

Vol. 18, No. 3

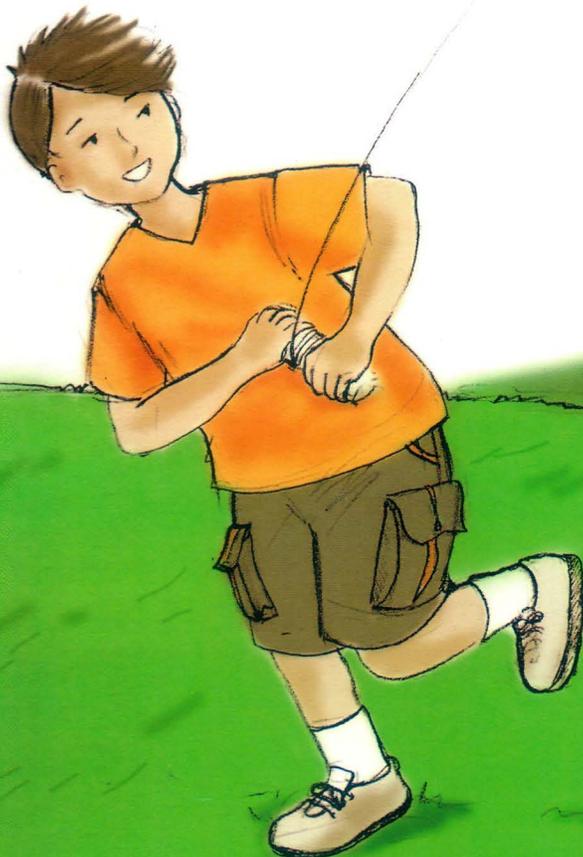
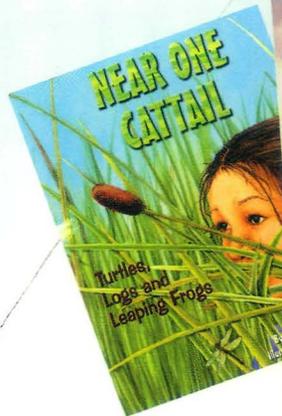
May–August 2006  
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# Skipping Stones

An Award Winning Multicultural Magazine

Celebrating Our 18th Year

25 Wonderful Books  
For All Ages!



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# 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:

### WONDER WHAT TO WRITE?

Writers sometimes get stuck or “blocked” – what can you do if you feel that all the good ideas have just dried up?

Don't quit. Like any form of exercise, writing is good for your skills, for your mind, for your character. Commit to putting down something every day, even if it's just one sentence. That commitment is important!

Give yourself interesting assignments. Try a form of writing that's new or unusual for you. Some starter ideas:

- Come up with a catchy **opening line** for a story. (You can write the whole story, of course, if you get inspired.)
- Recall a funny, or sad, or exciting situation, and write it as a **news report**.
- Write a letter to an imaginary friend for **advice** about a real problem, and write the friend's **answer**.
- Try creating **different types of poems**; rhymed or free verse, haiku, sonnets... maybe an epic poem about your life.

**Journaling** is a terrific way to keep your writing muscles nimble, and someday long in the future, you may be amazed and amused to read the words you've written today. Your journal is a gift to your future self. Besides the always popular **daily diary**, journals can be specific:

- **Travel journals** record events and details that you might forget over time. Even if you don't travel, keep in mind that your whole life is a journey, and that your home town would look novel and exotic to a stranger. Look at your world as if for the first time. Write what you notice!
- **Dream books** reveal the workings of your subconscious mind. Keep a notebook and pen near your pillow so you can write your dreams as soon as you wake, before they tiptoe away. Do you find patterns and symbols?
- **Promise or resolution journals** keep you motivated when you're trying to change yourself or break a habit. Be honest about your struggles, and be kind and patient with yourself. You'll nurture compassion and understanding.

## ART TIPS:

### POINT OF VIEW:

How do you draw faces? Trees? Apples?

