

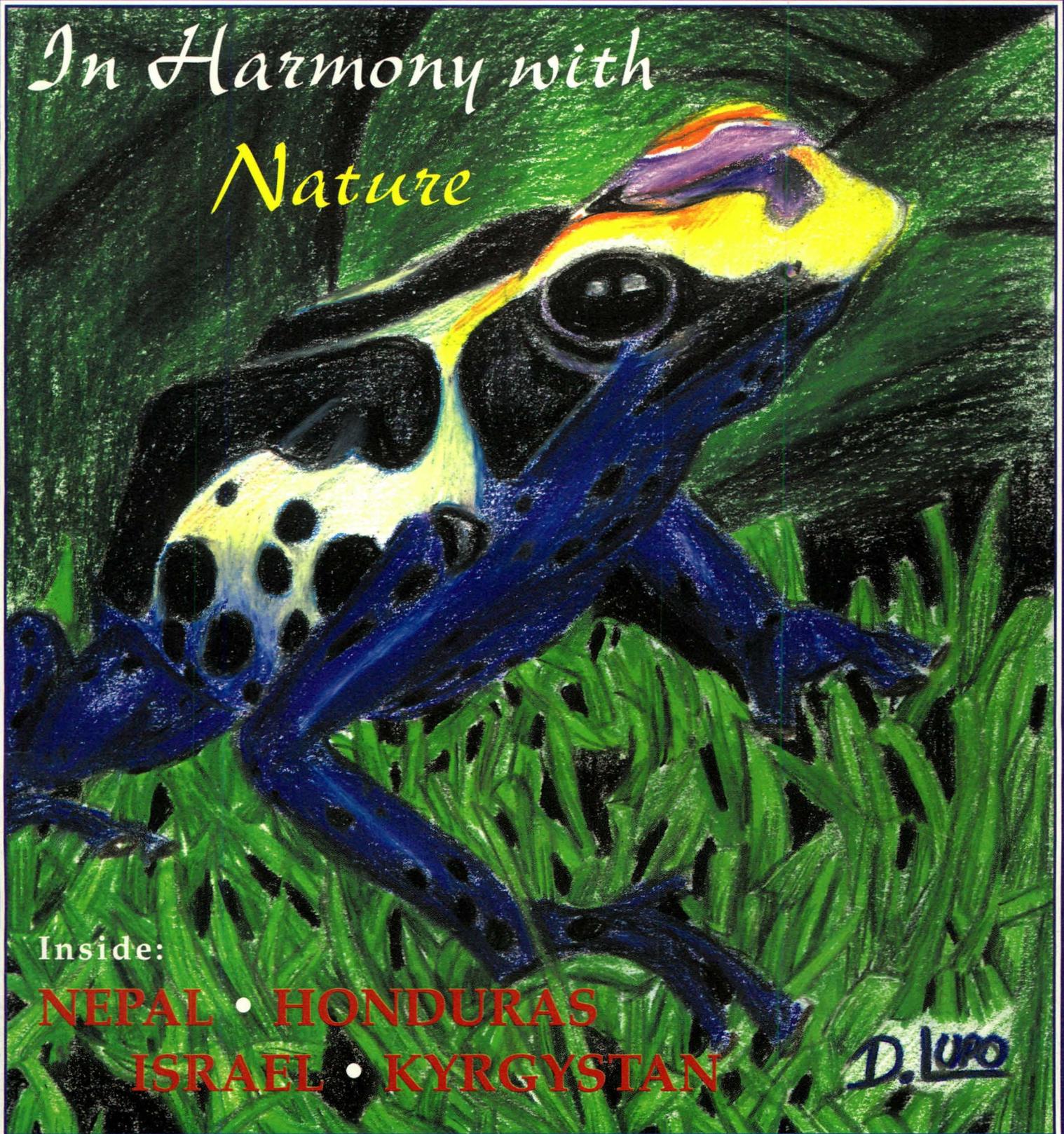
# Skipping Stones

Vol. 12, No. 2

A Multicultural Magazine

Display until May 15  
US: \$4.75; CAN: \$5.75

*In Harmony with  
Nature*



Inside:

**NEPAL • HONDURAS  
ISRAEL • KYRGYSTAN**

*D. LUPO*

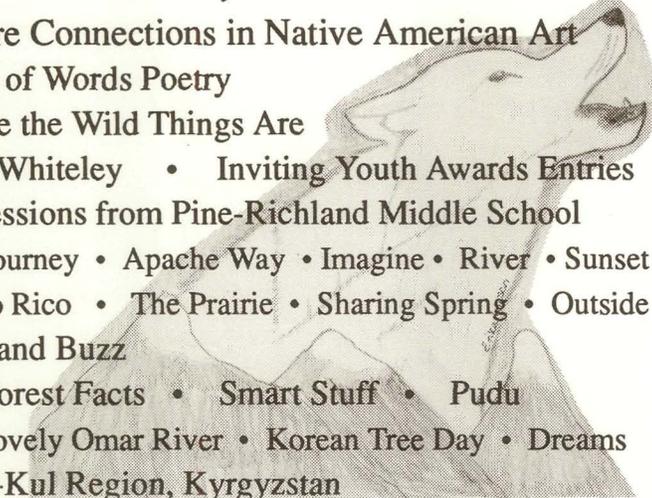
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ISSN: 0899-529X

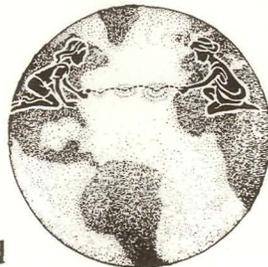
Mar - Apr 2000

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*Skipping Stones* is a nonprofit children's magazine that encourages cooperation, creativity and celebration of cultural and linguistic diversity. We explore stewardship of the ecological and social webs that nurture us. We offer a unique forum for communication among children from different lands and backgrounds. *Skipping Stones* expands horizons in a playful, creative way. We seek suggestions, submissions, subscriptions and support.

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## Acknowledgements

**Cover: Frog** by Daniel Lupo, Rockford Middle, MI.

**Board of Directors:** Paulette Ansari, Charlotte Behm, Mary Drew, Bill Hessling, Dick Keis, Stephen Mallery, Ron Marson, Joachim Shultz, Hanna Still, Arun N. Toké

**Special Thanks to:** Peace Rose Graphics, Brett Forman, Dr. Page, C. Mistos, and all the teachers whose students' work is featured in this issue. We also extend our gratitude to our contributors, volunteers and subscribers.

*Skipping Stones* is an educational and charitable organization with a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Donations to *Skipping Stones* are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please support our 50% discount and free subscriptions to low-income subscribers by making a tax-deductible donation. Financial support provided in part by Tops Learning Systems, V. Wellington-Cabot Foundation, Ben & Jerry's Foundation, Presbytery of the Cascades, Black United Fund, Emerald Valley Kitchens, Share It Now Foundation, and SELCO. **Winner of the**

**1995 Golden Shoestring Award** **1997 NAME Award**  
EdPress for Excellence in Educational Journalism



*Skipping Stones* (Pub. No. 015-089) is published bimonthly, except July/August, by Skipping Stones, Inc., 1309 Lincoln St., Eugene, OR 97401. Postage paid at periodicals rate at Eugene, OR. Postmaster: Please send address changes to Skipping Stones, P. O. Box 3939 Eugene, OR 97403-0939.  
**Subscriptions: Institutions: \$35; Individuals: \$25** (Airmail: \$5 extra; low-income discount: 50%); Single /back issues: \$5 (\$6, air). To submit, subscribe or reprint, contact:

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and also www.treelink.com/skipping

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Printed with soy ink on recycled & recyclable paper.

## From the Editor

Mahatma Gandhi often said, "We must become the change we wish to see in this world." If we want to see an ecologically balanced world, we need to live a life that is ecologically sensible and respectful to nature. How can we begin?

First of all, we have to feel a sense of belonging—that we are an inseparable, intrinsic part of the web of life, of natural systems. We have to love this home of ours, the only home that we will ever have. We can't just pack our bags and move to another planet or solar system. We belong here and now on this earth.

Learning to love nature is hard to do in our modern world where we hop from one artificial environment to another. From our centrally heated or air-conditioned home, we jump into our powerful automobile that keeps us isolated from our natural surroundings as we rush to enclosed schools, factories, malls, and offices.

When we come back home, for entertainment we glue ourselves to the TV tube or the computer screen. For play and exercise, we go to parks with plastic play structures and lawns full of chemicals; to enclosed, artificial athletics arenas; or to video arcades and movie theatres. Even when we go hiking, we are far removed from a true wilderness experience if we bring high-tech hiking gear that keeps us insulated from the extremes of the weather as well as the warm, moist feel of the soil beneath our soles. How many minutes a day are we in true communion with Mother Nature?

In many places, we can't even quench our thirst with pure, fresh water straight from the ground. Often, we consume bottled water, soda pop, or hot drinks. When was the last time you fed your hunger with raw products—fresh carrots straight from a garden or fruit you plucked from a tree? Most of our food is highly processed. It is no surprise that we feel afraid of untamed nature

and treat the natural world as distant. What is natural has become alien to us!

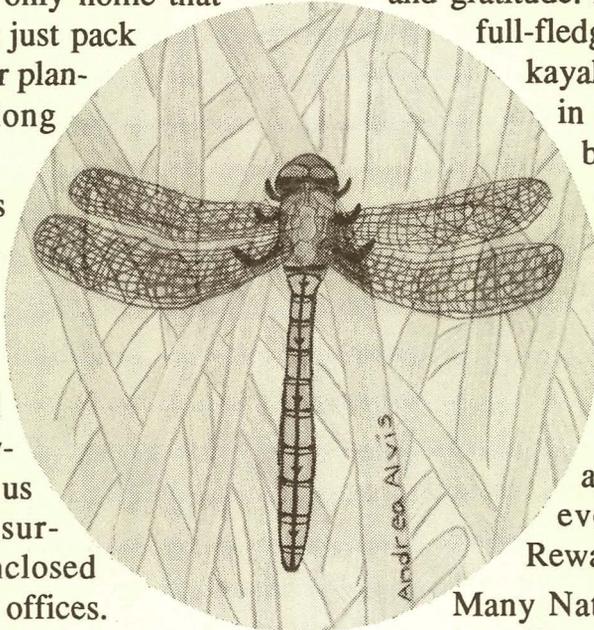
From this moment on, let's make a point to experience nature in our everyday lives. Take an unhurried stroll in a meadow, breathe fresh air in a grove of trees, feel the moss-covered rock ledges near a waterfall. Let's reconnect with the earth and nature spirits with a feeling of respect and gratitude. From windowsill planters or a full-fledged backyard garden, to hiking, kayaking, canoeing and swimming in natural areas, mountaineering, beach-combing, birding, back-country camping, or week-long wilderness adventures in remote regions, there are many ways to spend our free or family time in communion with nature. Let's plan many such activities during holidays and vacations, weekends and evenings—whenever possible. Rewards await us.

Many Native American coming-of-age ceremonies offer youth a vision quest experience to discover themselves. The guided vision quests, silent spiritual retreats, and sweat lodge ceremonies they undergo can teach us how to revere nature. Visiting organic farms, planting a garden, subscribing to a community supported farm, or buying locally grown, fresh produce at a farmers' market will also help us connect with nature.

As we embrace Mother Nature, we learn to identify with our natural roots, and we become true naturalists—friends of the rivers, mountains, wilderness, and the environment. When we see ourselves as an integral part of the ecosystem, we can't help but find ways to protect our natural home. Our love of nature will show us the many steps we can take to reduce our society's harmful impact on the incredibly beautiful web of life and biological diversity.

Welcome to our Earth Day 2000 issue!

*Arun Narayan Toke*





# Your Letters

## On Friends

My name is Alicia, and I live in Eugene. I am thirteen, and I have lived here since I was four. We first had a house in the city, but moved to the country after a few months. It has not helped me to make friends, since most of my friends' parents won't make the twenty-minute trip to my house.

Last year was probably the best year of my life so far. It was probably because of my friends; they were the kind of people who would stand by you and try to get your punishment lightened. I know some of them had never told a lie in their lives, and I am proud to say they called me their friend.

This year is different. Three of my friends have dropped out of school in the past year. My friends who had never told a lie now do it more often than not when they're stuck in a tight situation. Also, I seem to have to work harder to be correct "friend material." I don't think you should have to work hard to be a friend—I think you should just be able to be yourself. I still want the same friends, but I don't want to have to wear a mask to be their friend.

I got a call from a former friend a few days ago. She now has "cooler" friends in Sacramento, friends who wear expensive pants every day. She now does not like Eugene. I used to be her best friend but now she calls me a hippie. We always used to be together—after school, on the weekends, and on vacation.

But luckily I still have a true friend. We don't talk together much, but she is always nice when we do. She has never told lies or sworn in my presence. She doesn't know it, but she is my one true friend.

—Alicia (Ally) Seymour,  
Eugene, Oregon

**"Nothing's Abstract,  
Only Unique."**

—Jill Lisenbee, 14, Rockford, MI



*"No, you have not discovered a new world.  
You've discovered my vegetable garden."*

—Keith Feigenson, 17, Princeton, New Jersey

## Books for Children

You've been so wonderful, sending your magazine to me, when I hadn't even paid yet, and then all these books that you sent...there were so many. They are beautiful books, all of which will be useful. I'm not having the kids write a thank-you note because we don't use them in class. Our school is huge: 4700 students, in four different buildings, spread all over town. It will be a wonderful, much needed addition to our library. Thanks a ton!

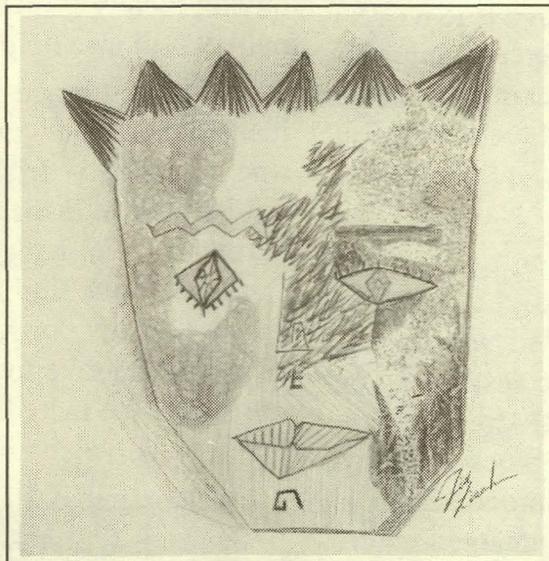
—Jane Baldwin, Peace Corps volunteer, Mongolia

## A Letter from Prison

Looking through these wonderful and very meaningful letters, articles, and pictures brings the big outside world into my small world here and I feel better connected to Europe and the other side of the world, Asia. Thank you for being thoughtful and concerned about who I may write from the pen pal column!

All life on this planet will be better and happier if we follow the golden rule: Do unto others as you want others to do unto you.

