Students and teachers who travel to the resort area of Fort Myers, Florida, may want to visit the charming winter estates of celebrated inventors Thomas Edison and Henry Ford.

During what is known as the Guilded Age of the late 19th century, Edison and Ford, seeking an escape from a season of unprecedented cold and snow, wintered together in southwestern Florida. While there, a real estate agent showed Edison a 13-acre parcel of land with a rustic cottage on the banks of the Caloosahatchee River. Sensing it was an ideal location to indulge his passion for boating, swimming, and fishing, Edison purchased the property in 1885. There he built his winter retreat, which he named Seminole Lodge, adding an additional home for his family, a laboratory, a pool, and extensive botanical gardens.

Not to be outdone, Edison’s friend Henry Ford purchased the property next door in 1916. Ford’s retreat, a 3,000 square foot home built in the Craftsman bungalow style of architecture, was named The Mangoes.

Following Edison’s death, his widow, Mina Edison, gifted Seminole Lodge to the city of Fort Myers. It was opened as a museum home in 1947. In 1988, the city of Fort Myers purchased Ford’s Mangoes, and, following a massive restoration project, in 1990 this property, too, was opened to the public. Today, the two estates host 225,000 visitors each year. Both museum homes have been added to the National Registry of Historic Places.

Ford’s home is pictured above, and Edison’s home is pictured below, right. Below left, the ERHS Teacher Librarian, Mrs. Terry Marzell, was seen visiting Edison’s impressive home library during Winter Break, 2016. To learn more, click on this link: Edison and Ford Winter Estates.
Libraries contribute to student success

Academic libraries at the university level play an important role in the education system, say Julie Todar and Irene M.H. Herod in their online article “Smartphones Can’t Replace Libraries” (Inside Higher Ed., Nov. 10, 2016). According to the authors, studies prove that academic libraries play an important role in the education system. Research shows a strong connection between the library and student learning and success. When students engage with the library, say Todar and Herod, they “build student confidence with the research process.” They also contribute to the persistence and retention of first-year students. In addition, the authors note that students who receive instruction in information literacy through their courses earn higher grades.

Todar and Herod also comment that university libraries provide a quiet place to study, and they foster educational communities. Furthermore, they provide maker spaces and media labs, which contribute to student creativity. “Keeping the information in this article in mind, it makes sense for teachers at the high school level to give their students many opportunities to learn how to navigate and use the resources in the school library, and to teach basic library research skills,” suggests Teacher Librarian Terry Marzell. “To do so ensures their success, not only at the high school level, but also at the college level.”

To read the entire article by Todar and Herod, click on this link: Libraries.

Author Spotlight: Joy Luck Club’s Amy Tan

One of America’s most prominent contemporary authors of Chinese-American fiction is Amy Tan. Her most celebrated novels include The Joy Luck Club, The Kitchen God’s Wife, The Bonesetter’s Daughter, and Saving Fish from Drowning. Her novels have earned numerous national awards. In 1993, The Joy Luck Club was adapted into a movie which garnered much acclaim.

Amy was born of Chinese immigrants on February 19, 1952, in Oakland, California. She attended San Jose State University, where she earned her bachelor’s degree in English and her master’s degree in linguistics. This talented author currently resides in San Francisco with her husband.

“I was intelligent enough to make up my own mind. I not only had freedom of choice, I had freedom of expression.”

—Amy Tan

Library Funnies
Interview: What is on the book shelf of Mr. Eric VanderWeerd?

Each issue we interview a member of the Eleanor Roosevelt High School community to find out his or her all-time favorite books. This issue we asked Mr. Eric VanderWeerd to share his views about reading. Eric is a teacher in the Physical Education Department and an ERHS golf coach.

Eric is an avid advocate of reading. “Reading is a very important life skill,” he says. “In today’s world it is extremely difficult to function without being able to read. Reading allows us to obtain information, get directions (and) guidance, and (it) can be very entertaining.”

Eric tells us his favorite place to read is in a comfortable chair in a quiet place. His favorite author? “Joel C. Rosenberg,” he reveals. Eric’s favorite genre for books is fiction, particularly action, geopolitical drama, or “any good story,” says Eric. For magazines, he enjoys publications about surfing, golf, woodworking, DIY, and fitness. When reading on the internet, Eric chooses articles from Fitness and Health, Tech, and Life.

Here are Eric’s five all-time favorite books:

- The Bible
- The Last Jihad series (5 books) by Joel C. Rosenberg
- The Left Behind series (12 books) by Tim La Haye and Jerry B. Jenkins
- The Twelfth Imam series (3 books) by Joel C. Rosenberg
- The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway

Great online resources for studying Black History Month

The month of February always heralds the national observance of Black History Month, and a wealth of great resources for studying this topic can be found online.