A straight-on, eye-level view is descriptive. And ordinary. Try a new angle on your subject. This can really capture your viewers' imagination, and give you a new perspective on your subject, too.



### Draw WHAT YOU SEE!

Every artist develops a “usual” approach to drawing. If you usually draw what you see in your imagination, challenge yourself sometimes by drawing directly from life. Start with a handy subject, like your foot. Look carefully and draw exactly what you see. Learning to observe accurately helps you grow as an artist.



### Draw WHAT YOU FEEL!

What if your favorite style is realism? Stretch yourself by capturing feelings directly from your imagination. You may not end up with a picture of anything you recognize – just enjoy the process. These similar sketches have very different moods.



# In this Issue of Skipping Stones

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## About *Skipping Stones*:

*Skipping Stones* is a non-profit 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 your suggestions, submissions, subscriptions and support.

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**www.SkippingStones.org**

In the spirit of ecological sensitivity, we choose to print with soy ink on recycled and recyclable Living Tree Paper (90% post consumer recycled content and 10% non-tree fibres).



## Wonderful Books for All Ages



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## From the Editor



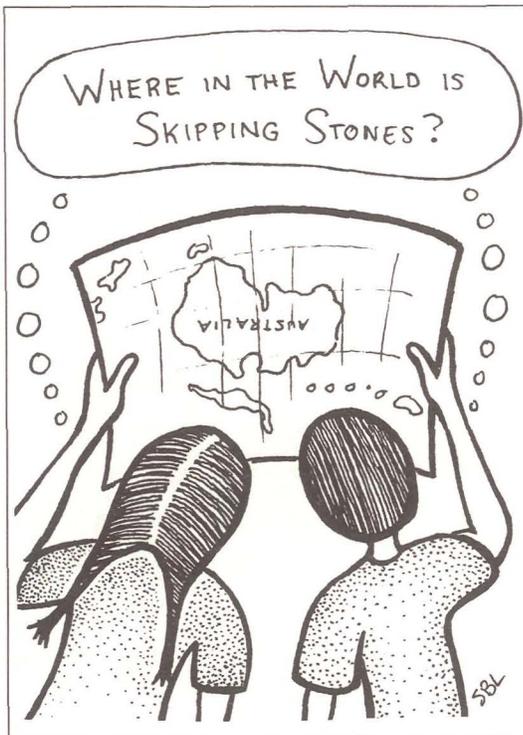
I recently observed a state level geography bee where one hundred students in grades 4–8 challenged each other with their knowledge of world geography while their parents and teachers watched intently.

Each year, tens of thousands of schools hold a geography bee. School winners take a qualifying test, and the top 100 students advance to the state level. Finally, the state winners compete at the national level in late May, when three “National” winners are honored by the National Geographic Society for their knowledge of geography.

In the preliminary round at the state level, it was obvious that most students were weak in “current events.” In our modern society, a good understanding of national and world geography is very important as human societies become increasingly interdependent. International travel and tourism, treaties and trade, television, the Internet and other mass media outlets make the world a global village where we are connected to each other through many more ways than we can imagine.

While most of you will not be at the 2006 National Geographic Bee in Washington, DC (although you may be able to watch the championship rounds on public TV channels), you can still prepare your best entries for the **2006 Skipping Stones Youth Honor Awards**. And you have a better chance of being “honored” with one of our ten Youth Awards. Furthermore, even if you do not win, you might still get published, as long as what you write or draw is from your own personal experiences or is your sincere opinion, about multicultural and international understanding or nature appreciation. See our website for details.

Many of us get nervous in competitions because of the nature of competition, where we



feel we must perform—give quick and correct answers in 15 or 30 seconds. Many students simply do not like exams, tests and quizzes because they find that time constraints and the pressure to show that they know it freezes their ability to think *under pressure*.

In preparing your **Skipping Stones Award** entries, you can take as much time as you need; no need to look at a clicking clock as you will most likely be working on the entry at home. You can even show your creation to your friends, family or teachers and get their comments to help make

it the very best. As long as it remains *your* original work or you give credit to your collaborators, we’d welcome it. You can also work with your friends or classmates to send in a group entry.

