

December 2009

# Educational E-News

School Liaison Newsletter



## INTERSTATE COMPACT UPDATE

Bill to help military children succeed  
in California schools is signed!

SACRAMENTO – Legislation aimed at easing the transition of military children into California schools passed from the Legislature with unanimous bipartisan support. The bill was signed by the Governor in October and will become law on January 1, 2010.

Assembly Bill 343 (Saldaña) allows California to enter into the compact with 24 other states in an effort to improve coordination of interstate school transfers and to remove some of the barriers to academic success military children face due to frequent reassignment of their active-duty parents. The bill's author, Assembly Member Lori Saldaña (D-San Diego) said that because students from military families move up to seven times before high school graduation, they often find themselves in a state of academic limbo. "A student may have been in an Advanced Placement program in Virginia, but may not be able to enroll in AP in California because her official transcripts are delayed," she said "Or a child attending kindergarten in one state may be refused admission when she moves to another state because of differences in age requirements." Saldaña, who grew up in a military family, said that these differing requirements can wreck havoc on a student's ability to get on track academically, and can even cause delays in graduation and college admission. "These frustrations only add to the stress these children already experience when moving away from friends and worrying about a parent deployed overseas," she said. When the bill is enacted, some of the changes will include allowing California schools to accept unofficial transcripts when enrolling students in coursework; permitting students to continue their enrollment at grade level in the receiving state at the same grade level regardless of age; and allowing local schools to waive prerequisites for placement in courses or academic programs. An Interstate Commission will, in coordination with state education officials, monitor implementation of the compact, address emerging issues and arbitrate in disputes between states.

Source: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a76/>

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### National Holidays:

December 25<sup>th</sup>:  
CHRISTMAS DAY

January 1<sup>st</sup>:  
NEW YEAR'S DAY

### Local SL installation calendars:

MCAGCC 29Palms:  
[www.29palms.usmc.mil/visit/school-liaison](http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/visit/school-liaison)

MWTC Bridgeport:  
<http://www.mwtc.usmc.mil/school-liaison/>

## College Prep Timeline for High School Seniors: (WINTER)

- ❖ Encourage your parents to complete income tax forms early so you can fill out your federal student aid application.
- ❖ Jan. 1 complete and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov)), along with any other financial aid applications your school of choice may require.
- ❖ Complete scholarship applications.

## Christmas Day Crossword Puzzle for Kids

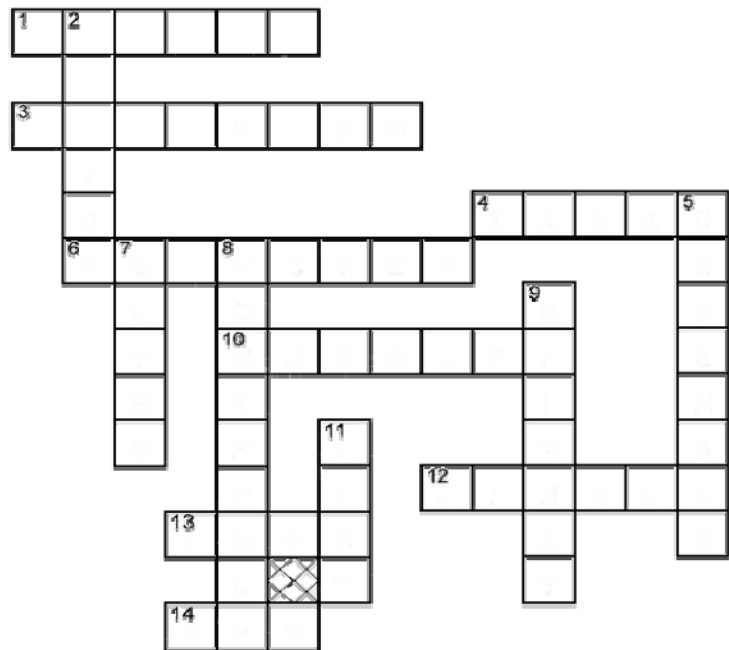
Christmas  
by Sunnie BunnieZZ

### ACROSS

- Santa rides in Christmas Eve
- Hang by the chimney
- Santa has long white one
- They pull Santa's sleigh
- Has a shiny red nose
- Sound Santa's bells make
- Santa brings to good children
- Color of Santa's suit

### DOWN

- Write this to Santa
- Christmas month
- Santa's helpers at Workshop
- Where Santa's Workshop is
- Santa slides down Christmas Eve
- Santa keeps names on



Nov 21, 1998

\*Answers on page 6



## Family Crafts: BOOKMARKS

- ❖ **Materials:** Fun Foam in assorted colors, Decorative scissors (optional), White glue, Fine-point permanent markers in assorted colors, 3/4" pompoms, Two 5 mm movable eyes and Yarn
- ❖ **Instructions:** Cut 2" x 10" strips of Fun Foam for base of bookmark. Cut additional shapes, such as face or star. Use decorative scissors if desired. Glue shapes to one end of strip. Decorate shapes with markers, movable eyes, pompom nose, yarn and hair. Write names of books you've read on base strip.

