

# Skipping Stones

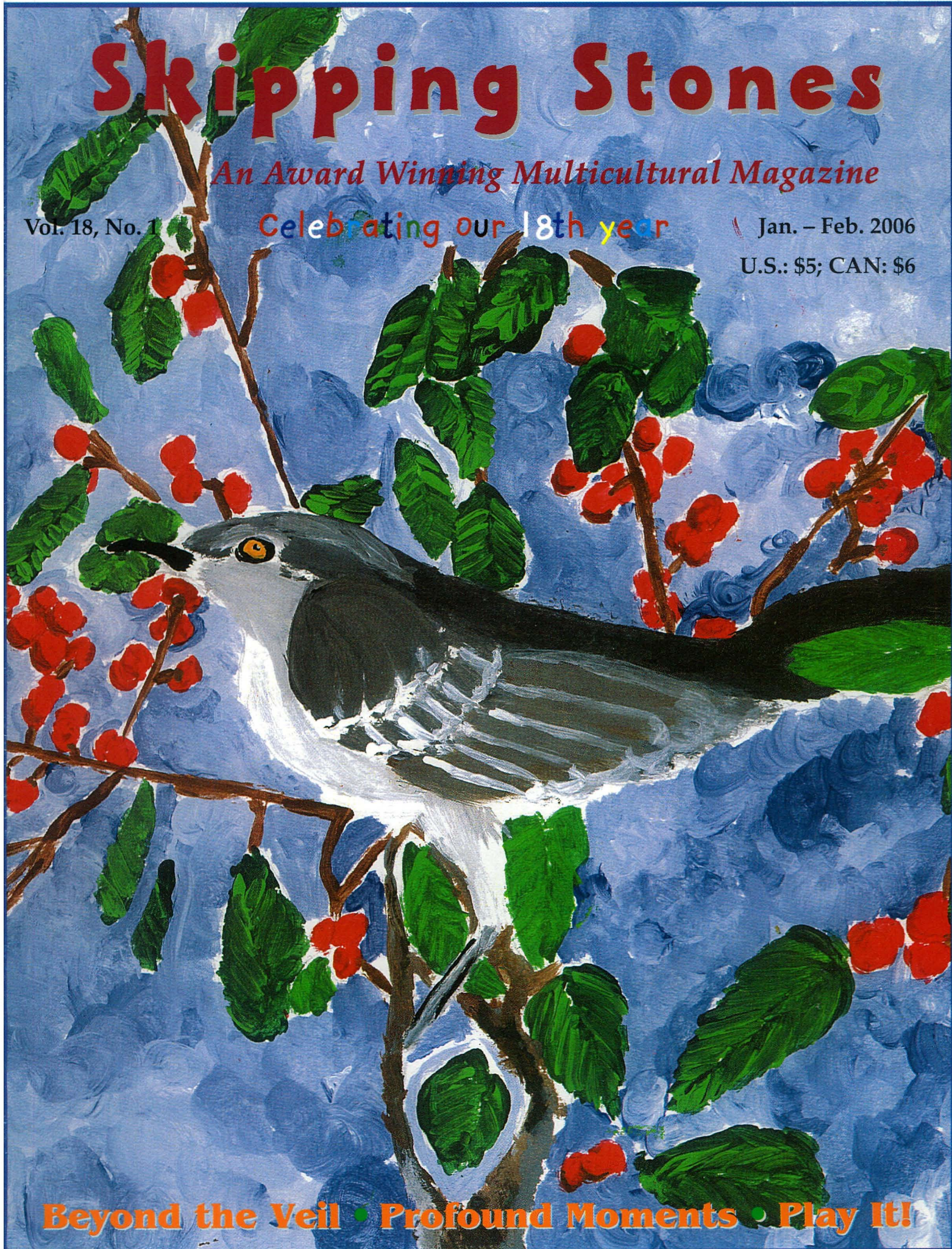
*An Award Winning Multicultural Magazine*

Vol. 18, No. 1

Celebrating our 18th year

Jan. – Feb. 2006

U.S.: \$5; CAN: \$6



**Beyond the Veil • Profound Moments • Play It!**



# In this issue of Skipping Stones

Vol. 18 no. 1

Jan.-Feb. 2006

ISSN: 0899-529X

## Beyond the Veil • Profound Moments

- 7 What the World is Really Like
- 8 **Bedouin Tea:** In Jordan
- 9 Aspiring Authors from Skokie, Illinois
- 10 My Grandmother
- 12 An African American Girl • Eternity
- 14 A Profound Moment... *Ein bedeutender Moment*
- 15 Sunday Scoff
- 16 Austin's Story
- 18 **My Advice to Young Artists**
- 20 We Want You!
- 21 Otto and the Glowing Ball of Light
- 22 Peace Birds: *A story of hope from Japan*
- 23 Mr. Mayor • The Way of Peace • Moroccan Salad
- 24 **From Russia:** Sergey and Sasha • My Little Town
- 25 **Sports Feature: Play It!**  
An Endless Game • Gymnastics • Extreme Skiing  
• Brothers • Countdown on the Court  
• A Nice Breeze • I Believe
- 28 The Highland Fling
- 30 You Are Something when... • A Tasty Explosion
- 34 **Beyond the Veil:** *Women in Iran*



## Regular Departments

- 3 From the Editor
- 4 Meet the Contributors
- 5 **Health Rocks!**
- 6 *What's On Your Mind?*
- 11 Dear Hanna
- 13 *Skipping Stones Stew*
- 17 Poetry Page
- 31 Noteworthy N.E.W.S.
- 32 Bookshelf
- 33 **For Parents and Teachers**



© 2006 by Skipping Stones, Inc. Opinions expressed in these pages reflect views of the contributors, and not necessarily those of Skipping Stones, Inc. In the spirit of ecological sensitivity, we choose to print with soy ink on recycled & recyclable paper.



*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 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.

**Editor/Publisher:** Arun Narayan Toké

**Editorial Staff:** Beth Erfurth, Hanna Still and Nicole Degli Esposti

**Webmaster:** David Caruso

**Interns:** Shannon Lattin, Kendal Richards, Sarah Davis, Kasey Clark

**Student Reviewers:** Wujun Ke, Scout Guerrini, Lidia Mikolaenko and Saumya Kini

## Acknowledgements

**Cover:** *Songbird in a Holly Bush*, acrylic on paper, by Leyla Akay, 9, a Turkish-American homeschooler, Pennsylvania.

**Board of Directors:** Paulette Ansari, Esther Celis, Misa Joo, Bill Hessling, Steve Mallery, Ron Marson, Joachim Schulz, Hanna K. Still and Arun N. Toké.

**Special Thanks** to Shannon Lattin, Peace Rose Graphics, our interns, contributors, volunteers and the teachers whose students' work is in this issue. Thanks to Tops Learning Systems, Black United Fund, Oregon Country Fair, Helios Foundation, A & A Charitable Foundation, Emerald Valley Kitchens, and Asian Council for their financial support.

*Skipping Stones* is an educational and charitable organization with a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Donations to *Skipping Stones* are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please support our 50% discount and free subscriptions to low-income subscribers by making a donation.

**Winner of the National Association for Multicultural Education, Writer, Parent's Choice and EdPress Awards.**

*Skipping Stones* (Pub. No. 015-089) is published bimonthly, except July/August, by Skipping Stones, Inc., 166 W 12th Street, Eugene, OR 97401. Postage paid at periodicals rate at Eugene, OR. Postmaster: Please send address changes to Skipping Stones, Inc. P. O. Box 3939 Eugene, OR 97403-0939.

**Subscriptions:** Institutions: \$35; Individuals: \$25  
Airmail: add \$10; Low-income discount: 50%;  
Single / back issues: \$5 each (\$7 by air).

To submit, subscribe or reprint, contact:

**Skipping Stones Magazine**

P. O. Box 3939 Eugene, OR 97403 USA  
(541) 342-4956; editor@SkippingStones.org  
www.SkippingStones.org



*"It's all YOUR fault!"*

How many times have you heard this? How often do you use the phrase yourself? And, what's the response? Of course, the very predictable, "No. It's YOUR fault." or, "YOU started it!"

*"But if YOU hadn't..."*

The argument drags on with no resolution.

We find ourselves in many unhappy situations where we have conflicts with our best friends, or family—brothers, sisters, parents. Often, we seem at a loss and can't figure out how to resolve the conflict so that it does not become a bitter, life-long memory.

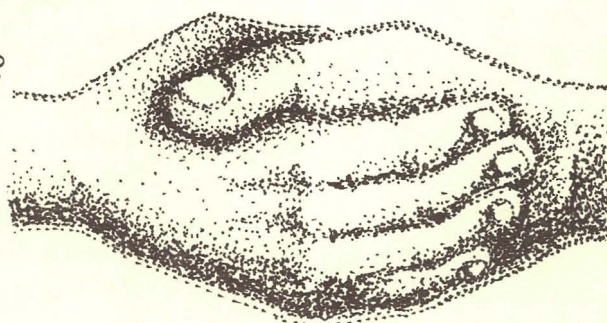
Have you ever noticed how the language we use plays a big role in creating and escalating conflicts? Our choice of words, tone of voice, body language, and self-righteousness, all help contribute to the problem.

In my youth, I felt a lot of anger toward others who could not see it "my way." But now I know that many times we can look at the same situation and see very different things. Why? Our cultural background, upbringing, training, and experiences help shape who we are and how we "see" things. And, our views and opinions also change depending on which side we are on, and where we are in our lives.

Have you heard words like "non-violent communication," "non-violent conflict resolution," "dialog," or "peer mediation?" These are ways to achieve a *win-win* situation for all parties involved in a conflict, small or large. They allow us to "see" the multiple ways we observe truth, identify what our *real needs* are, and find a common ground in many difficult situations.

Wouldn't life be beautiful if we could be mindful of what our friends and family need and learn to be patient, respectful and understanding. We would surely be liked by others and they'd want to keep us around for a long time.

Mahatma Gandhi, Thich Nhat Hanh, César



Chávez, Rosa Parks, Mother Teresa, Marshall Rosenberg and many others have taught through their lifeworks that **Peace Is the Way**. We *can* bring about lasting peace in our lives and our society by non-violent means. So, my New Year's resolution is to seek non-violent ways in all situations of conflicts.

To help create a peaceful life for all, a small group of us with diverse faiths—Jewish, Hindu, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, Baha'i and Native American—have volunteered at a local juvenile correctional facility for the last few years. We visit the teenagers for an hour or so, and engage them in a dialog on topics such as ethics, spirituality, prayer, diversity, choices, etc.

We go there with an open mind. A dialog is not a debate, argument, lecture or gossip. It is listening deeply and searching for truth with a hope to understand each other better. So, we tell them not to think of our Sunday visits as "church" but as "search" time. Whatever the reason they have been confined to this facility, we wish to sow hope in their future.

Learning to communicate clearly, concisely and politely is very important in our personal lives as well as in the society at large. So, in 2006, we're offering workshops in area schools to introduce the concepts and practice of dialog to students. They will learn the skills of dialog with friends and others. I am sure that these skills will help us nourish better relationships in life.

Another important way we communicate is through our writing that is clear, concise and engaging for the readers. In our pages, we try to bring you many "works of art." In this issue, you will also find several pieces that offer ways to improve your writing and artistic skills.

Let us try to live by the Truth we know, fearlessly and courageously, in the footsteps of the many great human beings. As we nurture our selfless, loving nature, peace will reign.

A stylized, handwritten signature in the bottom right corner of the page, likely belonging to the author of the article.





## Meet the Contributors



I live in Germany. My mom is an American and my dad is a German. He works as a teacher—that's why we live here instead of in the States. I grew up bilingually, like my three siblings. I am fluent in both languages, as well as French.

Aside from my family and friends, important things in my life are soccer, jazz-dance, reading, writing and school. My free time is usually spent writing books, short stories or poems, or reading. My little village has its own women's soccer team, and I am a player on it. I also dance and I tutor children who aren't doing well in English and Math.

A while back I had an experience I believe is worth sharing (see page 27). I wish to encourage other people to follow me by seeking conversations with people they have never talked to before and who might inspire them.

—Katie Grosser, 15, Meschede, Germany.

My cultural background is Japanese, Irish, French, German, Canadian, and my great-great grandpa married a Native American princess. I speak English, and a little (more like microscopic) bit of Japanese. Some important things to me are my two lizards and six toads. My future dream is that I'll be richer than Bill Gates.

—Charles Bakes, grade 5, Illinois. (See page 9.)

I like to write because it is fun. I get to be as creative as I want and I get to write down what my ideas are. My wonderful, advanced writing teacher (who is very, very good at writing things) inspired me to write. I want to be an internist doctor, a vet, a teacher, or a writer. I love dogs and I like to ride my bike and roller blade. I'm a Russian Jew. I also speak some Hebrew.

—Emma Lazar, 9, Illinois. (See page 9.)

I live among the rolling pastoral hills in an old mining region. The countryside is very reminiscent of rural Cornwall, England. Our village is peppered with rock cottages. Inspiration for writing is everywhere.

I attend Mineral Point Middle School. I am actively involved in 4-H, jazz band, and my church. I also enjoy playing piano, cooking, and playing with my buddy and my dog, George. If you ask me, "What is your passion?," it would be difficult to choose between writing and soccer.

—Bailey Davis, 14, Wisconsin. (See page 17.)

I am 15 years old and I want to change the world. My name is Elizabeth and I speak only English but hope to become fluent in Spanish so I can better communicate with the children of the Canal Child Care Center, where I have been working for the past two years. Working there has opened my mind to a different world—a horrible, starving world of dangerous risks taken to cross borders, of tattered, outdated schoolbooks and of abusive relationships seen through the eyes of a child.

Here in the San Francisco area, I am surrounded by Asian Americans, Latinos, Middle Easterners, and Caucasians. Despite the diversity and tolerance of my area however, I find that many people often forget about the other countries in the world. Few know much about the strife in South America, the overpopulation in China, or what the hundreds of "Save Tibet" bumper stickers mean.

Expressing my opinions on current events and issues affecting youth is very important to me. I want to increase awareness of the world around us; of the hunger, the abuse, and the manipulation. So I wrote this particular essay to raise awareness about the devastation of females in Afghanistan. Many United States citizens, myself included, often overlook how lucky we are to have numerous rights and educational opportunities. Now that Iraq is the main news focus, Afghanistan has been almost forgotten.

I hope my essay will remind its readers that there is always some hungry child on the street, some battered wife in a shelter, or some brother who died from a suicide bombing. We must not forget.

—Elizabeth Moore, 15, California.

I'm part Çerkes on my father's side, although he was brought up in Turkey. I speak Turkish (and we visit our relatives there every year) and I'm studying Latin. I am home-schooled and enjoy a wide variety of subjects including logic, reading and math. I play the violin and the piano every single day. I have even played with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra! When I grow up, I wish to work as anthropologist, zoologist studying gorillas in Kenya, sociologist and then a philosopher, until I'm 100 years old.

—Leyla Akay, 9, Pennsylvania. (See the front cover).



# Health Rocks! *The Zen of Sprouting Good, Fast Food*

Now that the world outside has shed its green coat and gardens are like patches of dirt, fresh grown vegetables are hard to find. What if you could grow veggies in your own kitchen? Your windowsill could become a mini-farm to provide nutritious food for your family. When sprouting, you do all your gardening indoors, and you don't have to wait that long for the vegetables to grow: go from planting to harvesting in just a few days. How's that for fast food?

## So What is Sprouting, Anyway?

Eating sprouts really means eating seeds that have had a chance to grow just for a few days.

Believe it or not, you eat unsprouted seeds all the time. Sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, and poppy seeds are some of the most obvious examples, but even beans are seeds, too. Seeds can lay dormant for a long time, waiting for just the right conditions to begin growing into a plant. This is why you don't have to worry about opening the kitchen cupboard one day to discover that your bag of sunflower seeds has erupted into a flower-bed.