—Bruce Miller is serving time in  
San Quentin Prison, California



# What's On Your Mind?

*This is a forum for expressing views on critical matters in your lives. We know that you have unique and fresh perspectives. We offer this page for your active participation and invite you to share your opinions with others on an issue. Send your art and/or writing under 250 words.*

## Progress?

We're making progress every day  
New technologies for work and play  
New planes allow us to fly super fast  
New medicines are made to make our lives last  
New machines are all around to make us stuff that  
can't be found  
in the environment, sea, sky, or ground  
Best of all, this progress comes cheap;  
Costs only the Earth and all that we need  
That report you wrote took just one log  
Driving to work? Not too much smog  
Progress is great—it lets us be lazy  
And at the same time, it makes the sky hazy  
It destroys natural resources that we need and treasure  
So we can live life with ease and pleasure  
This progress we make so we can be rulers of them all  
Yet this progress we make shall be our downfall.

—Adam Granger, 14, Rockford, Michigan

## Anything Is Possible!

Did you ever go around doing some thinking  
Of being someone great like Abraham Lincoln?  
Did you write a song that you wanted the world to sing?  
Or have a dream like Martin Luther King?  
Did you ever want to play golf like Tiger Woods?  
Or be like St. Nicholas and give out goods?  
Did you ever want to dance like Fred Astaire?  
You can do anything if you dare  
If you dare to dream, anything is possible!

—Levi Cerminara, 11, Weirton, West Virginia

## Stress and Pressure

These kids have it great  
Sure that's what they think  
Always believing that they got it all  
When all they ever had was a baseball bat and a  
Barbie doll.  
The stress and pressure we get every day  
Is so unreal it's sometimes hard to deal  
But we pull through each and every day  
Just going on our way and knowing just  
What cool things to say.  
The stress we get from home and school  
Is sometimes hard to rule.  
Your parents scream  
"Get your homework done before the fun,"  
And you know just what they mean.  
"Have a pill—it will make you thin,"  
You hear your friend say.

Next it will be:

Take a sip. Get a buzz. Wanna smoke?  
I don't think so. Life ain't no joke.  
You think we're unruly and drugged up teens  
Messing around when we're not seen.  
But as far as I know,  
You have to put your best foot forward  
And show off your talents  
Because that may be all you have  
Now, if you give into these pressures  
From your friends  
Your life may be humming a whole other tune.

—Lydia T. Schmidt, grade 8, Eagan, Minnesota

## Caring for Nature

*I love nature, and there is nothing I'd like to see more than every human effort put forth to protect it. There is so much to learn from our surroundings, the animals that live here, and our people. I wish the animals already forced into extinction could have just one more chance, and that people would realize what a threat pollution is to our earth. I wish for peace between people worldwide. I hope it's not too late for us to make a big difference. We might not realize that we are harming our earth until we see the effects. But if we learn how to change our actions, we will surely be able to see what a difference we've made when our earth is restored, and it 'smiles back' at us.*

—Danielle Meyer, 16, Milaca, Minnesota

# Nature Symbols in Native Art



These drawings are untitled because they were created as greeting card illustrations, but in them I used many special symbols that mean a lot to me and my tribe—the Cherokee Indians of the southeastern United States. I feel it is important to put part of our background and knowledge into the greeting cards that we send to others. That way, we include a little part of ourselves along with the card’s message.

One of the most important symbols that the Cherokee and other southeastern tribes still use in their art is the sun. It symbolized *Etoda*, “the Father,” or God, because both the sun and *Etoda* give warmth, life, health, and strength, and provide for people’s needs. We believe all things created by *Etoda* have spirit helpers or guardian angels to help, guide, and protect them.

The Cherokees were once called “Children of the Sun.” I use the sun in my artwork to illustrate what is important in nature and in Cherokee spiritual life. I also like to use it because my full name is *Nudawetsia-gehya*, which means “Daughter of the Sun.”

I enjoy drawing celebrations. During the fall and harvest time, the eastern tribes held a major celebration. The first Pilgrims who lived here were guests at the Native Americans’ harvest celebration. Every year, the tribes held a great feast to thank God for all the vegetables and fruits that had been grown and all the meat and fish that the people had caught and preserved. This food was stored away for the coming winter. The Cherokee called this feast *Nuwatiequa* and celebrated it at the new moon of October. Other tribes had different names for this feast, but they all offered prayers to the Father to thank him for his goodness in allowing Mother Earth to provide so much for their lives.

The Turtle is an important sign because it represents the Earth. According to one of our creation stories, back before time was known—when the world was covered by water and before people lived on Earth—all the animals lived in a crowded place far above the Sky Arch. The animals wondered what was below the water surface on Earth; they thought it might be a less crowded place to

live. The first turtle wanted to help his fellow animals, so he bravely dropped from the Upper World to the waters below and dove to the very bottom. He brought up some mud on his shell to make land for the animals to live on. When Turtle did this, both the mud and his shell expanded until it became the continent that we now live on.



I draw women to celebrate motherhood. Being a mother is the most important job a woman can have. Children are considered life's greatest gift. The women I draw represent Mother Earth. In our society, as in other eastern tribes, women were considered very important and had a voice in everything. We had women chiefs and medicine women who acted not only as doctors but also as spiritual leaders and ministers. Cherokee women even had a strong influence in tribal government. We had tribal chiefs, sub-chiefs, and a council of wise male leaders who worked with the chiefs in making decisions for the village and tribe. There was also a Women's Council, made up of the tribe's wisest and most influential women. Cherokee women still have an important role—not only in the home, but in the running of the tribe.



*Cherokee artist Tsia Suzanne White Man Sullivan lives in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.*

# The 1999 River of Words Exemplary Poems

## River of Life

flowing  
 carving its  
 way through  
 Tibetan  
 across wide  
 nourishing  
 suds of country  
 through  
 Impressive  
 path of  
 watching new  
 smiling at  
 viewing the  
 carrying a  
 collecting,  
 in an ever  
 a pot of  
 at the end

rocky  
 plateaus  
 rolling plains  
 rice fields  
 washing  
 the gorges  
 guiding the  
 Yangtze  
 rise  
 in awe  
 scenery  
 grains of memory  
 from its travels  
 treasure box  
 sparkling  
 life giving

—Ru-Woei Foong, 14, Shanghai, China, wrote this poem in the graphic form of the Chinese character for water.

## Dear Night

I must tell you, silence  
 is no longer the virtue it once was, rather  
 it only reminds us how small and alone we  
 really  
 are. Next time you wish us to celebrate a  
 cosmic event, please,  
 be more direct. A comet, or a meteor  
 shower,  
 even some good old-fashioned fireworks.

The star  
 was a nice touch, I must admit:  
 more suited to the taste of poor mortals  
 than this  
 awful,  
 divine,  
 stillness.

—Sarah Dooley, age 16, Atlanta, Georgia



## Through the Eyes of Morning

The long  
 complicated  
 elements of morning  
 drape themselves across the dew-touched  
 meadow  
 as if they are  
 lace  
 from the intricate garments of a queen  
 who has chosen  
 this moment  
 to blow a frosty kiss to her people through  
 the fog  
 so intensely ghost white  
 that if you look deep enough  
 you can see yourself.

And so I look.  
 Deep.  
 Hoping that if something as simple  
 yet intense,  
 as young  
 yet ancient,  
 as morning  
 knows who I am, maybe I will too.

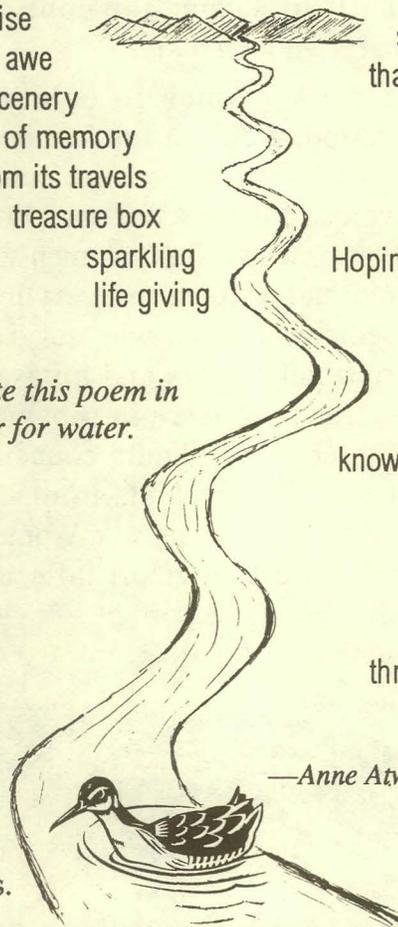
But I only see the dew.  
 And the fog.

And who is anyone  
 through the distorted eyes of  
 morning?

—Anne Atwell-McLeod, 13, Edgecomb, Maine

A crystal  
 snowflake  
 falls down  
 on the  
 freezing  
 white  
 floor of  
 January.

—Martha Bregin, age 7,  
Clarkston, Michigan



The 2000 ROW winners will be  
 honored on 29 April at the Library  
 of Congress, Washington, DC.  
 For more info, check the Website:  
[www.irn.org](http://www.irn.org), or write to  
 River of Words, 1847 Berkeley  
 Way, Berkeley CA 94703 USA

# Where the Wild Things Are

When you think about going on vacation, what do you think of? Theme parks? Dude ranches or the beach? How about just seeing animals? Have you ever been to Yellowstone National Park to see the grizzly bears, or visited Rocky Mountain National Park to see elk or big-horn sheep? Have you ever gone whale or bird watching? If you have, then you've taken a nature vacation!

On a nature vacation you visit the wilderness and watch wild animals in their natural habitats. Instead of going to the ocean to catch waves, you visit the Everglades in Florida to look for alligators. Or you sit on a plateau in the Badlands of South Dakota to watch herds of buffalo as they move through the morning mist. Perhaps you go to a local pond to watch the ducks or slurp through a swamp in search of snapping turtles and toads. These are all nature vacations.

One of the nice things about this type of vacation is that part of the money you pay to visit a park, zoo, or to go on a wildlife tour is spent to protect wild animals and their natural homes. It would seem that the more people who visit and support a park or a zoo, the happier the animals are. But is this true?

Sometimes parks can have too many visitors. Have you ever been to a big national park in the summertime? Was it packed with cars, and were the campgrounds full? Did you go on a nature hike and see a lot of people on the trail? When a park has too many visitors, nature and wildlife gets trampled, destroyed, picked, or scared! How can we still visit parks without ruining them? Answer the following true or false statements to find out.

## TRUE or FALSE?

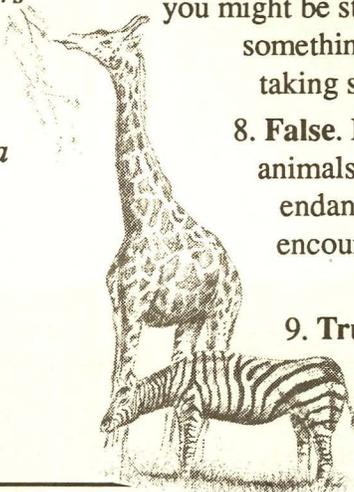
1. *It won't hurt anything to pick a couple of flowers along a trail where lots of flowers are growing.*
2. *Getting too close to animals to take a photo sometimes makes them unable to breed.*
3. *It's okay to leave garbage on the trail or near a picnic site because the park staff will clean it up.*
4. *Taking shortcuts, or switchbacks, along a trail can cause erosion and landslides.*
5. *Injured animals should be taken back to camp, your lodge, or a ranger station.*
6. *Whacking a tree is the best way to get the animals out of it so you can see them better.*

7. *Collecting shells, rocks, plants, wood, and other things along the beach or trail is a bad idea.*
8. *It's okay to buy souvenirs made from insects and animals such as butterfly wings, tortoise shells, horns, and feathers.*
9. *It bothers animals if you shout or whistle at them.*

## Answers

1. **False.** Every time you pick a flower or a plant, you rob an animal of its food. You are also stealing from other people who want to enjoy the flowers.
2. **True.** Animals need a certain amount of energy to breed. When something scares them, they use up that energy by trying to escape or run away.
3. **False.** The amount of garbage that is dumped on our park and forest trails each year in the U.S. could fill up all the football and baseball stadiums in the country—that's hundreds of thousands of tons of waste. This garbage not only kills animals that are attracted by and eat shiny wrappers and human food, but it costs a lot of money to clean up.
4. **True.** Taking shortcuts along trails creates new places for water to run. These new water channels encourage erosion which wipes out entire mountainsides, and destroys the vegetation animals need.
5. **False.** Although your heart might tell you to help a wounded animal, it is best to leave injured animals where you find them. Wild animals, especially injured ones, don't often survive in captivity.
6. **False.** Imagine how you would like it if you were jerked out of bed by something slamming against the side of your house! Animals don't like it any more than you would.
7. **True.** By collecting items along the trail or beach, you might be stealing an animal's home, grabbing something that other visitors want to see, or taking something that plants need to grow.
8. **False.** Don't buy any products made from animals, and *especially* from threatened or endangered species. That way you won't encourage people to continue killing animals to make the things you buy.
9. **True.** Animals don't like loud noises!

—Carolyn Hill, nature educator,  
Silver Springs, Maryland



# The Enchanted Fairyland of Opal Whiteley

Opal Whiteley was born in 1897 and grew up in the forests near Cottage Grove, Oregon, America. As a child, she eagerly learned all she could about everything around her by reading books, asking questions, and especially watching and observing the ways of all the natural creatures, whom she called fairies. When she was about six years old, she began to keep a diary. She wrote on any kind of paper she could find, from paper sacks to leaves. As Opal grew up, she continued to write down the things she saw around her and to learn more and more.

During her teenage years, Opal traveled. She visited towns and camps and spoke to children and their parents about the beautiful fairyland around them. Often the children would accompany her on walks into the forest, enchanted and mesmerized by all the things Opal showed them about the fairies and their ways.

Eventually, she put these observations in a fanciful book called *The Fairyland Around Us*, so that, as she says, "others may know some of the same joy." Although she had raised money to pay for the publication of her book, there were difficulties at the last minute and the original publishing plans

were scrapped by the would-be printers, who claimed they needed more money because Opal had changed the text before printing.

Deeply disappointed but undaunted, Opal managed to save enough money to pay for the printing and binding of two-to-three hundred books, with blank pages where the illustrations were to go. Opal worked tirelessly, pasting in wildlife pictures and writing captions by hand.

Opal sent copies of *The Fairyland Around Us* to many influential people. Mr. P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education, exclaimed in a letter to Opal, "I have read your book with interest and delight. I should be glad indeed if copies of it could be put in all of the schools of the United States."

Today, only about five of these books are still known to exist. One of them is preserved in the library of the University of Oregon, and it is from this book that an Internet website has been created. Here you will also find the diary Opal kept as a little girl, pictures of her and her animal friends in Oregon, and more about her life. Now people everywhere can read about Opal's enchanted fairyland. Come visit the website at [www.Liloriole.net](http://www.Liloriole.net) anytime!

—David Caruso, Eugene, Oregon.



## 2000 Youth Honor Awards on Multicultural & Nature Awareness

Seeking artistic and creative entries that promote: *cultural diversity, intercultural experiences, social issues, nature, ecology, resource conservation, or peace and nonviolence.* For details, visit [www.efn.org/~skipping](http://www.efn.org/~skipping).

