHABBAT DINNER	
6.26	WATER SLIDE	IMAX	WET WATER WEDNESDAY	PACIFIC PARK SANTA MONICA PIER	CARICATURE ARTIST	
6.29	MEZUZAH HUNT	SCOOKIE JUNGLE	GAN IZZY GOT TALENT!	BATTLESHIP IOWA	JUGGLER JOHN	
7.01	GAME TRUCK	SPLASH! EXTENDED DAY	DUCT TAPE QUEEN	GOODYBYE BGG	WATER SLIDE	
7.02					SPORTS TOURNAMENTS	
7.03					MAD SCIENCE	
7.06					REPTACULAR ANIMALS	
7.07					CIT SHABBAT SLEEPOVER	
7.08					BIKE SHOW	
7.09					GAN IZZY COOK-OFF	
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www.CGIPalisades.com
(310) 454-7783

Learn Jazz with Alper Music

If your child is going to play music, why not have them study with one of the best?—Pacific Palisades resident Gregory Alper.

Alper is an acclaimed saxophonist, recording artist and composer who performed on the New York City jazz scene. He has composed music for Warcraft, for film and television, and has recorded five CDs, including the critically acclaimed *Fat Doggie*, recently remastered at Abbey Road and released by First Hand Records.

When he is not recording, Alper has taught improvisation at UCLA Extension and leads the jazz band for Children's Music Workshop Honor Orchestra. He also teaches year-round at his studio in Marquez Knolls.

This jazz player offers a unique way of teaching all styles of music that incorporates listening, singing and drumming in addition to all the traditional tools of music reading technique and theory.

"Music is a language. We learn language by immersion; school comes later," Alper said. "We need to hear and experience communication first. We explore making connections between familiar experiences with the various aspects of music so that it's not abstract or detached from experience. There are more important aspects beyond



Alper Music School campers learn the language of jazz.

learning notes."

In addition to private lessons on a cornucopia of instruments (saxophone, clarinet, flute, guitar, piano, bass, trumpet and recorder), Alper Music also offers a weekly jazz band and Summer Jazz Camp for students 8 to 15. Students play in an ensemble and learn jazz history and how to listen.

many ways to directly experience and make music even before a student has mastered the instrument or theory," he said. "We do both, and the programs are always tailored to the level and mix of individuals who attend. Everyone has fun and a great experience of music."

During full-day camp, a lunch is served, with outside time factored in, allowing campers to socialize and form friendships.

Young Jazzers learn to improvise and get real time direction and experience playing with prerecorded tracks and live professional musicians. Students also learn repertoire and the language of jazz. All instruments are welcome, and the week culminates with a final concert performance by the participants.

The camp, which starts on June 29, runs weekly through July 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Half-day programs from 1 to 4 p.m. are also available.

The cost for the full-day program is \$525/week (\$500 if paid by May 1). Lunch is included. The cost for the half-day program is \$325/week (\$300 if paid by May 1). Space is limited.

Call: (310) 454-0160 or email: ga.one@verizon.net or visit: alpermusic.com.

Judy Silk's Book, *Give a Mom a Margarita*, Debuts

If you are looking for a Mother's Day gift that will bring a smile to mom's face, then Pacific Palisades resident Judy Silk has crafted the perfect present.

If You Give a Mom a Margarita is a recently released parody of the popular children's book series *If You Give a . . .* and can be found on Amazon.com. This book, strictly for adults, tells a humorous story of one mom's Saturday afternoon, a margarita, some chips, underwear, a slumbering husband and a misbehaving teenage daughter.

What starts as an ordinary day can end up in chaos and bedlam—moms know that the best way to handle any emergency is to keep a sense of humor and find the laughs along the way.

Judy Silk was a frequent Viewpoint contributor to the *Palisadian-Post* and also wrote for the *Palisades News*, *The Huffington Post* and *Salon*. When her second husband died in 2013, she was able to cope by maintaining her sense of humor that she had shared with him, calling it "Joyful Mourning."

One of the projects she had talked about with him was publishing this book. Silk has also started performing standup and can be seen at youtube.com/watch?v=JZleW98mEVc and various storytelling venues across Los Angeles, including The



Moth, Expressing Motherhood and Tasty Words. She will be featured on Felicity Huffman's What The Flicka website.

More than Music At Woman's Club

Join Ingrid Vinje for a class that nurtures young children's development through music and movement from 10 to 10:45 a.m. on Tuesday, April 28, at the Woman's Club, 901 Haverford Ave.

This class is for children 2 to 4 years old and their caregivers (one adult per child, please). The event is free for Woman's Club members and their guests.

KIDS SUMMER CAMP
Mon., June 15 – Fri., August 14

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Gerry Blanck is a 7th degree Black Belt & former W.K.A. World Kickboxing Champion

Go Camp Gan Israel

Camp Gan Israel (CGI) is much more than a break from school routine, it is a comprehensive program, designed to strengthen the body and soul. Children ages 5 to 12 are provided with a rich and wholesome summer vacation of fun and excitement along with friendship and meaningful educational experiences.

