

Light and Love: Changing the World one County at a Time **by Emme Barrieau (7th grade)**

In the wise words of Martin Luther King Jr., “*Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.*” I believe Dr. King was referring to the power of love and light. In many classic fairy tales, the true love of a prince and princess overpowers the evil of the ruthless villain. While we, as everyday people, may not be princes and princesses, we can still be the light in our world that drives out the darkness.

Tuolumne County is an exceedingly beautiful and unique place. The historical value of Columbia, the friendliness of Sonora, and the beauty of Yosemite are all combined to create this rare breed of community. However, no place has perfect people. People are occasionally mistreated for their looks, beliefs, and way of life. This causes people to feel hurt and even angry.

Dr. King also said, “*The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.*” I believe this means who you are is not what you do when life is easy, but when the world is torn by disagreements. Sometimes it is hard to be kind to people who live differently than you, but I believe you should love everyone, even if you disagree with their way of life.

When Martin Luther King Jr. was alive, there was racial tension in the United States. Dr. King helped people of all races stand united as one. We can live up to our country's name and do the same by learning to respect all people. Education is an avenue to learn about different cultures and people. If we learn our country's history, we can think about their solutions to problems.

In conclusion, everyone should make an effort to be a kind person. If you see someone being mistreated, stand up for them. If you have a friend at school being bullied, be there for them. If you see injustices, push it away with love. Together, we can make the world a better place.