

## DELVING INTO SCIENCE

By Sasha Clayton

Across the country, Science has taken a back seat to Math and Language Arts in most public schools due to the demands of testing required by the No Child Left Behind Act. Public school eligibility for federal funds is based on Math and Language Arts scores only. So naturally, in order to keep federal funding and not be placed on probation, schools have focused their energies on improving scores in these two subjects. Now, Science has appeared on state tests again, and many schools are worried that their lack of attention to this valuable subject will greatly impact the scores children receive. Schools like Hilldale that did not stop teaching both the content and the hands-on experimental aspects of Science will naturally score higher. Additionally, students at these schools will not have lost time building critical thinking skills, formulating hypotheses, and developing a passion for the subject.

This month, three of our Sixth Graders are competing in the San Mateo County Science Fair at Hiller Aviation Museum. These students were honored at the Hilldale School Science Fair and now have taken on the challenge of improving their work and presenting it at the next level. Matt Wong will be presenting "Looking for Lift;" Amangeet Samra will present "Rocket Science;" and Amanjot Samra will present "Ocean Pollution." This is the first time that Hilldale students have entered at the county level with more than 350 other public and private school students. Mr. Barnes and I are hopeful that they will gain much from sharing in their generation's brilliance at the Fair and from observing what other students are presenting.

A Sixth Grade student at Willet Elementary School in Davis, CA was recently touted in an article in "The Sacramento Bee." The results of his science project, which were shared with his father's colleagues at UC Davis, shocked researchers. His hypothesis that the navel orangeworm preferred pistachios over walnuts or almonds was proven in his study, and the results were presented to the state almond industry conference in December. His Sixth Grade Science project may save farmers money and boost production of almonds. With the attention paid to Science at Hilldale, perhaps our bright, young minds will make the next great discovery!