If you have some neat ideas or projects that will help make our society more just and equitable, tolerant of differing views, respectful of everyone’s rights, responsible to needs of the weak and disadvantaged, ecologically sustainable... send your creative entries—art and writing—our way.

Even if you miss our June 25 post-mark date, you can still mail or e-mail your creations for upcoming issues. There are some serious problems that affect many children and youth all over the world, including in our own communities. What comes to your mind? Child abuse and domestic violence, war-caused suffering, poverty, lack of health care, HIV/AIDS impacts, environmental racism... Several articles in this issue challenge us to think about these issues of grave concern.

**Skipping Stones Awards** promote a more cooperative world where we learn from each other, share with each other, and make the world a better place for everyone.



**“Get Your Feet Wet!”**

Take the risk, learn about other cultures.

—Christine Stoddard, gr. 11, *European-Hispanic, VA.*

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**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 free magazines, books and/or 50% discounts for low-income schools, libraries and families with your donations.

**Winner, National Association for Multicultural Education, EdPress, Writer, Parent’s Choice and EEA Awards.**



**Coming Attractions**

**Wanted!** *Your best creations for our future issues!*

Your hero—the person you admire the most

What do you like about your community?

Unforgettable moments in your life

Your dreams and visions for the world

Your best friend, favorite foods or travel tales

What’s so wonderful about wilderness and wildlife?

**Youth Honor Award Entries** are due by June 25!

**Guidelines for Submissions**

**Writing:** Essays, poems, plays, riddles, recipes, stories...

Typed or neatly handwritten, **under 1,000 words.**

Poems **less than 30 lines.**

Non-English and bilingual writings are welcome!

**Artwork:** Photo essays, drawings, paintings, cartoons...

Send original color or black & white photos with

captions or photo essays. Send your original artwork—cartoons, drawings, paintings—on unlined white paper.

**The 2006 Youth Honor Awards**

*Send your entries on any of the following:*

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

Enter by June 25, 2006.

*Skipping Stones—Youth Awards*

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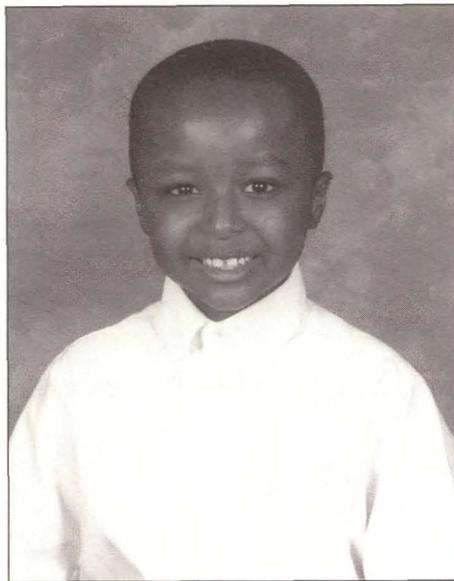
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## Meet the Contributors

I am an American citizen, and also a Tanzanian citizen. You can call me Tanzanian-American. "Having dual nationality is a blessing. It means you have two cultures to choose the best from..." says Mama. My parents are Tanzanians. They come from a strong tribe known as *Chaggas* found in Northeastern Tanzania at the foothills of the famous Mount Kilimanjaro. Mama has taught me a lot about *Chagga* traditions, cultures and heritage. We are a strong and a close family because of our heritage. We eat *Chagga* foods. My favorite dish is the famous *ndizi*— green bananas, peeled, cooked with some seasoning, and eaten with beef or chicken stew. Mmmh! Yummy!

Occasionally, I put on our traditional dress when we go to church. It is fun to look different. I have definitely inherited my Mama's strong-willed personality. Mama teaches us moral values, behavior, and its elements. From the very early days of my life, my Mama has been teaching us values such as respect for all— young and old, black and white—honesty, obedience, and love towards one another. According to *Chagga* traditions, it is not only considered disrespectful, but you can even get punished for talking while an adult is talking. First born sons are expected to be strong and to protect their siblings and their family.

