



Daisey Rodriguez, left, and Maria Aristizabal with the Three Kings Bread.



Cristina Curbelo performs.

Photos by Todd Lack

Kings

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spins on the celebration, but typically children will leave their empty shoes under their beds the night before the holiday, hoping to have them filled with presents as they sleep. Grass and water are also left under beds in honor of the camels the kings' rode.

Pat Gardea, outreach coordinator at the museum, said that last year's Three Kings Day celebration brought the biggest crowd to the museum since its opening day. She said Three Kings Day is a major gift giving holiday in the American Latino community.

"We do this because we know that many children around the world recognize ... the Three Kings as the real gift givers," she said. "Some of these children don't ... know about Santa Claus but the Three Kings are the ones who actually bring the gifts."

For reduced admission of \$3 per person, families got access to the entire museum on Saturday. Kids also got face-to-face time with the Three Kings, who posed for pictures with the children. Each child received a small teddy bear in king's attire, a star and a candy cane from the kings.

"We want to reach out to the entire community in the spirit of the season. For many people, the season continues on to this day and we want to have everyone introduced to this tradition and invite the people who do celebrate it to celebrate it with us," Gardea said.

Elsewhere in the museum, a room was set up to serve Rosca de Reyes, a crown shaped sweet bread topped with candy and cheese. The dessert is common in the Mexican celebration of Three Kings Day. Typically, a small figurine of the baby Jesus is baked within the bread and who ever finds the figurine is supposed to throw a party on Feb. 2, Dia de la Candelaria, a Mexican family and religious celebration.

The Three Kings set up at the museum also included stations where children made resolutions to do something for themselves, their families and a friend in the new year. Music was provided by a small band led by guitarist Cristina Curbelo. They played and sang holiday songs from countries like Mexico and Puerto Rico.

Among the many people who came to the celebration was Chris Payden-Travers, who held her 22-month-old grandson, Connor McLaughlin, for a picture with the Three Kings. She said Three Kings Day was always important in her household and she's been celebrating the holiday since early childhood.

"It's part of the Christmas celebration. We



Javier Correa with Ana Ortiz and their daughter, Dalymar.

tend to think it all ends on Dec. 25, (but) for many cultures, we keep it going for twelve days," said Payden-Travers.

Javier Correa and Ana Ortiz came with their five-year-old daughter, Dalymar, who made New Year's resolutions that included playing more with her family and learning more in school. Ortiz said that on the day before Three Kings Day, her family typically goes out and cuts grass to place in the shoe box under the little one's bed.

"It's part of our culture. We are from Puerto Rico and in our country it is a big celebration," said Ortiz.

Pat Gardea's husband, Ray Gardea, Joige Cherry and Bryan Chandler dressed the part of the Three Kings for the celebration. All three said they enjoyed volunteering their time to be with the kids and spread the holiday cheer.

"I'm involved because it's a good thing for kids to know and it's a tradition ... I'd like to share with the community," said Ray Gardea.

The event, co-sponsored by the Hispanic League of the Triad, had many volunteers from organizations like the Junior League, Crosby Scholars, Salem Academy and the local Civitans. Maria Aristizabal was one of those volunteers. Aristizabal is a member of the Children's Museum outreach committee and was the 2007 chair of the Hispanic League Board.

"I think it's great. I think it's just another way to show hispanic culture, hispanic traditions and an opportunity for the Hispanic people to come and celebrate it in a different country, you know they're away from their own country, so they get an opportunity to do this down here in Winston-Salem," said Aristizabal.

La Espiga Bakery and radio station La Preciosa 94.5 FM also helped with the event.

VOTING COALITION WANTS YOU!

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Voting Rights Coalition, a non-partisan community group, needs help as it prepares for a "Get Out the Vote" effort for this year's November elections.



Linda Sutton has long pushed for voters' rights.

