

# Teacher of year: Daily learning as vital as tests

MARIE WADSWORTH  
NEWS-SUN

Los Angeles fifth-grade teacher Rafe Esquith reminded Lea County teachers the skills and knowledge they give their students every day is more important than their test scores.

Esquith, a fifth-grade teacher at Hobart Elementary in LA who was awarded the national teacher of the year award and won accolades from Oprah, Queen Elizabeth and the Dalai Lama, was the guest speaker at the Moran Lecture Series, sponsored by the Moran Foundation, during the Lea County teacher in-service at R.N. Tydings Auditorium Thursday afternoon.

About 1,350 Lea County teachers attended the 90-minute lecture.

"The real challenge for all of us is not the test at the end of the year but to give kids skills that they're going to be using five years from now and 10 years from now," Esquith said. "Give them skills they're going to be using for the rest of their lives. That is the assessment of good teaching."

Esquith also encouraged Lea County teachers to take risks and challenged them to do something different every year. He gave the example of a risk he'd taken that was a success and a mistake.

He started a film club in his classroom where students can take home films from every genre and every era on a weekly basis. But later a mother came to speak to him about being upset by her child seeing something "bad" in the



MARIE WADSWORTH/NEWS-SUN  
**Los Angeles fifth-grade teacher Rafe Esquith gave a 90-minute lecture about the power of teaching to 1,350 Lea County teachers during Thursday's in-service day.**

movie "Witness."

After that incident, Esquith said he meets with his parents at the beginning of the school year to find out which kind of movies are acceptable for their child to check out from his class' film club library.

Lisa Presley, a third-grade teacher at St. Helena School, said she began her teaching career in the same Los Angeles school district as Esquith. She taught there from 1973-1980.

"The one thing I agreed with him is, it isn't the test at the end of the year, it's what you give them every day," Presley said. "It made a lot of sense. We never realize what impact we have on kids."

## Schools

from PAGE 1

their career in that facility."

The next phase will be to design and develop the interi-

or and exterior of the Freshman Academy and Alternative High School. Mackay will start creating designs on Friday and will finish by April 1.

Aside from approving the

one-story building design, Bruce Hardison, member of the Hobbs Schools oversight committee, was hired as the construction manager for the Freshman Academy and Alternative High School.

## No mas

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The cleanup is designed to increase awareness about littering and to encourage volunteers to adopt highways, Arnett said.

"Our maintenance personnel couldn't possibly pick up all the litter on their own," she said.

DOT District 2 Engineer Gary Schubert said volunteers allow the department to focus on what it does best — repairing highways and signs — rather than on litter control.

"We're just trying to highlight the fact that taxpayer dollars are being spent picking up trash when we could be fixing roads," he said. "If you drive Highway 18, you'll see we didn't get all of (the trash) by any stretch of the imagination."

Eunice Mayor Matt White, who spent the morning picking up trash along with city employees, said he and others gathered 16-18 bags of litter — just from one intersection.

The most common item found were pieces of

blown out tires, according to DOT employees Jacky Byrd and Jimmy Baker.

"Lots of truck tires," Baker said.

Hobbs Fire Department fire marshal Larry Bryant joked about the number of beer bottles and cans he picked up.

"Bud Light is the most popular beer in Lea County," he said. Getting out during the breezy morning taught Melissa Leyva how much trash is on the ground between Hobbs and Eunice.

"I never thought there was that much trash out here," she said.

Arnett and Schubert thanked the volunteers and said they are happy to partner with Hobbs and Eunice to keep area highways clean.

For more information on the Adopt-a-Highway program, contact the DOT District 2 office at 575-637-7200.

For more information on cleanups or to schedule a partnership with the DOT for trash pickup, call the Hobbs DOT office at 393-2692.

## Asthma

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Asthma in Southeastern New Mexico: Unwrapping the Enigma."

"While we know what can cause an asthma attack — the triggers," Whorton said, "we do not know what causes the disease."

One theory of what may cause the disease is persistent exposure to asthma triggers by genetically predisposed individuals. Some asthma triggers are secondhand smoke, dust mites, mold, air pollution and animal dander. Another theory of what may cause asthma is immunological overactivation of T-cells caused by expo-

sure to parasites or bacteria, psychological or social stress, obesity and inactivity.

Over the last several decades, more children have been diagnosed with asthma nationwide, Vigil said.

"That's probably a combination of detecting it better but also the fact that we really think more children are getting asthma and we're not sure why that is," he said.

According to Vigil, there is a lot of speculation, such as the possibility children are growing up in cleaner environments and therefore their bodies are not as resistant.

"It's a very interesting subject," Vigil said, "and nobody has the actual answer. There's a lot of theories."

## Lottery numbers

**N.M. PICK 3**

7-0-7

**ROADRUNNER CASH**

4-7-18-23-29

Bonus: 20

**TEXAS PICK 3**

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Thursday by the Texas Lottery, in order:

7-7-4 (day); 7-8-6 (night)

**CASH FIVE TEXAS**

1-3-25-28-33

**DAILY 4**

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Thursday by the Texas Lottery, in order:

0-2-1-9 (day); 1-1-5-3 (night)

**TEXAS TWO STEP**

5-12-28-31 BB: 4

# Palin laying low after election

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Gov. Sarah Palin hadn't been back home in Alaska for a full day and her staff had begun fielding requests Thursday for postelection interviews, including from Barbara Walters, Oprah Winfrey, Larry King and others.

Palin had been expected at her office in Anchorage but later notified her staff that she wouldn't show up after all. She remained at her home in Wasilla, located 40 miles to the north, but was expected in her office on Friday, spokesman Bill McAllister said.

"The intensity of all the interest is amazing. Everyone wants to talk to her," he said.

Palin is coming off a whirlwind nine weeks of almost non-stop travel and campaigning since becoming Republican John McCain's vice presidential running mate in late August. McCain and Palin lost Tuesday's election to Democrats Barack Obama and Joe Biden.

"I think she's been working from home," McAllister said. "Maybe she just liked the idea

of spending a whole day at home. It could be the first time she woke up in her own bed and spent the night in her own bed on the same day since late August."

Aides to McCain and Palin, meanwhile, responded to reports of tension between the two sides over the Republican Party's purchase of more than \$150,000 worth of clothing for Palin and her family, and accusations that Palin was ill-prepared for her role.

Randy Scheunemann, McCain's foreign policy adviser, called the idea of a split between the two campaigns "laughable."

"It's hard to believe these people worked for John McCain. They obviously have no loyalty to John McCain and no loyalty to his running mate," said Scheunemann, who prepared Palin for the vice presidential debate.

"I've worked in Washington for over 20 years. I have seen literally dozens of politicians, and Sarah Palin is as smart, tough and focused as any politician I've ever seen. I'm proud of

the time I was able to spend with her," he said.

Meg Stapleton, a campaign spokeswoman for Palin, said the accusations were unfortunate.

"We have the highest regards for Sen. John McCain," she said in an e-mailed statement. "Gov. Palin was honored to be chosen as McCain's running mate."

Palin returned to Alaska late Wednesday night, her final flight in the McCain-Palin campaign plane. Dozens of supporters greeted her with chants of "2012! 2012!" as she walked off the airplane — encouragement for her to run for president in four years.

Asked by reporters if she might run, Palin said: "We'll see what happens then."

The governor said she hoped to work with President-elect Obama on energy policy.

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