In addition to moral values, Mama also teaches us to learn and accept moderation in every way of our lives. "Moderation can set you free from temptation, anger, anxiety, frustration, sadness, etc. If you live a modest life you will be more content with what you have than what



Editor Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
Dear Editor,  
I was told that your job is to read the stuff we write and make them a readable book.  
Today I am done with one of my longest homework I have ever get and done. The whole thing started when I asked Mama, "how many schools have I attended?" We counted them. Even discussed them and then, Mama said, "put it into writing." "This is going to be your homework" I did not know the stories I knew in my head or heart will

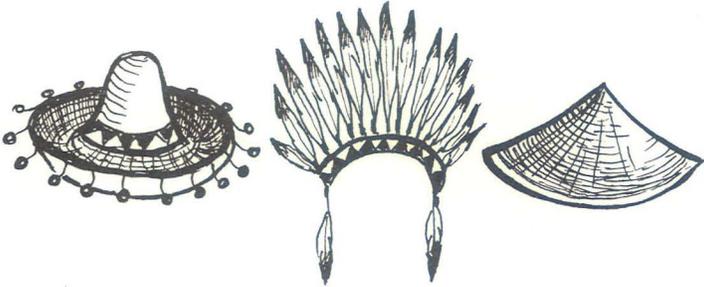
you don't have; you will be able to handle or avoid competition and temptation." Mama always tells us that we are neither better nor worse than others. Because of Mama's teachings, we are growing up aware of who we are, where we come from, and what we want to be. It has been easy for us to adapt quickly in any environment we chose to live; it has helped us to interact well with different people, and keep on learning a lot from them.

I'm told, "If you walk in the foot-steps of a stranger you will learn things you never knew before." So I'm not afraid to move to a new place anymore. It is fun to learn new things from new places, meet new people, and above all, make new friends.

Our traditions and customs embrace *Umoja na Uhuru*—unity, tolerance and freedom. My parents' birth country of Tanzania is the only country in Africa that has no tribal or ethnic conflicts, and has never experienced war, even though it has about 130 tribes. It's the only country in Africa known for its political stability and peace among its people, united by their language, Kiswahili. Everyone, young and old, can speak Kiswahili. I am learning some Swahili, too.

—Alvin J. D. Maeda, 7, Oklahoma.

## What's On Your Mind?



### Diversity

Diversity is when we see  
That other people are like  
You and me.

We might be different in some ways  
We might speak different languages  
We might wear different clothes  
Have different cultures

But we are always going to be the same  
One way or another  
We are all people  
That would like to share  
Some of our culture some day.

—Yadira Sanchez, *Latin American, grade 5, Oregon.*

### To err is editor. . .

*In our last issue (page 13, para. 4), Dr. King's quote should have read: "True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring."*

*We had by mistake edited the latter part of the quote, and kept it in quotation marks. The quote comes from Dr. King's April 4th, 1967 Keynote Address to the Clergy and Laymen Concerned Assembly at the famous Riverside Church in New York City. We thank Dr. Huffman, the author, for pointing out our mistake.*

—editors.

*What actions can we, as individuals and society, take to reduce our negative impact on the natural world? How can we make the society more equitable? Send your ideas and opinions to editor@SkippingStones.org for use in our future issues. Please be concise and clear in writing your thoughts.*

### My Beautiful Mom

I praise my mom  
not only on Mother's day  
but every single day  
that I live

I will praise my mom  
even when the time comes  
for her  
or when my time comes

Her beautiful yellow hair  
like the morning sun  
and her beautiful brown eyes  
that are shining puddles of earth

Her kindness is never gone  
and it is always there  
and her love for my sister and me  
has never died

The food that she makes  
is the best, even  
with all restaurants' food  
put together.