- **Writing** (essays, poems, stories, songs, travelogues, round tables, interviews, etc.): Typed or neatly handwritten. Non-English writings (with English translation) welcome. *Word limit: 750; poems: 30 lines.*
- **Artwork** (drawings, cartoons, paintings, photo essays). Include artist's name, age, and address on the back of each page. Color and/or b & w prints with captions. Send originals with an SASE. *Limit: 8 photos /paintings.*
- To nominate **Youth Organizations** that work with low-income, minority, or alter-abled people, protect nature or ecology, or improve racial and/or cultural relations, please use the format for *Writing*

Send entries by 20 June with a \$3 fee and a certificate of originality from a teacher/parent to:

*Skipping Stones Youth Awards* P. O. Box 3939, Eugene, OR 97403 USA; e-mail: [skipping@efn.org](mailto:skipping@efn.org)

### ***We Just Shut the Door***

There are starving children in China,  
People we don't even know,  
And their pain just may be so deep inside  
That it's a place we never go.

There is a lonely man crying,  
Yet you have no clue,  
And maybe somewhere someone's helping,  
Maybe that is something you seldom do.

Secrets are taken to the grave,  
The truth you will never find out,  
And someone's trying to tell you something,  
But you can't hear over your own shout.

Your soul may be drowning  
More and more each day,  
And you try to ignore the pain  
Hoping the sorrow will go away.

Perhaps someone cries for you,  
Yet you're completely unaware,  
And somewhere a family is homeless  
And you can't even share.

Every moment a child is born,  
Though some are premature,  
And with everything going on in the world,  
We just close the door.

—*Jessica Sollner, 14*

### ***A Stroll on the Beach***

A stroll on the beach  
On a cool, sunny day  
At sunset.

The wind blowing my hair freely  
Sand moving beneath my feet  
The water trickling between my toes  
Sea gulls flying above  
The purple, red, and pink in the sky  
Children playing about.

Strolling along the water's edge  
Waving my arms in the blowing wind  
Blissful and satisfied.

—*Brian Smith, 13*

### ***If You Look***

If you look through the eyes of the  
windows in my house,

You will see the night sky fade  
into morning brightness and feel  
the fiery glow of the sun's rays.

You will touch the whispering  
teardrops of the ample sky  
emptying its contents on the green  
drenched earth.

You will smell the fragrance  
of spring flowers in bloom  
and hear bumble bees buzzing  
from a rose to a daisy.

You will hear the crunch of the  
dewy grass as a dog barks  
hysterically across the wet yard.

You will see vibrant butterflies'  
wings whipping through the air  
to get to bed before the sun,

If you look through the eyes  
of the windows in my house.

—*Ashley Conley, 14*

### ***Haiku***

The sun arises  
Peeks over the horizon  
Then goes back to bed

—*Elyse Johnston, 13*

### ***My Night***

Glitter in the sky  
when velvet blankets the night  
all is still and hushed.

—*Stephanie Bacon, 13*

### ***Dunes***

Mountains of pale sand  
sculpted by the hands of wind  
changing constantly.

—*Stephanie Bacon, 13*

### ***Tornado***

Mother Nature's winds  
gathered in one place

—*Bethany Evans, 12*



## The Poetry Page

### Our Journey

We've been living here forever,  
beneath the stars above, children of  
the same creation.

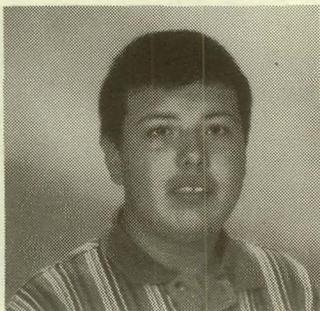
We've been given sustenance to share  
what's natural, our duty, we understand,  
returns a life of love.

We give thanks for birds of beauty,  
who spread their wings and sing, and for thunders,  
who wake up the earth in spring.

Sisters of the planet world, forest trees,  
stand firm and tall, the Spirit of flowing  
waters, purest medicine of all.

We greet each other in our minds,  
our voices singing song, acknowledging  
we're part of what belongs.

When the syrup from the maple brings  
the winter's end, we give thanks for where  
we've come from and know where we have been.



—Sching Wak (*Big White Pine*) or  
Mike Reszler, 16, is a member of the  
Bad River Band of the Lake Superior  
Chippewa. He lives with his grandpar-  
ents in Ashland, Wisconsin. He writes,  
“A dream of mine is to one day become  
Tribal Chairperson for my reservation.”

### The River

The river is a long green  
snake  
winding  
twisting  
dancing  
dreaming in the sun.  
The river is round water  
rock-skimming water,  
singing branches,  
as fast as an eagle,  
as slow as a growing fern:  
a white ghost  
in the moonlight.

—Aaron Wells, written at age 9, Eugene, Oregon

### Imagine

The moon is on fire tonight – Imagine!  
It sits in the velvety black sky

s u r r o u n d e d  
by twinkling stars

It smiles upon the snow-peaked mountains  
It looks at its reflection in the melancholy lake.  
And as we stop upon the riverbank, the moon  
burns

Brighter and brighter, just until it looks like it's  
about to E X P L O D E!

We watch the moon fade away at dawn.

—Susan Harvey, 12, Huntington, West Virginia

### The Apache Way

Keepers of a code  
everyone ignores  
doing what's right  
not what's in vogue  
loyalty and respect  
to the worthy  
echoes of knowledge  
establish a path  
valiant ones follow  
employing free will  
The Apache Way

—Miranda Garza, 18, of Bryan,  
Texas, writes, “I am part Apache. I've  
always had a deep respect for Apaches.  
They respect and honor everything and  
everyone worthy of respect and honor.”

### Sunset

The sun going over the horizon  
With pink, purple, green, and blue  
Robins fly across the sky with dinner in their beaks  
Grass swaying in the wind from left to right  
Bullfrogs croaking together to make a song in the  
swamps with the crickets chirping along  
Sitting here on the hillside just watching the sunset  
There is so much more to hear and see than  
you could ever imagine

—Stephanie Corey, 9, Burién, Washington

# Appreciating Nature

## Puerto Rico

My island, Puerto Rico. My roots call me back to this island of paradise, an island of enchantment. It's the one place I long to be, the one place that waits for me.

I smell the morning dew; the warm contentment is overwhelming. My face brightens with a smile when I hear the singing song of the little green frog, known as the coqui.

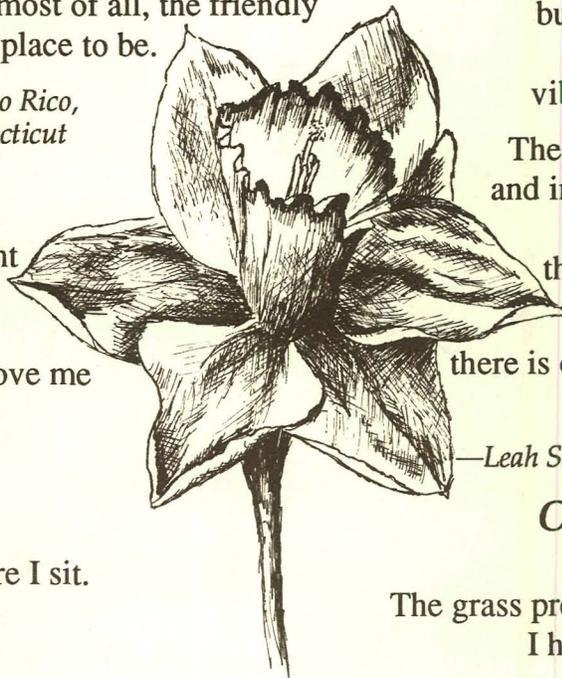
I like to challenge the wild and dangerous, rough, frothy white waves of the hot beaches. I also enjoy the endless walks along the sand, and the smell of the salty sea air. I welcome the blazing heat of the tropical sun on my body, with the the intention of getting a smooth, bronze, gleaming tan. My island's lively music, stylish dancing movements, the paradise's hot, spicy foods, and, most of all, the friendly people are what make it my favorite place to be.

—Shannon Rosa, 13, from Puerto Rico, Meriden, Connecticut

## The Prairie

The prairie grass reflects the sunlight  
I wish I could sneak a book  
and sit under the willow tree  
and read in the towering grasses above me  
until someone came to find me.  
It would be my secret spot  
and no one would hear me.  
I feel like I am living in a prairie,  
my log cabin miles away from where I sit.  
I would walk to the woods  
I would swing across the creek.  
And when I reach the other end,  
I would dangle my feet into the ice cold water  
As I sit on a boulder  
watching the water drift by me.  
I am a pioneer girl  
in my land, my world  
under the willow tree.

—Anna Urdahl, 10, Shorewood, Minnesota. Anna writes, "I was inspired to write the poem when my class took a field trip to the prairie. I remember sitting in the long, tall, golden grasses. I was alone, the

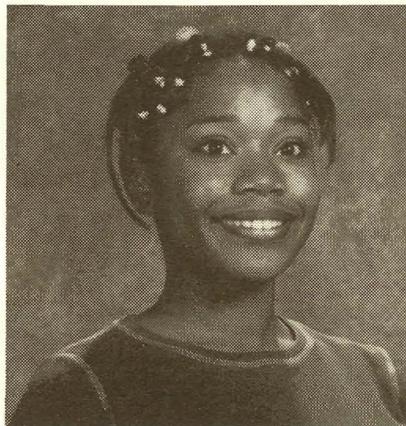


The birds' joyful songs  
wake the sleeping  
butterflies who flutter  
back and forth,  
vibrant colors flashing.  
The butterflies' colors flash  
and invite the anxious children  
outside from  
their long wait indoors,  
And among it all  
there is one lemon yellow daffodil  
bright and free.

—Leah Soo Driska, 13, Kensington, CT

## Outside

I walk  
The grass pressing down under my feet  
I hear music  
A bird  
Chirping in the trees  
Crickets and grasshoppers leaping  
A bee buzzing  
I stop  
Listening to the sweet melody  
It seems far away  
The wind joins in  
It blows coolly  
A message has been given  
Silently it stops  
I walk, the grass pressing down  
under my feet.



—Vania Leah Allen (photo), 14, Ore City, Texas

# Bees and Buzz

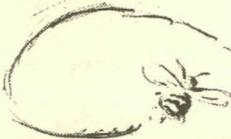


Illustration by Best Feman

Bees and lots of buzz. Just because they like to swarm. No harm, they make a hive in a tree. Buzz buzz the bumblebee. **Fat and Furry.** Silken black and yellow coats. **Glow and glisten.** Bees are coming, better listen. Dressed in furs for a ball. Dance in their coats around the garden. Suited fine fat gentlemen drinking flower wine. Buzz buzz

Walking barefoot on grass. They are in the clover. Step on a gentleman bee, a painful reminder it will be.

Around the hive, bees are alive. Hundred bumbles buzz and HUM. Furry orchestra drone the bees. Beat of wings hundred times a minute. Here swarm



Be careful approaching bees. Wear a hat. Swarms follow the forest bee.

Bees make Honey Sweet reward for bears.



Honeycombs soaked and tried to find his hive. Honey for tea! Honey for bread!

Sit on porch and sip warm tea. Honey sweetened. Summer buzzes; heat waves, bee waves. Beneath the porch HUM the bees. Buzz buzz the bumblebee.



—Mela Burgundy, San Diego, California.

## How Does A Rainforest Eat?

For a plant, getting dinner in a rainforest can be tricky because there is so much competition for light and food. Tropical rainforest plants use every method possible to capture food, even enlisting help from other forest insects and animals. How do plants eat?

- By opening their mouths, or leaves, and drinking rainwater.
- By using their roots to reach out on the forest floor and down into the soil to grab nutrients.
- Through photosynthesis, in which the sun's energy is captured and used to make food.
- Through bacteria, which help plants make the best possible use of nutrients.
- Through termites, which carry organic material, or plant food, all through a rainforest.
- Through insects and birds, which pollinate, or carry food, from plant to plant.

Some trees have a special method of eating: ferns and orchids grow on them, and they use these plants to catch water and food. Some plants can prevent parasites from eating their food by producing a waxy film to cover leaves.

—Carolyn Hill, Annapolis, Maryland

## The Pudu

El pudu es un pequeño venado, de piernas cortas, que vive en el sur de Chile. Los pudues andan en grupos pequeños. En su vida tienen solo una pareja y siempre andan juntos a menos que uno de ellos haya muerto. La hembra hace un nido de hojas, donde tiene solo una cría. La cría llega a su adultez al año de vida. Está prohibido cazar pudues porque quedan muy pocos de ellos.

*A pudu is a small, short-legged deer that lives in the south of Chile. They move around in small groups. Pudus have only one mate in their lifetime, and they are always together unless one of them has died. The female makes a nest of leaves where she has only one baby. Their young reach adulthood at a year old. The hunting of pudus is prohibited since there are a very few left.*

—Colleen Purcell, Maipu, Santiago, Chile



## How Do Insects Stay Warm in the Winter?

On cold winter days, animals stay warm with their heavy fur coats, people bundle up in a thick layer of clothes, and most insects make their own antifreeze!

Antifreeze literally means to not freeze. It's a special liquid made out of alcohol that won't get hard the way ice does, even at very low temperatures. Take water, for example. It turns into ice at 32 degrees Fahrenheit. But antifreeze stays liquid even when it gets much, much colder. When you mix antifreeze with other liquids, it keeps them from freezing as fast. That's why you put antifreeze in a car's radiator—it keeps the water there from turning into ice, which can really damage a car.

Insect antifreeze works the same way, except that insects make their own. The shorter, colder days of fall let insects know it's time to conserve energy stores for the long winter ahead. When insects burn less energy, a sweet sticky alcohol, glycerol, builds up in their bodies.

Glycerol works like car antifreeze. When it mixes around inside an insect's body, the whole insect becomes more freeze-resistant. In fact, our entomologist friends say some insects even tolerate temperatures far below zero. Now that's a way to keep warm!

Scientifically yours,

*Twig*

—Julie Steele and Susan Vaughn, Ohio State Univ., Ohio



# My Lovely Omar River

One night in the Malaysian town of Muar a boy pulled a thin notebook from underneath his pillow. He turned to an empty page.

"My lovely Omar River," he wrote, "I miss the times at my grandparents' house in Kedah when I visited you. Every evening my cousin and I waded across a green paddyfield to meet you. We heard the soft sound coming from your body as you rubbed the stones and long-branched Ketapong trees beside you.

"We stood at your edge to gaze down at you. Perhaps you had swollen in the night from the rains, but no, your body was normal.

"I took off my shirt and pants and plunged into you. Your body was cold and the current swept by very fast.

"Again and again I dived into you. I discovered the glistening black and green stones and the amber-yellow sand moving under you. I lifted up a large, green stone and threw it into your body. You made a gulping sound."

"My lovely Omar River," the boy wrote, "perhaps it is time now for me to go away from you." He pressed the thin notebook to his chest. "But, oh," he murmured sleepily as he slid the notebook beneath his pillow, "I promise to visit you in my dreams behind your Ketapong trees."

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## Ëndrrat

Imora lotët  
dhe i hodha në lumë  
i mblodha në buzëqeshje  
i bëra lule në pranverë

I lidha yjet me ënderra në qiell  
U bëra si zog dhe fluturova pa kufi.