To sprout, these seeds are given the secret ingredients they need to begin turning into a plant. With a little water and sunlight, they begin to germinate and signs of life become visible. First, the seed or bean swells as it absorbs the liquid like a sponge. In a few days a small green or white shoot emerges in search of light. If allowed to grow too long, this gets taller and less tender.

## Why Sprout?

Usually garden plants are tended, watered and weeded until they produce a vegetable that can be picked. Leafy plants, like lettuce or spinach, are grown until their leaves are big enough to eat. But sprouting cuts this process short. We are interested in the seed or bean when it has just started to become active. At this stage, the sprout has many more "live foods"—amino acids, proteins and vitamins, than it did when it was just a seed. These nutrients are important for a healthy body, and sprouting on your own is a fun way to get them! You can keep sprouts in the refrigerator and use them as toppings for your favorite foods, or grab a handful when you just need something to snack on until the next meal. Sprouting turns an ordinary seed into a super-healthy snack.

## What Can You Sprout?

Sprouts can be divided into two types: those that are eaten after they have just started to swell up with water, and those that are allowed to grow into small green plants. Both are extremely nutritious.

The sprouts in the first category include barley, lentils, peas, chickpeas, wheat, shelled sunflower seeds, and all kinds of nuts. Because they are only grown for a short time, they are still pretty much raw. Nuts and sunflower seeds can be eaten just as you would normally for a delicious treat. However, some sprouts, e.g., beans, should be cooked after they are sprouted to make them easily digestible.

Green sprouts, on the other hand, can be eaten raw. These long and stringy plants may take a little more time to grow (still only five to twelve days), but they are well worth the wait. Alfalfa sprouts are the most common kind seen in the store, but sprouts can be grown from all kinds of seeds such as clover, fenugreek, broccoli, cabbage, radish, and sunflower seeds still in the shell.

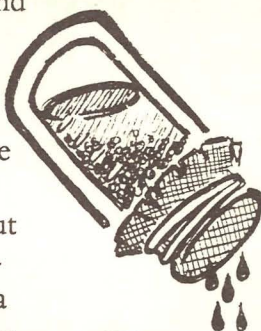
## A Recipe for Sprouting in Your Kitchen

**Materials:** 1-5 tbs. of organic seeds • wide-mouth jar • large bowl • a square of cheese cloth • a rubber band

### Steps:

- 1) Rinse seeds and place them in the jar.
- 2) Pour 1 cup cold water over the seeds.
- 3) Stretch cheese cloth or screen over the jar opening and hold it in place with the rubber band.
- 4) Allow seeds to soak for eight hours.
- 5) Drain water.
- 6) Rinse seeds twice a day: pour fresh water into the jar, swirl it around to help remove seed hulls, and then drain.
- 7) After rinsing, prop the jar upside down at an angle in a bowl to allow the seeds to drain. This prevents rot.
- 8) Watch for the beginnings of sprouts to appear. This could take three to five days. Eat them all at once, or pick out the most mature ones and allow the others to continue growing.

—Shannon Lattin, Oregon.







## What's On Your Mind?

### Just the Littlest Things

It was about halfway through the school year. Everyone had their cliques and friends, but I knew one girl who didn't. I guess you could call her a geek, because all she did was read, study, and do homework. I don't think she even played a sport. She was one of those quiet people who no one really paid attention to, and those who did only made fun of her. I had heard all kinds of rumors that she had problems, but I didn't really believe them. I felt bad for her.

My friends and I were nice to her. We let her sit at our lunch table and we said hi to her often, but she wasn't our best friend, like someone you would call on the phone every night. Throughout the year, she started talking to us more and more. We continued being kind to her, and we began wondering why anyone would make up rumors about her. She was normal as far as I was concerned. She was just really quiet.

The year flew by so fast, and before we knew it we were signing yearbooks and wishing people great summers. That summer I got a letter. When I opened it, I realized it was from her. It read, "I just wanted to thank you so much for being so extremely kind and friendly to me this year. Before you became my friend, I had no one to talk to or sit with at lunch. I was so lonely that I was going to kill myself. I didn't think I was good enough and didn't think anyone wanted me around, but you and your friends changed that. You made me feel wanted and included me. It meant so much to me. I am going to be moving and switching schools next year. I'll never forget you and what you did."

By the time I finished the letter, I was in shock. I could not believe what I had just read. I learned that the simplest things and the smallest acts of kindness can mean the world to someone else.

—Michelle Kappeler, 14, grade 8, Pennsylvania.

Art: Shannon Lattin, Oregon.

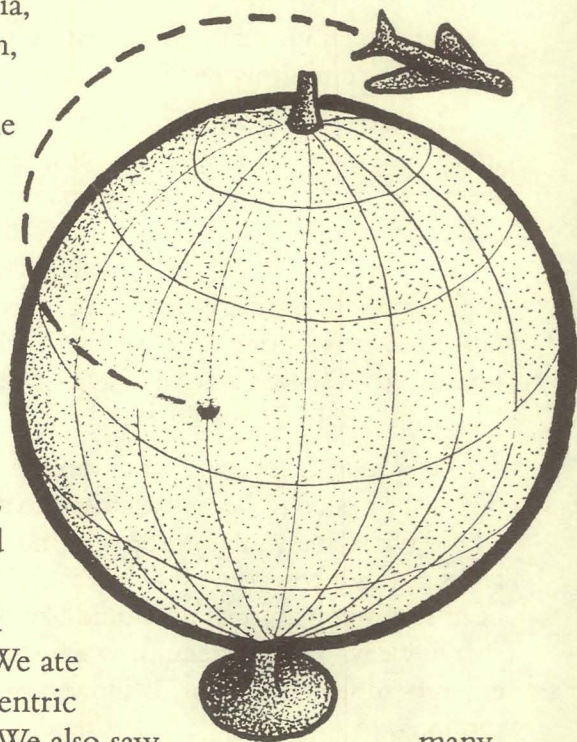
### Traveling

My family is unique in many ways but one trait that stands out the most is our interest in traveling. When I was about five, my family lived on a small island near China, about an hour ferry boat ride from the city of Hong Kong. When we lived there we did a lot of traveling to places like Bali, Malaysia, China, Japan, Indonesia, Australia, the Philippines, and other countries.

On our trips, we saw and experienced many things that I would have never experienced otherwise. We ate at many eccentric restaurants. We also saw many new animals, like the kangaroos in Australia. My favorite country we visited was the Philippines. It was so hot there, the beaches seemed to sizzle and the cement would burn my feet if I walked on it. The hot climate, refreshing fruits, and great food was a hit with my family.

After five years in Asia, my family returned to the United States. The U.S. felt like a whole new world to me. There were many things that I had to get used to in America, the largest transition being adapting to a new school. The houses were much cleaner and more comfortable than in Asia. At least I didn't find rats, cockroaches, and wolf spiders living in my bathroom!

—Jason Morrison, Grade 6, Mt. Tabor MS, Oregon.





# What the World is Really Like:

## *Getting a Glimpse of the Everyday Lives of People*

You can travel the world on vacations to every country in the world and never experience another culture. The only way you can truly experience another culture is to walk around like the commoner and get to know the natives. Culture is not about the tourist sites of how the elite 2% live, it's about the natives. A country may be defined in books by the landscapes or museums, but a country is defined in real life by the way the average citizen lives.

Having a cross-cultural experience requires that you get a glimpse of everyday life for the citizens, the workers of the country. I went to Monterrey, Mexico on a mission trip to help out people living in poverty there. We brought bags of food around to houses of impoverished people living up a mountain. We talked to them and they let us enter their houses quite often. One lady was in tears because we took the time to come and help her and her husband. At another house, we visited a little boy who was crippled. He sat in a metal tub of water to stay cool while his parents were at work. His face lit up the dark room when we walked in.

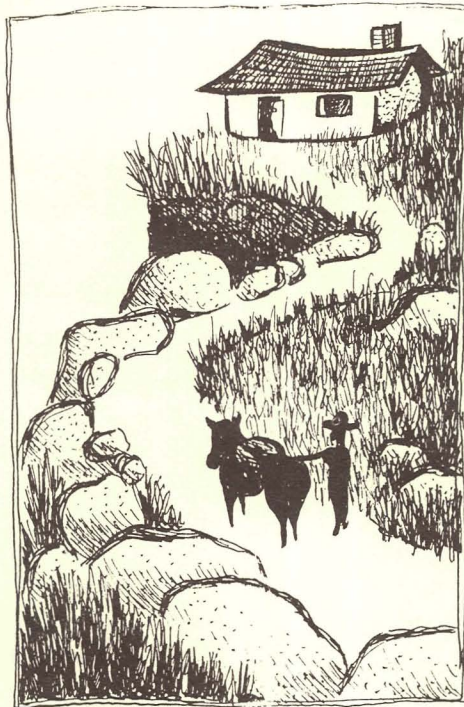
Finding out how people live and what their homes look like, not only on the outside, but on the inside as well leads, leads to experiencing their way of life. At first, I was shocked to see the dimly-lit insides of the shacks. Many houses had no cement floors, only dirt. One did not even have a roof, yet a mother with a small child was living there. Seeing how the people live and hurt and rejoice takes effort. It may be easier to sit by a hotel pool than it is to hike up a mountain to help the locals. It was hot and the hike partway up the mountain was hard, but it allowed me to experience a fraction of what it is like to have to

walk down it every day to go to work or school.

Seeing the hearts of the people and what they appreciate and have fun doing really opens ones' eyes to the culture. When I talked to some young girls, they wanted to show that they liked me a lot. They ran home and brought me little gifts of jewelry, in return for the necklaces I had given them. They had so little, yet were eager to give it away. I was barely more than a stranger to those girls, yet they appreciated my company. In Mexico, most people depend on relationships more than people do in the United States because they have less material possessions to depend on. Playing tag is a favorite game for kids I babysit at home in the United States. I found that the Mexican children enjoy it too, even though they are many miles from my home. In Mexico, I played tag in dusty streets and a run-down carnival. At home I play tag in grassy yards and nice big playgrounds. In order to really see what comprises another culture, one must spend time with the natives, not only stay in a fancy hotel and visit all the museums and malls.

Getting beyond being only a tourist takes work, but only after you try to get to know the locals can you truly encounter another culture. Seeing the "real" Mexico opened my eyes to how unique their culture is. People have so little, yet are so happy and willing to give what little they have away. Up the side of one of Monterrey's beautiful mountains, I say the heart of the country in the eyes of the shantytown dwellers.

—Emily Bair, 16, is now a junior, Washington, DC.





# Bedouin Tea

It was not in the plan for my trip. In fact, it was the surprise of it all that made this particular afternoon so special. Let me share it with you.

Jordan is a country in the Middle East, south of Syria and east of Israel. There are many well-known places to visit, such as Petra, Amman, and Madaba. They were very interesting to see, but the time came to leave Jordan and continue to Israel. The final stop planned before crossing the border was Mt. Nebo. Historically, this is where Moses stood to look at the Promised Land.

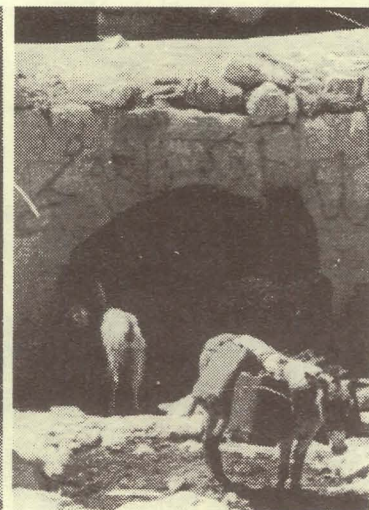
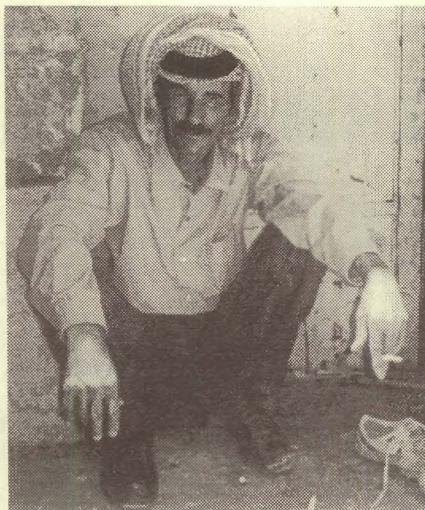
Close to Mt. Nebo sat a small, faded sign: *Moses Spring*. The guide told me it was the place where Moses struck a rock and found water. We stopped and hiked down the dusty hill to take a picture. Sure enough there was a spring, with a herd of goats being watered. They were tended by women dressed in dark colors and veils. Arabic lettering was spray-painted on the rocks. I tasted the cool spring water, took some pictures, and got ready to leave.

Above the spring was a rundown building. I saw two Bedouin men, Arab nomads who move about in the desert. One was a young man, and one was older. They were squatting against the building in the shade, talking quietly together. Although both were dressed in pants and buttoned shirts, the older man had a red checked, black-banded scarf on his head, a *burnoose*.

The Bedouins greeted us with smiles, saying *Marhaba* in Arabic, which is "Hello." I smiled back. They spoke to me again and the guide said I was being invited to have tea with them.

Over an open fire the older man heated water in a worn metal pan. The younger man disappeared into the building. He came back with one dented tin cup, two faded yellow plastic cups, and a glass. They made strong, sweet tea and served it to me in the tin cup. We sat by the fire and talked. The guide translated my English words for them and their Arabic words for me. We sat together for two hours.

We talked about everyday things, like our ways of life. We also talked about work, school, family, and Moses Spring that brought us together. Our backgrounds could not have been more different. But in



the important things, the things that really matter, we could not have been more alike.

People everywhere have good times and bad times. They work hard in school to learn. They look for ways to take care of the families they love. They try to understand how the past leads to the present. That day, our differences disappeared just like the smoke from their small fire as it curled into the dry desert air and was gone.

Too soon we had to say good-bye. The older Bedouin man raised one sun-darkened hand to stop me. He went into the building. When he came back, he took my hand in his and pressed something into my palm. I uncurled my fingers, and lying there was a small seashell. It was round, with twisting channels spiraling into its lowest point. It was beautiful; simple and yet complicated at the same time.

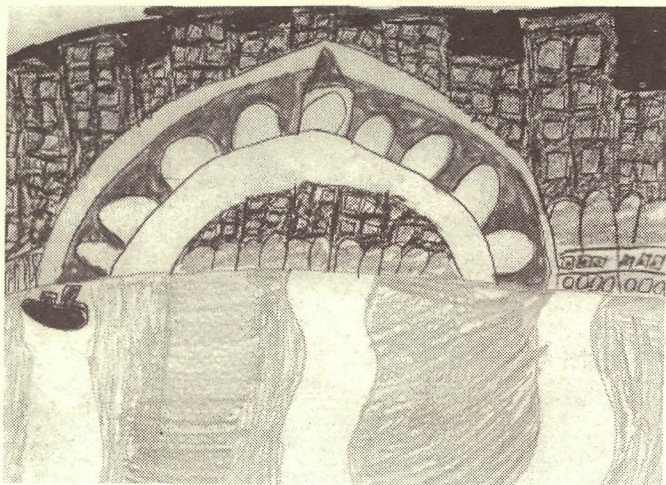
The man told me it was the only thing of value he could give me. He wanted me to remember the time we spent together and that we were now joined as friends. I thanked him, and then left. Because of the time I had spent there, I missed my ride at the border into Israel. But it was worth it.

I have a very nice life, with everything I need and more. One of my most special possessions is that small shell. Sometimes I feel angry or afraid of others who are different than I am. When that happens I think about the spirals of a seashell from the desert, circles joined together as one. I remember the kindness of the sweet tea offered to me in a tin cup. And I enjoy knowing people who are very different, yet very much the same.

Understanding these things is as unchanging as the desert and the sea. I am wiser for having been there for an afternoon for a cup of Bedouin tea.

—Laurel Houck, Pennsylvania.





## Aspiring Authors from Skokie, Illinois

A school of fire dabs swim on the sea floor  
Brightly colored coral lies in the sea shore  
A school of fish surrounds the rainbow coral  
While the sapphire water flows around them.

