

# CONNECTIONS

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*Happy 2021!*

## **New Year's Message**

from Chas Abate

Our parents and our grandparents told us stories... The Depression, the World Wars, the earthquakes, the fires, the people coming together, fighting, laboring, sacrificing, inventing, building, growing...

Now so many plot twists and thickenings and so many heroes and villains later, we are still in that story. We know what we need to do and we know that we need to do it together.

Looking back on the past year can indeed be painful. But one thing stands out. It is yet another positive vision of ourselves (students, faculty, families, and friends) as a beautiful, strong, and real community, seeing on a whole new level of meaningfulness, and ready to begin living that next chapter.

Every year, we extend Season's Greetings to you all and we always mean it. This year, however, it is truly coming from a most emotional and heretofore uncharted depth of the heart.

**Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!**

# JANUARY 2021 NATIONAL DAYS

National Oatmeal Month

National Soup Month

2nd week is Letter Writing Week

1/1 - New Year's Day

**1/4 - World Braille Day**

**1/5 - National Bird Day**

1/13 - International Skeptics Day

**1/15 - National Bagel Day and National Hat Day**

1/18 - Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday

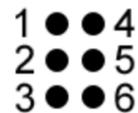
1/24 - National Compliment Day

1/29 - National Puzzle Day

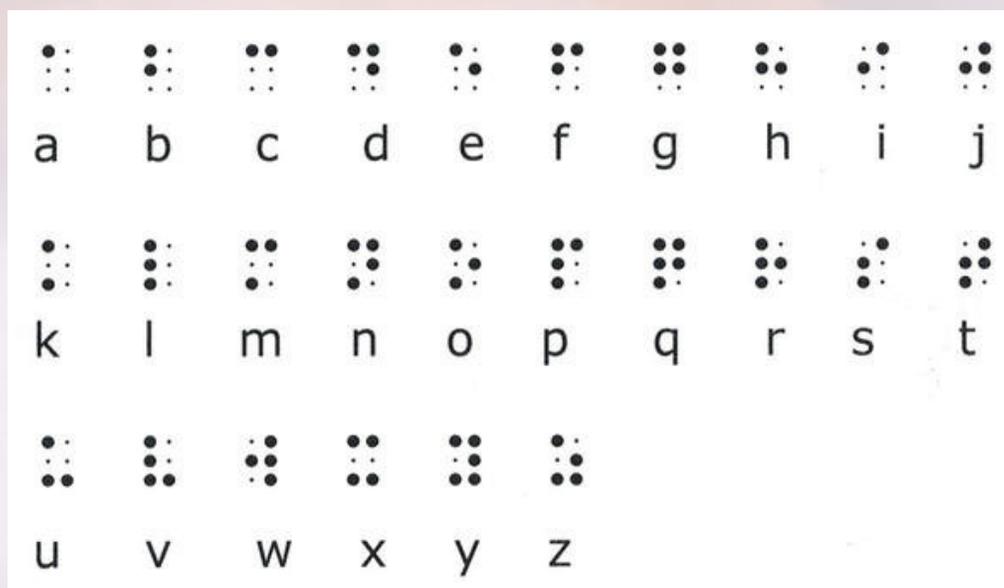


## World Braille Day - January 4

Louis Braille (1809-1852) became blind after he accidentally stabbed himself in the eye. He later became an inventor and the designer of braille writing, which enables people who are blind to read by feeling a series of organized bumps representing letters.



The basic unit of the braille code is the *braille cell*. A braille cell is a group of six dots. The dots are numbered and are referred to as dot 1, dot 2, dot 3, dot 4, dot 5 and dot 6. This is helpful in describing the combinations of dots that make the different braille signs.



A braille letter or character is made by raising one or more of the dots in the cell so that it can be felt by the fingers. The large dots in the braille samples (left) represent raised dots. The small dots help to identify the position of the dots within the cell; they do not show in real braille.

# Nutrition Class: Vegan Ravioli

Alison showed us how to make raviolis by hand! She makes cooking look so easy! Here's what she did:



- Made the pasta dough and filling.
- Put the pasta dough through the roller (left).
- Let pasta dry on the pasta rack.
- Cut into small squares (bottom left).

- Use two pasta squares (one top + one bottom) and fill.
- Seal the sides to make little ravioli pillows. Yum!!



## What is this crazy contraption?

(Answer is on the bottom of this page.)

The earliest known mention of ravioli appears in the personal letters of Francesco di Marco Datini, a merchant of Prato in the 14th century.