E mblodha vesën e mëngjesit  
për të zgjuor fëmijët  
Kur flene deri në mëngjes vonë  
kur zogjtë kënojnë  
këngëne etyre.



—Alva Xheka, 16, Tirana, Albania

# Plant A Tree Day

Long ago on the high tops of South Korea, people cut down many lush, green trees. This left the mountains bare without any green. Koreans did not know what to do.

Something had to be done to restore the beautiful mountains back to their once lush land. The people had to think, "What can we do to solve this problem?"

The government made 5 April as *Plant a Tree Day*. Fifth of April was chosen because it marked the beginning of the growing season in Korea. Schools and businesses are closed on this day so that people may go out and plant trees.

To this very day, the people still restore the land and fill the mountaintops once again.

—Doug Kim, 12, Korean-American, Lincolnwood, Illinois

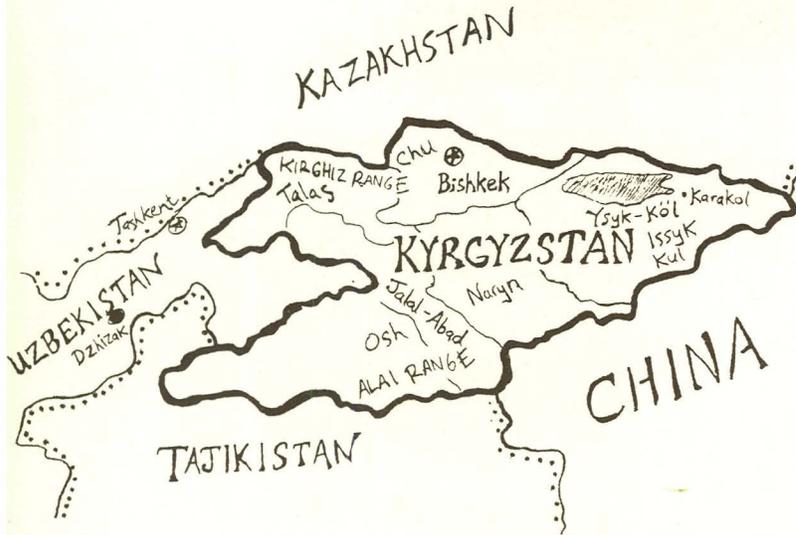
## Dreams

I took the tears  
and I threw them in the river  
I gathered the smiles  
and made flowers in the spring.

I tied the stars with dreams in the sky  
I was a bird and flew without limits.

I gathered the night dew  
to wake the children  
when they sleep till late  
in the morning,  
when birds sing their song.

# Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan



Kyrgyzstan is a not-so-big country. It is made up of six regions: Chu, Issyk-Kul, Naryn, Jalal-Abad, Osh, and Talas. Kyrgyzstan's people are very friendly. We have many schools and universities. We also have rivers, high mountains, villages, woods, and a lake that we are proud of. Our country is interesting and beautiful. Some people say it looks like Switzerland.

Issyk-Kul, the lake, is very beautiful in all kinds of weather, and at all times of the day or night. We love our Issy-Kul! In the summer, people from all over the world come to the lake for rest. The lake doesn't freeze in winter. There's nothing like it. Since ancient times the Kyrgyz people have told many legends about Ysyk-Köl (see below). Scientists believed that at the bottom of the lake were the ruins of a city.

Maybe Ysyk-Köl interests you. It's good for you to come here and see the lake with your own eyes!

—Najira, Ainura, and Nurjamal are students in Karakol.

## Transparent Ysyk-Köl Lake

*I will tell you why Ysyk-Köl is transparent. One time in a small land lived one small and friendly family. There was a husband, wife, and son. They were poor. The husband, Bluem (blue), worked every day, all the time. He was a worker for the king. The wife, Lake, was a needle worker for the cruel king too. Their kind son, Wave, was a good and hardworking boy. In the fall, a baby girl was born to this family. When she was born it was not night. Her name was Beautymir (beautiful as a mirror). She grew fast.*

*When Beautymir was sixteen the king fell in love with her and decided to marry her. But she and her parents did not like him, and Beautymir loved another young, strong and good lad, Moun (mountain). When the king came with his soldiers Beautymir and her family were not at their house; they had run away. When the cruel king heard about it he was angry and screamed, "Give me my Beautymir. I will kill her family! Now!" The soldiers went to find her. By this time the family was next to a deep pit. The king's soldiers came next to them and tried to kill them, but Beautymir jumped into the deep pit and turned into a mirror. Then her mother jumped in and turned into a lake, and her father jumped in and turned the lake blue. Then her brother jumped in and turned into a wave. The soldiers wanted to jump in too, but Moun turned into the mountains and the soldiers could not kill the friendly family.*

*From that time on, this lake is transparent and beautiful, and is surrounded by high mountains.*

—Asel Turgunbaeva, form 9, Karakol, Kyrgyzstan

## My Animal Friends

*We have a large barn. In our barn we keep some animals. When I come into the barn I meet a big orange horse. She is beautiful. She has a pony named Black. Then I hear, "Moo!" Certainly it is our big white cow. She does not have a calf, but she gives us milk to drink. We drink the milk and become strong and healthy. We must say, "Thank you, cow!"*

*"Cluck, cluck." What is this? Oh yes, it is our chicks and chickens. Our hen had ten chicks. They are small and yellow. They play with their brothers and sisters, but their father will bite them and say, "Do not play! Find food to eat, help your mother!" Their papa is a beautiful and strong cock.*

*The Chong-Aruk river is next to our house. There you can see ducks with ducklings. They are all white.*

*So I come home. I see my strong dog, Laika. He is three yrs. old and yellow. When people come they say, "Oh, your dog is very big." Sometimes, he is mischievous. Laika always quarrels with Nurka, our cat.*

*Oh, I forgot about our rabbits. We have eight rabbits. They are all black because their mama is black. They like carrots and cabbage.*

*I like our animals and pets.*

—Asel Turgunbaeva, Karakol, Kyrgyzstan

# Nepal: Living on the Edge



The cheerful people of Nepal spend their entire lives on the edge—living on the edge of *Sagarmatha*, better known to us as Mt. Everest.

The Nepalese existence remains much the same as their ancestors—centered around farming and close family ties.

Although the valley holds the bustling capital of Kathmandu, more than half of the people of Nepal live in tribal villages along the slopes

*Photo essay by  
Gina White,  
Deerfield, NH*

*Photo at right:  
Chris Weber, OR*

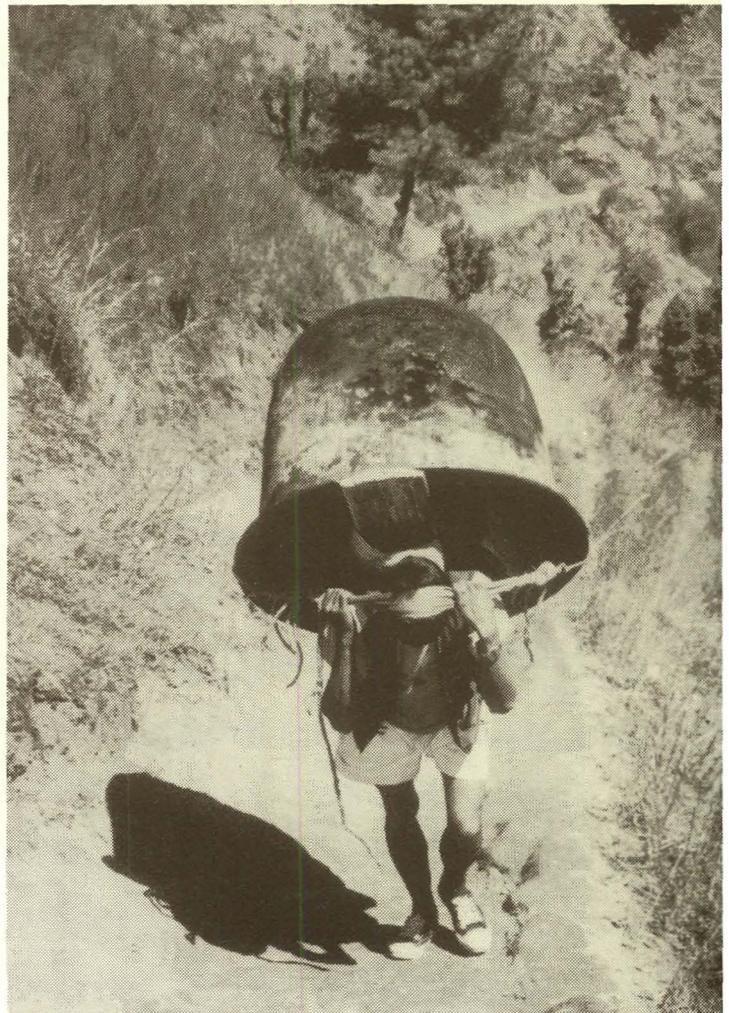
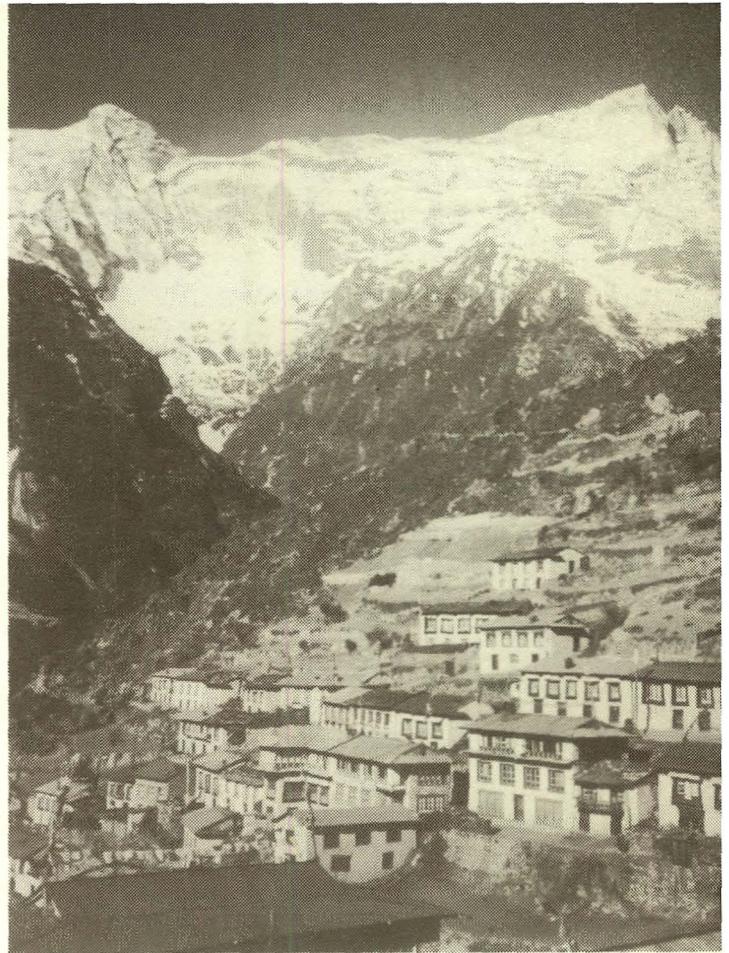


of the mountains where the only form of transportation is by foot, but the villagers have strong legs and don't seem to mind stuffing their back packs and hiking to a day of work in the hilly fields.

The children get their share of walking by helping with chores in the morning before attending small village schools. One such chore is fetching water since there is no running water or electricity in their homes.

At the end of the day, families gather at their homes, which are made from mud brick, wood or stone. They share a dinner of grains, vegetables, a bit of meat, and *dhindo*, a pastry food made from flour and boiled water. *Dhindo* is popular among the mountain villagers.

After dinner people gather around fires to chat about the day and to tell bedtime stories to the children. Folktales that have been told for centuries come alive as the sun sets. After the fires burn down, the villagers go to bed early to prepare for another day.



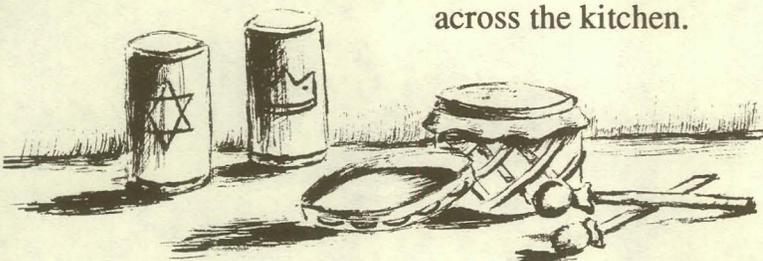
# Hamantaschen: The Hat-Shaped Cookies

I could almost taste the flour-covered dough cooking in the oven, and the mouthwatering aroma as it lingered in the house. Thoughts of *hamantaschen* cookies danced in my brain. These

Purim delights take me back to the memories of making them.

Purim is a Jewish holiday in which the saving of our people is remembered. We usually dress up in costumes of characters mentioned on this holiday. Comparing the different costumes is always fun—it's like a Jewish Halloween. One of the people mentioned during Purim is Haman, who attempted to destroy the Jews but failed. As a tradition we make cookies in the shape of his hat and call them *hamantaschen*. I have no idea why we chose his hat to make cookies out of but they taste delicious.

The kitchen is prepared for a disaster. My mother makes the dough first. My sister and I are allowed to knead it after we wash our hands. It becomes really sticky and removing it from my hands is another project! While the dough sits in the refrigerator, my mom sets the table with old white pillowcases discolored from previous years of baking. Flour and different jellies are then placed on the table. The fun has yet to begin. The dough, which is ready to mold, is brought out of the refrigerator. My eldest sister and I immediately shove our hands into it, and my youngest sister tries to sneak her little paws in there too. We flatten the dough with enormous rolling pins that look like they're from the Stone Age. Flour is placed on the dough so it doesn't stick to the rolling pins. The jar tops come out next since we use them for cookie cutters to make circles. The excess dough usually ends up flying across the kitchen.

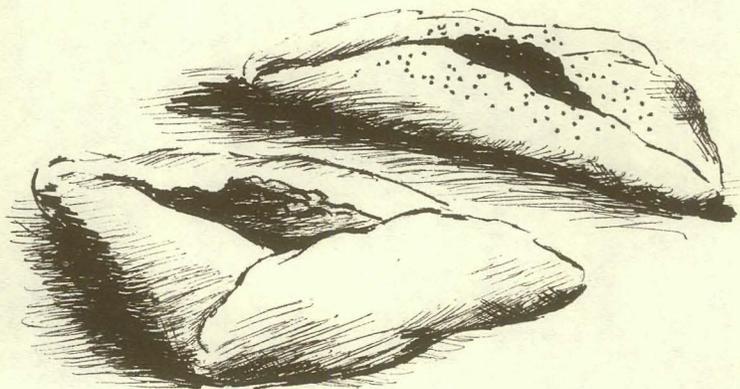


“Stop that! I don't feel like peeling dough off the floor and walls!” yells my mother.

“Okay, Mom,” we answer as we continue throwing dough at each other. This results in a large mess which we end up cleaning later.