## Sites for... Online Tutoring

### Recruit a little homework help from web-based services

**Tutor.com**<sup>®</sup> The award-winning tutoring site, Tutor.com, prides itself on “real-time” help. With thousands of tutors available 24 hours a day, seven days a week—which include certified teachers, college professors, graduate students and select undergraduates from accredited universities—help with everything from homework to test prep is always in reach. Use purchased minutes to pay for a tutoring session (one student per tutor), which takes place in an online [classroom](#) setting via a chat window and a two-way interactive whiteboard that you can draw on with your mouse.

**HippoCampus.com**<sup>®</sup> HippoCampus.org is a free online service that offers multimedia studying packages in a variety of subjects, including algebra, psychology, religion and U.S. history. The content, which is created by colleges and universities, is meant to provide an additional learning challenge along with task assistance in general education subjects for high school and college students. The site was designed as part of Open [Education Resources](#), a worldwide effort to improve access to quality education for everyone.

**CliffsNotes.com**<sup>®</sup> When we think of CliffsNotes, we think of those yellow-and-black booklets that contained summaries—and were sometimes seen as “cheat sheets”—meant to [save](#) you the time of reading a book. In 2004, its owners John Wiley & Sons, Inc. turned the concept into an interactive online experience. Broadening subjects to extend past literature into foreign languages, math and sciences—there’s a Test Prep and Study Break section, too!—the site offers articles and additional online tools to assist students and graduates alike.

### **SOAR – Student Online Achievement Resources:** [www.SoarAtHome.com](http://www.SoarAtHome.com)

This program allows parents of children in second grade through high school to administer short standardized tests in math and language arts. Then, interactive tutorials are provided to support the areas where children need to build skills. There are parent resources to help them help their children as well as video lessons that come with printable worksheets. In this area, students do not need to be military connected to use this resource, so feel free to share it with your friends.

### **MCCS Online Homework Helper:**

[www.usmc-mccs.org/library/tutor](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/library/tutor)

This program has two main features: a resource library and a live tutoring tool. Students (and parents) can connect with a certified tutor in any subject area kindergarten through community college. You usually would call your base library for a personalized password to this valuable program. However, don’t be discouraged just because you are here at MCMWTC Bridgeport! Family members of those stationed here may call Jim Mallard at the base library in 29 Palms at 760-830-6875 or email him at [mallardj@usmc-mccs.org](mailto:mallardj@usmc-mccs.org) to get a personalized password.



*A child educated only at school is an uneducated child. ~George Santayana*

## It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like . . . An Educational Christmas

With the holiday season fast approaching, young children are bombarded with toy commercials that send them running to their parents with sprawling wish lists. The problem is that adults often do not know whether they will hold a child's interest past Christmas day. Every year young kids' gifts get more and more expensive, so prudent parents need to do their homework before making a purchase. What you want is a toy that will teach your child something but that is fun at the same time. The following article will give you some ideas of toys available that will make everyone – including your wallet – happy.



You can give your child much more than textbooks and computer programs and still feel like they are being enriched while they play. In fact, smaller elementary age children need as many ways of learning as you can give them, so be creative and think about what it takes for a kid to be well-rounded. There are many skills - physical, mental, and social - that you can help your little one master by providing them with the right toys. You will find here examples of great toys divided into categories to give you an idea of what is on the market. They are simply suggestions paired with the price you can expect to pay for each toy. Use this as a guide to help you choose the educational presents best suited to your young child.

### Electronic Toys

High-tech toys can be a source of major concern for parents. The truth is, video games can be expensive and many are inappropriate for young children. Luckily, there are several options you can feel good about. On the top of the list is Nintendo's Game Boy Advance SP, which is the latest and greatest version of the old standard handheld system. It costs around \$80, although you can often find used systems for a bargain. Each educational game runs between \$10 and \$40, again depending on whether it is new or used. Best of all, Nintendo has transferred old favorites like the Mario games to GBA, so you can buy with confidence. There is also the Leapster Multimedia Learning System by LeapFrog, a handheld priced similarly to GBA. It comes with six games that teach fundamental skills like reading and math in a fun way.

### Musical Toys

Children who are exposed to music perform better in other subjects like math and reading, so it may be worth it to encourage your little one's desire make a little "joyful noise." If you have a little drummer, you can spare yourself endless banging (and subsequent headaches) by giving him or her Rhythm Sticks by Rock Beat. These toys make interesting percussion sounds without touching a drum and are priced between \$15 and \$20. Bongo drums, which cost around \$30 depending on the brand you choose, are also a quiet option since they are played with the child's hands. Young rockers will love kid-sized guitars, which are made in both acoustic and electric versions. Expect to pay between \$50 and \$100 for a quality instrument. If your child sings day and night, encourage their pop star dreams with a karaoke machine. There are sets for boys, girls, or either gender that are generally priced around \$30.

