



Los Altos Historical Commission and Los Altos History Museum
40th Annual Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest
For 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Graders

2024 Theme: Your Pathway to California – Inspired by the El Camino Real

General Instructions for Teachers, Principals, and Parents

- 1) READ the attached prompt and rubric before you discuss this contest with your students. You may wish to photocopy both the prompt and the rubric for your students to refer to as they write their essay. You have also been sent a video which is a good way to introduce your students to the Essay Contest. The video may be sent home for students and parents to view together.
- 2) **IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION: A COVER SHEET WITH PARENT RELEASE and SIGNATURE is required.** Remind your students that the **COVER SHEET must be stapled to the top of the essay.** Also, remind students to only put their name and date on the essay.
- 3) READ the grading rubric to the students. This rubric is used to judge the essays.
- 4) When you receive the completed essays from your students, please put them in a large envelope. Please label the envelope the "MARGARET THOMPSON HISTORICAL ESSAY CONTEST."
- 5) **Student essays and accompanying photographs, maps or drawings/paintings** are due to the classroom teacher by **Friday, March 8.** LASD essays must be returned to the LASD Asst. Superintendent's office by **Tuesday, March 12.**
- 6) Private school/home-schooled essays must be returned to the Los Altos History Museum by **Tuesday, March 12.**
- 7) **Cover sheet, prompt, instructions, and rubric are also available at the following websites: Los Altos History Museum, Los Altos School District, and the City of Los Altos.**
- 8) **Essays, maps, paintings, drawings or photos will NOT be returned.** Please ask students to make a copy before they turn in their essays and their visual contribution.
- 9) **Prizes will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. The Margaret Thompson Essay Contest Trophy will be awarded to the school/schools with the most winners. The contest winners will be honored in May at an Ice Cream Social on the Los Altos History Museum patio.**

A note of appreciation from the Los Altos Historical Commission and the Education Committee of the Los Altos History Museum to participating teachers:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this essay contest. We hope that you and your students find it enjoyable and rewarding, and that it encourages interest in the history of our community.