—Erick Leon, *Hispanic student in Arizona.*



### Thinking of You

I wanted to take this moment to let you know I was thinking of you. You mean the world to me and I am so blessed to have you in my life! And, although I don't always take the time to tell you, I think of you every moment, every day, every night. So take that extra moment right now. Pass this on to everyone that is important in your life. I took this moment because... I LOVE YOU.

—Hashim Ali Hussaini, *originally from Afghanistan, currently a student in Indiana.*

# Health Rocks!

## SUGAR



Recently, we received a poem, “Sugar High” from Emily (see excerpts), that helped us decide to write this issue’s **Health Rocks** page about sugar in our diet.

You might like to tell us how you manage to eat candy and other foods with sugar in moderation.

—editors

### Sugar High

I touch the vending machine thinking, “What should I get?”  
I am just a hyper 7th grader who forcefully adores candy  
I worry that I don’t get a cavity  
I cry when my mom takes away my candy  
I understand that sugar can be bad for my health  
I say too many things at once when I’m hyped up...

—Emily Fogg, 12, Michigan.

Summer is almost here, and that means ice cream, lemonade, popsicles, and – WAIT! Is there a way to enjoy a treat in the heat without all that sugar? And is sugar really that bad for you, after all? Let’s take a look.

### Sugar Spikes

First of all, sugar tastes good for a reason: your body needs it. In order to get energy from the food you eat, the body must first convert it into glucose, a form of sugar. When you eat sugary foods, your body can get that energy even quicker. However, too much sugar, or the wrong kind, is bad for your health.

Your body uses a chemical called insulin to keep your blood-sugar levels balanced. When you eat a lot of sugar all at once, insulin can overreact, thinking that the influx of sugar means you’ve eaten lots of food, even if you haven’t. It redistributes the blood sugar too quickly, leaving you hungry and tired soon after you’ve eaten.

### Sugar and Your Immune System

Sugar won’t give you the flu, but it can sure help the flu get you. In your white blood cells’ fight against viruses and bacteria, vitamin C is one of their most powerful weapons. But the chemical structure of vitamin C is a lot like the structure of sugar, and the two can end up competing for space within the white blood cells. Without much room left for vitamin C, your white blood cells don’t have the secret weapon they need to battle flus, colds, and all kinds of other sicknesses you definitely don’t want to get.

### Cavity Concerns

Plaque—the filmy stuff that sticks to your teeth—acts like a fly-trap for the sugar in the foods that you eat. When bacteria appears on the scene, it attacks that

sugar and breaks it down into acids that eat away at your teeth. So to prevent cavities, make sure that when you do eat sugary foods, you brush your teeth right away!

### A Complex Situation

Sugars come in different forms. Simple sugars, like white sugar, or the kind found in candy, cookies and ice cream, are the worst for you. They enter the bloodstream quickly, and can trigger an enzyme that helps store fat.

Complex sugars are found in fruit and grains, among other things. These get broken down much more slowly and are released more steadily. Since they don’t cause such a rapid rush of sugar, insulin levels can remain steadier, as well. This also means that you don’t get hungry as quickly.

### Tasty Alternatives

There are all kinds of ways to enjoy summer treats without the added sugar. Smoothies made of blended fresh fruit and yogurt are always a favorite. You can make your very own fudgesicles by mixing eight ounces of plain yogurt with 1/4 cup sugar-free cocoa. Pour the mixture into paper cups with popsicle sticks stuck in the top, and freeze them until they’re solid.

For homemade mango sorbet, just puree a can of mangos with ½ cup carbonated water, 1/3 cup honey, and a tablespoon of lime juice. Put the mixture into an ice-cream maker and follow the machine’s instructions.

When making other favorite food recipes, try to substitute honey or molasses for white sugar when you can. And cut down on the amount of sweetening that the recipe calls for by 50%. Your body will thank you!

—Shannon Brady Lattin, intern, Univ. of Oregon.

**Summer Activity:** Visit your local library or the Internet to learn about some great. . .

## Women of Courage, Faith and Strength!



**Hazarat Babajan**

b. Afghanistan (c. 1800-1931)

Renowned Sufi mystic, sage and teacher, a wonder-worker of supreme Divine blessing. She lived for about 130 or 140 years.