—Emma Lazar, 9.

### Twister

The orange tornado,  
it rises huge dust clouds.  
It twists and it turns, it seems invincible.  
The twister can be stopped though,  
but only by torrents of merciful weather.  
On the plains where there is little moisture,  
what in the world will stop the tornado?  
You'll have to wait the twister out,  
no matter how windy it is.  
Then hope and pray you'll survive,  
with all your cold, canned food.  
Once it is over you might have survived,  
but then look at all the massive destruction.

—Charles Bakes, grade 5.

### The Whale with Its Tail

The whale's tail floats like a sting ray  
meeting the turquoise water.  
The azure water welcomes the whale in  
The whale flaps its back tail  
good-bye to the invisible air.

—Peter Kundzicz, grade 3, Polish-American.

### Nature



Nature is simple  
But beautiful.  
It's a work of art,  
As if someone did it,  
Someone really smart.



—Mark Badulescu, 12.  
"I speak Romanian, English and a  
little Spanish. The most important  
thing to me is my family."

### Thames River

Art by Minnie Pham, grade 4.

The Thames River is so beautiful  
With its blue water and boats flowing upon it  
This is where the London Eye stands  
With pointy buildings and towers  
The gorgeous sun shines upon the river as if ascending to heaven  
Surrounding the Tower of London is a closed up stonewall  
Many bushes and trees surround the Thames  
London has such perfect scenery!

—Nadia Ali, 6th grade.

### The Louvre

The pyramid gives a nice touch to the Louvre  
With its glass surface and black rims  
In the reflection of the fountain a beautiful castle stands  
With the clear blue sky the Louvre glows like an angel  
touched the place  
People forget about the long lines but just look at the  
glowing palace above  
The dirty concrete and arches give an ancient feeling  
The Louvre is a castle not just of art but glory

—Nadia Ali, Asian American, 6th grade.

### The Olive Tree

One olive tree stands slanted, tall and alone.  
The temple rests in the sandy grass.  
The tree's roots go everywhere.  
The clear blue sky stands hanging over the temple and trees.  
The yellow sanctuary waits and waits for its reward.  
The clouds fly in the ocean blue sky.  
The little green leaves hang down with nothing to do.  
The shadows play all day.

—Kelly Ann.



# My Grandmother

My grandmother, Graciela, was born March 25, 1949 in a small town in Mexico. She had her first child when she was about sixteen. She had seventeen children in all; thirteen are still living. Graciela did not have an easy life, but she never complained. She worked really hard and expected her children to work hard as well. Her strong work ethic was a model for my father and his siblings. All her children have been successful in many different ways.

Graciela loved to cook. She would gather her six daughters in her small kitchen and teach them family recipes. Chicken soup was one of her favorites, but she became famous for her *chongos*. These were sweet Mexican balls that delighted all the children.

Graciela only made them on special occasions like Christmas. Graciela and her husband struggled to provide for their family. She taught my aunts how to cook, but she told her sons they had to work. When the boys got old enough, they were needed to help with the household chores and produce some income.

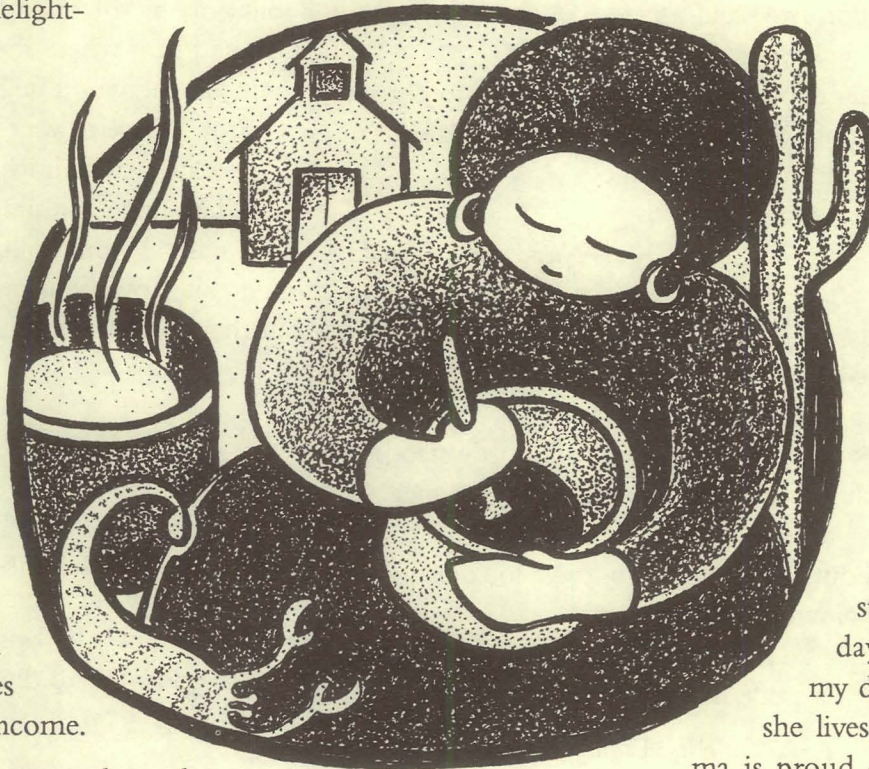
When my father was only twelve years old, he would rise early in the morning to feed the animals on the farm. All the boys had to go and get wood, and once a scorpion bit my father. My dad came running home shouting in a lot of pain, "A scorpion just bit me!"

My grandmother made something quick that would cure the bite. If her children were injured my grandma said that they must be able to work the next day. My grandma is a tough woman!

The children in rural Mexico often didn't go to

school at all, or they went only for a few years. I heard my grandma say once, "I would rather have my children work than go to school." I was a little shocked to hear her say that. Now, education in my family is a very important goal. However, my grandma never attended school. All she knew was the value of hard work. I am so indebted to my grandmother and my father for their determination to have a better life.

*"My grandmother and my father had such a strong work ethic, and I am convinced that because of them, I am able to have the many opportunities I have today."*



My grandma lives with us now. She is fifty-seven and she hasn't slowed down much. She's tall, a little fat, and she has dark skin. She is famous for her loud voice that you can hear from really far away. She is always cooking for my dad, and her special *chongos* are still the favorite holiday treat. I think that

my dad loves the fact that she lives with us. My grandma is proud of what my dad has achieved. She always talks about how her sons and daughters have a lot more now than what they used to have and she is trying to get me to do more around the house.

My grandma taught all my aunts, uncles and my dad that you have to work hard to get what you want. I really appreciate what my grandma has done for our family and I really want to thank her for what I have. Perhaps the way to do this is to work hard myself.

—Adriana Valdivias, Castilleja School, California.



# DEAR HANNA

*It is a total mystery to me how I can decide what I'll do in a couple of years, after high school. How does one figure that out? Worst of all, my parents are always pushing me to be sure to earn a lot of money.* —Brian

Brian, I am tempted to tell you about an incident from my life, in hopes that you might benefit from my experience. Strangely, a thought has gone through my mind, more than once, from which I can't free myself. I've heard myself say: "If I would get to come back to earth in a second life, I would want to be a psychologist."

I am convinced that my wishing to be a psychologist is related to this event from my youth. I must have been in my senior year in high school. We were given a questionnaire and asked to bring it back filled out the following day. The last question on page three was: "What are you planning to do after high school?"

I filled out the questionnaire by myself. I showed it to my parents before going to school the next day, since a parent had to sign it. My parents were shocked to see that I had written that I wanted to be a psychologist. They assumed their controlling, negative-attitude voice and said: "Oh, no! Erase that! You are going to be a teacher!! Hurry up. We have to sign the paper!"

I felt very badly inside my heart, but I erased the answer and wrote *teacher*. My father signed the questionnaire, and off I went. I felt as if I did not exist. My parents could control me, had power over me, and I did not own myself.

I do remember well that upon reaching school, I erased the answer *teacher* and quickly wrote *psychologist* before handing it in.

Looking back, I feel I could have used a different approach in that incident. Here is what I might have said to my parents when they told me to change my answer:

"It sounds to me that you have already decided that I will be a teacher. Actually, we have never discussed what I will be. Obviously, we need to have many discussions on that subject.

"It would be most helpful to me if you are my resource. You are a generation ahead of me and have a great deal more experience. I need to be able to trust you that you will honestly answer the questions which I want to ask of you.

"Could you advise me about people in different professions with whom I could discuss various professions I could consider for my future? Could you recommend useful, fair-minded books? Why don't we discuss elective subjects which might be helpful in the time I have left in high school?

"We might also discuss if I could do something next summer to help me get a better idea of which vocation to prepare for. We could really use this time well and helpfully. It seems less scary if I don't have to decide my future all alone."

Brian, I needed to learn to trust and respect myself. If I had the self-confidence, I might have said: "I don't know enough about being a psychologist or a teacher. I am not ready to write either as my answer. This is a good time for us to work together and learn more, and then I will be ready to make a decision. I will write: *Possibly a psychologist, but not certain.*"

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

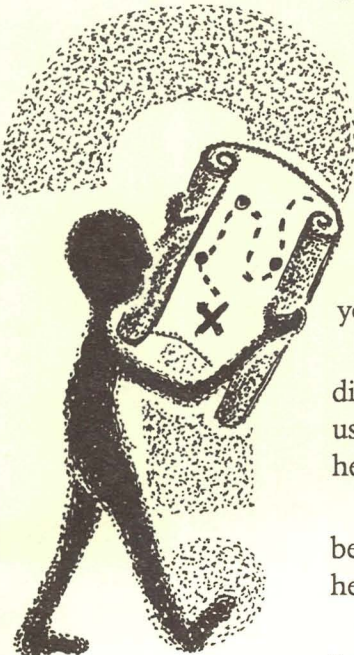
You earn respect when you speak with strength and honesty.

*In Peace,*

*Hanna*



Art by Shannon Lattin,  
student, University of Oregon







### **An African American Girl**

I've been called an African American girl and I wonder why. Is it because of my rich, chocolate-colored, oval shaped face that looks just like my mother's? I wonder.

Is it because of the jet black, wavy hair that I got from my father? Maybe it's the symbolic head wrap and *dashiki* dress I wear to school sometimes, passed on to me from ancestors. I wonder.

Could it be my taste for collard greens, crackling bread, and sweet potato pie cooked by my grandmother? It just might be my love for folklore, and the rhythm of my feet when I dance to the beat of the drums. I wonder.

In June I recognize Juneteenth with reflection. Is that why? During the month of December, I celebrate Kwanza with my family and in February, I am reminded of all the famous African American people. Is that why? I wonder.

Would my being called an African American girl have to do with my native land, Africa, or my home, America? It's both. Now I know. I am an African American girl.

—*Nerissa Cannon, educator & author, Florida.*

## **Eternity: Remembering Dr. M.L.King, Jr.**

Not every day a great man is born.  
A man who believes so strongly that everyone is equal.  
A man who leaves such a mark behind  
that he changes all eternity.  
For all he met he touched their lives.

Without him,  
what would the world be?  
Some friends would not be friends,  
divided by the color of their skin.  
Family may not be family.  
Hate would overpower the love that shines through.  
A man was born with a heart of gold and the power to succeed.

Not every day a great man is born  
A man who believes so strongly that everyone is equal.  
A man that changed so many lives  
and the way that life is lived.  
A selfless love and passion to succeed  
He changed the world for eternity.  
Through the ages my voice reaches out to him.

There you are.  
Standing in front of a crowd.  
Speaking from your soul.  
Looking at the crowd, so large,  
waiting for you to speak.  
Waiting to hear those famous words that changed so many lives.  
Feeling so deeply for equality.  
Consequences not cared about,  
as long as change occurs.

The need to succeed pouring from your soul  
and the unfair changed for good.  
No one showing you the way,  
just your feet, so strong, pushing you along.  
A passion, a need to love one and all.  
To bring all people together.

No boundaries limiting, just actions reversing.  
Thousands following.  
Waiting for you to speak.  
To say the words remembered forever.  
Releasing a pain so deep.  
Standing in front of a crowd.  
Speaking from your soul.

To have a passion so real that the whole world listens  
and remembers...always remembers.

—*Lindsay Woodard, high school senior, Oregon.*





## Harlem

Harlem, Harlem!  
Rise up and shine.  
Shine! For it's our time to jive.  
Look up high in the sky  
Gaze at the amazing stars  
Everyone's swaying while the music is playing.  
We dance on into the night jive.

Harlem rise up!  
Once again to show these young 'uns  
how our history really began.  
We're all equal in God's eyes  
So let's dance on with this midnight high.

Dubois and Langston, we raise our hands high  
To two of the most famous writers of their time.  
Writers who expressed  
how good it feels to be Black,  
So let all races sing for this quest.

James Weldon Johnson was a part of this fling,  
He wrote a song that made our hearts sing.

Claude McKay came this way.  
He told them old fools  
He wasn't living this way.

Harlem, Harlem!  
Rise up and shine,  
Let's continue to dance  
On with this midnight high.

—Jalissa Wynder, 13, African-American, Louisiana.

## I Speak Me!

We have come a long way  
They have tried to stop us  
But look where we are today  
We are able to read, write, and pray  
Learn about the past, present, and work  
to make us a better future  
And provide for the ones that are sure to come after.

—Michaela Robinson, 16, African-American, Oregon.



## Children of God

Our deepest fear is  
not that we are inadequate.  
Our deepest fear is that  
we are powerful beyond  
measure. It is our light  
not our darkness that  
most frightens us.

We ask ourselves,  
who am I to be brilliant,  
gorgeous, talented, and  
fabulous? Actually, who  
are you not to be?

You are a Child of  
God. Your playing small  
doesn't serve the world.  
There is nothing enlight-  
ened about shrinking so  
that other people won't  
feel insecure around you.

We were born to  
make manifest the glory  
of God that is within us.  
It's not just in some of us;  
it's in everyone.

And as we let our own  
light shine, we uncon-  
sciously give other people  
permission to do the same.

As we are liberated  
from our own fear, our  
presence automatically  
liberates others.

—President Nelson Mandela,  
South Africa. Excerpted from  
his Inaugural Speech of 1994.

## A Someday Dream

Hear that girl. Hear her  
voice, it is rich and full.  
Do you know her? I do, her  
name is Marian Anderson.

—Emily Temeyer, grade 5,  
Tennessee.



## A Profound Moment in My Life

It might be hard to explain the following story. After all, I am but a normal teenager, with supposedly no beliefs and no convictions, no faith and no interest in the church. I live in Germany and am one of the few girls my age to attend mass every week. And still, while there, I must admit, I often just think about other things while I'm supposed to be listening to the sermon or paying attention to the priest. I can't help myself—and frankly, sometimes I don't want to.

This year I'm being confirmed and in preparation for it we are writing a type of magazine containing interviews with different people working for or in connection with the church. So two of my friends and I rode our bikes up the hill to the local hermits and talked with the elder of the two.

This interview had an impact on me. Here was a woman whose young adult life had been spent as a star in showbiz, but then she gave it all up for her belief in God and Jesus. She offered her life to Christ and has no regrets at all. It was not only the things this woman told us about her belief, it was rather the way she spoke, not at us, but with us, the way she guided us to the idea of being Christians not just because we were baptized, but because we wanted to be. She didn't want to force us into anything; she was only giving us the wonderful option of doing more for our belief, encouraging us to really listen to the gospels and not being ashamed of our faith.

This woman made me think some more about my being a Christian. The interview was three months ago and still I intend to read the gospels. I try to listen more in church. I read more about my religion.

The conversation didn't make me a better Christian, I think. I don't really notice any changes in my day to day life. But it did touch me somehow, and that woman really impressed me. I would like to speak my gratitude and thanks for people like her.