The Palisades branch of CGI has a well-earned reputation as a trendsetter with innovative ideas, creative programs and new activities being introduced continuously. This reputation makes CGI the first choice in summer camps for kids and their parents.

Not only does CGI employ loving and devoted staff to care for the safety of campers (and to make sure that every camper is having a good time), a healthy lunch is provided every day.

The camp is held on a more than two-acre site, steps away from Los Liones State Park. Campers enjoy a great deal of open space, a massive sandbox, a mountainside view, hiking trail, ocean breezes and a grass playing field.

The camp program includes swimming lessons and water activities, sports, arts and crafts, talent shows and comedy skits. Field trips include theme parks, ice skating, berry picking, discovery centers and sports games. Late-night programs and family events are a major highlight at CGI.

Last year one parent commented, "This is a fantastic way for children to spend the summer. The camp is fun, well-organized and my kids had great days, every day."

CGI will be held from June 22 through August 7. Registration is open.

Visit: CGIpalisades.com.

Bryan's Smile Focuses On Drug Awareness

When Santa Monica dentist Melanie Gullet lost her 26-year-old son Bryan to drug addiction, she formed Bryan's Smile, a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing awareness about addiction and depression.

"The 'not my child' and the 'not me' attitude, along with the lack of knowledge about addiction and depression, have created a disturbing increase in deaths of America's young," said Gullet, who believes that the best way to deal with substance abuse is to prevent it from happening in the first place.

The nonprofit uses the Reality Tour® Drug Prevention program created in 2003 by Norma Norris of Butler, Pennsylvania, in which participants follow the fate of a fictitious teen addicted to drugs and include a peer-pressure scene; an arrest and prison experience; an emergency overdose scene and a funeral scene.

A narrative by the "addict" precedes each scene and includes the constant reminder

to the audience that "I'm just like you."

At the end of the dramatization, participants hear from an addict's mom (Gullet), a local police representative and possibly a person in recovery.

Tomorrow, Thursday, April 16 and again on May 14, there will be a free program from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours School, 11955 Sunset Blvd., in Brentwood.

Each attendee will be given a drug-abuse profile to adopt during the program so he/she can become familiar with different addictive drugs and gateway drugs.

The program is open to youth ages 10 to 17, who must be accompanied by a parent. The event is free, though advanced registration is necessary because space is limited. RSVP bryanssmile@bryanssmile.com.

Teachers, youth group leaders, community leaders, and others who are interested in the program are invited to attend, as well. RSVP to Gullet with questions bryanssmile@bryanssmile.com.



HOMES & GARDENS

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During the drug prevention program, an arrest and prison experience are highlighted.

Groza Offers Personalized Service

Groza has become a name that Pacific Palisades parents can rely on. Not only does Groza Learning Center offer tutoring for school subjects your son/daughter might be having trouble with, they are also the center for test preparation, a site for home-schooled children to meet for small classes, a place for course recovery and, most importantly, a source of good advice about what works for an individual student.

Tutoring is offered in all subjects for kindergarten through senior year in high school, and each student is given a personalized tutoring plan that targets an individual personality and learning style.

If your child has trouble with a high-school class and chooses to repeat it through an online source, Groza offers a monitored testing site—and help if it is needed.

Home schooling, but your calculus is a bit rusty? Consider having your student take a special class at Groza.

Groza tutors are also experts in helping students prepare for the ISEE or the HSPT for private middle and high school. Tutors at the center, located at 881 Alma Real, know application and testing deadlines, and where your student should be in the process.

Does your student have a chance to become a National Merit Scholar finalist?



Scott and Christy Groza, co-founders of Groza Learning Center, place family and respecting their students like family as a top priority.

How do you know? Chat with someone at Groza who will recommend the appropriate steps to take for the PSAT.

SAT/ACT scores are important factors in securing placement and scholarship opportunities. Do you know the difference? Do

you know that more kids take the ACT than the SAT, and both tests are regarded equally by colleges? If not, maybe it's time to speak to someone at Groza, who can give you and your child the information you need to select the test best suited for your student.

It's not uncommon to hear from parents that they did not study for SATs years ago. But now, the college landscape is more

competitive and planning needs to start earlier. If your son or daughter is shooting for a top-tier university, there are several things to consider: course selection, GPA, subject tests and extracurricular activities.

With practice standardized tests, Groza tutors know if your student needs help with English, math or maybe just more practice with test-taking skills.

If it is time for your student to transition to a new school, co-founder Scott Groza says, "I recommend every school, but only certain schools for specific students."