Ravioli originated as a traditional food in Italian cuisine and they are usually served with a sauce. Ravioli are commonly square, though other forms are also used, including circular and semi-circular (*mezzelune*). Alison, like most of us, prefers square-shaped ravioli. Mmm, delicious ravioli below...



## CH&S January Birthdays

- |                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1/7 - Scott            | 1/17 - Tyrone   |
| 1/8 - Meredith         | 1/20 - John     |
| 1/11 - Jason           | 1/24 - Carolyn  |
| 1/12 - Jen and Randall | 1/30 - Suzie S. |
|                        | 1/31 - Mike     |

Chinese birthday tradition maintains that one should symbolize their longevity by eating a plate of long noodles, slurping them in as far as possible before biting. Does a plateful of ravioli count?



Answer: The item Alison is holding in the top right picture on this page is a pasta drying rack.

# Language Arts: Alphabetical Animals

nestre  
[King Kong]  
King crab  
King prawn  
Kelp gull  
Koala  
King Bird

Lion  
Lion fish  
Lady bug  
Labrador retriever  
Lobster  
Ligers  
Leopard  
Lizard  
Llama  
Lly



Sometimes we play "alphabetical animals" in language arts class. We started with "A" animals back in April 2020 and recently, we began with "K." Yes, "King Kong" counts (as a double-word score too!) because it was such a good guess!

**What two letters are missing from the last animal "Ly \_\_"?**  
(answer on bottom of page)



## Dear Sasquatch

**Q:** 'Squatch, how are you planning on celebrating January 13th, International Skeptics' Day?

**A:** Thank you for question. Sasquatch prefer to be called "Tim," but you may call Tim "'Squatch," if like.

I celebrate International Skeptic Day like any other day: with existential crisis. Do 'Squatch, er, I mean, Tim, exist? How do I know Tim exist? Do Tim exist more as Tim or as 'Squatch since not many know name is Tim?

A pinecone by any other fir is still pinecone, right? People say 'Squatch is myth. Do that mean that Tim is myth, too? Do other people exist, or is this all in Tim's head box? Aw—the dizzy thought making brings Tim back to solid thought: Cogito Ergo Tim.

**For more about skepticism, attend our Ancient Philosophy class on Wednesdays from 10:30-11:30 am.**

# January 18th is MLK Jr.'s Birthday

## Secret Multiplication Word Puzzle Martin Luther King Jr. - Fives



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

INSTRUCTIONS: Multiply each number. Then match the answer to the letter in the Secret Message alphabet key. Write the letter on the blank above the problem number.

$$\begin{array}{r} 1 \quad 3 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \quad 0 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \quad 5 \\ \times 6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \quad 1 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \quad 5 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \quad 5 \\ \times 2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 7 \quad 6 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 8 \quad 5 \\ \times 1 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 9 \quad 9 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \quad 5 \\ \times 8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 11 \quad 7 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 12 \quad 5 \\ \times 3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \quad 5 \\ \times 9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 14 \quad 4 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 15 \quad 8 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 16 \quad 5 \\ \times 7 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 17 \quad 2 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 18 \quad 5 \\ \times 4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 19 \quad 5 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 20 \quad 5 \\ \times 0 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_ 8 \_\_\_\_\_ 14 \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_ 8 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 17

\_\_\_\_\_ 16 \_\_\_\_\_ 14 \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 15 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 13 \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 17

### Secret Message Alphabet Key

A= 5   B= 24   C= 35   D= 45   E= 25   F= 48   G= 18   H= 8   I= 16   J= 6   K= 49   L= 10   M= 63  
N= 54   O= 72   P= 27   Q= 30   R= 20   S= 28   T= 40   U= 0   V= 7   W= 15   X= 14   Y= 32   Z= 21

# Andrew's Corner

## Why We Love Baby Animals

When you look at pictures of baby animals, how does it make you feel? For me, seeing how small and adorable they are, it makes me feel happy and warm inside. I love baby animals!



What is it about cuteness that triggers our brains to feel empathy, community, and sharing? Believe it or not, there is a science for cuteness.

Baby animals, like puppies, use their cuteness to increase survival possibilities and make it possible that adult animals of other species take care of cubs of species that are not their own.



According to Konrad Lorenz, a common set of features of baby animals, such as large heads and small faces, might help a puppy's survival possibilities and make it possible for adoption by other animals.