The hardest part, putting the jelly in the middle of the circles of dough and folding the edges around it, is about to begin. After this, each side has to be pinched together to form a hat-like cookie with three points. This is similar to a hat that a British soldier would wear in the 1700s. These little replicas of Haman's hat are placed in the oven for hours. By the time they come out, my craving has reached its climax. The buzzer rings throughout the house, calling each watering mouth to the kitchen. My mom, with her pot-holders, slides the cookie sheets out of the oven. The cookies are placed in rows according to jelly flavor. My sisters bicker over which ones they are going to get because they're so yummy!

This is one of the more anticipated events on our family agenda. Even cleaning up is pretty exciting because we get to eat all the cookies while my mom cleans.



Purim is all about cookie-making in our family. The tradition is not fulfilled unless my whole family gets involved in baking. Even my grandma comes up from Pennsylvania to assist us. This adds to the special feeling of this holiday, and gives me something to look forward to!

—Corey Fleisher, 15, New City, New York.  
Illustrations by Brett Foreman, student intern.



*Whether it's a warm breeze in the middle of the desert or the splashing of the blue ocean against my body, Israel is always a wonderful experience. The bright sun of a hot summer day comforts me, and the pure white sand sticks between my toes as I run through the water of the Mediterranean. By the end of the school year, the only thing on my mind is the feeling I get knowing that I will be in my homeland.*

*As I get off the plane, my family awaits my arrival. As I am pulling my cart with all the suitcases and looking for my family, someone suddenly jumps on my back. My cousins! Oh, how I have missed them! I move along, waiting to see my other relatives, especially my beloved grandmother. When all the quarreling begins over whose house I will visit first, I realize it's going to be a great vacation.*

*My family lets me rest for the first day, but they warn me to be up and about bright and early the next morning. They have a whole travel plan for me already. The next morning, I slip on my shorts and tank top, and I don't forget my sunglasses! For the next few days we travel through Old Israel, seeing such sights as the Western Wall in Jerusalem and the well-known synagogue in Tiberias. I learn more and more about my culture after each visit, and all my knowledge of my homeland which was lost during my time in America is now replaced.*

*One of the most wonderful experiences is floating on the water of the Dead Sea and moisturizing my body with a replenishing mud bath. The Dead Sea is the lowest point on Earth, and because of the amount of salt in the water, one can float or even stand on the sea! Also near this area, I visit the Kibbutz with its lovely botanical gardens and breathtaking view of mountains and deserts.*

*The southernmost part of Israel, called Eilat, borders the city of Taba in Egypt. Eilat is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, where you can spot many different sorts of fish in any shape or color you can imagine.*

*Another day takes me to the opposite side of Israel, all the way up north, bordering the country of Lebanon. The soaring hills of the Golan Heights reveal an incredible adventure of their own. As I stand high above the land, I look down at the many features of this very special place.*

*All around me there are people from my own culture, and I feel a sense of pride in my heritage. As I depart for the United States, I sigh and start counting the days until my next visit.*

**I** believe Friday nights are special. Rather than looking forward to a night of being with my friends, I wait for the one time in the whole week that my family gathers together.

We sit around the mahogany dining table, with the elegant crystal chandelier casting rainbow prisms over us. Glass wine cups and elegant silverware are set on the table, with two loaves of challah bread, fat and warm, placed in the center. By my father's seat, at the head of the table, there is a silver wine cup engraved with grapevines and a Jewish prayer he recites before drinking the wine. A prayer book lies on the table, next to the dish of salt used to dip the bread in. The chabbos candles on the counter give off orange flames while my sister, mother and I say the blessings.

Now it's dinnertime. My father stands up with his yarmulke on his head, and holds the cup of wine while he recites the Kiddush, the blessing we say every Friday night. Next, he goes to the kitchen to wash his hands. As he walks back to the dining room we hear the last words of the blessing. Taking his seat, my father recites the blessing on the bread. He cuts a piece of challah, dips it in the salt, and passes it down to the family.

When the Kiddush is over, my mom calls from the kitchen. "Dana, come serve the chicken-vegetable soup while I put the fish on the table." She doesn't have to tell me twice because I am already entering the kitchen, ready to help.

The rest of the traditional dishes, such as rice-stuffed cabbage in a tomato sauce, chicken and potatoes with a hint of cinnamon, and cubes of tender meat, stay heated in the oven, while the large bowl of tiny cut salad sits in the center of the table. My parents eat their favorite appetizer: fish cooked with pepper and chickpeas, while my sister and I feast on the challah bread and baba ganoush.

I think of Friday nights as a time to be with my parents, allowing them to listen and speak to my sister and me, and it is their time to learn more about us. As each day goes by, and we get closer to Friday night, I look forward to the Kiddush and sitting around one long table, with one lovely family.

—Dana Naim, 15, Clarkstown High North, New City, New York



# Seder



Today my grandchildren, children, friends, and relatives shared a Passover meal with me. As we laughed and sang, my thoughts travelled back to 1937 in Holland. Pesach, Passover, had come early that year.

Spring had not yet established herself: snowdrops were blooming, but patches of snow remained where the sunshine did not reach. There would be no Seder celebration at the Quaker school for refugee children. The school was located deep in the woods in a beautiful old castle, our temporary home, surrounded by huge oak trees and two moats. We attended silent Meeting there on First Day (Sunday). It was a healing and comforting time, but with my father in a concentration camp, I felt a special need to acknowledge the bond of our Judaism. I felt as if I would let him down if I did not participate in a Seder. I knew that he was thinking of us, that he was wondering whether my sister was studying the four questions that traditionally are recited by the youngest child during the festive Seder evening.

On the first day of Passover, a stranger rode his bicycle to the gates of the school. He told the principal that he had heard about the Quaker school for refugee children in the small neighboring village where his family owned a butcher shop. He wanted to know if there were any Jewish children among the political and religious refugees, and if there were, his family wanted to invite them for Seder. Our principal acknowledged that there were Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant refugee children in our tight-knit community, and that he would announce the generous invitation at the noon assembly. The young man left directions to his house and reiterated that all would be welcome for the Seder.

There were seven or eight of us who walked five miles in the pitch dark to Ommen, the village where our unknown friend lived. The older students carried the younger ones on their shoulders. We were a group, a family, related by being born Jewish and having been uprooted during our youth. All of us had fled from our homes, leaving parents behind, dead or incarcerated. During that long walk we sang the songs recorded in the Haggadah, the Passover prayer book. We did not speak the same language, but we sang the same music. We taught the youngest in our group to recite the first of the four questions: "Why is this night different from all other nights?"

Soon, we came to our host's house. It was small with a thatched straw roof, and the butcher's shop was attached. Our hostess enveloped us all in a warm embrace even before introductions took place. The front room in this house was long with white-washed walls, and warm, so that the chill of the long walk soon left us. The festive candles created an atmosphere of sanctity and quiet, and the symbolic objects on the Seder platter were familiar. The butcher and his son counted their guests and brought chairs and pillows, including one, as the Haggadah instructs, for the Prophet Elijah.

"Why on this night must we all recline (sit on pillows)?" the questions continued. Some of us spoke little Dutch, but we communicated through our prayers and our tears. Our hosts were excellent cooks, and the traditional matzo ball soup reminded us of our own homes and families. We told the ancient Passover story of how the Jews escaped from Pharaoh's yoke; persecution and slave labor were all too fresh in our minds.

We walked home quietly, late at night, the little ones asleep in the arms of the older students. The rabbis had encouraged us through the ages to invite the strangers in our midst to share the Seder: "Let all those who are hungry come eat with us. Let all those who are in need share our meal." The family in Ommen had taken that instruction to heart.

As I fell asleep that night, I felt reassured that the bond that existed between my father and the Israelites enslaved in Egypt was uninterrupted. My guilt was relieved because my presence at the Seder had forged yet another link in the endless chain of people striving for freedom. With the love of an eleven-year-old, I somehow felt that my earnest prayers and presence at the Seder might contribute to my father's release from the concentration camp, and to the freedom of people everywhere.

As the evening wore on and my family told Passover stories, I shared my memory of that special Seder in Ommen. I did not tell them that the Dutch family was killed when the Germans invaded their country.

My youngest granddaughter asked the final question: "On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs. Why on this night do we eat only bitter herbs?" To remember.

—Renate G. Justin, Fort Collins, Colorado

# Souf: The Nectar of Flowers

הצוף שבפרח

"Kids, I have something sad to tell you," Mom said, a few weeks after the Dahans moved into the upstairs apartment. "Souf is very, very sick. She has cancer of the stomach."

Souf (meaning "nectar of flowers" in Hebrew) had just had her first birthday. I went to her party reluctantly, but stayed afterward to play with her because she was so much fun. She held my finger in her tiny hand and led me from room to room, pointing at each of her toys and telling me its name. I was amazed that a one-year-old could make me laugh.

I was in sixth grade, and I played basketball after school every day. When Mom told me how sick Souf was, she said, "Maybe you could visit her for a few minutes every day, since she won't be able to leave the house until she gets better."

"Fine," I agreed. "As long as I don't miss basketball practice."

Every time I came to the door, Souf was excited to see me and reached behind my back for the small surprise I always brought. Once, it was stickers and an album. I divided the album into sections for butterflies, fuzzy figures, and day-glow stickers. Souf's mother, Estee, told me Souf showed it to everybody who came to the apartment.

I especially enjoyed visiting at bath time. I would sit next to the tub and squirt Souf with squeegee toys, which made her squeal with laughter. My daily visits got longer and longer, but I still had time for basketball.

One day, Estee had scary news: Souf was going for an operation. She would have to stay in a sterile hospital room. "Only her closest relatives can visit her. That means her father and me," said Estee, "and you, too, since you're just about one of the family."

That made me feel important, but I was nervous. When I walked into the hospital room with a white mask over my nose and mouth, I was shivering inside.

"Hi, dinosaur," said Souf, giggling. She liked

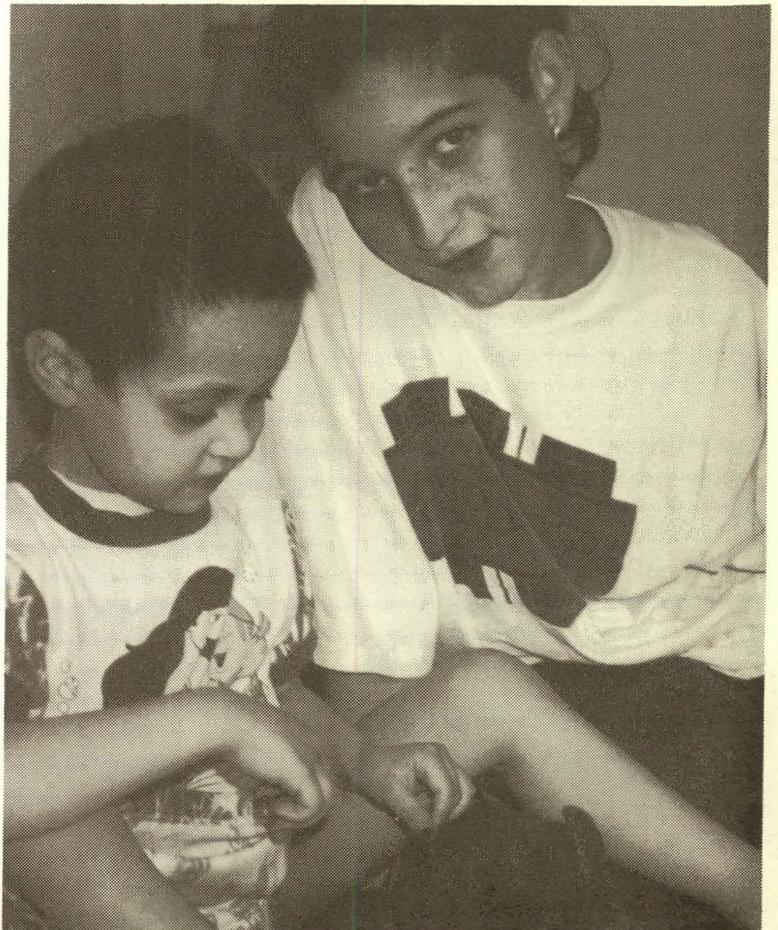
animals so much that everything reminded her of one. Her laughter relaxed me and soon I was pantomiming (imitating) different animals for Souf to guess what I was. The afternoon passed quickly and I didn't mind missing basketball practice.

Souf came home from the hospital with a tube in her stomach to funnel the medicine into her body so she wouldn't need injections. I worried that the tube would hurt her, but it didn't. She understood that the medicine would make her better. Her stomach was so swollen that she called it her balloon.

"We have to make the balloon go down," she told me cheerfully.

I told my parents, "No matter what happens to Souf, she turns it into a game. I've never known anyone else like that."

A few months later, Estee said, "Souf is going to have the tube removed. The cancer should be gone by now." I hadn't felt so happy since I'd won my basketball trophy.





After the operation, we took Souf to the beach, where we had a special celebration ceremony. I felt as if I had played a part in fighting her cancer.

Souf's head was bald because she was still taking medicine. She couldn't play outdoors because direct sunlight would make her nauseous. And she couldn't go to a play group because there were too many contagious diseases. So for her second birthday, she and I got dressed up in funny hats and bandannas.

"When you get better, we'll go to a museum where you can see hats and costumes from all over the world," I said.

"We're planning to take you and Souf to Disneyland next summer," Estee told me.

"Really?" I couldn't believe it. "That more than makes up for all the basketball practice I have missed!"

But the joy didn't last long. When Souf went back to the hospital for a routine check-up, we were shocked to learn that her cancer had come back. It had gotten much bigger and more serious. Just when we thought Souf was recovering on fast forward, her body was getting sicker, instead. Souf was cheerful, but I couldn't bear to think that she was going to die.

After Passover, I was frightened to see how thin and tired Souf looked. But she still liked to play. Knowing she loved animals, I brought my cat, Toffee, to visit her. We put funny hats on

Toffee and took photographs. The next day, I went to the local pet shop.

"Could I borrow a bunny rabbit and take it to Souf for a few hours?" I asked, explaining how sick she was.

"Sure," the shop owner agreed.

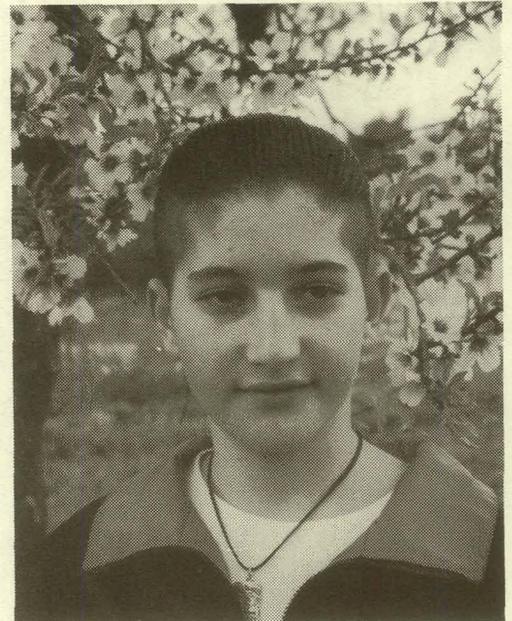
Souf sat on the floor and the bunny hopped around her. She laughed and laughed, but soon she was too tired to play. I returned the bunny to the pet shop and went back to visit Souf, telling her stories and holding her hand. Two days later, on 23 May, she died.