—Katie Grosser, 15, Meschede, Germany.  
*Katie wrote both the German and English versions.*

## Ein bedeutender Moment in meinem Leben

Die folgende Geschichte ist vielleicht schwer zu erzählen. Ich bin schließlich nur eine normale Jugendliche, angeblich ohne Überzeugungen, ohne Glauben und ohne Interesse an der Kirche. Ich lebe in Deutschland und bin eines der wenigen Mädchen meines Alters, die noch regelmäßig jede Woche zur Messe gehen. Und trotzdem, ich muss zugeben, dass ich, während ich da bin, oft einfach an andere Dinge denke, wobei ich eigentlich dem Pastor oder seiner Predigt zuhören sollte. Ich kann mir nicht helfen — und ehrlich gesagt, manchmal will ich das auch gar nicht.

Dieses Jahr werde ich gefirmt. Als Vorbereitung auf die Firmung schreiben wir eine Art Firmzeitung, in welcher Interviews mit verschiedenen Menschen, die für oder in Verbindung mit der Kirche arbeiten, enthalten sind. Also sind zwei meiner Freundinnen und ich mit unseren Fahrrädern den Berg zu den Einsiedlerinnen unserer Stadt hochgefahren um mit der Älteren von beiden zu sprechen.

Und dieses Interview beeindruckte mich sehr. Hier war eine Frau, die als junge Erwachsene im Showbiz tätig gewesen war, dann aber alles für ihren Glauben an Gott und Jesus aufgegeben hat. Sie widmete ihr Leben Christus und hat keinerlei Bedauern dies getan zu haben. Es waren nicht nur die Dinge, die uns diese Frau über unseren Glauben gesagt hat, es war vielmehr die Art, wie sie gesprochen hat, nicht zu uns, sondern mit uns, die Art, in der sie uns an die Idee herangeführt hat, nicht nur Christ zu sein, weil wir getauft wurden, sondern weil wir es wollten. Sie wollte uns nicht zu irgendetwas zwingen; sie gab uns nur die wunderbare Wahl dazu, mehr für unseren Glauben zu tun, und ermutigte uns dazu, vor allem den Evangelien richtig zuzuhören und uns nicht wegen unseres Glaubens zu schämen.

Diese Frau brachte mich dazu, mehr über mein Dasein als Christin nachzudenken. Das Interview liegt drei Monate zurück und ich beabsichtige immer noch, die Evangelien zu lesen. Ich versuche in der Kirche mehr zuzuhören. Ich lese mehr über meine Religion.

Ich glaube nicht, dass die Unterhaltung mit der Einsiedlerin mich zu einem besseren Christ gemacht hat. Ich merke eigentlich keine Veränderungen in meinem alltäglichen Leben. Aber es hat mich schon irgendwie berührt und diese Frau hat mich wirklich beeindruckt. Ich würde gerne meinen Dank dafür aussprechen, dass es Menschen wie sie gibt. —K.G.







Sunil's chest tightened as his eyes latched onto the slim figure of a woman. She wove her way between haphazard rows of produce, sidestepping ruts and avoiding stray dogs. Behind her walked a teenage girl about Sunil's age. His unease grew as Mrs. Silva, wife of a local member of Parliament, and her daughter, Amali, neared his spot at the open-air Sunday *pola*.

"Keep an eye on your bracelet, Amali. You can't trust these poor people." Mrs. Silva's strident voice reached Sunil's ears. His skin prickled on hearing her scoff. He spat out the sour tamarind seed he'd been sucking.

*Gadong!* A peal of thunder reverberated across the sky.

Mrs. Silva approached Sunil. "Give me two kilos of bitter gourd and a bunch of curry leaves. Hurry up, you lazy boy, before it rains."

Sunil moved deftly and put the purchases into Mrs. Silva's flat, round bamboo basket.

"How much?"

"One hundred and ninety *rupees*, Madam."

"Nonsense! Here's one hundred *rupees*," Mrs. Silva said and tossed the money on top of the gourds.

Sunil opened his mouth to protest but was silenced by Mrs. Silva's glare.

"You scoundrel! Be grateful that I don't haul you to the police station for trying to cheat me," she said.

His skin turned several shades darker and his shoulders sagged.

"Follow me to my car with the basket of groceries," ordered Mrs. Silva.

As soon as Sunil deposited the vegetables into her white SUV, Mrs. Silva and Amali sped off without a word of thanks.

Sunil scampered back to his vegetable pile. He knelt down and pushed the curry leaves closer to the other vegetables. His fingers touched something slim and hard. Amid the dark green spiky leaves was a gold bracelet. Sunil's eyes dilated. It was Amali's bracelet. He put it in his shirt pocket and covered the vegetables with thick plastic. Moments later, the rain came down hard and furious. Sunil dashed across the street and took shelter in a store.

"You can't trust poor people. Cheat. Scoundrel." Mrs. Silva's unkind words whirled around in Sunil's head. He'd keep the bracelet. He hadn't stolen it and it would be payback for her miserliness.

The next day was *Poya*, the full-moon holiday. Sunil walked to the nearby Buddhist temple. The

scent of lighted joss sticks permeated the evening air. He walked toward a flower altar at the bell-shaped, pinnacle-topped *dagaba* and placed several pink plumeria flowers. He clasped his hands in worship, softly reciting the familiar stanzas.



"I undertake the precept to abstain from taking things not given." Sunil paused. He'd hidden the bracelet and told no one about it. He hurriedly finished his prayers and left the temple.

At home, Sunil opened a scarred wooden trunk and dug underneath his clothes for the matchbox. The bracelet was still there. He took the matchbox, hurried outside and jumped on his battered, rust-bitten bike, pedaling off to Mrs. Silva's house.

Sunil halted in front of the wrought iron gates and leaned his bicycle against the brick walls of the compound. Suddenly, a doubt clouded his mind. Should he keep the bracelet or give it back? He held the matchbox tightly. Unexpectedly, the gates opened, forcing Sunil into saying, "Madam Silva!"

Mrs. Silva opened a window of the SUV, "What do you want, boy?"

"I found this among my vegetables yesterday." Sunil's fingers trembled as he dropped the bracelet into Mrs. Silva's opened palm.

Mrs. Silva's eyes dilated. "This is Amali's bracelet! Thanks," she said and drove away.

Sunil had hoped for something more than 'thanks. His shoulders slumped and eyes glistened with unshed tears as he pedaled away.

The next Sunday, Sunil was at his usual spot at the *pola*. Mrs. Silva came and asked, "How much for 1.5 kilos each of drumsticks and okra?"



# Austin's Story

My dad invited me to go to work with him once. Well, rather I had no choice but to go with him. At the time, I thought, "Ugh...what a drag!"

I randomly chose a seat, not realizing whose it was. A woman came out of a nearby room. She looked glum, like she had just woken up from a night of endless crying. She sat down at the table in front of me.

"I'm sorry, am I sitting at your table?" I asked.

"Oh, no. It's ok" she said.

A young boy came out looking sickly and tired. He was small and scrawny with the color drained from his face, but he was also cute, with freckles around his nose. He sat down dreamily by his mom. "Good morning honey," she said.

After a few moments, the mom asked why I was there. I told her why, and I asked the boy's name. "His name is Austin," she replied.

I smiled. That's my brother's name. Maybe it was fate.

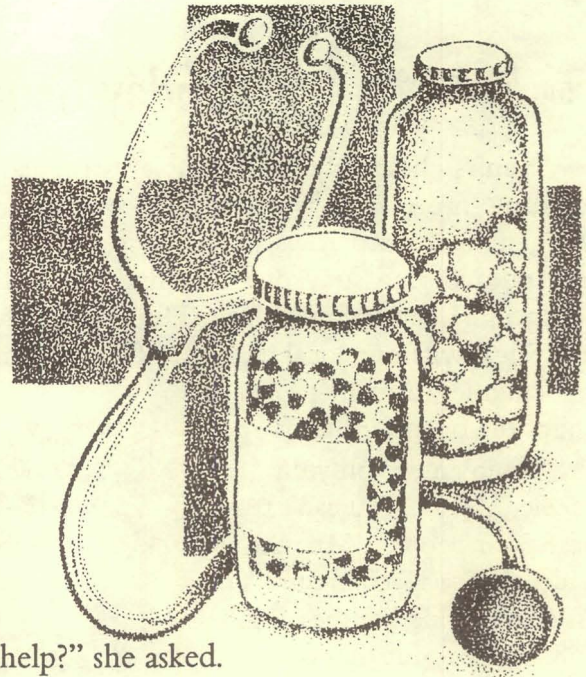
A few moments later, the mom began a puzzle with Austin and asked if I would like to help. I did—why not? I felt a question welling up inside me begging to get out. "Why is Austin here, if you don't mind my asking?"

"He has pneumonia."

I felt my insides plummet. The mood of the conversation changed suddenly—all while searching for Big Bird's eye on a puzzle piece.

She continued his story, "We've been here for almost a year now. We thought it would dissipate, but it keeps coming back. Austin's been through a few procedures but none of them have worked. He's getting a little better, and we're really hoping for the next procedure to work."

Austin got up to go to the rest room. "Do you



need help?" she asked.

He limped off to the rest room without answering.

She gave a deep sigh as if she had been wishing for a miracle and had just given up. She kept going. "I'm scared Austin won't be with us for long. He's been so brave this entire time. He is my hero for going through all this without ever complaining. The doctor," she sniffled, "has told me the possibilities and the likelihood. But you just can't give up on this type of thing—it's just too hard."

Her eyes carried a weight that no mother should ever have to hold. Austin returned. Suddenly, I saw him as an old man, nearing the end of his life. His little face was only of seven or eight years, but while making his way back, he had transformed.

"Can we have McDonald's tonight?"

I smiled. My dad came back just as we had finished the puzzle. Austin placed the last piece in. On the ride back home, my whole experience seemed so surreal. I never found out if he got better, but from that point on, I decided I would be a pediatrician.

—Alisha Wang, high school sophomore, Washington.

**Sunday Scoff**, continued from page 15.

"Two hundred and eighty five rupees," said Sunil.

"Amma, he's asking too much," said Amali.

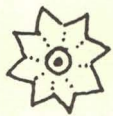
"You must learn that not *all* poor people are dishonest," replied Mrs. Silva.

"Aah-hh," gasped Amali and Sunil.

He counted the rupee notes Mrs. Silva had given him. She'd given the exact asking amount. A sense of well-being flooded Sunil. He straightened his shoulders and beamed. He'd made a fair profit on the sale and gained Mrs. Silva's respect.

—Suhashini A. K. DeFazio, Maryland.

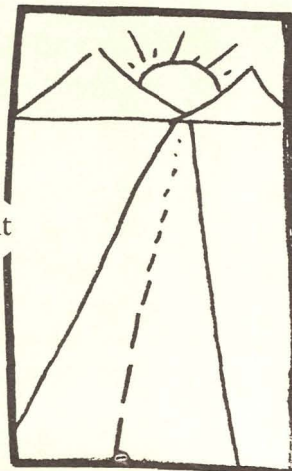




## Poetry Page

### Poetry

Poetry is the feeling  
When school just lets out  
There are no boundaries  
There are no rules  
Just let your pencil spout  
Poetry is the world  
When you fall asleep at night  
It's your emotions  
It's your dreams  
You're not here to fight  
Poetry is a way  
To let your feelings fly  
You express  
You relate  
And the limit is the sky  
Poetry is something  
That we all have inside  
We might not want it to come out  
And if we don't  
One part of us will surely die



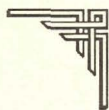
—Myray Manymoos Reames, 11, Oregon.

*"I live in a small valley community in the woods of Southern Oregon. I've lived here all my life. I am in a class with 12 kids, and we love our community school. A bunch of folks all got together and bought seven acres in downtown Williams, Oregon with trees and fields, and we built a straw-bale classroom for ourselves with a lot of help from adults. It was sooo much fun to let the poem come out of me and it happened very quickly. I hope you enjoy it!"*

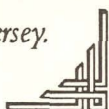
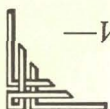


### In the Sky

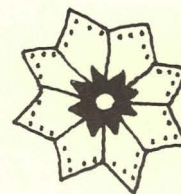
Bald eagle  
White, brown  
Swooping  
Flying  
Diving  
America's  
Symbol of  
Freedom  
Bird.



—William Faughnan, 8, New Jersey.

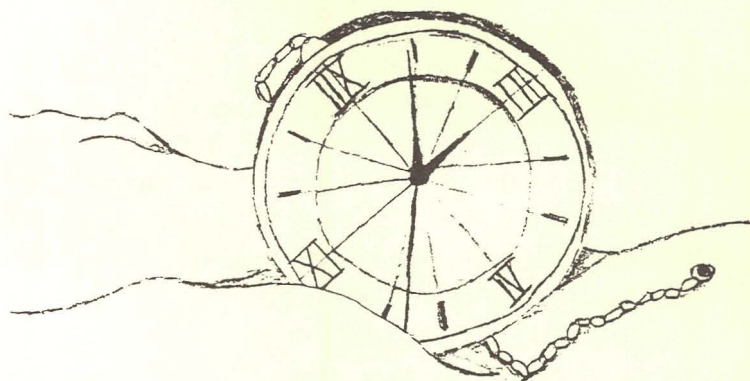


### Beauty



A gentle smile reaches my lips  
Snow is falling plentifully to the ground  
I run outside not wishing to miss anymore  
Twirling, falling, dancing in the wonderland  
Time seems to stop or not exist  
Rolling, laughing  
Not a care in the world  
I wish everyone could experience this wonderland  
Some are ignorant  
Have places to go, people to be  
Sadly, they miss the beauty around them  
Time has made them blind  
I wish they could see this world in its true light  
It yearns to be seen  
Few see it  
Can you?

—Poem and art by Bailey Davis, 14, Wisconsin.



### November 27, 1995

When I was born,  
delicate stones whistled  
like the wind  
outside the house.  
Then it was like  
misty sunlight sprinkled  
the air with silky dust.  
And when I came  
into the world,  
I saw tender shadows  
promising me  
a wonderful life.



—Erin Ichinotsubo, 9, Japanese American, Hawaii.



## My Advice to

Draw! Paint! Sketch! These are the things that I love to do most. Many people think art is just a fun and easy thing to do. Little do they know that it is much more than just drawing, painting, and having a good time.

I am an American born Chinese; my parents are from Hong Kong. I was raised in Hawaii until I was 8 years old. Then my family moved to Los Angeles. Living in the Los Angeles area and in Hawaii has helped me grow my love for art. It has also helped me appreciate and love the many cultures around me.

It was tough growing up as a child who loved art and had a gift for it. I wasn't good at math or science, history or English. I was only good at drawing and painting. Ever since I could hold a pencil, I have drawn everything that I could see and everything that I loved. Art was what I loved to do the most. My parents always encouraged me to do art, but they didn't encourage me to become an artist, as they felt that I wouldn't be able to earn a living. In many cultures, you are praised when you do well academically. But art is not something that is considered to be academic.

Art has always been fun for me, but it hasn't always been easy. When I was in college, my first three years in the illustration program were very difficult. I wanted to be better than everyone else in my classes. I wanted to be able to compete in the world of artists. I always seemed to be at the bottom of my class. But this did not keep me away from my dream of becoming a successful artist and illustrator. It made me stronger and gave me more reason to climb my way to the top. Don't let the hard times stop you from doing what you want to do. Believe and trust in yourself.

Then comes the hardest part—the work. There's no room for slacking off and being lazy if you want to be successful. Sometimes it was discouraging because I felt like no matter how



## Young Artists

hard I tried, I could not do as well as I wanted. During times of discouragement, I turned to my friend, Onesi Jr., and to my grandma. They always encouraged me to keep going. At school, my professor, Richard Hull, always took time to help me. Whenever he had office hours, I would sign up and always show up. I didn't want to let him down, or miss my opportunity to learn from him.

Learning to be humble was an essential part of becoming successful. That way, I could listen and learn from my teachers and be inspired by great artists like Norman Rockwell and my professor, Richard Hull. I enjoyed studying the work of great artists; their artwork has influenced me a lot.

All my hard work, dedication, and commitment paid off. When my classmates saw my first great artwork they were blown away! It felt so good inside to realize that I had come one step closer to my dream.