But why do humans love baby animals so much? One theory is that baby animals remind us of human infants, which we are meant to protect. The second theory states that our empathy towards baby animals allows us to better interact with them. This characteristic could have been evolutionally favorable helping us survive in the past.

What this all comes down to is when we see the cuteness in baby animals, like big and rounded eyes, chubby cheeks, soft skin, and playful behavior, it kicks in our desire for parental care.

When I see baby animals I want to pick them up and cuddle them. Now I know why . . . daddy instincts!

*Bio: Andrew Newson is a 23-year-old student at Life College who has a passion for research and reading. He likes comic books, video games, hiking, exploring new places with his mom and... babies! Andrew is an authority on all things Star Wars, Star Trek, and interesting places to visit in the Bay Area. Andrew loves learning new things—in fact, he is currently studying Mandarin.*



# Quote of the Month

**“Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.”**

–Ralph Waldo Emerson.



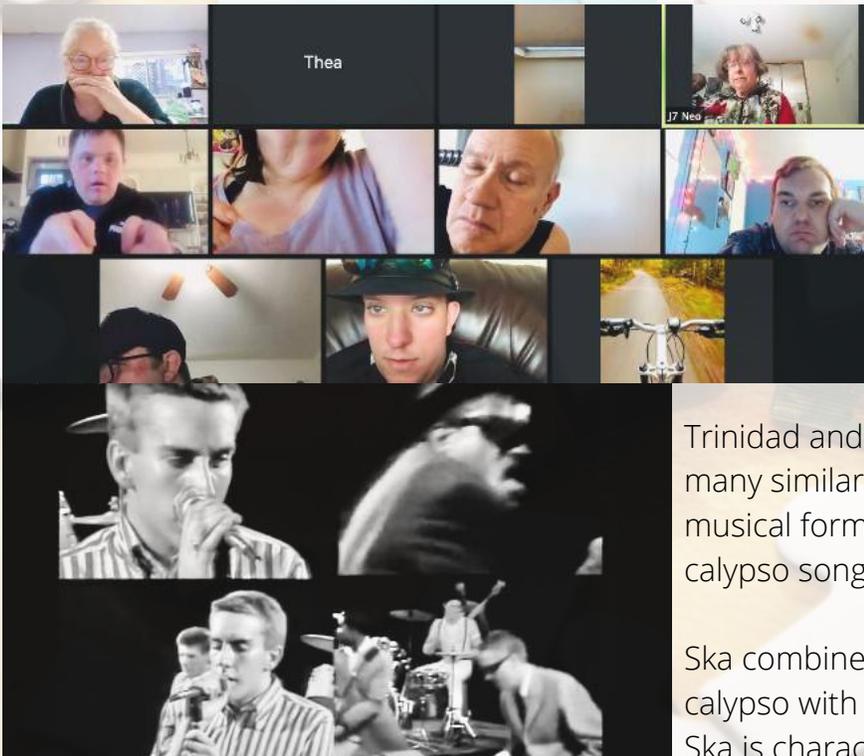
Harold chose our first quote of the month and here he tells us about the importance of finding peace.

As we know, this COVID-19 pandemic can bring on sadness, frustration, and a whole lot of anxiety. In order to cope, I take Emerson’s words to heart and I rely upon those things I know I can do to bring me peace, such as reading a good book, helping my mom out in her garden, and especially, stopping to appreciate the interactions and relationships I have with the students and the staff on the CH&S Zoom channel!

**What are some of the things you know you can do to bring yourself peace?**

## National Puzzle Day - January 29

Each year on January 29th, National Puzzle Day recognizes how exercising our brains with puzzles is just one of its many benefits. Whether it’s a crossword, jigsaw, trivia, word searches, brain teasers or Sudoku, puzzles put our minds to work. Spending time daily working on puzzles improves memory, cognitive function, and problem-solving skills! (Do you hear that, puzzle-meister Dave?)



(Above) "The Specials" are an English 2 Tone and ska revival band formed in 1977.

## Mento and Ska

In music class, Kate explained how *mento*, a style of Jamaican folk music, influenced *ska* and *reggae* music.

Mento is often confused with *calypso*, a musical form from Trinidad and Tobago. Although the two share many similarities, they are separate and distinct musical forms. Mento singers frequently used calypso songs and techniques.

Ska combined elements of Caribbean mento and calypso with American jazz and rhythm and blues. Ska is characterized by a walking bass line accented with rhythms on the off beat.