## Educational Christmas Continued ...

### Board Games

Board games teach problem solving, math skills, and social play, all of which are valuable to young children. Many classics like Scrabble and Monopoly come in kids' or junior versions. Another example is Scooby-Doo Clue, an animated variety of everyone's favorite murder mystery game. The game Operation allows kids to improve hand-eye coordination and learn all about anatomy. All of these games cost around \$30 and provide endless replay opportunities.

### Pretend Toys

One of the best ways to raise an intelligent child is to encourage them to use his or her imagination. Children who pretend learn to solve problems, see things from a different perspective, and stay entertained. Little girls who adore playing dress-up will be delighted with a costume wardrobe. Many companies make sets that fit a child and her favorite stuffed animal, with prices ranging between \$15 and \$40 depending on how vast the fantasy closet is. Tea sets are also a classic favorite and come in styles to fit children's favorite cartoon stars. A set with plates, cups, teapots, and silverware usually sells for no more than \$30. For boys and girls, Wild Planet Toys' spy gear is sure to be a favorite. Gadgets like walkie-talkies and spy watches run from \$10-\$30.

### Sports and Outdoors Toys

Exercise and fresh air are an important part of a child's life, not to mention necessary to give the parents a break. To get your little one out and about, try some of these great toys. Skechers has put out an updated version of the classic roller skates, this time building them into cool sneakers. Called 4-Wheelers, these \$33 skates come in small sizes and colors to fit every child. If your kid loves camping, he will flip over an outdoor camping set. Many manufacturers sell sets complete with tent, hiking pack, water bottle, and sleeping bag for \$70. Even if you never go away to the woods, your child can pretend to explore the great outdoors from the backyard. Keep these gifts in mind as you shop so that you will not be discouraged browsing the endless gift aisles. Not only are they affordable, but they also provide a perfect combination of kid-appeal and educational value.

Source: 2002 M. Wilt Pagewise



## HOLIDAY JOKES!

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire? *Frostbite*

How do sheep in Mexico say Merry Christmas? *Fleece Navidad!*

What do you get if Santa goes down the chimney when a fire is lit?  
*Crisp Cringle*

What kind of candle burns longer, a red candle or a green candle?  
*Neither! Candles always burn shorter!*

What Christmas Carol is a favorite of parents? *Silent Night*

What do snowmen eat for breakfast? *Frosted Flakes*



We would like to wish  
you and yours a **VERY  
HAPPY and SAFE  
HOLIDAY SEASON!!!**

Best Wishes,  
*Tina & Tessa*

**SL Contact Info:**

❖ MCAGCC Twentynine Palms:  
Website: <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/visit/schoolliaison/>  
phone: 760.830.1574

❖ MWTC Bridgeport:  
Web site: <http://www.mwtc.usmc.mil/school-liaison/>  
Phone: 760-932-1521 (MWTC Bridgeport)/ 760-784-4548  
(Coleville)

**Marine Corps**



A L A R E N E G O Q T V J A I F M M  
I J B R A V E R Y A N Z A F J C R U  
L U F H T I A F M R U D W G E H O S  
W G O D L L U B E I R P A H N E F N  
X G T M R Y S Z S A G E N A C S I O  
Q O N M E Y R T N A F N I N O T N I  
S D A R T I L L E R Y D K I M Y U T  
R L E L P Y R E V O C L O S M A R I  
E I G E O I K C E N R E H T A E L D  
D V R J C S C A R L E T T A N H O A  
R E E E I G U N N Y U O R N D O F R  
O D S U L J V S N O N N A C A N M T  
K Q E N E E I C O U R A G E N O H X  
L H C E H B Q G B E D U T I T R O F

AFGHANISTAN GUNNY  
ARTILLERY HELICOPTER  
BRAVERY HONOR  
BULLDOG INFANTRY  
CANNONS IRAQ  
CHESTY LEATHERNECK  
COMMANDANT LEJEUNE  
COURAGE OKINAWA  
COVER ORDERS  
DEVILDOG PENDLETON  
FAITHFUL SCARLETT  
FORTITUDE SERGEANT  
GENERAL TRADITIONS  
GRUNT UNIFORM

Word Search Hint: all words are found either left to right or up & down, there are no diagonals.

**\* Answers to Crossword Puzzle on page 2**

Across: 1) sleigh, 3) stocking, 4) beard, 6) reindeer, 10) Rudolph, 12) jingle, 13) toys, and 14) red  
Down: 2) letter, 5) December, 7) elves, 8) North Pole, 9) chimney and 11) list

**The school is the last expenditure upon which America should be  
willing to economize. ~Franklin D. Roosevelt**