In my senior year, for my Bachelor of Fine Arts project, I illustrated a story that I made up about an all-American dog (a mutt) who lives near Santa Monica in Los Angeles. He visits his dog friends who live in different parts of the city.

The mutt visits his friend, a Rhodesian Ridgeback (a dog breed from Africa), who lives in "Little Ethiopia" of Los Angeles. In the illustration his friend is giving him a beautiful, colorful umbrella, something that represents his country (p. 19). In another illustration, he and his Shar Pei dog friend run through a Chinese New Year parade in Chinatown. On Olivera Street he visits his Chihuahua friend, and in Little Tokyo he visits his Japanese dog friends.

Having lived as a minority child in Utah for a few years, I wanted to show that America is a multicultural place. The four painted illustrations that I did for this project received the "Juror's Choice Award" in the Brigham Young University's Annual Student Art Show.





In the beginning years of my illustration career, I had a chance to illustrate a multicultural cookbook, *The Magical Melting Pot*. It features many famous chefs from around the country. (See *Bookshelf*, p. 32).

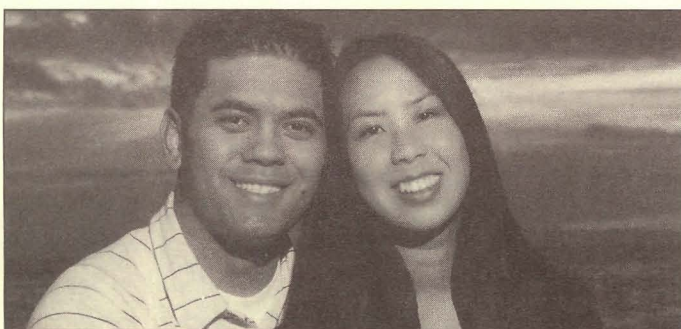
Although I'm starting all over again, this time I'm armed with more knowledge and ambition, and a determination to be even better. Now that I've made it to the professional world, I get to work even harder and be the best I can be. I see myself struggling and working hard in the future to become a great inspirational artist and illustrator.

My favorite medium to work with is acrylic, both medium and high viscosity. I like acrylic because it's very forgiving when I make mistakes, and also because it dries fast! This means I can meet my deadlines.

I got married this spring. My husband is all American—he's part Hawaiian, Tongan, Samoan, Chinese, Cherokee, French, and more. Now we are definitely a multicultural family.

I hope I have helped you jump-start your dream of becoming a successful artist. Believe in yourself and don't let anyone discourage you. You can fulfill your dream and help inspire others.

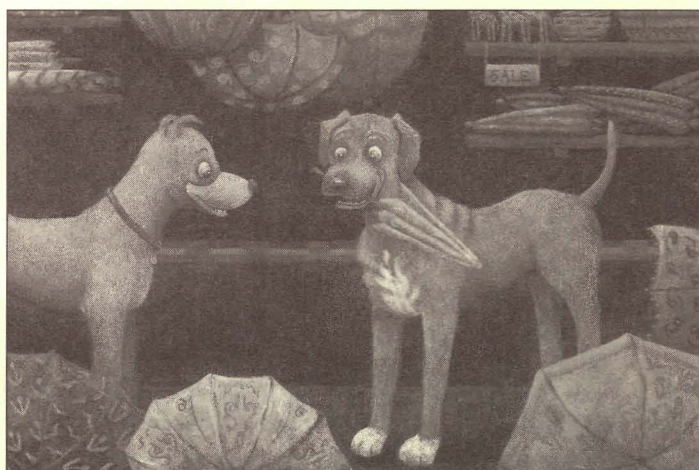
—Alvina Kwong, California. All illustrations are done with acrylic, either high or medium viscosity. Contact Alvina at [alvinakwong@yahoo.com](mailto:alvinakwong@yahoo.com).



### Want to Improve Art Skills?

1. Draw in your sketchbook! A sketchbook is where you can practice drawing whatever you want. Draw from your imagination, from real life—everything and anything. It will help you improve your skills. *Practice makes perfect.*
2. Study and learn from the artwork of other artists and illustrators. Draw inspiration and ideas from their life and artwork.
3. Draw lots of people! People are the hardest thing to draw. Once you master the skill of drawing people, you can draw anything. I'm still learning to draw people, too!
4. Work hard. Don't give up! You have to work hard to succeed.

—Alvina Kwong, illustrator.



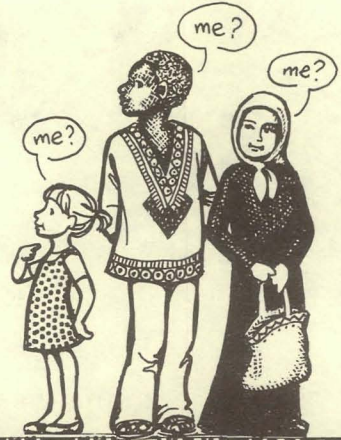




# WE WANT YOU!

Skipping Stones is *your* magazine. Send us your best essays, stories, poetry, artwork and photography. Tell us what *you* care about! Describe your country or culture, share a favorite celebration, draw your family, make your favorite recipe famous, invent a puzzle, ask Dear Hanna for advice. What are your hopes, your worries, your dreams? Give the world the gift of your wonderful imagination!

Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to ask for our **guidelines for submissions**, or go to [www.skippingstones.org](http://www.skippingstones.org)



## WRITING TIPS:

### KEEP IT FRESH!

Common phrases and descriptions get tired because we use them so often. We call them "trite" or "hackneyed." Unless you have a good reason (like humor) to choose them, try to think of a more original approach. For example:

- "as cute as a button"  
might become "a most amazing miniature"
- "much to my delight"  
"I didn't know I could get this happy!"
- "It was a hard-won victory."  
"We worked, we sweated, and we won."
- "I was frozen with fear."  
"I was so terrified I forgot to blink."
- "It goes without saying"  
(This seldom needs to be said!)

Find other examples, and try rewriting them.

### USE ACTIVE LANGUAGE!

Read this sample paragraph critically:

There are many ways to tell your readers about something that happened. Because it's important for the writer to be as clear as possible, events should be presented in the correct order. Once that has been achieved, the story should be made exciting through the addition of details and action.

Now compare it with this alternative:

As a writer, I have a box of tools that I use to make my writing "sing." Of course, I place events in a sensible order. Then I can share my excitement. My readers want to hear what I notice, how I feel, and how I respond.

Both examples say pretty much the same thing, but the first uses hackneyed language and the **PASSIVE VOICE** (...events should be presented..., that has been achieved...), and feels flat. Notice that you're more involved when you read the **ACTIVE VOICE** (...I place..., I can share..., my readers want...). The second example is shorter, but stronger! Do you notice any other differences between these examples?

## ART TIPS:

### BE BOLD!

**Contrast** is the difference between light and dark tones.

**WEAK CONTRAST:**

**STRONG CONTRAST:**

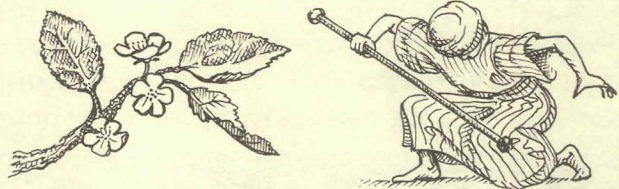


Contrast helps artwork show up! Make your dark areas rich and strong, use bold lines, keep light areas bright and crisp! How else does the second picture add contrast?

Contrast between different colors is often harder to see. View colored art in dim light to see the light/dark contrast.

### BE DELICATE!

**MOOD** or **FEELING** sometimes needs a softer touch. One of these pictures looks just right using delicate lines. Might one look better if it were bolder? Why you think so?



### Draw DINGBATS and BORDERS!



You don't have to send us a big drawing to be published. We need small pictures (dingbats) and long or short borders, too! Notice how many designs we sampled in these borders.





# OTTO and the Glowing Ball of Light

Once upon a moon, out in the vast realms of the universe, there lived a ravenous space sprite whose name was Otto. He was very hungry because he had slept for many years after a tiring quest to find a flame flower which brought eternal good fortune.

Otto was about the size of the planet Pluto, maybe a little smaller, and was colored many shades of blue. He had sky blue fingernails and toenails, indigo eyes, ears, nose and lips, turquoise hair (including his long curly beard), and a periwinkle shade for the rest of his skin. He always wore a deep blue tunic, bowler hat, vest, shoes, and cape too. He was as thin as a scrawny chair leg. He was only living because of his magical and enabling powers as a sprite. He could only die if he was so immensely sad that its emptiness would swallow a black hole.

Otto's problem was that he needed a lot of food for his grumbling stomach. But what could he eat in space? He had become befuddled and confused in his 90 years of sleep. So, for a while he tried desperately to remember what sprites were supposed to eat. After what seemed like an eternity, an idea hit him like a lightning bolt. He would make something twice his size to eat. Then he wouldn't be hungry for a while (remember, he wasn't that smart).

So, after remembering what he liked to eat, Otto gathered a few good sized asteroids, some slushy comet snow (it had taken him quite a while to chase after that comet), stardust, two volcanic rocks from the fiery planet Venus, and a couple of brilliant red and orange clouds from Jupiter's stormy atmosphere.

Otto then selected an enormous asteroid from the asteroid belt. Carving a large hole in it, he there placed all of his ingredients. Otto smashed mixed, crushed, ground and blended everything together except the stardust. He did that until he had a thick, soft, pasty, doughy substance with a grayish color to it. He then rolled it into a sphere and sprinkled stardust, as a kind of topping, in a dense layer all over it.

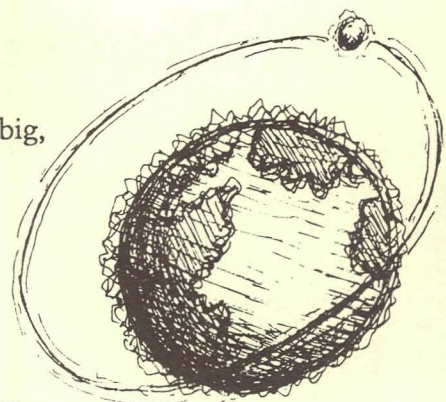
Then Otto held up the gigantic ball of a grayish sort and carefully flew very close to the sun where the ball quickly hardened. In the process, a bit of light was trapped inside the sphere. Otto went back where it was considerably dark. The ball glowed a bright, luminous silver, like a gigantic orb of light.

To him, it was a great, big, gleaming pie. It was all his very favorite space foods in a ball. To us, it would be a cluster of rock and dust which shone.

Since he'd been sleeping without food for so long, and had to take eating very slowly, he ate away at the ball over the course of many days. One day he woke up and it was not there at all! So Otto slowly and painstakingly restored it by making a new one, only to eat it afterwards.

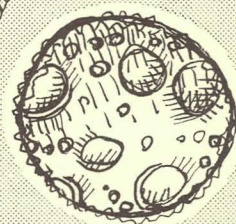
This has been going on for millennia, and to us, it is merely the eclipse of the glistening, silver orb, or "Luna," who wanes and waxes every month. But perhaps there really is a hungry space sprite colored many shades of blue that bakes the moon and eats it. You never really know, and you may believe anything you prefer. Just remember Otto every time you gaze upon the full moon, especially a blue one.

—Laleyna Vail, 10, Oregon.



## Otto's Pie Recipe

- \* Gather 3 or 4 good sized asteroids, 2 bathtubs full of slushy, cold comet snow (don't injure yourself while chasing after the comet!), 200 pounds of stardust, 2 of dangerous and fiery Venus' volcanic rocks, and 5 brilliantly colored Red-orange clouds from Jupiter's windy atmosphere.
- \* Find a colossal asteroid and carve an enormous hole in it.
- \* Now put all ingredients except the stardust in the hole.
- \* Smash, mix, crush, and blend your ingredients together until you have a doughy substance.
- \* Roll it into a sphere, remember to pack tightly.
- \* Sprinkle stardust in a dense layer over the sphere.
- \* Bake in the heat of the sun until hardened, and don't burn yourself in the process! Make sure you have a good amount of light trapped inside.
- \* Store in a dark place and eat at will.





# Peace Birds

"I'm not sure I'm doing this right," Mom said for the umpteenth time.

"It's okay, this one will be flying upside down," Kai said as he winged the crane past his big sister and tossed it into the basket of paper cranes. They had been making cranes ever since they had heard about the tsunami, and after three days their mom was still having trouble. In Japan, a thousand cranes are made and strung together to express hope and for healing.

"What do Americans make?" Kai asked.

"We send or make cards," said Mom.

He knew how to do that, too. It was the season to make and send New Year's cards. They were late in getting theirs out this year as usual. And now after the disaster, no one felt like doing it.

"Are we going to make a thousand cranes each?" wondered Maya, who was older and more skilled at making cranes.

"Do you think we can make that many?" Mom asked.

"Yes, of course," Maya said confidently.

After a long silence, Kai asked, "What if the whole world made cranes?"

"That would be thousands. And where would they take them?" asked Maya, who knew that there were few shrines in other places to take them all.

"Well, making cranes isn't easy, believe me!" Mom exclaimed.

"We could teach them," Kai offered.

"Oh, brother," groaned Maya.

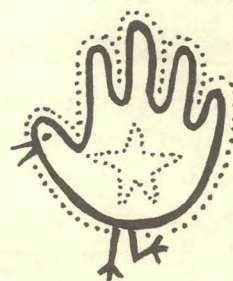
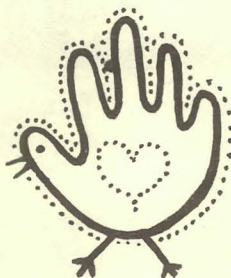
"What else could they make that's easier?" Mom asked as she clumsily folded another paper crane.

"They could draw a bird," said Kai.

"Not everyone can draw a bird," Maya admitted.

"I can," said Kai, reaching for a pencil and piece of construction paper from a shelf. He plopped his hand down on the piece of paper and carefully drew around it and then announced, "Here's a bird."

"That's a Thanksgiving decoration! Right Mom?" Maya insisted. Their multicultural family celebrated both Japanese and American traditions.



"Hey, that's a good idea, Kai. It's like a helping hand, too," Mom said.

"Let's write a letter to the world," Kai decided.

"And say what?" asked Maya.

"Please make birds," Kai said simply.

"Who would we ask?" Maya wondered.

"Teachers know lots of children," Kai replied.

Moving to the computer Mom asked, "What do you want to put in this letter?" After a few starts and much discussion, they came up with the following:

*Dear Teachers of the World,*

*Please ask your students to make a handprint bird. They can decorate it and write a wish on it for the tsunami victims. Please put the birds up so everyone can see and remember. Thank you.*

*Peace,*

*Kai and Maya*

After printing the letter, they signed their names in Japanese under the English and put their address.

Sitting at the computer, both children named countries, sometimes in Japanese and sometimes in English, as their mother surfed the Internet to find addresses of schools all over the world. They even looked in the countries where the tsunami had hit. "They also have wishes," Kai pointed out.

"How will the *tsunami* survivors know about our wishes of goodwill?" Maya asked as they folded cranes after dinner one evening.

"Good question," said Mom, "Perhaps, they might never find that out. But surely, it will help all the kids who participate in making the birds of goodwill. Maybe it's the thought that counts."

After the holidays, Kai and Maya's classes made handprints and put them above the blackboard.

After the last of their thousand paper cranes was



## Peace Birds *continued*

strung, Kai, Maya and their mother took them to the local shrine and prayed for the people who had died and for those who survived.

Several weeks later, the postman brought a big brown envelope. It had come from America. It waited to be opened until they got home from school.

"This isn't from Granny." Kai could recognize her address. Inside, there were several pictures of handprints pasted on walls of a school.

As the weeks passed, more envelopes arrived with pictures. Some were newspaper clippings of more disasters.

Kai and Maya made another trip to the 100 Yen Shop to buy a map of the world. Maya made a tiny handprint to stick on each country where an envelope had come from. Soon the map was covered with tiny handprints.

Focusing on the map to take a picture, Maya looked over the camera at Kai and her mother, smiled, and said happily, "Cool, it looks like the world is reaching out."