# January 18th is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

## Did you know?

- King's birth name was Michael, not Martin. The civil rights leader was born Michael King Jr. on January 15, 1929. In 1934, his father, a pastor, traveled to Germany and became inspired by the Protestant Reformation leader Martin Luther. As a result, King Sr. changed his own name as well as that of his 5-year-old son.
- King entered college at the age of 15. King was such a gifted student that he skipped grades 9 and 12 before enrolling in 1944 at Morehouse College.
- King was the driving force behind watershed events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the 1963 March on Washington, which helped bring about such landmark legislation as the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.



## We Visit Other Programs!

Mike visits REC, Inc's *Art & Storytelling with Daniel Potter* evening class. What a great combination: art, storytelling, and other students!

So much fun on a Tuesday night!



## January 25th is National Oatmeal Month

- Oats are a whole-grain food, known scientifically as *Avena sativa*. They're a gluten-free whole grain and a great source of important vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants.
- A unique group of antioxidants called *avenanthramides* are almost solely found in oats. Avenanthramides may help lower blood pressure. Avenanthramides have anti-inflammatory and anti-itching effects.
- Oats contain large amounts of *beta-glucan*, a type of soluble fiber. The health benefits of beta-glucan fiber include: Reduced LDL and total cholesterol levels, reduced blood sugar, increased feeling of fullness, and increased growth of good bacteria in the digestive tract
- Oatmeal is yummy, comforting, and good for us!



# 11 Minutes of Daily Exercise Counters the Effects of Sitting

Recent surveys of people's behavior since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic indicate that a majority of us are exercising less and sitting more than we were a year ago.

A new study was published in December 2020, in a special issue of the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. The scientists gathered results from nine recent studies in which almost 50,000 men and women wore accelerometers. They found

that people who exercised moderately for about **11 minutes a day** were significantly less likely to have died prematurely than people who moved less, even if they belonged to the group that also sat the most!

The study found that if 11 minutes of exercise is good, 35 minutes is *better*. The sweet spot for physical activity and longevity is about 35 minutes a day of brisk walking or other moderate activities, an amount that led to the greatest statistical improvement in life span, no matter how many hours someone sat.

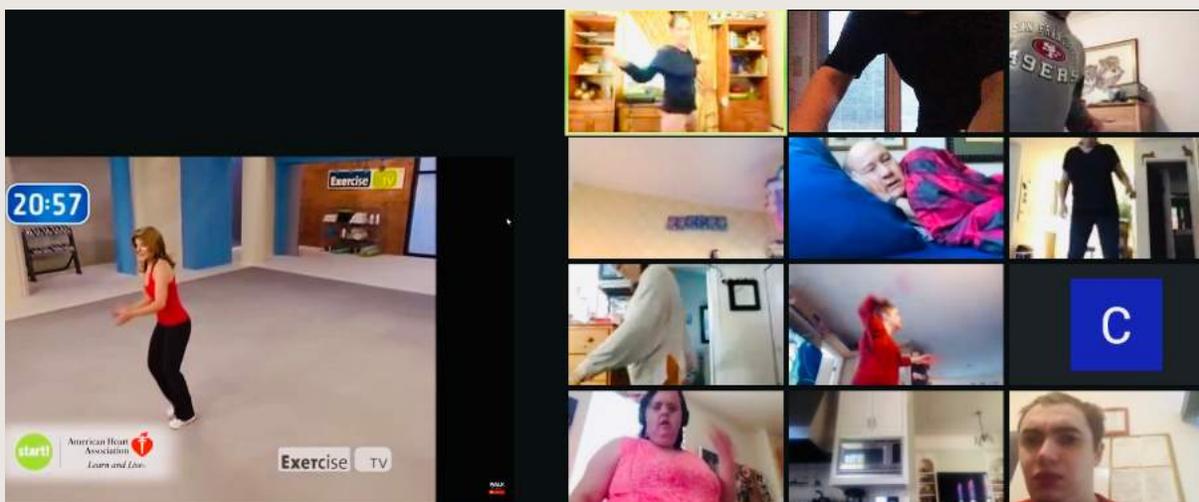
If you cannot get in 35 minutes of exercise per day, **11 minutes per day** is still very good for you! Check out the article here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/02/well/move/exercise-sitting-longevity.html>



## We Love Our 3 Mile/45 Minute Walking Workout!

We have been loving our Walk at Home workout! Led by Leslie Sansone, an American group fitness instructor from Pennsylvania, the workout is safe, vigorous, and approved by the American Heart Association! Leslie has been active since the 1980s and has released over 100 DVDs and four books. Walk at Home workouts promote low-impact walking exercises that are designed for nearly everyone.