File Photo

The coalition, headed by community activist Linda Sutton, will meet tonight (Jan. 10) at 6 p.m. at the Winston Mutual Building, 1225 E. 5th St., to plan, strategize and organize. The public and anyone interested in volunteering with the voting effort are welcome.

"If you care about the future of your children, your grandchildren and your community, then this is one opportunity for you to get involved in helping to secure that future by taking power into your hands and unleashing your political weight," Sutton said.

The coalition will work to register voters and then make a push to get voters to the polls, both for the primary and the fall General Election, which

this year will feature contests for president, governor and lieutenant governor, among others.

"Failing to register and vote is not only a betrayal of ourselves and a betrayal of our own rights, but also a betrayal of the heroic voting rights marchers who lost their lives," said Sutton. "We should be marching into the voting booths just as courageously as those who marched then."

There are many opportunities for people to get involved, the coalition says, even from the comforts of their own homes and without spending money or devoting large blocks of time.

For more information, call Sutton at 336-724-9411.

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It's fine to join the YMCA because you ate too much over the holidays.

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Magnet

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program. "Magnet schools are schools that are available to anyone in the district; they don't have to be in your zone," stated Kim Morrison, Winston-Salem / Forsyth County Magnet Schools program manager. "What it is designed to do is to have a terrific program that magnetizes students from around the county."

Each magnet features its own distinct curriculum and is designed to appeal to specific interests that students may have, all the while adhering to state guidelines.

"Since this is funded by the federal government, the number one thing that we have to do is meet the standard course of study," Morrison said. "But what they want us to do in magnet schools is to do that through new and innovative programs."

Philo Magnet School Director Connie Rogers can't wait for her school to adopt its new curriculum.

"The world is changing; we have to keep up with it," she said, referring to her school's forward-thinking theme.

Philo's new curriculum will focus on Mandarin Chinese — which she says is the most spoken language in the world — International Business and World Culture; and Global Technology. Rogers says she believes it will prepare the students for the 21st century global economy.

"I think it will help the students to get a feel for how small the world really is," she commented. "We're just real



Angell Caudill

excited about this endeavor."

Angell Caudill helped develop the Visual and Performing Arts curriculum at the Reynolds High School. As Director of Arts Magnet at the school, Caudill says she couldn't be happier with the way things have turned out.

"It's kind of like the stars were aligned for all of this to happen," she remarked. "It was a fabulous collaborative effort. I tell people it's one of the most enriching intellectual experiences I've ever had."

Reynolds will offer programming for students with varying degrees of interest in the arts.

"We really believe that it'll be a way to tap into multiple intelligences," she commented. "It makes good sense, with cognitive brain development, that's kind of cutting edge, and we think that it'll just mean greater success for all students."

Becoming an arts magnet seemed like the perfect fit for the school, Caudill says.

"This is a way to take everything that's been great at

Reynolds for so long, since 1923 — great academics, great history in the arts — add to it, develop it, and create success for the 21st century," she remarked. "That's really what we're trying to do; we're trying to make it a better experience for more students by using our strengths and honing our skills."

The curriculum at Hanes will also help students to be better prepared for the workplace of tomorrow, says Principal Joe Childers.

"Our magnet theme is math, science and pre-engineering," he explained. "The whole point behind it is that with this country experiencing a huge shortage of mathematicians, scientists, engineers, to try to encourage children to think seriously about these areas as possible future careers."

The school will feed into the curriculum at Atkins High School, he added, so that students, if they choose, can continue their educations there once they leave middle school.

"You're just trying to offer them a many things as possible, so that hopefully, they can find something that sparks their interest," he said. "Who knows? It might lead to a future career."

Saturday's Magnet School Enrollment Fair will be from 10 a.m. to noon at the Marriott Hotel downtown. The school system will receive magnet school applications until 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 31. Applications are available at all schools and at the Administrative Center, 1605 Miller Street in Winston-Salem. Parents also can apply at wsfcmagnets.net.