"You were her best friend," Estee told me at the funeral.

"And she was mine."

I spent the week of *shiva* (mourning) sitting on the floor of the Dahans' apartment, looking at all the smiling photos of Souf with tears in my eyes.

As I study the prayers for my *bar mitzvah*, Souf is always on my mind. It hurts that my treasured friend only lived for three years. But despite my terrible sadness, I realize that my life was made beautiful by knowing Souf. I became a better person for having a friend who was so brave in the face of certain death.



—David Weiman, 14, Haifa, and Leslie Cohen, Kibbutz Ein Hashofet, Israel. David, a vegetarian, enjoys basketball, reggae music and writing.

*And God said to me: "Do not say, 'I am still a boy,' but go wherever I send you and speak whatever I command you." — Jeremiah 1:7*  
(from David's *bar mitzvah* invitation)

# My Visit to Honduras

In October 1998, Hurricane Mitch ravaged Central America. Honduras, an already poor country, was one of the areas most devastated by the hurricane's path. Many groups from all over the world came to participate in relief efforts; our group came from Fredericksburg, Virginia.

We stayed in the city of El Progreso, the largest and closest city to the devastated banana plantation where we would be working. On our first day of work we met three women, two named Maria and one named Lupe. Hurricane Mitch had taken away their houses and they were living in temporary structures made mostly of plywood and reeds tied together. The cinderblock houses that we were constructing were for the two Marias.

The people in Honduras did not have a lot of stuff like we do. On the second day at the work-site, one of the Marias asked me if I would like to go to the river with her to get water for making concrete. After a while, our trips to the river became times of conversation and stories. We grew attached to the Honduran people, and they warmly expressed how much we meant to them. They often mentioned that there would be *una gran falta* (a void) after we left, and said that our group had refreshed their community. These women took us into their worlds and shared their lives with us.

Often the stories they related were

*A completed house with our team members, owners and workers from the community.*

*Photo: Beth Van Why*

about Hurricane Mitch. Our friend Harly told us that during the flooding, after his wife and two children were safe on a hilltop, he had taken a rowboat back and forth from the banana plantations to the city for two days straight (without sleeping) to help the Red Cross save people from drowning.

During these story times the Marias, Harly, and the other people I encountered were patient with my often shaky Spanish. They taught me new words and helped me with pronunciation when I had problems. The children in particular enjoyed being *maestros* (or teachers), correcting and drilling us. We practiced the Spanish vocabulary of words like "tree," "coconut," "eyelash," and they wanted to learn the English words too.

The friendliness of the Hondurans struck me as well. On the way to the plantation each day, several small children ran to the side of the road to wave to us as we went by. Once, we passed a man on the side of the road cutting a coconut with a machete. When I waved to him, he dropped not only the coconut but the machete as well to make sure he could wave back.

I became very close to one of the Marias.





Photo: Children playing Simon Says

We discussed things like politics, the hurricane, national birds and trees, vocabulary, and fruit. We also talked about what our lives were like. She exemplified the generosity that Hondurans hold in high regard. Even though Maria had so little, she happily insisted that I take home some of her treasured possessions to remember her by.

The Hondurans shared almost everything with each other. One day, someone gave Maria's eight-year-old son Omar a cracker with peanut butter. Without a thought, he broke it into three pieces and shared it with his mother and older brother. Many in our group also commented on his dedication, and how amazing it was for such a young boy. Omar, having learned his work ethic from his community, worked diligently to help us construct the house. This left a strong imprint on us. The Honduran women also stayed very busy, spending all day with the children, preparing food, carrying water from the river, doing laundry in the river, as well as many other things. But while the Hondurans worked hard, they were not rushed like we Americans tend to be.

One of the people we met was a teenager named Juan. He arrived at our hotel at six in the morning to serve us breakfast and stayed there until ten. He went to school from noon until five

in the afternoon, then came back to the hotel to work from six until ten at night. There are so many kids and so few schools that students must go in shifts, usually three hours long. One school we visited had only three classrooms, each with six tables, a blackboard, and no electricity.

To me, many of the Honduran people are heroes. The coordinator of our group was dedicated to arranging and planning food, work and fun for the groups that come to help. This is in addition to his full-time ministry through his church for those in his community who need shelter, food, and clothing. Harly's selfless act of helping the Red Cross save people's lives with the rowboat is a wonderful

example of heroism that would be applauded in the States. The construction workers who toiled long days in the sun, readily giving their time to help the community get reestablished, and the daily way that the Hondurans care for and give to each other are examples of quiet heroism.

Both the Hondurans and the Americans were deeply impacted by the trip. The Hondurans received building materials, help, and hope while we gained perspective. I was touched by the way they used the word "love" more freely and more often when talking about people than we do. Their easy-going personalities and loving openness showed us that we Americans are often caught up in ourselves and our own personal schedules. Their sense of community, the way they shared with and helped each other, and the way they welcomed us was heartwarming.

My trip made me realize that so much of what we have is excess. In comparison to our society, Hondurans have the bare minimum. But because their lives are not so cluttered with material things, they are able to maintain a clearer perspective of life in the world. It is amazing to me that I had to go to a place where there is so little in order to learn so much.

—Jennifer Landis, Fredericksburg, Virginia

## Charles Schultz

A great man died this week  
His humor,  
His talent, and his heart  
Will always be remembered.

What will I do every Sunday morning  
without the joy  
that fills my heart when I read his comics?  
Linus will never  
grow out of his blanket.  
Schroeder will never  
become a famous composer...



like Beethoven.  
Lucy will never  
marry Schroeder.  
Charlie will never  
kick the football.

Or win a baseball game.  
Or kiss the little red-haired girl.  
But he will always be with me.  
Sometimes I still sing about

Happiness,  
and finding pencils  
and tying my shoes.  
I think we all do in our  
own way.



You're a good man, Charles Schultz!

—Kate McKee, grade 6, Jacksonville, Florida.  
Charles Schultz died on 12 February at the age of 77.

## What is Beauty?

I stared at my appearance in the mirror  
My ugly reflection looked so clear  
A poster of a model stared down at me  
That is what they say I should be

About eighty pounds with a cigarette  
Lots of makeup, a smiling vignette  
I grabbed a magazine off my bed  
Visions of perfection ran through my head

I felt like a dejected weed  
Looking at beautiful flowers, then at me  
Why am I obsessing over every little ounce?  
Isn't it the beauty on the inside that counts?

I wish I could be liked for the true me  
Not for the person everyone told me to be

—Ki Kallbrier, 14, Saratoga, California

## Spring Whaling

A blue sea speckled with ice  
spread out like a checkers game  
Stretches out to the horizon.

Seven men in coats of snow  
seated in a boat of seal skins  
Paddle furiously to catch the supreme creature  
of the Arctic Sea.

A fountain of mist rises into the air,  
then fades as the whale comes up to breathe.  
The harpooner lifts his weapon  
and poses like a statue, then releases it.

A bitter cry of pain sounds  
as the tip digs into the whale's skin.  
The valiant creature fights to the end  
until it is silent.

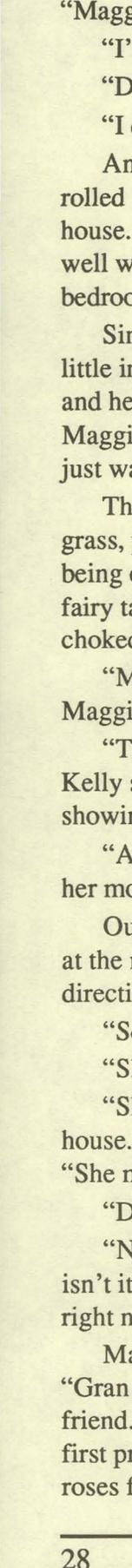
The hunters return with red rosy smiles  
and share the great kill with the whole village.  
The whale is butchered and  
unalik\* is served.

Cruel as it may seem,  
the great sea creature actually gives itself  
The Inupiat hunters thank the whale spirit  
in one of the earth's never ending cycles.

\*boiled whale blubber and skin

—Christina Jeffery, 13, Barrow, Alaska

Christina writes, "Twice a year in Barrow the Inupiat people hunt for the bowhead whale. The more traditional hunt is in the spring. The whaling crews go onto the ice, where they may stay for weeks at a time. They hunt the whale in a boat that is made from the skins of six seals. Once a whale is caught, a great number of people and boats tow it onto the ice for butchering. In the fall, the whale is pulled onto the beach by tractors, since there isn't any ice. I have witnessed the pulling in and butchering of a whale in the fall, and it is an awesome sight. Whaling is a very old and special part of the Inupiat culture and a big asset to the community. I myself am not Inupiat Eskimo, but I am 1/8 Yupik Eskimo."



# The Memory Book

A voice echoed through the two-story home. "Maggie, telephone." Mrs. Kelley called Maggie.

"I'm busy."

"Don't you want to know who it is?"

"I don't care. I don't want to talk to anyone."

An hour had passed since the moving van had rolled up the driveway of the house next door. Gran's house. Two grimy workmen struggled to unload a well worn sofa. Maggie slouched in front of her bedroom window watching their progress.

Since her grandmother's death Maggie found that little interested her. Her grades had dropped in school and her friends had stopped trying to cheer her up. Maggie knew her parents worried about her. But she just wanted to be left alone.

The breeze, sweet with the smell of freshly cut grass, played gently in Maggie's curtain. Months of being closed up changed the house next door from a fairy tale cottage to a cold and empty shell. Weeds choked the roses in the front garden.

"Maggie, come down here, please." *What now?*, Maggie wondered as she trudged towards the voices.

"This is our new neighbor, Emma Wilson," Mrs. Kelly said. "And this is our Maggie. How about showing Emma the sights this afternoon?"

"Aww, do I have to?" Maggie asked. One look at her mother's face gave Maggie her answer.

Outside on the street, Maggie paused to glance at the moving van, then started off in the opposite direction. A barbecue smell drifted on the breeze.

"Sorry your mom made you come." Emma began.

"She thinks I need to get out more."

"She told me your grandmother used to live in our house." When Maggie didn't speak Emma continued. "She must have liked roses."

"Did Mom tell you that, too?" Maggie asked.

"No, just a guess. It is a rose garden out front, isn't it? What was it like having your grandmother right next door?"

Maggie stopped and turned to look at Emma. "Gran and I did everything together. She was my best friend. I never thought of her as being old. We won first prize at the fair for the last three years with the roses from that garden." Maggie turned away. "I

guess someone else will win this year."

"Maybe not," Emma said as she pushed at her glasses. "I don't know much about roses but maybe we could fix them up."

"No, we can't! Gran's the only one who can fix them and she's not here!"

Emma's eyes filled with tears. "No, she's not," she said quietly. "But at least you've got your memories. I never knew my grandparents."

Maggie and Emma returned home to find the Wilsons' driveway empty. The air hung around them with the promise of rain. Dark clouds loomed on the horizon, matching the storm of emotions Maggie felt inside. She returned to her bedroom alone.

A steady rain pelted Maggie's window. She sat on her ruffled bedspread, lost in a sea of photos. Her grandmother's face smiled up at her from a picture she held, and Maggie smiled back. Could Emma be right? It hurt so much not to have Gran with her. Should she stop wishing for something she couldn't have and be glad for what she did?

"Mom, can you pick me up a photo album?" Maggie asked the next morning at breakfast.

"Sure, honey. What's it for?"

"I've got some things of Gran's I want to put in it. You know, photos and stuff."

It didn't take long for Maggie to fill the photo album. Gran at her birthday party, Gran decorating the Christmas tree... Squeezed between photos were cards Gran had given her and the poems Maggie's mother had found in a box in the attic. Tears stained Maggie's cheeks but in her heart Gran didn't seem quite so far away anymore. She made notes about each picture as she relived the memories. Finally, she sat up and straightened her stiffened back.

Through the window, Maggie saw Emma bent over the rose garden pulling at the weeds. Maggie carefully laid the photo album aside. She hurried downstairs and out the front door. Maggie dropped to her knees beside Emma and started pulling weeds just as she'd done so many times before. Emma stopped working and looked at Maggie.

"We've got a lot of work to do if we want to have a chance at first prize this year," Maggie said.

—Lisa Hart, Fenelon Falls, Ontario, Canada

# DEAR HANNA

*My grandmother, who lived with us, just died. At the funeral, everyone fussed over my younger brothers. Hardly anyone talked to me. I am almost 12. Why don't people care about me? —Suzzie*

**Dear Suzzie:** Likely your younger brothers were open about their need for attention, so people responded by playing with them, feeding them, and reading to them. I suspect you did not make similar demands, and so received little attention. It is very easy to understand why you felt ignored, lonely, and hurt.

I'll begin answering with a story:

*In 1957 a Bangkok monastery relocated. The monks had to move a clay Buddha weighing more than 5000 lbs. As the crane picked the statue up, rain began to fall heavily. Lest the statue be harmed, the monks lowered and covered it with a large tarp. But damage had already been done; the head monk sadly observed a crack in the clay. During the night, he went to check on the statue with a flashlight. He thought he detected a gleam emanating from the crack, so he assembled the monks. Using hammer and chisel, they broke apart the eight-inch-thick clay shell. The gleam grew brighter as more and more clay fell off, revealing a gold interior. Carefully they spent the night removing the thick cover. When they were finished, they gazed at the ten and a half foot, solid gold Buddha.*

*A description in the relocated temple containing the restored Buddha surmises that several hundred years previously, monks had covered the figure with thick clay to prevent an attacking Burmese army from stealing the precious gold statue.*

I use this story to suggest that we are each born, like the gold Buddha, with the beauty of our natural selves: our pure, gold-like essence. When young, we openly express ourselves and our feelings, pains, and joys. Adults, even strangers, can often read a small child's message and readily respond. But as we grow older, for many reasons, possibly fears of judgement, inadequacy, and rejection, we tend to put on a "layer of clay": feelings are driven inward instead of being expressed. Perhaps this is what happened to you. Would it help if you tried to crack your shell? Initiate conversations, question others about their experiences, fears, and moods, share your own feelings, and ask for help and advice. If you allow your true self to be seen by the world, others will be much more likely to engage and respond to you. I am enclosing a pretend hammer and chisel for your encouragement!

