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MacArthur students zoom past reading goal

By Carol Scully MacArthur PTA Home Reading Club Coordinator



MacArthur fifth graders proudly display their Jester Jingle certificates as the top readers in their classrooms. From left are Virginia Cortez, Mylene Leyba, Jesse Navarro, Arianna Pena, Melina Lopez, and Anthony Verona.

MacArthur Elementary students couldn't stop reading during the past month to bring smiles to Miller Children's Hospital patients. The 480-strong student body read a whopping 310,123 pages in a Jester & Pharley Phund Read-A-Thon underwritten by Verizon.

On Tuesday, they presented 35 "Jester Has Lost His Jingle" books and 35 Jester & Pharley Dolls to Miller's for their achievements in The Jester & Pharley Phund Reading Makes A Difference™ Program.

During the month-long Read-A-Thon, MacArthur students read 35,123 pages more than their 250,000-page goal set by Principal Wayne Wong.

"Teachers, staff, and families also contributed 40,000 pages to make this school community effort a wonderful success," Principal Wong said.

"The motivation to read was high and the spirit of making a difference was infectious as students, staff, and families joined together to reach our goal," MacArthur Literacy Specialist Tammy Lavelle said.

"We are thrilled to receive these uplifting, emotionally supportive Jester & Pharley books and dolls for our young patients," said Miller Children's Hospital Director of Child Life Rita Goshert. "It means so much that they are being given by other students."

The Palos Verdes-based Phund is built around the lessons of hope, humor and charity in "The Jester," written and illustrated by David Saltzman before his death from cancer at 22.

"Although we've lost David, MacArthur Elementary has found his Jingle," said Barbara Saltzman, David's mom, who joined Lakewood Mayor Diane DuBois at Tuesday's awards assembly. For more information on The Phund, visit www.thejester.org.