He and wife Christy, who worked as a teacher at Calvary before opening the Groza center, recommend visiting each school. "The interaction with staff and faculty, and even just stepping onto a campus will make the yeas and nays far easier to declare with certainty. Also, be realistic about the workloads at each school. You don't want your kid miserable at the 'best' school when he/she could thrive at a school better suited to them."

The same is true of college. There are thousands of great colleges and there is a perfect one for each student. Essays play an important part of the college application package, and Groza tutors will help to make sure the structure and grammar are correct.

If you have younger students, how do you help them do well? The Grozas recommend boosting academic aptitude by simply championing reading. Kids who love to read generally do well in standardized tests.

Groza tutors also encourage parents to offer children structure and routine. Putting systems in place for kids to have focused study time, free of distractions, not only help academics, but also cultivates discipline.

Visit: GrozaLearningCenter.com or call: (310) 454-3731.

Yu-Gi-Oh! Trading Cards

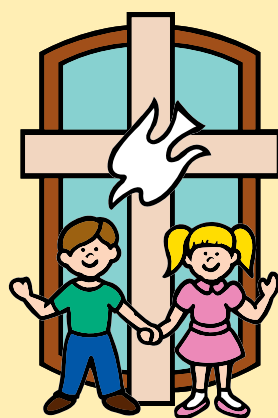
Yu-Gi-Oh! the Trading Card Game is held from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of the month in the Palisades Branch Library community room. All youth are invited, including beginners. The game improves skills in math, reading, strategy and statistical analysis. All levels are welcome.

Call: (310) 459-2754.

On the Cover

Georgina Benjamin, 2, plays at a bouncer at the park's EGGstravaganza.

Photo: Shelby Pascoe



Palisades Lutheran Preschool will be offering a NEW SUMMER PROGRAM

For children ages 3 to 6
4 days per week for 5 weeks (Monday-Thursday)
From 9:30-1:30 or 9-3

Week 1: June 22-25 • Week 2: June 29-July 2
Week 3: July 6-9 • Week 4: July 13-16
Week 5: July 20-23

Each week will have a day that includes:
Music & Movement, It's All Fun & Games,
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Please visit our website:
www.PalisadesLutheranPreschool.org
for details

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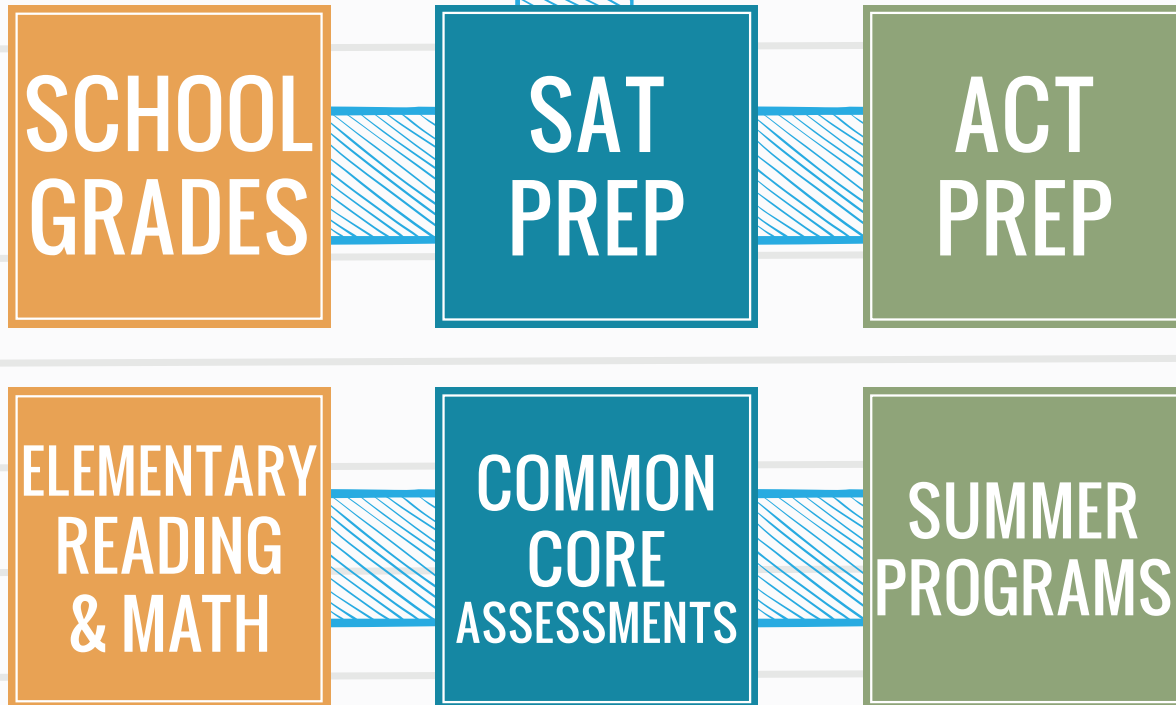
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