Check out our favorite 3 mile workout on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/DYuw4f1c4xs>

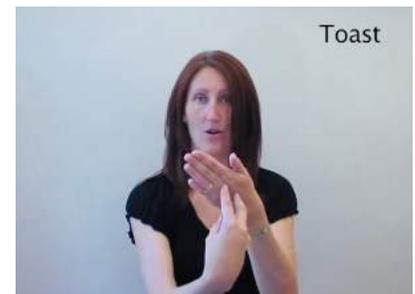


# Language Arts: Octopus for Breakfast

What do you get when you couple American Sign Language (ASL) breakfast items and the story *Inky the Octopus*? Octopus for breakfast, of course!



(Above) We practice the sign for "waffles."



(Below) Jen shows us how to sign "pancakes."



We learned to sign all sorts of breakfast items from orange juice to milk to pancakes to eggs to toast to waffles. We also learned how to sign "octopus" after reading *Inky the Octopus*, a true story of Inky's great escape from an aquarium in New Zealand. For more about Inky's adventure, check out this National Geographic article: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2016/04/160414-inky-octopus-escapes-intelligence/>.

Did you know that octopuses/octopi don't have tentacles? They have four pairs of *arms* with suckers (circular muscles) along the underside. Tentacles have suckers only at the tips. Squids have both tentacles and arms. Who knew?

The Parody and the Genius of

# Weird Al Yankovic



Student Andrew N., is a big fan of parody and the music of Weird Al Yankovic. Andrew worked with Thea to develop an interesting two-part knowledge class on Weird Al.

He began with the definition of parody:

Parody's are my favorite type of movies and music, because they are really funny. Weird Al is the king of parodies! He made the comedy movie UHF and makes music videos that make fun of songs like Gangsta's Paradise (he called it Amish Paradise), Beat It from Michael Jackson (he called it Eat It) and MacArthur Park (he called it Jurassic Park).

My favorite part are the lyrics because they are very clever. For example in Jurassic Park, He sings "Now I'm being chased by some irate velociraptors. Believe me this has been one lousy day" and I like that the video is animated. His videos really make me laugh.

Andrew read a few different articles about Yankovic and narrowed his research down to the top 15 facts that he thought his classmates would be most interested in learning about.

For example: Did you know that Weird Al first recorded his song "My Bologna" in a bathroom during the summer of 1979, before his senior year in high school? Yankovic parodied "My Sharona," a song by The Knack. Using the campus radio station's equipment, Yankovic recorded the song in the men's bathroom and sent a tape to DJ Dr. Demento. The on-air response was overwhelming—the song was the most in-demand song Dr. Demento played all year.

## "Jurassic Park" by Weird Al Yankovic

I recall the time they found those fossilized mosquitoes  
And before long, they were cloning DNA  
Now I'm being chased by some irate velociraptors  
Well, believe me... this has been one lousy day

Jurassic Park is frightening in the dark  
All the dinosaurs are running wild  
Someone shut the fence off in the rain  
I admit it's kinda eerie  
But this proves my chaos theory  
And I don't think I'll be coming back again  
Oh no



Our class took an in-depth, comparative look at three of Andrew's favorite Weird Al Yankovic songs: "Jurassic Park," "Handy," and "Amish Paradise." Both the lyrics and the music videos of the original works and the Weird Al parody songs were reviewed and compared. Fun class! Great job, Andrew!



## **CH&S is Looking for Instructors!**

Our non-profit organization provides unique and valuable resources to people who have intellectual/developmental disabilities and/or other complex issues.

When people think about *special education*, they do not usually picture college or graduate school. We do! We aim to be nothing less than an institute of higher learning for people who have special needs.

Our two campuses in Marin County emphasize cultural literacy, citizenship, professionalism, and esteem building. Our curriculum is elegant, personalized, and dynamic.

Of course, we are looking for people who are just right: intelligent, creative, stable, organized, funny, enthusiastic, personable, poised, dedicated, etc., etc., etc., etc.!

- Experience with teaching is a plus.
- Experience with working in developmental services is a plus.
- Appreciation and grasp of Positive Behavioral Support is a plus.
- A sense of humor is a big plus and a must!

Work hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

**Send resume and cover letter to  
cwalker@communityhomesandservices.org or  
call (415) 408-3604.**

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What beverage *ingredient* are we signing?



**New Year 2021!**  
**Connections Magazine**

**Answer:** Caffeine, of course!