*Illustration by Brett Forman*

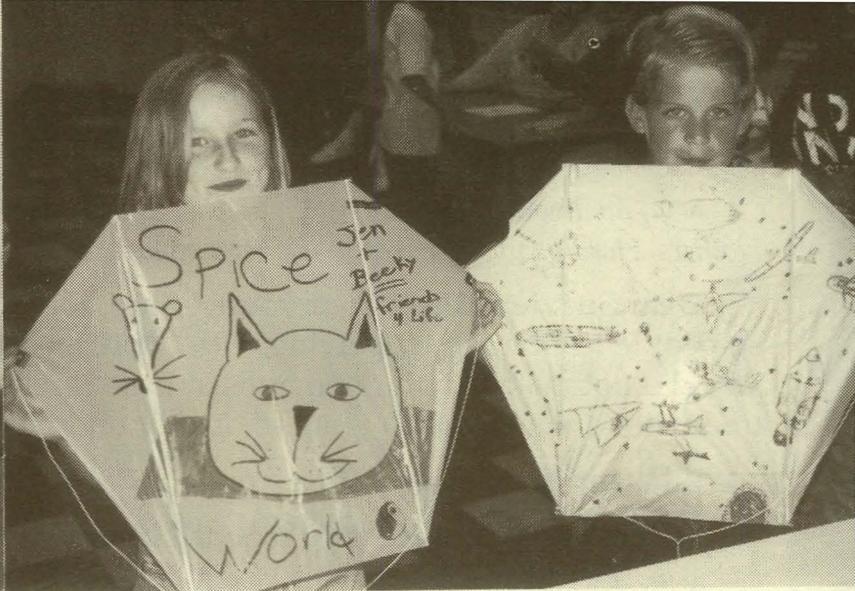
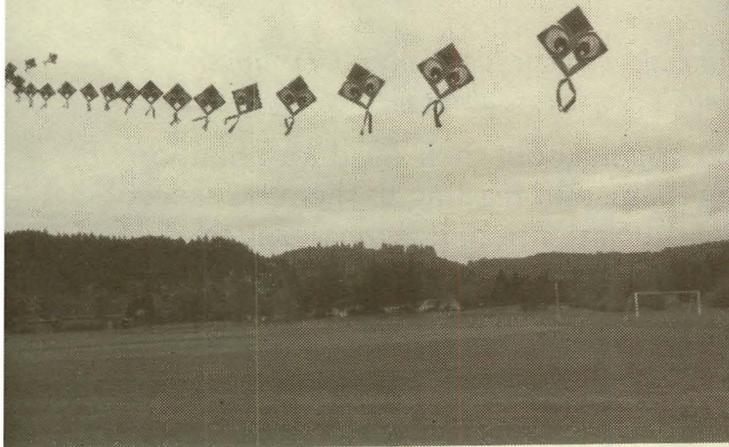


Send your questions or comments to:  
**Dear Hanna** c/o *Skipping Stones*  
P.O. Box 3939, Eugene, OR 97403 USA

In Peace,

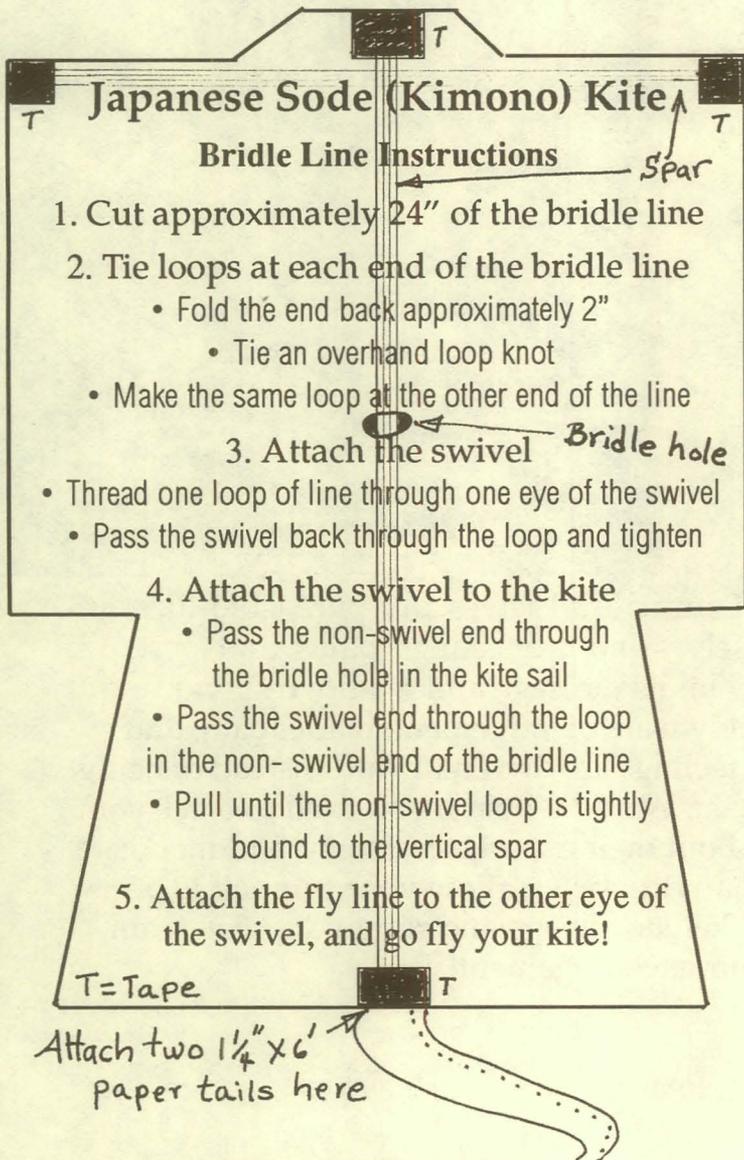
*Hanna*

# Go Fly A Kite!



April is U. S. National Kite Month. A warm and breezy spring day makes perfect kite flying weather. You can build one of these simple kites and fly high!

**Small Sled Kite:** There are two legs of equal length to each bridle—one on the left keel and one on the right. The fly line attaches to a loop where the two legs meet.



## Safety Tips

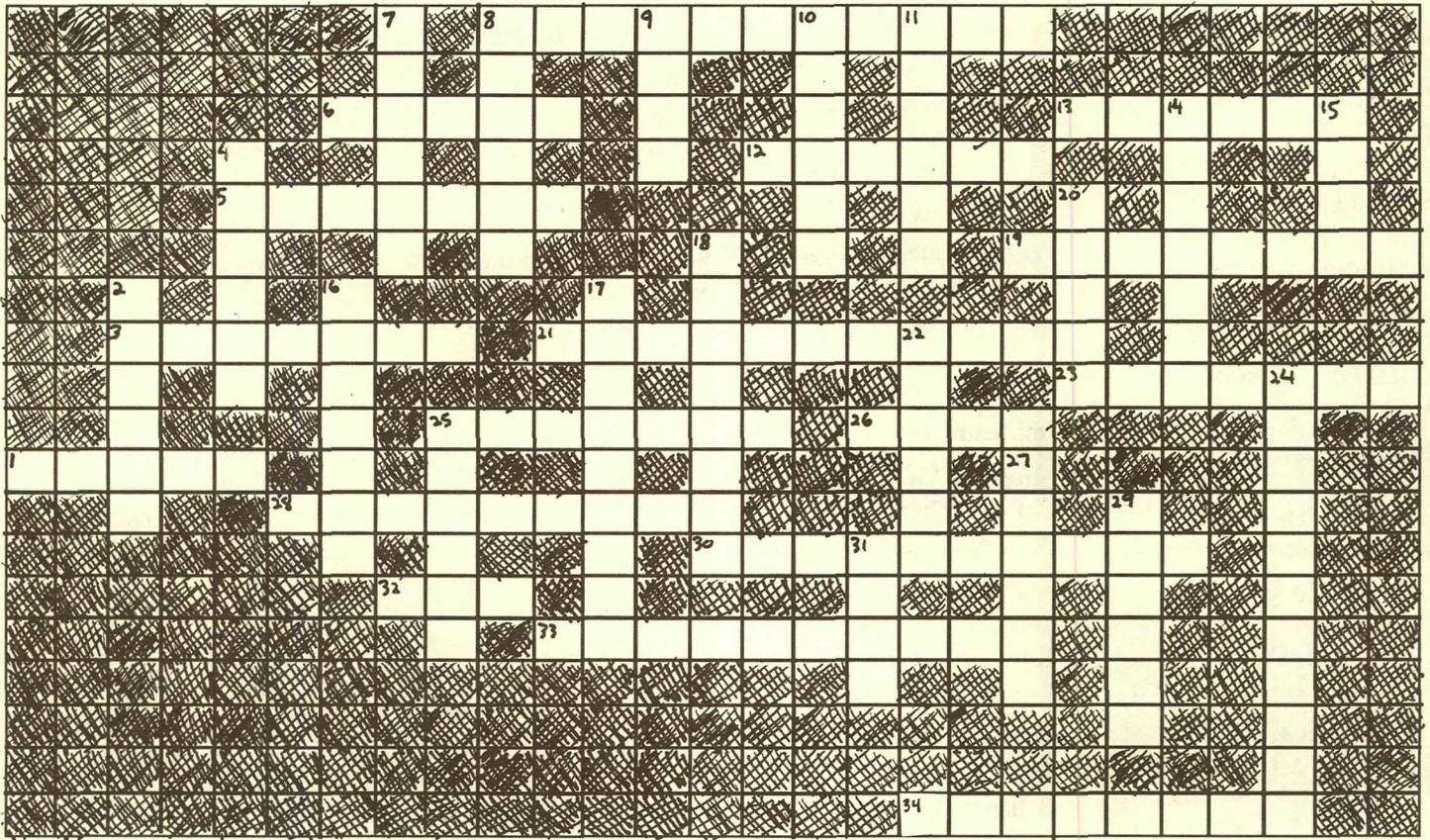
- Watch the ground around you. Look out for lumpy fields, pot holes, and speed bumps.
- Don't walk backwards. You may fall over.
- Wear sunglasses when it's sunny.
- Choose kites you can control easily.
- Ask grownups for help if you have questions. Most kite flyers are more than happy to help. (Ask parents' permission before speaking with the kite flyer.)
- Don't fly your kite in wet or stormy weather. Lightning loves a wet kite line.
- Don't fly near power lines or antennas. If a kite does get tangled in them, call the power company for help.
- Don't fly near busy streets.
- Keep a safe distance away from others flying kites; kite lines can easily cross and get tangled. Spend your time flying, not untangling lines.
- Airports are off limits. Don't fly your kite high enough to hit a plane.
- If your kite gets caught in a tree, don't try to remove it yourself; ask a grownup to help you.
- Don't use your kite to scare people or animals.
- Most importantly, have fun flying your kite!

## Kiting Resources

- AKA (American Kiteflyers Association) Website: <http://www.aka.kite.org>; email: [aka@aka.kite.org](mailto:aka@aka.kite.org)
- *American Kite* (magazine) Tel: (916) 273-3855

— Instructions, photos, sketches and safety tips by Dr. Richard Page, Creswell, Oregon.

# A Nature Crossword *by Carolyn Hill, Silver Springs, Maryland*



## Across

1. This unopened flower bud is used as a spice, especially during Christmas.
3. This green, tropical fruit is used to make guacamole.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ broth is used in many soup recipes.
6. We put \_\_\_\_\_ in our food to make it more tasty.
8. Medicine man in Africa and other parts of the world.
12. What chewing gum is made from.
13. A large cat now almost extinct because its fur is used to make coats.
19. More than 3,000 types of rainforest \_\_\_\_\_ make us better when we're sick.
21. The sound of its wings gives this tiny animal its name.
23. Many tropical plants are used in natural \_\_\_\_\_ that we use to wash our hair.
25. At the zoo we feed elephants bags of \_\_\_\_\_.
26. The leaf-cutter \_\_\_\_\_ can live in an underground nest more than one mile long.
28. People kiss underneath this plant at Christmas.
30. The bark of this tree is made into perfume.
32. A \_\_\_\_\_ constrictor can be over ten feet long.
33. The Rosy \_\_\_\_\_ flower is used to cure leukemia.
34. Large tropical fruits with meat and milk

## Down

2. Panda bears live in these tall, tropical grasses.
4. This cat looks like a leopard, but isn't. It is found in Central and South America.
7. The giant canopy is one amazing \_\_\_\_\_ of a rainforest.
8. You might put laundry or apples in a \_\_\_\_\_ basket.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ on-the-cob.
10. A colorful flower that grows on plants and trees.
11. The "Fruit Loops" bird with the colorful beak.
14. The King of the apes that lives in rainforests of Africa.
15. Tropical forests can get over 30 feet of \_\_\_\_\_ per year.
16. We cook with this tree sap.
17. From wood and rattan we make \_\_\_\_\_.
18. A fruit we eat in soup and salads.
20. Rainforest trees scatter their \_\_\_\_\_ with help from wind, birds, and mammals.
22. We like this fruit as much as a monkey does.
24. A red plant used to decorate homes with at Christmas.
25. A serpent found coiled in the forest canopy.
27. This monkey shouts a lot.
29. Many people start their day with a cup of \_\_\_\_\_.
31. A \_\_\_\_\_ beetle recycles excreta and turns it into little balls that it pushes through the forest.

# PEN PALS

## Croatia

**Adriana Uroda**, girl, 12  
Nikole Tesle 40  
22000 Sibebik, Croatia  
Int: girl and boy pen pals

**Maja Prsle**, girl, 13  
Snjeznicka 26  
Gerovo 51304 Croatia  
Int: reading, movies, sports

**Ivana Versa**, girl, 14  
Epulonova 12  
52100 Pula, Croatia  
Int: movies, gymnastics

**Petra Maričić**, girl, 15  
Gruška 20  
10000 Zagreb, Croatia  
Int: music, dancing, reading

**Lucia Lazić**, girl, 16  
Cosmijeva 4  
21000 Split, Croatia  
Int: music, guitar, painting

**Ivana Zorica**, girl, 16  
Stankovačka 4  
22000 Šibenik, Croatia  
Int: fitness, volleyball, music

**Marinka Šimunac**, girl, 17  
and her sister, age 10, both at  
Karamanova 4/20 Kat  
21000 Split, Croatia

## Finland

**Susanna Lindqvist**, girl, 16  
Ytternäsvägen  
FIN - 21660 Nagu, Finland  
Int: singing, downhill skiing

## Ghana

**Akwasi Osei Ampofo**, boy, 12  
(Int: Bible, reading) and  
**Benjamin O. Ampofo**, boy, 15  
(Int: football, Bible, travelling)  
both at Juaben Police Station  
P. O. Box 28  
Juaben-Ashanti, Ghana

**Saaka Seidu Sampson**, m, 15  
c/o Victory Assembly of God  
P. O. Box 597  
Techiman B/A, Ghana  
Int: science, studies, ping pong

**Lila Adu Appiah**, girl, 16  
**Shadrack O. Hayford**, m, 16  
both at P. O. Box 1826  
Sunyani, B/A, Ghana  
Int: pen pals, friends, dancing

## Guyana, S. America

**Trandson Benn**, boy, 14  
Section O Industrial Area  
Mackenzie, Linden, Guyana  
Int: soccer, Nintendo

**Stacy Hinds**, girl, 14  
63 Silvertown  
Wismar, Linden, Guyana  
Int: dance, books, outdoors

**Travis Mendonca**, boy, 14  
65 Accabre Drive  
Kara Kara, Linden, Guyana  
Int: reading, swimming

**Shellyza Alexander**, f, 15  
211 Greenheart Street  
Mackenzie, Linden, Guyana

**Sharma Allicock**, girl, 15  
165 Glenn Road  
Kara Kara, Linden, Guyana  
Int: basketball, reading

**Deickieza Daniels**, girl, 15  
94B Wismar Housing  
Scheme, Wismar, Linden  
Guyana, South America  
Int: reading, singing, drama

**Lana James**, girl, 15  
439 Greenheart Street  
Mackenzie, Linden, Guyana  
Int: singing, dancing

**Brookiena Klencian**, f, 15  
21 Republic Avenue  
Mackenzie, Linden, Guyana  
Int: basketball, soccer

**Natoya Lyte**, girl, 15  
111 Thomas Street  
Kara Kara, Linden, Guyana  
Int: singing, reading

**Winford Vincent**  
575 Ariwa Street  
Retrieve, Linden, Guyana  
Int: cricket, running, books

### Just Kidding

Question: What do you  
call a sleeping bull?