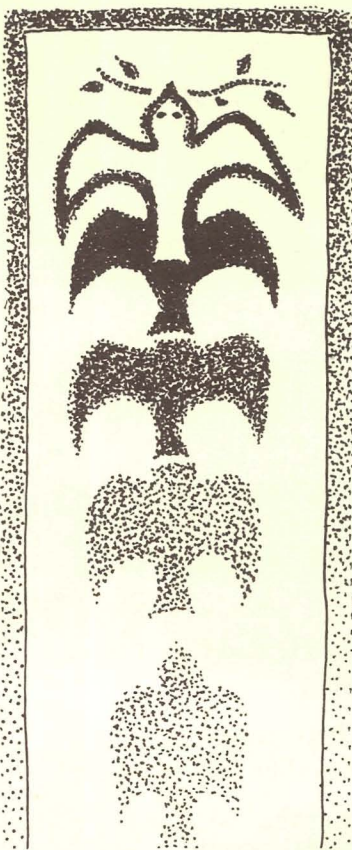
—Annie (Elizabeth) Donwerth Chikamatsu, Japan. Annie wrote this in honor of a friend and her young family who perished in Phuket, Thailand, in the tsunami.



## Mr. Mayor

Dear Mr. Mayor,  
I would like to invite you to my house for dinner  
I live three blocks away from your office building  
I have a riverfront home under the 9th Street bridge  
Dinner is not formal  
So come in your most casual clothes  
I hope you don't mind leftovers  
It's all I could find in the dumpsters  
I would say bring a guest  
But there isn't enough food to feed three  
Please come early  
The neighborhood is dangerous after dark  
I hope you can make it  
I don't get much company anymore.

—McKenzie Banas, 13, Pennsylvania.



## The Way of Peace

The way of peace  
begins with a sacred dance  
of children in a circle  
of fearless destiny.

The way of peace  
is a poem remembering  
the birth of a saint

The way of peace  
is a road leading  
a mother and father  
to a brave light.

The way of peace  
is my promise  
to believe in a gentle  
story of the world's purity.

—Resy Kony, 10, Hawaii.

## Pen Pals Wanted

We are a 4th grade class at Steiner Ranch Elem. in Texas. We are going to celebrate our class party by learning about different cultures. Writing pen pal letters would be a great way to learn even more. Please let us know if your students would like to get pen pal letters from our students! Contact us at: [broylesaus@aol.com](mailto:broylesaus@aol.com) or write to:

Michelle Broyles c/o Steiner Ranch Elem. School  
15809 Booth Circle  
Austin, TEXAS 78641 USA

## Moroccan Tomato and Cucumber Salad

*A Recipe from The Magical Melting Pot (see p. 32)*

*(As per Kitty Morse, chef and author of eight cookbooks)*

- 1 large cucumber, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 green pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 1 tablespoon minced cilantro leaves
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1. In a serving bowl, combine the cucumber, tomatoes, peppers, cilantro, olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper.
2. Serve at room temperature. Makes 4 servings.





Once there lived two boys. They were friends from their childhood, but they were very different. One of the boys, Sasha, always helped everybody. The other, Sergey, only did things for himself. He thought this was the right thing to do and laughed at Sasha.

Once in the winter, the boys went from school to a frozen lake. They heard someone crying and calling for help. Sasha spoke to Sergey, "Let's go see what it is."

When they went three meters, they saw that a little girl fell into a hole in the ice. Sergey was frightened. Seizing his friend by the hand, he said, "Sasha, let's go from here or we might fall!"

But Sasha was not in agreement. He said that it was necessary to attempt to save the girl.

"You always think more of others. You can sink!" said Sergey, and quickly went to the other side.

Sasha stayed there by himself, and the girl kept crying for help, but she was already choking on the water. Sasha threw his scarf to her, but she couldn't catch it. She was still little and didn't understand that somebody was saving her. Then Sasha took off his school bag and jumped in the water. It was very cold. Sasha took the girl and pushed her up onto the ice, but he couldn't get himself out. "Maybe I'll drown," thought Sasha.

He was very cold in this water and his boots were so heavy. The last thing Sasha thought of was his parents.

Meanwhile, Sergey had gone home, muttering to himself that his friend was too kind! After all, it was

## My Little Town of Bologoye, Russia

I live in Bologoye. It's situated to the north from Moscow. It doesn't have big shops, broad streets, traffic lights, large parks, or traffic noise. A lot of lakes and forests are around our town. In the forests there is clean, fresh air and beautiful landscapes.

People here are more open and friendly than in Moscow. In our town there isn't any competition, and many people know each other. Bologoye is beautiful. Autumn leaves are now falling down. In the winter our town is white with snow.

My school is not the best in the world, but I like it. I am interested in aviation and am beginning to think about my future. I want to know a lot and travel often. —*Tanya Polinskaya, 13, Bologoye, Russia.*

that little girl's own fault she had fallen into the hole in the ice. Sergey didn't want to think about it anymore, so he went into a shop and bought a big cake. When he arrived home, he ate it all himself. However, that night Sergey became sick and was taken to the hospital.

Sasha woke up in the hospital, hearing his Mum crying near the bed. "Sasha," she exclaimed, "you frightened us! You would have drowned if that fisherman hadn't saved you!"

Sasha was frightened that his dad, also at his bedside, would be angry, but his dad smiled and said, "You are simply a hero! You saved the little girl! She is alright now!"

Then the door opened, and Sasha's friends came into the room. "Sasha, get well!" they exclaimed.

At the same time, on another floor of the hospital, Sergey, who had been there since the day before, stayed near the window and thought, "Why is no one coming to visit me?"

—*Nikita Pavljuk, 11, Bologoye, Russia.*

"I'm a schoolboy from a little town. I have many friends, but only one of them is my best friend—his name is Sasha. I like to play computer games, listen to music, and read books."



—*Katerina Troleмова of Bologoye, Russia, likes to read all sorts of books. One of her favorites is Tanya Grotter, which she illustrates here. She writes, "Books are fun to read because of the magnificent adventures within the pages. I can stay with this book all day."*



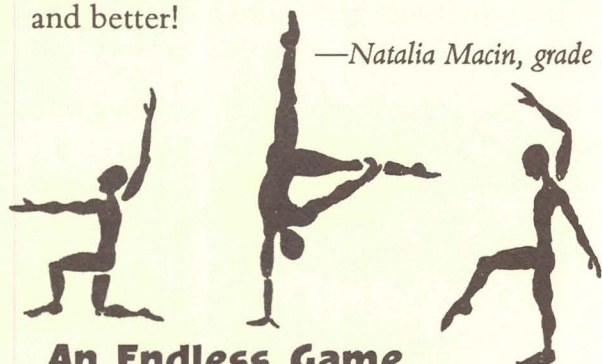
## Gymnastics

It was Thursday after school when my mom came to pick me up and I saw my friend go to the cafeteria. My mom and I went to see what was going on. My mom saw a girl do a flip. "Wow!" she said.

"I want to do that! I want to do that!" I screamed at the top of my lungs.

My mom went in and told me to stay put. Five minutes later, she came and told me I was in. So, I ran inside and got ready. I was in gymnastics. At first, I did easy things like cartwheels and roundoffs. The next few years, I was doing flips. It was hard in the beginning, but I got better. My favorite things are running roundoff flipflops and backwalkovers. All my friends are there with me, like Abby and Yassmin, and we have lots of fun. We do the vault and the balance beam. On the balance beam, I do a cartwheel in the middle and a roundoff off it. On the vault, I run jump on the trampoline and I put my hands in the middle and do the splits over the vault. I plan on doing gymnastics until the end of elementary. I am trying to get my front handspring and to do that I need my frontwalkover. I almost have my flipflop by myself. It always gets better and better!

—Natalia Macin, grade 3, Texas.



### An Endless Game

What is hockey?

Hockey is...

Flying across the hard, smooth ice

Tasting the frigid air rush onto my face

Stopping the whirling, twirling puck with my pads and stick

Watching the steaming bodies smash each other into the boards

Feeling the warm sweat drip down my face after a hard fought game

And the sweet smell of victory and the putrid odor of defeat.

That's hockey!

—Kyle Beljanski, 14, Michigan.

## Play It!

### Extreme Skiing

Spread eagle

Tail grab

Iron cross

Rodeo

180

360

540

720

900

and

even

1080

Back flip

Front flip

Funboxes

C rail

Kink rail

Dragon rail

Rail

Halfpipe

Quarterpipe

Spine

Tabletop

Kicker

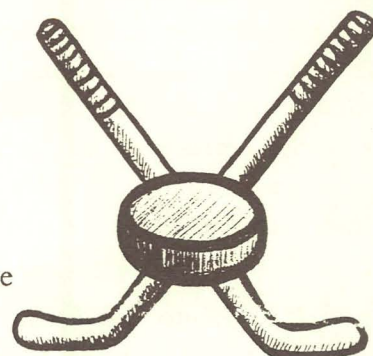
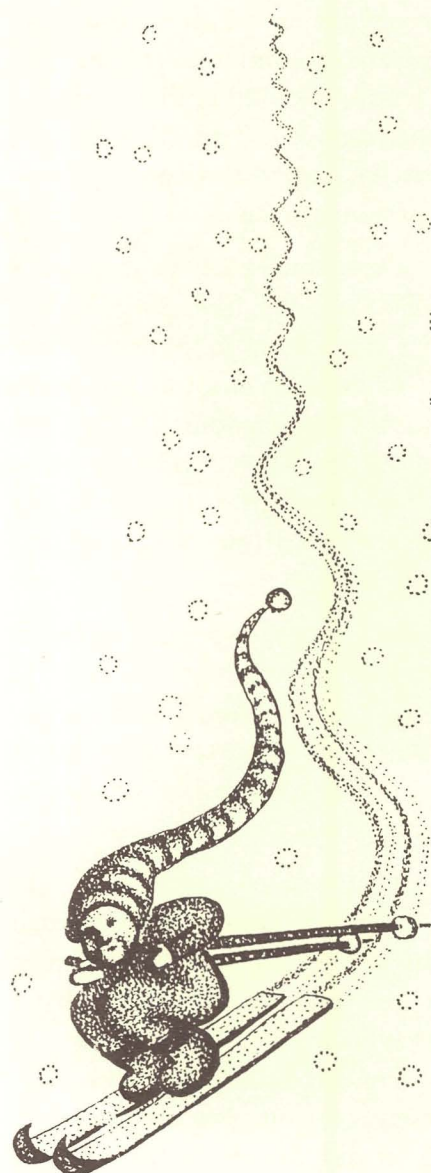
Gap

Powder

Ledges

**Legends.**

—Sean Murphy, 11,  
Connecticut.





## Brothers

I have fifty-nine brothers, none of whom I am related to by blood; but nonetheless they are my brothers. The dictionary defines a brother as a male having at least one parent in common with another person. To me, this definition could not be further from the truth. Brotherhood is not a birthright. It is something that must be earned through friendship, sacrifice, and common purpose.

My fifty-nine brothers and I play football for Torrey Pines High School. We have forged an unbreakable bond that will forever unite us not only as teammates, but as a family. While this may seem like an exaggeration, what I have endured with these young men is more real than the bond that many biological brothers share. Day after day for twelve months a year, we sweat together, we bleed together, and we sacrifice together.

In the weight room we challenge each other to become the best. On the practice field, we sacrifice every bone in our bodies for the good of the team. And on game day, when we stand together against our adversaries, we push ourselves beyond our limits, not as individual players, but as a family.

I learned during Hell Week looking into the eyes of my brothers that we would do anything for each other. When each day seemed to stretch on forever, and football had become torturous, I realized that I was not the only one who was struggling to survive. Knowing that there were fifty-nine young men who would sacrifice themselves for me gave me the inspiration and strength to dig deeper within myself when I had nothing more to give.

When I hear the word "brother" I don't think about a random genetic mishap, a pesky younger sibling always sneaking into his older brother's room to cause trouble. I think of the Allied troops who stormed the beaches of Normandy on D-Day. I think of the Marines in Iraq who are facing imminent danger together on a daily basis. I think of my fifty-nine brothers who unite to achieve a common goal.

— Eric D. Weiner, 17, Jewish American, California.  
Eric's favorite subjects at school are English and history. He has traveled to many countries. He also plays lacrosse.

## Countdown on the Court

"This is a winnable game, girls!" my coach encourages. "They are calling time out to devise a plan because they can't get around our defense! Be ready for anything!"

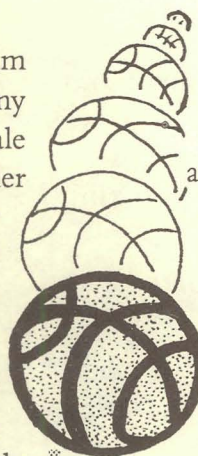
We were playing our rivals, St. Aden's. When we sprint back onto the court, the score is tied: 24-24 with three minutes left until the end of the game. I am guarding their best player one-on-one.

It is their ball. They bring it up the floor. I am on my girl. She is trying to make v-cuts and lose me, but she can't. The point guard makes a cross over dribble past our girl. Their point guard shoots and out of nowhere, our center slaps the ball down. She got "stuffed." The crowd goes wild. Our team, ecstatic, runs down the court on a fast break. The other team is on our heels. The clock is winding down: ten-nine-eight, We sprint past half-court. Seven-six-five. We topple past the top of the key. Rachel quickly and accurately passes me the ball. Four-three-two. The other team is at our side, all crowding around me. They are swiping at the ball in a desperate attempt to stop me from scoring. I go up for a right-handed lay-up. One second left. A girl from the other team grabs onto me, pulling me down to the floor. Beeeeep! The buzzer rings.

The ball bounces off the rim. I go flying into the back wall. Thank God there are pads covering it. I land on my leg the wrong way. The girl who pull me down is fine. My coach and team run over to me. At first I am unable to stand up, but a few minutes later I am walking. I tell myself, "It isn't that bad. I can finish the game."

"Two shots," the referee announces. I limp over to the foul line and line myself up with the basket. The referee passes me the ball. I look at the basket, dribble the ball twice, and spin it. I look intently at the basket and shoot the ball. It floats in the air and drops into the basket. We win! We beat our arch rivals, St. Aden's! My team swarms around me and we all scream and go crazy. We can't believe it. We have won!

—Diane Maciurzynski, 16, New York.





## A Nice Breeze

Zzzzzzz! "Jenna wake up!"

"Yes, Mom. What do you need?"

"We are going to get skates!" "Yes!" I shouted. My dream might finally come true I thought. So we got in the car and drove to Willowbrook, and they didn't have my size! So, we drove to the Galleria and tried on six pairs of skates before I found the right ones. So, my mom laced up my skates, and I ran straight for the ice. I got on, and boom! I fell and started to get soaked! But I got up and held on to the wall. When I started to freely skate, I felt like I was flying! Then, my feet started to hurt. I thought that three hours was enough! But it turned out I had only been skating for 30 minutes! After that, we got in the car and drove home.

The next day was Sunday and my mom woke me up at

10:00 to go ice skating! I shot out of bed and raced into the closet as fast as a cheetah that saw a big juicy steak at the end of the desert. Well we got in the car and drove to the ice rink. Then, I started to skate. It was incredible! I thought I could skate forever, but the lesson was only for 30 minutes, then I got to practice for one hour.

I met a girl named Andrea while skating. Well, I kind of bumped into her, but anyway, she was my level so I practiced with her. Now, I skate three days a week and I've loved it from the first time I was soaked!

—Jenna Huntsman, grade 3, Texas.

Art: Shannon Lattin.



## I Believe...

About three years ago, I was in a major car accident. My mom was driving me to basketball. The light turned green, and as we slowly started to go, a car sped through a red light, hitting the right passenger door. I was wedged in the car and couldn't find the strength to work my way out. I remember trying to stand, but my legs wouldn't move. I later found out I had severely fractured my leg in three places. I also shattered my knee cap. I ached all over and was distraught by the thought of missing my big basketball game. On top of this, the doctor came in and said I might never run again.