Teachers can encourage their students to take a virtual tour of the Museum of African American History and Culture. Included are maps, videos, photos, diagrams, and informative text. You can tap into this virtual tour at MAAHC.

Additional resources curated by the Smithsonian Institute can be found online. These include information about African American artists, authors, and musicians, as well as portraits of prominent Black figures in history. Also provided are reading lists for young people. These resources can be found at this link: Black History Month Resources.

An extensive collection of materials assembled by the Library of Congress can be found at this link: LOC Resources. Included is info about the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans in the armed forces, prominent abolitionists, slavery and emancipation, and the Black experience in the Civil War.

Teachers can access relevant videos, lessons, printables, quizzes, and activities about Black athletes, scientists, and historical figures at TeacherVision.com.

PBS has also assembled a collection of online resources for teachers, including information about the 1963 March on Washington, poet Maya Angelou, the Underground Railroad, and Nelson Mandela. Access these at PBS Resources.

“Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another’s uniqueness.” —Ola Joseph

Screenchomp app uses iPad to create and share educational videos

Screenchomp is a moviemaking app that allows teachers and students to use their iPad as a digital whiteboard. It’s useful for teachers to record a demonstration of a concept, such as a diagram or a math problem, and then post it to the internet for students to review. In addition, students can use the app to record their understanding of a concept, and then share it with their teacher or fellow students.

Once a demonstration has been created, ScreenChomp provides a unique URL for the recording which can be shared through email or social media, or it could be posted on a teacher website or blog for students to watch.

The app is simple to use, and, best of all, it’s free. For a short YouTube video that explains how the app can be used in the classroom, click on this link: Screenchomp YouTube Video. For written directions on how to use the app, click on: Screenchomp Directions. Why not give it a try?
Nonfiction books available for Black History Month Studies

The Mustang Library owns a large collection of books that can be used for Black History Month Study. Here is a sampling of available titles:

- Famous Firsts of Black Women by Martha Ward Plowden
- Black Pioneers: An Untold Story by William Loren Katz
- The Black Cowboys by Gina De Angelis
- A History of Free Blacks in America by Stuart A. Kallen
- Dreaming in Color, Living in Black and White: Our Own Stories of Growing Up Black in America ed. by Laurel Holliday
- Notable Black Scientists ed. by Kristina M. Krapp
- The Buffalo Soldiers by TaRessa Stovall
- Stolen into Slavery: The True Story of Solomon Northup, Free Black Man by Judith Bloom Fradin
- Fight On! Mary Church Terrell’s Battle for Integration by Dennis B. Fradin
- The Fight Renewed: The Civil Rights Movement by Adam Woog
- Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad by Louise Chipley Slavicek
- The Girl from the Tar Paper School: Barbara Rose Johns and the Advent of the Civil Rights Movement by Teri Kanefield
- African Americans in Sports ed. by David K. Wiggins
- The Sons of Liberty by Alexander Lagos
- Brown v. Board of Education: Equal Schooling for All by Harvey Fireside
- Artists and Writers of the Harlem Renaissance by Wendy Hart Beckman
- Baseball and the Color Line by Thomas W. Gilbert
- Freedom Summer: The 1964 Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi by Susan Goldman Rubin
- Wake Up Our Souls: A Celebration of Black American Artists by Tonya Bolden
- Freedom’s Daughters: The Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement from 1830-1970 by Lynne OIlson
- Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic by Erskine Clarke
- The Tuskegee Airmen by Judy L. Hasday
- Obama: Historic Journey by Jill Abramson

Recent Additions to the ERHS Mustang Library collection

- Becoming a Nurse by Mary E. Muscari
- The “How-To” Guide on Becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant by Sheila Mara
- Genocide and the Bosnian War by Jacqueline Ching
- Genocide in Darfur by Janey Levy
- Juvenile Justice: A Reference Handbook ed. by Donald J. Shoemaker
- Combating Body Shaming by Tamra B. Orr
- Building on a Dream: The Eiffel Tower by Russell Roberts
- The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race ed. by Jesmyn Ward

Fiction

- Trouble Makes a Comeback by Stephanie Tromly
- Heartless by Marissa Meyer
- The Crooked Kingdom by Leigh Bardugo
- The Devil’s Engine: Hellfighters by Alexander Gordon Smith

The mission of the Corona Norco Unified School District is to ensure that students use information and ideas effectively and demonstrate the ability to access, locate, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of sources. The vision of the Corona Norco Unified School District is to ensure that all students are information-literate and that students are independent, competent readers.