Answer: A bulldozer!

—Kelsey Duffy, 11  
Lafayette, Louisiana

To be listed on the Pen Pal page, we request US \$5. You will also get a copy of the issue in which you are listed. Low-income and subscribers get one free listing. **Priority is given to ages 7-17.** Please do not give the same addresses out to all of your friends. Thanks!

## Kenya

**Fifty pupils**, ages 8-16, want  
pen pals all over the world.  
Write them c/o Secretary,  
B.M.Y.G. P. O. Box 151  
Butula, Busia, Kenya

## Lithuania

**Justina Verbylaite**, girl, 11  
Berjir 65  
Garliava 4316  
Kauno raj, Lithuania  
Int: art, music, sports

**Viktorija Zaksate**, girl, 14  
Bandužiy 15-18  
Klaipeda 5814, Lithuania  
Int: swimming, writing letters

**Ksenija A. Viesiolkina**, 16,  
Draugiste 1-24  
4761 Visaginas, Lithuania  
ksenija@visaginas.is.lt  
Int: friends, books, music

## Russia

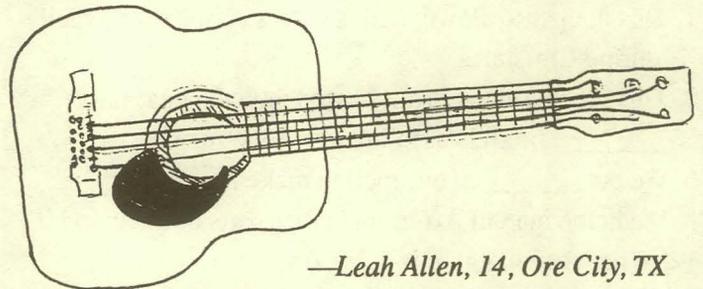
**Karina Ionesova**, girl, 14  
**Eva Ionesova**, girl, 9  
P. O. Box 3004  
RU-443099 Samara, Russia  
Int: writing, music, postcards

## Sweden

**Emma C. Karlsson**, girl, 15  
Brunnsvägen 7  
Rödeby 370 30 Sweden  
angell\_2000@hotmail.com  
Int: basketball, friends

## United States

One room **Sunday School**  
**students** —ten girls (ages  
6-16), three boys (ages 9-13)  
Mrs. Pat Turner  
10135 Norwood Road  
Wingina, VA 24599  
Int: church activities, pen pals



—Leah Allen, 14, Ore City, TX

**Hi!** I'm a thirteen-year-old girl, and I'm in seventh grade. I live on an archipelago in southwest Finland on an island called Nagu (Nauvo, in Finnish). About six percent of everyone in Finland doesn't speak Finnish, and I'm one of them. The only Finnish I can speak is what I've learned in school.

I'm interested in horses, and go horseback riding every Thursday. I also like to take a walk with my neighbor's dog Blenda; I do it everyday. On the weekends I go out with my friends and sometimes we go dancing. I love downhill skiing too. Unfortunately there aren't any big mountains near here, so I always have to travel a long way if I want to go downhill skiing.

I would love to have a pen-friend who is between thirteen and fifteen years old.

—Susanna Lindqvist, see column 1 for address

## Celebrations

**April:** National Kite Month

6: Moharram (Islam) • Chakri Day (Thailand)

10-16: Young People's Poetry Week

12: Ramnavami (Hindu)

19: Passover begins at sundown (Jewish)

22: Earth Day • 23: Easter (Christian)

27: Take our Daughters to Work Day • Passover ends

28: Arbor Day • 29: Greenery Day (Japan)

**May:** Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

1: May Day; Spring Festival and International Labor Day

2: Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day)

5: Cinco de Mayo • Children's Day (Japan)

10: Israel Independence Day • Mother's Day (Mexico)

**National Week of the Ocean, 9-15 April** was founded to promote the ocean's preservation for future generations. What can you do to get involved? Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper about local ocean issues, or study different things about the ocean (its history, endangered sea creatures, or even problems like offshore drilling and ocean dumping). For more information, contact: National Week of the Ocean, P.O. Box 179, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33302.

**Thirtieth Annual Earth Day, 22 April.** The theme for this year's Earth Day is "New Energy for a New Era." How can we make the kinds of energy we use now more efficient and earth-friendly, and what new, cleaner kinds of energy can we use? Visit [www.earthday.net](http://www.earthday.net) to find out how you can take part.

**Doris Haddock, 90**, of Dublin, New Hampshire, known to her eleven great grandchildren as "Granny D," is walking across America from California to Washington, D.C. She left Los Angeles on 1Jan. 1999, and walks about ten miles a day. Her goal is to show the U.S. Congress that people do care about campaign finance reform and their democratic rights and responsibilities. She has just reached Capitol Hill, in spite of her arthritis and emphysema, and talked to countless people along her way. She suggests people contact their representatives and demand campaign finance reform. Visit her at [www.GrannyD.com](http://www.GrannyD.com)

**National TV-Turnoff Week, 24-30 April**  
Millions of Americans will participate in the Annual TV-Turnoff Week. They'll play, exercise, read, talk to family or friends, or dozens of other *screen-free* activities. Many also use this week to make lasting changes in their TV viewing habits. The National TV-Turnoff Week is sponsored by TV-Free America. Tel. (800) 939-6737, [www.tvfa.org](http://www.tvfa.org).

## Mary- The Rock

Know this girl, Mary  
my best friend, I suppose.

Never moves

never talks

never stops staring at the TV

just sits there,

her print in the chair

deep and very warm.

I ask her if she wants to play Monopoly

she never answers

never moves

just stares at the glowing TV.

I ask her if she wants pizza

she just sits.

When I get up and say goodbye,

she doesn't move

sits as still as a rock.

I left her sitting there.

Found another Mary

who plays and jumps

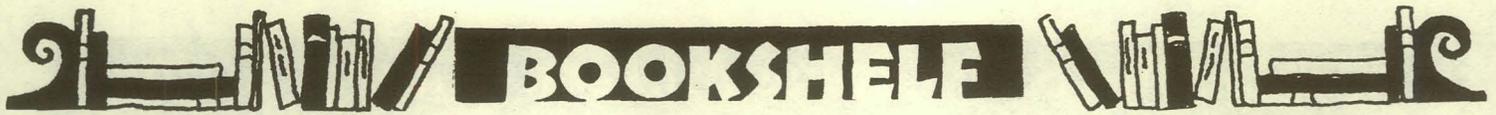
and her soul is full of playfulness

and we play and eat and never

ever just sit and watch TV all day.



—Sharia Roberts, 14, Caribbean, Baytown, Texas



**The Blessing Seed** *A Creation Myth for the New Millennium* by Caitlín Matthews, illustr. Alison Dexter (*Barefoot Books*). A thought-provoking reinterpretation of the Biblical creation story. The author replaces the idea of original sin with original blessing, and emphasizes a loving God who encourages the first woman and man to nurture and care for all of creation. Ages 6–10.

**Exploring the Earth with John Wesley Powell** by Michael Elsohn Ross, illustr. Wendy Smith (*Carolrhoda Books, Inc.*). A child's guide to becoming a geologist, written from an earth explorer's point of view. Clearly illustrates different types of rocks, equipment, earth events, and other basics of geology. Ages 7–11.

**My Nature Journal** by Adrienne Olmstead (*Pajaro, CA; www.pajaro.com*). For budding young naturalists. Provides scientific information and plenty of space for field observations and reflections. Jump to or skip over any of the five sections: Woodlands, Meadows, Ponds & Streams, Seashore, and Twilight. Ages 8–13.

**Rising Sun** by Frank Hajcak, illustr. Tricia Garwood (*Human Potential Press*). One Native American boy searches for knowledge and an understanding of nature and harmony. He returns to his people and shares with them his newfound appreciation for nature. Colorful and creative illustrations. Ages 6–11.

**One Child** by Christopher Cheng, illustr. Steven Woolman (*Crocodile Books*). A young girl, upset by the harm she sees being done to the environment, decides to take action by doing anything and everything she can to help. The effect one child has on the world is startling, heartwarming, and inspiring. Ages 5–10.

**We Shake in a Quake** by Hannah Gelman Givon, illustr. David Uttal (*Tricycle Press, CA*). The story of one family's actions during a minor earthquake, as told by the youngest child. The family reacts by forming a preparedness plan for the next quake, as does the child's class at school. Colorful, engaging illustrations. Ages 7 and up.

**Multicultural Resource Calendar 2000** (*Diversity Resources, MA, 1-800-865-5549*). The most complete multicultural calendar available today, containing an extensive resource section with a short description of religious and cultural celebrations and festivals. Also includes the birthdays of many historical personalities. For all classrooms.

**New Moon: Sports** (*Crown*). Written and edited by girls, this is one of three non-fiction books to help girls explore their ideas, dreams and goals, and most importantly, themselves. It highlights the many ways girls can participate in athletic activities, and examines common myths about girls and sports. Contains stories, poems, interviews and advice. Ages 8–13.

**Sing through the Seasons** compiled by the Society of Brothers, music arranged by Marlys Swinger (*Plough Publishing*). For the musically inclined! Ninety-nine children's songs for all seasons, with accompanying scores. Great for intermediate-level piano players. Ages 6–11.

**Something Nice to See** by Theodore Roosevelt Gardner, illustr. Peter Hamlin (*Allen Knoll, Publishers*). A young boy learns to celebrate his differences with the help of his friend and neighbor, Italian immigrant Sam Rhodia, who builds the well-known Watts Towers in Los Angeles, California. Ages 7–11.

**The Songs of Birds** *Stories and Poems from Many Cultures* retold by Hugh Lupton, illustr. Steve Palin (*Barefoot Books*). A wonderful collection of stories, poems, and myths about birds, from around the world and across time. With delicate and lifelike illustrations. Ages 6–13.

**The Upside Down Boy/ El niño de cabeza** by Juan Felipe Herrera, illustr. Elizabeth Gómez (*Children's Book Press*). Juanito's migrant family settles down so he can attend school. Because he doesn't know English, understanding his teachers and classmates is difficult. Gradually, with his teacher's help and his family's support, Juanito blossoms in his new surroundings. Ages 6–10.

As parents and teachers, our task is to guide youth, to help them build a sense of community, responsibility, a strong character, and ecological sensitivity. We can do so only by setting an example of what we wish them to become.

Loving nature is hard to do in our modern, technological world. Our automobiles, brick or concrete buildings, entertainment and exercise equipment, and electronic gadgets keep us isolated from our natural surroundings. As parents and teachers, our first task is to plant seeds of love for nature in our youth, to help germinate the seed, and to nurture the tender shoots—to instill a sense of appreciation, passion and love for nature through frequent, direct experiences with it during their formative years and in everyday life.

### Connecting with Nature

- **Gardening** offers a superb hands-on experience for kids. School yards (and your own back yard) make a perfect site for a garden. In addition to a vegetable garden, kids can create a flower garden, perennial herb garden, or ornamental shrub and rock garden. Students can also create a specific garden that is described in a favorite book. As the seasons progress and years roll by, students visit the gardens several times a week not only to pull weeds, mulch and water the plants, but also to observe and record changes and growth.
- **Create a habitat** suitable for a species in your backyard, school yard or empty lot nearby. Which species are native to your region? What are their preferred habitats? What kinds of flowers and plants do butterflies, birds, bees, etc. choose to frequent? Kids research

the habitat needs and scout around to see if suitable sites exist. Once a habitat has been created, students monitor the site to see if and when these species or animals show up.

- **Form a Nature Society** in your classroom or school. The goal? To spend time in communion with nature, every day if possible. Students learn to enjoy, appreciate, love, and understand natural products by working and interacting in small groups outdoors.

- **Plan camping, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, mountaineering, beachcombing, swimming and other wilderness adventures** during school vacations, weekends and holidays. Invite students to record their thoughts, feelings, and observations in a nature journal.

- **Vision Quest Retreats** Organize vision quest and/or silent retreats for your students or family where athletic skills or physical endurance do not count highly. Participants seek a contemplative communion with nature, and a silent, meditative reflection of the surroundings in their mind. Vision quests offer more flexibility to both the participants and the organizers. Choose a safe site and a warm season, and a set of well-understood guidelines. Take enough drinking water and sleeping gear. As you enter the nature sanctuary, do ask for permission from the nature spirits so that everyone will be sure to enjoy this communion.

- **Multimedia & audio/video** resources do have a place in generating student interest in nature. They can be used to gather information and to supplement your teaching but should not be used as a substitute for direct nature experiences. Generally speaking, internet sites, CD ROMs, videos, and slides cannot give a true immersion experience with nature.

### Recommended Resources

**Windows on the Wild:** *Biodiversity Basics; An Educator's Guide to Exploring the Web of Life* and *A Student Book (World Wildlife Fund and Acorn Naturalist)*. This excellent two-part teaching resource contains 33 well planned activities with background information and reproducible student pages. They are designed to teach students of all ages about biodiversity and to stimulate critical thinking, discussion, and informed decision making on behalf of the environment. For grades 3 to 11.

**Discovering the Naturalist Intelligence** *Science in the School Yard* by Jenna Glock, Susan Wertz, and Maggie Meyer (*Zephyr Press*). Observing, collecting, predicting, analyzing, and communicating are essential skills for a naturalist. They can be encouraged in your students using this teaching resource, which offers many outdoors activities, from "Alphabet Hike" to "Wonders of Clouds." For grades 1 to 6.

**Reconnecting with Nature: Finding wellness through restoring your bond with the Earth** by Michael Cohen (*Ecopress, Corvallis, OR*). The sustainability of nature depends on the use of our 53 naturally inherited senses. Unfortunately, we are learning to restrict ourselves to only five of these senses. This contributes to many environmental and personal problems. Participate in the many suggested activities at the end of each chapter to help your verbal-reasoning mind to reconnect with your sensory mind. This resource shows us ways to use nature's wisdom to awaken our dormant sensitivities and rebuild our spiritual connection with the natural world.

**Vital Signs: The Environmental Trends that Are Shaping our Future** and **State of the World: A Report on Progress toward a Sustainable Society** (W. W. Norton), from the Worldwatch Institute, are two up-to-date resources for teaching global, ecological and nature conservation issues to middle and high school students.



## ***“Rice Threshing”***

**Rice is a staple food in Southeast Asia. This painting shows a traditional method of separating grains of rice from harvested plants.**

*Oil painting by Don R. Driggars, Tucson, Arizona*

***Skipping Stones***  
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**Eugene, Oregon 97403**

*Sample copy. Please subscribe!*