I was soon released, but the sad news about not running stayed with me. I went to our basketball team's championship playoff, wishing I could play. Before the game, my coach made an announcement. He then wheeled me to the basket, and I made the first shot. The team went on to win the championship. Afterward, he gave me the game ball, signed by all my friends, and let me receive the trophy for my team.

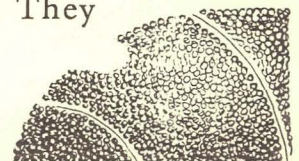
Before I left, he told me, "I know with your love and drive for the game, you'll make it back! I believe in you!"

I took his words to heart and made a goal to come back. I started increasing my physical therapy, and worked my way to crutches. After four months, I could walk! It was slow, but it was a step in the right direction. I couldn't run, but oh, how I wanted to play. It meant so much. Then I practiced shooting. Slowly my physical therapist taught me how to jog again. I had to wear a brace, but I could jog!

When it was playoff time again, I was there. Even though I didn't run very fast, I could hit a three-pointer easier than eating cake. We lost that game, but it didn't matter. I was back! Over the years I quit using the brace. I can run now like my old self, maybe even faster. Every day I see the ball my friends signed, and I thank God for my team and coach. They gave me the greatest gift.

They believed in me!

—Melissa Sirera, 13, PA.





# The Highland Fling

"Kathleen!" Deirdre is flying toward me, pleated green kilt swinging heavily, frizzy carrot hair spilling rebelliously from a black, pipe band hat. "They've already called your class twice," she pants. "You'd better race. Whatcha doing here, anyway?"

As I skim over the damp grass in my black leather dance slippers, I attempt to explain to my best friend, Deirdre, how I became such an absorbed spectator at the eardrum-splitting piping events. Deirdre's band has dispersed and her pipes have been put away; I know that the sole purpose for which she, my parents, and my grandmother are sitting out this wet June day is to watch my Highland dance competition. I babble something about losing track of time...

Being late for my first dance as a competitor in Premier, the highest level, is unnerving. I am the last dancer from the twelve-years category to slide into place on the line-up bench beside the stage. The lone set of bagpipes playing "The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling" sharply strikes my ears with more force than the bands I have been listening to. Why are my knees shaking? I have to relax.

I try to distract myself by smoothing my fire engine red kilt. Without meaning to, I wish the morning was already over so I could peel off its corresponding knee socks, by then sticky with perspiration, to satisfyingly reveal my aching feet with crisscross marks from the laces. Pain is a bit of a joke among us Highland dancers; the sport requires long, exhausting hours of practice, constantly pushing joints and muscles past their limits, and often suffering injuries. My mother tolerates my choice of obsession, most likely because my Scottish, Gaelic-speaking grandmother was once a dancer herself. My mother dislikes its stressful, competitive nature.

I must say, I usually thrive on the competitive excitement, and even the stress. I love the lively precision of Highland steps, the appealing music of the pipes, and even the butterflies in my stomach that accentuate moments like this.

Today is a slight exception, however. I cannot remember another time when I was so drugged with apprehension and anticipation, to the point of wanting to explode.

As it is my first competition in Premier, my grandmother has come all the way from Cape Breton. (Actually, she has simply planned her annual visit to include the Highland Games, but at this crucial moment my frenzied mind makes no distinction). I hate to admit even to myself how much I would love to succeed while she is watching.

Now I stare at the colorful line of girls in swishing kilts and velvet vests, their sharp, tight movements executed in perfect unison. They seem to jump halfway into the clouds, making it look so deliciously easy. Only spectators who have

danced, such as myself and Gran, know how hard they are really working. I count out the beats in my head in Gaelic: "*a-haon, a dha, a tri, a ceithir...*" It is almost my turn.

As I walk onto the worn wooden stage, looking everywhere but at the judge, my entire body is like a teetering tower of bricks that could collapse at any minute. The crowd beyond is a vibrant blur, blending with the background of canvas tents and marching pipe bands.

While I stand in first position, and the judge records my number, my searching eyes find Deirdre and my family. I paste a smile on my face. As my eyes settle on Gran's tiny, weathered form, the wrinkled, pacifying face looking calmly back at me, I know I am taking everything too seriously.



Art by Shannon Lattin



**"My flying tartan is the weight and yet the pride of my heritage."**

The piper blasts the air with his preparatory drones, and the lively Strathspey pierces the air. The eight counts before the bow seem endless. I am strangely conscious of my hair, tightly glued to my head in a well-sprayed bun. With a sudden wave of inspiration, I try to envision it flying loose in the harsh, salty winds of Scotland, surrounded by the beautifully rugged moors of my ancestry. I imagine myself living with the daily hardships of the ancient culture that are shadowed in the dance I am about to perform, and a strong feeling of connection swells within me.

My body springs high into the air. Against the bleak sky, my fingers etch the head of a Highland stag, and my legs, also deer-like, are light, sharp, and tingling with exhilarating energy. My flying tartan is the weight and yet the pride of my heritage. Immediately I shed the

pressure of the competition; I have become a part of something so much greater. Today, I have joined my Celtic ancestors and the dancers of many generations to come in this triumphant movement. I *am* the dance. The dance is I. There is no separation.

It is over before I know it has begun. I stumble numbly offstage. Gran wraps me in a tight embrace, centuries of our entwined pasts melt us into one.

"*Gle mhath, Catriona.*" Very good, Kathleen.

Sinking into her fragile body, still pulsing with the spirit of a dancer, I realize that in her mind I have already won. My heart soars. That is good enough for me.

—Megan M. Gannett, 16, Victoria School of Performing and Visual Arts, Edmonton, Canada.

## The 2006 Youth Honor Awards

*Send your entries on one or  
more of the following:*

**Nature & Environment  
Culture & Diversity  
Dreams & Visions  
Youth Activism, Family  
Society, Peace & Justice**

Enter by June 25, 2006.

*Skipping Stones—Youth Awards*

P. O. Box 3939

Eugene, OR 97403 USA

[editor@SkippingStones.org](mailto:editor@SkippingStones.org)

[www.SkippingStones.org](http://www.SkippingStones.org)

### Prayer

Words strange to my tongue  
Fall awkwardly from faltering lips

Reading from a yellowed paper  
These syllables that have traveled  
Dark oceans and fiery nights

Wondering who created this meditation  
Of birth and destruction

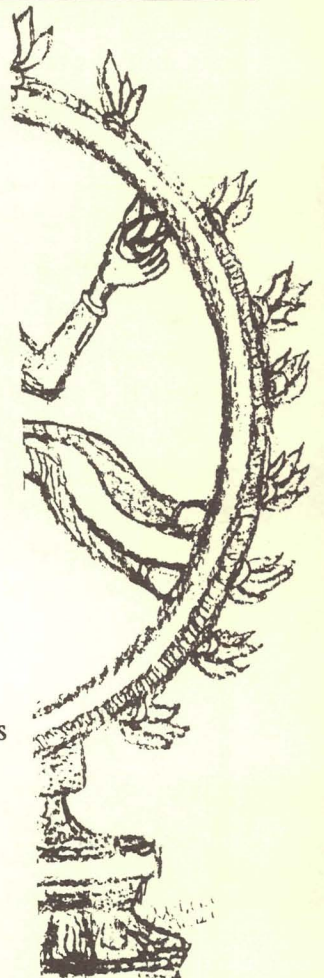
In her mind  
These words are worn  
All jagged edges effaced  
By time and repetition

A method to converse  
With gods that remain faceless  
Tendrils of smoke behind indigo mountains

Yet to me  
They have no meaning

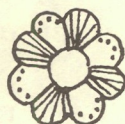
Only a song  
Set to the music of voices.

—Catherine Carberry, 16, Puerto Rican American, New Jersey.  
Art by Ambika Trasi, 16, Indian-American, New Jersey.





## You Are Something When You're Special



My hero is Stevie, a kid with down syndrome, that I met one year at the Winter Special Olympics in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. He is the floor hockey goalie on a team of eighteen kids, all with special needs.

Stevie caught my attention because he is so kind and patient. The first time I saw him he was worried about my grandmother having a seat, so he ran to find her one. He wasn't worried about why he is different from other people, but more worried about others. I think it is so great to see him in a sport like floor hockey. You see a lot of professional athletes and how hard they have to work to achieve their goals. They might have to work for years to get their techniques down, but Stevie has a technique all his own. Some professional hockey players try really hard to get the puck out of the goalie's area, but Stevie just lays on it. I think it is so neat how he does this. Athletes like Stevie have to work twice as hard as a professional athlete. Stevie does other events in Special Olympics, like golf, bowling, softball, and weight training, but floor hockey is his favorite sport.

Stevie is my hero because even with all of his challenges, he still manages to accomplish anything he sets his mind to and he always has a good outlook on life. I really think all kids with special needs are heroes because they work hard to succeed. They don't give up easily or make excuses. They just do their best and keep trying until they make it. Imagine what the world would be like if we all did that! Thanks, Stevie.

—Nicole Allerton, 13, Pennsylvania.

### *Aqua Current*

Teal triumphant waves  
Crashing on the sandy shore...  
Sand castles destroyed

—Natalie Affinito, 13, Pennsylvania.

## A Tasty Explosion



What type of snack explodes?

That's right. It's popcorn!

Popcorn has been popping up in America for over 600 years. You might not think popcorn is important, but it has played a big part in many historical events. One of the first things travellers such as Columbus saw when they came to America was popcorn used as jewelry by the Native Americans. They decorated themselves with popcorn necklaces and headdresses and tried to sell the popcorn jewelry to his crew. Some Native Americans used popcorn to make soup, while others enjoyed watching it pop in hot sand.

Popcorn was also used as a peace offering during meetings between the Native Americans and the English colonists. Colonial housewives learned to like it, too. A favorite breakfast treat was popcorn served with cereal and cream. This was the original Corn Pops cereal we still see in supermarkets today.

Do you know what makes popcorn pop? Native American tribes believed that spirits lived in each kernel. The spirits were quiet and happy in their homes but got very angry if their houses were heated. The hotter their homes would become, the angrier they would get. When they couldn't take it anymore, they burst out of their homes and into the air as white puffs of steam.

Scientists say that popcorn pops because of a drop of water in the center of the kernel. The water is stored in a circle of starch, surrounded by a hard outer shell. When the kernel is heated the moisture expands, just like when a balloon is filled with air. Pressure builds up against the hard shell until it explodes. The soft starch becomes inflated and bursts, turning the kernel inside out.

People all over the world enjoy popcorn. In the United States, people eat about 17.3 billion quarts of popcorn each year. Although, you may not use popcorn to make jewelry or soup, it's always a fun snack.

—Eva C. Giacona, New York.



## Transnationalism

At a time in American life when loyalty to any other nation has been perceived as disloyalty to America, a new study of family stories reveals that many families who came to the United States in the last 30 or 40 years strongly identify with both the country they came from as well as with America (known as "transnationalism"). Published in the latest issue of *Family Process*, the study confirms that among the newest immigrants, transnationalism is replacing the "melting pot" dynamic of the nation. The study, conducted by a professor, whose grandparents came from Sicily, and three transnational students with ancestry in Cuba, Greece, and Russia, describes how family stories told by new immigrants and their American-born children help retain bonds with their country of origin, reinforcing their dual identities.

(Source: [www.blackwellpublishing.com/press](http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/press))

## Beetles, Monkeys, and Even Mice Sing

No, we are not talking about any new musicians or a rock band! Scientists have long known that male mice produce high-frequency sounds when they pick up the scent of a female mouse, possibly for courtship. But recently, Washington University researchers were surprised to discover that even male lab mice produce such complicated sound patterns. They recorded these sounds and modified them for human ears. The recordings indeed sound bird-like. As we know, songbirds, humpback whales, porpoises, insects, and bats also sing to communicate their presence or feelings.

(Associated Press)

## Did you know?

- That average produce bought in a North American market was trucked over 1,500 miles from where it was produced before reaching your kitchen?
- That many of the products sold in the United States were made (at least in part) in other countries?
- Due to global warming and deforestation, the current drought in the Amazonian region of Brazil is severe. Many communities who rely on river-based transportation are cut off—the world's largest river is running very low. Water-borne diseases are rising as stagnant water provides a great breeding ground.

## The Danger of Mercury Poisoning

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed an ordinance on Nov. 1 requiring mercury warnings on fish. The first of its kind in the country, the law will require grocery stores and restaurants to post "mercury in seafood" warning signs on necessary foods in English, Spanish, and Chinese in the city and county of San Francisco.

A recent Center for Disease Control and Prevention study showed that women in coastal areas had blood levels of mercury that were twice as high as women living inland. Another recent study found that 17 percent of Asian women had mercury blood levels exceeding the EPA limits, higher than other populations in the nation.

"...women are at higher risk and should be educated about which fish to avoid, regardless of whether they speak English, Spanish, or Chinese," said Eli Saddler, a public health specialist at GotMercury.org. He continued, "Women and children should not eat swordfish, shark, tilefish, or king mackerel. They should also reduce their tuna consumption." Visit: [www.GotMercury.org](http://www.GotMercury.org) for details.

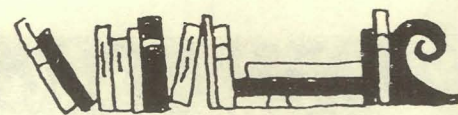
## Jan. 23-27: No Name-Calling Week

For the last two years, hundreds of schools across the nation have organized a *No Name-Calling Week*. It provides students and teachers tools and inspirations to launch on-going dialogue about ways to eliminate bullying in their communities. Also, a *Creative Expression Contest* for students in grades 5-8 welcomes original writing and artwork that convey experiences and feelings about name-calling, and ideas for reducing bullying in schools and communities. Last year, 1,600 students from 200 schools in 36 states participated. For more information, contact: Brooke Wiese, Ed. Dir., GLSEN, 90 Broad St., 2nd Fl., NYC, NY 10004; Tel. (646) 388-6591 or visit [www.nonamecallingweek.org](http://www.nonamecallingweek.org); [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org).

## Rosa Parks, the Civil Rights Leader

Rosa Parks, passed away at age 92. She had refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama and worked to bring equal rights for blacks. Visit [www.civilrightsteaching.org](http://www.civilrightsteaching.org) for lesson plans.





**Shanghai Messenger** by Andrea Cheng; illustr. Ed Young (*Lee & Low*). A young Chinese-American girl learns about her heritage when she travels around the world to meet her extended family. From the apprehension of leaving home to the wonders she finds in China, the featured snapshots of her life offer her an understanding and appreciation of her multicultural background. ES, MS. ISBN: 1-58430-238-0.

**Legend** by Thea Autry Rodriguez (*Publish America*). In this adventurous tale, a young boy named Simon sets out in search of Heaven, an elusive place that was shown to him in a dream. On his journey, Simon experiences many escapades and makes a variety of interesting friends who help him realize the true meaning behind his quest. Filled with villains, heroes, romance, and adventure, *Legend* has all the elements of a good narrative. ISBN: 1-4137-2976-2.

**Playing War** by Kathy Beckwith; illustr. Lea Lyon (*Tilbury House*). On a hot summer afternoon, five children decide to play war to overcome their boredom. However, one boy who is new to the neighborhood does not think the game is so fun. Having experienced real war first-hand, the boy shares his story and teaches his friends that war is not a game. Ages 6 and up. ISBN: 0-88448-267-7.

**A Dream of Freedom: The Civil Rights Movement From 1954 to 1968** by Diane McWhorter (*Scholastic*). Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are just a couple of the profiles offered in this historical account that explains civil rights landmarks of the 20th century and the personal struggles of the activists as they forged ahead in the face of adversity to pursue social and political equality for all African Americans. Young Adults. ISBN: 0-439-57678-4.

**The North Carolina Black Repertory Company** by Felecia Piggott McMillan, Ph.D. (*Open Hand*). Using timelines and photographs, this outline of the Black theatre company shows how it has developed and grown over the past 25 years, as well as the new challenges its members face. MS, HS. ISBN: 0-940880-74-1.

**Hang a Thousand Trees with Ribbons: the Story of Phillis Wheatly** by Ann Rinaldi (*Harcourt, Inc.*). Young Phillis Wheatly's talent and passion is poetry. Ironically, it is also what pins her painfully between

the world of slavery and wealthy white society. In a true story about the first published African American in the United States, Rinaldi writes a powerful book about identity, courage and creativity. Young Adults. ISBN: 0-15-205393-x.

**The Magical Melting Pot** by Michelle Greenwald (*richy.greenwald@gmail.com*). This delicious combination of recipes and biographies is a lesson in the many tastes of home. Chefs from around the world share their favorite childhood meals, as well as some of their new inventions. Recipes (see p. for a sample) are organized by country, with whimsical illustrations throughout. All ages. ISBN: 0-9717565-0-3.

**Defining Moments: Women's Suffrage** by Jeff Hill (*Omnigraphics*). Divided into three sections, this reference book gives an overview of the history of the women's movement in America, a glimpse into the lives of the women involved, and the documents that were critical to the movement. Using these different perspectives, readers can see history unfold itself and understand the impact that women's suffrage has had on American culture and politics. Teaching resource for MS, HS. ISBN: 0-7808-0776-6.

**Creatures of the Rainforest: Two artists explore Djabugay country** by Warren Brim and Anna Eglitis (*Magabala Books*). Walbirr-walbirrs, Wubuns and Wawurs are just a few of the exotic animals portrayed in this picture book. Captions in both English and Djabugay adorn lively portraits of the many animals found in Northern Australia. ISBN: 1-875641-99-8.

**The Fish and Their Gifts/ Na Makana a Nal'a** by Joshua Kaiponohea Stender (*Kamehameha Schools*). This bilingual tale of a Hawaiian boy's brush with death describes how the fish in the ocean came to be different after Kanaloa, the protector of the sea, granted each fish a wish. A great traditional tale! ES, MS. ISBN: 0-87336-081-8.

**What You Will See Inside A Hindu Temple** by Mahendra and Vandana Jani (*SkyLight Paths*). This is one of a series of illustrated books, that explains various religions (such as Catholicism, Judaism and Islam), and their rituals in a colorful, fun-to-read manner. This particular book is a great introduction to the ways and whys of Hindu faith and worship. Ages 6 and up. ISBN: 1-59473-116-0.



## What Do We Meme?

**Opinions rule!** Our beliefs shape language, behavior, relationships. What we believe shapes our world. Trouble is, some people believe the wrong things. Right? My ego sure thinks so, and expects that everybody should accept my point of view. But a recent adventure in reading has shattered my certainty that I know precisely what this sorry planet needs.

This challenging book is **Boomeritis**, by philosopher and theorist Ken Wilber. He observes that each world view or paradigm (he calls these "memes") begins as progress and expanded understanding. When carried to extremes, however, it becomes a disease that hinders human growth. And I've discovered that I've got boomeritis.

Wilber models human development as a spiral of memes. Society evolves as a critical number of its citizens begin to grasp the understanding of the next meme up the spiral. Individually and culturally, there can be much reaching forward and sliding back: it's not an even progression, but you might recognize some memes you've visited lately in the diagram. Many of my generation, the baby-boomers, live at least partly in the "green" meme, marked by altruism and tolerance of diversity. But even at this level of awareness, we easily regress to intolerance (of other memes), thereby becoming "The Mean Green Meme."

Can I tell whether my own set of beliefs has crossed that line? As I explore Wilber's theory, I notice certain warning signs in my own reactions to others: contempt, fear, an impulse to attack or avoid. I find it in my own suffering: my anxiety, frustration, or outrage toward those who see life differently.

The occupants of all "first tier" memes believe implicitly that theirs is the only true and sensible model of reality, so they can all get pretty mean. But consider that a "green" ideal is tolerance. Notice how people (yes, even you!) resist ideas rooted in other world views. Notice that when debates arise between differing ideals, each side becomes even more entrenched. Notice that intolerance, name-calling, whining, and retaliation are not limited to earlier memes. If human behavior is that predictable, what's the point of yelling?

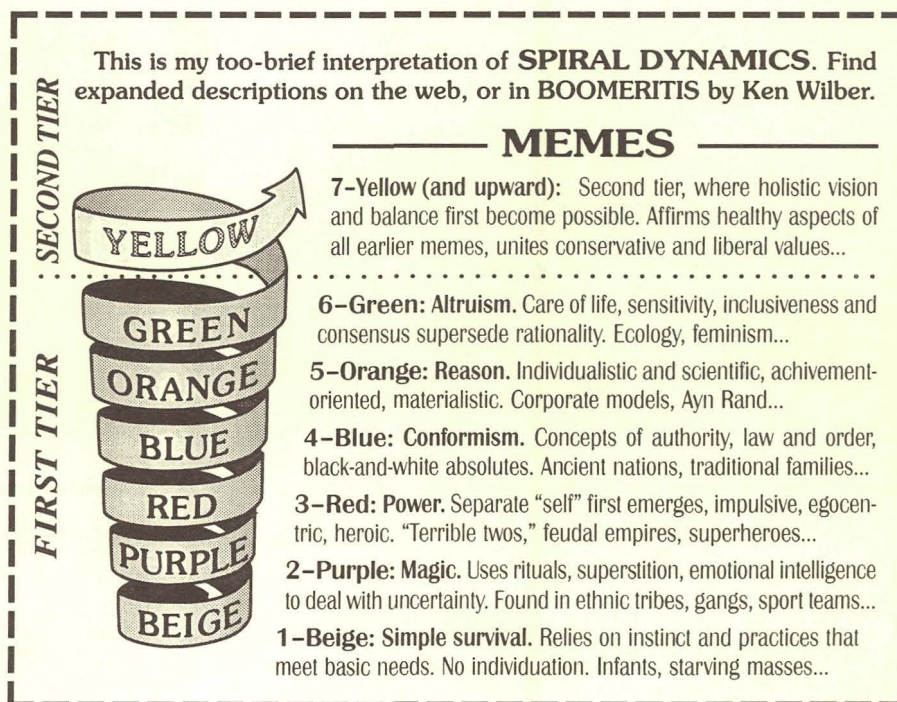
**So, a dilemma.** I can't just dust off my hands and walk away from my best understanding of truth. Is there a sane and healthy choice for myself, for society, for positive change? Have you heard that the wind wanted to prove it

was more powerful than the sun by getting a traveler to take off his coat? The harder the wind blew, the more tightly the man held on. But then the sun smiled patiently and radiated its kind warmth, and the traveler eventually shed his coat without a fight. My answer lies there, in patience and kindness. For I, too, am that traveler.

**If human society evolves** by climbing a spiral of memes, do we get to discard earlier memes? No, for two reasons.

First, the stream of human life, and civilization itself, evolves continually through the spiral. Every meme is essential to development, and we can watch this in our growing, changing children. Every meme is needed by someone, or some group, until we can reach for the next level. Where else can we live but where we are?

Second, Wilber senses that humanity is poised at a "second tier" of development, where we will gain an integrated understanding of our relationships with each other and our world. That healing reality will arrive when enough people affirm the necessity of all stages of the journey. Inclusiveness will become real rather than merely ideal.



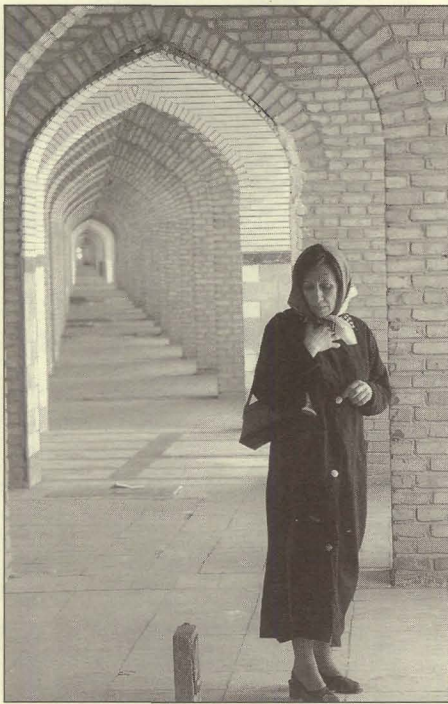
**Inspiring? Hopeful?** Imagine giving our children the freedom to explore and appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of all sorts of ideas. Imagine exposing "either/or" reasoning based on false choices, and dismantling the "us against them" game that makes policy-making such a struggle in diverse societies. Do we want this?

If we say yes, here's the hard part. This work can only begin right here. If we so identify with our opinions that we create an "us," if we fail to notice that this is what we teach our children, we serve them poorly. In this light, we see how "what we know" limits us all to a smaller, more anxious reality than we could be living.

*Peg Marson is an Oregon artist who illustrates science books for kids. She welcomes your comments at [tops@canby.com](mailto:tops@canby.com).*



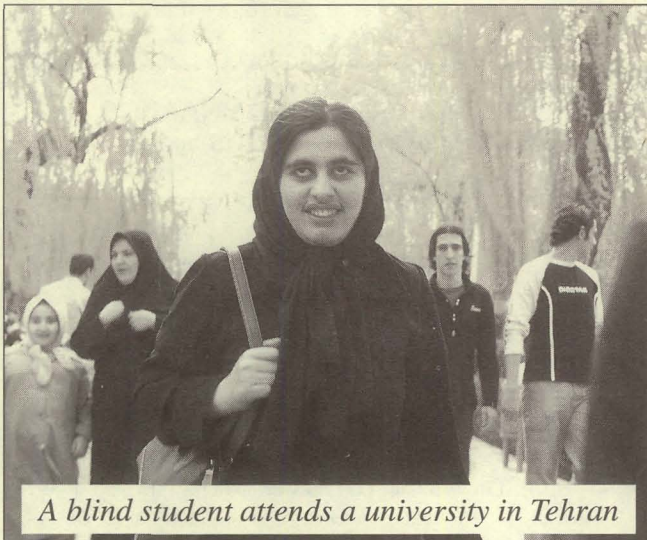
## Beyond the Veil: Women in Iran



I was born in the greater Manchester area of the United Kingdom. My parents named me Nalina. Having an English mother and a Persian father, I was raised in two very different cultures.

the most was documentary. There are many reasons for this, but mainly because I enjoy the voyeurism and interaction between myself, my camera, and the subjects in my photographs. In my case, the subject is mainly people. I am fascinated by documentary photography because I learn most effectively through real life situations and by viewing other people and their cultures. It is most fulfilling for me to express what I view through my lenses. Photography, especially documentary, opens up new worlds for me to view and understand and enables me to show different cultures and lifestyles.

My father came to England in 1976 from Persia to study. He graduated in 1979, the year the Iranian Revolution began. When my father



*A blind student attends a university in Tehran*

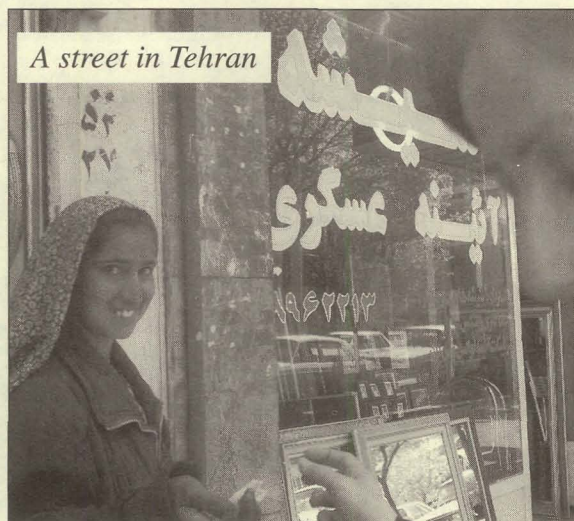


*She is the only woman bus driver in Tehran, Iran.*

In September 2005, I was in my final year of a B.A. Honors degree in photography at the University of Bolton. I had to produce a final project in whatever area of photography I chose.

During my three years at the university I had tried many different areas of photography—fashion, alternative, editorial, documentary, face and form, landscape, and advertisement. The area that interested me

went back home, it was no longer Persia. The country had been changed to the Islamic Republic of Iran. My father always expressed to me how he could not believe how the country had changed so rapidly “for the worst.” Can you imagine living life with free speech, free will, and the freedom of expression, then over a few years, having all of that taken away from you? To be given new rules that restricted women’s dress codes, power in the work-



*A street in Tehran*



place, and luxuries such as wine and spirits? All of this happened because the new hierarchy had different interpretations of the Koran. Why should a narrow opinion overrule the opinions of millions?

My family and I are always discussing women in Iran and each of us have our own opinions. My knowledge about women in Iran comes from what my father tells me and what I see, hear, and read in the Western media. Both my father and the Western media have their own opinions and views about the women in Iran. I listen to both, but I am the kind of individual that needs to see something in order to understand it. I need to be there and to feel the subject that I am questioning; we all interpret things in our own ways. This is why I decided



have a lot of family in Iran who were able to make contacts for me. They arranged for me to visit schools, universities, homes, workplaces, parks, graveyards, dentists, and take bus rides. I suppose all I had to do was show up and take these images, but I like finding my own unique pictures. As I was

walking in the streets of Tehran, I got some of what I consider to be my best shots; natural, unposed Iranian women. I was in Tehran for a week and a half, and then I went to Rasht, a town in the north, near the Caspian Sea.

It was difficult to take photographs in Iran. There is a lot of red tape there—you need to follow their rules and do not draw too much attention to yourself. Also, it was extremely hot in Iran, and, what made things even hotter was that I had to wear a long black *tudor*—a head-to-toe dress.

I learned a lot in Iran. Some people like the new laws, some people do not. Everyone has their own opinions. All I can say is that there should be a choice. If people benefit from the rules, then great, I am happy for them. But, others should not have to suffer or feel trapped in their own country. They should be able to express themselves like everyone else.

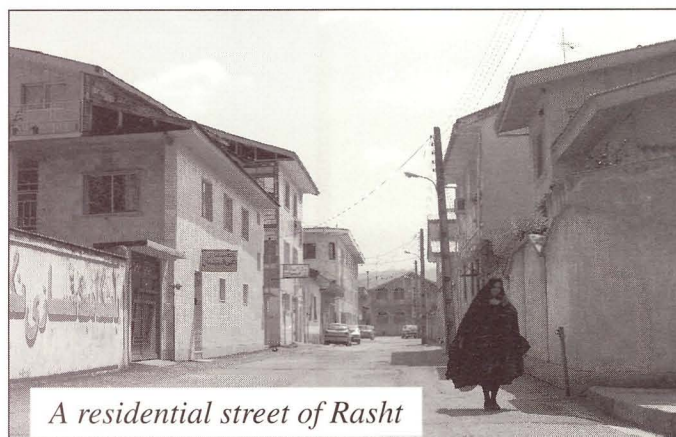
—Nalina Asefi, United Kingdom. You can write to Nalina at [AFarnoo@aol.com](mailto:AFarnoo@aol.com). Also see back cover.



*I think woman do have some power in Iran.*

to produce a documentary about women in Iran. My main aim was to go beyond the veil and portray women in what I perceive to be an honest light. I wanted to look at Iran differently than the Western media does because I think it only captures what Iran wants people to see. I wanted to capture the actual personalities of the women and how they express themselves.

Since I was able to stay in Iran for only two weeks due to the deadline for my project, I had to plan everything perfectly, months before leaving. I consider myself very lucky because I



*A residential street of Rasht*



# Beyond the Veil: *Portraits of Women in Iran*



*Iranian women work in many fields: science, dentistry, business, travel agency and more.*



*[left] A student in the streets of Rasht, a city in Northern Iran; [above] a college chemistry class room in Rasht; [below] open-fire bread baking.*



*Photographs and text by Nalina Asefi, an Iranian-British university student, United Kingdom.*

[www.SkippingStones.org](http://www.SkippingStones.org)  
Skipping Stones  
P. O. Box 3939  
Eugene, Oregon 97403

☐ *Sample. Please subscribe!*

Recycled Paper