**Mary Baker Eddy**

b. New England (1821-1910)

Founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist (1879) and the Christian Science Monitor (1908). She professed spiritual healing in her books.

**Mother Frances Cabrini**

b. Italy (1850-1917)

First American citizen to be recognized as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church. She is known as the "Patroness of Immigrants."

**Mother Theresa**

b. Macedonia (1910-1997)

Life-long humanitarian work serving the poor. She founded the Missionaries of Charity in 1950. Honored with the Nobel Peace Prize.

**Shirley Chisholm**

b. New York (1924-2005)

First Black Congresswoman, childhood educator. Shirley set up many day-care centers to help low-income families with children.

**Maya Angelou**

b. 1928 in Missouri

Poet laureate, Pulitzer Prize-winning author, actress, songwriter, director and producer of films. Worked with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Dolares Huerta**

b. 1930 in New Mexico

Lifelong work to bring rights to migrant farm workers. Co-founder of United Farm Workers with César Chávez; public speaker and organizer.

**Toni Morrison**

b. 1931 in Ohio

Novelist, educator and editor. Became the first African-American woman to receive the Nobel Prize in literature.

**Dr. Wangari Maathai**

b. 1940 in Kenya

Founder, Green Belt Movement. Winner, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize. Known for environmental work to counter deforestation in Africa.

**Isabel Allende**

b. 1942 in Peru

Widely-read Latin American author of books such as *The House of the Spirits*. She risked her life as a journalist in Chile in the 1970s.

**Dr. Vandana Shiva**

b. 1952 in India

Scientist turned public policy activist, speaker and organizer for the rights of family farmers, ecology & sustainability. Founder, the School of Seeds.

**Mata Amritanandamayi**

b. 1953 in Kerala, India

The "Hugging Saint," Amma, is a humanitarian, spiritual teacher, world traveler, and a perfect example of selflessness and unconditional love.

**Oprah Winfrey**

b. 1954 in Mississippi

TV talk show host, news anchor, and a highly influential African-American personality today.

**Sandra Cisneros**

b. 1954 in Chicago

Author of books such as *The House on Mango Street* that seek to break down stereotypes. She is also an organizer of a women's peace group.

**Winona LaDuke**

b. 1959 in Minnesota

Native American author of books about the environment, indigenous cultures and women's movements. Was a Vice Presidential Candidate.

## He Proved You Wrong\*

Just another man  
You might hear him be called  
One who took a stand  
In something that "never had a chance"  
His courage proved you wrong

Just another dirt bag  
Brown with filth, disgust  
Beaten once, and once again  
Bleeding from his broken skin  
Standing up, not giving in  
His strength, it proved you wrong

Just another protester  
Standing in a line  
A follower, mindless  
Good for nothing, worthless  
"But he'd be there on his own, boy"  
An innocent voice from above  
It's the truth  
And his heart, it proved you wrong

Just another man, you say  
A face in the noisy crowd  
Law has changed, society set in its ways  
A life's dedication  
Beatings healed, mended

A scar always on his heart though  
From your white town Montgomery  
Ask him if he'll take revenge  
And his love might prove you wrong

*\*Dedicated to those Blacks not formally recognized for their strengths during the times of harsh racial segregation.*

—Sarah Blauser, 14, Pennsylvania.

## Where is the Love?

Why is it easier to hate than to be kind? Is it because kindness is but a speck of dust in this storm of hate? Or, is it because no one understands each other in this multicultural world? How can you relax in your warm bed when people are freezing and starving in the world? Is it that hard to pitch in to the community? Just take a minute to look around and ask yourself, "Where is the love?"

—Jacob Ivancie, 6th grade, Oregon.



## EENY-HEEKI-HADCHI-O

We say "Eeny-meeny-miny-mo,"  
To pick one and tell the others no.

When choosing sides in Tokyo,  
The kids all chant "Hee-foo-me-yo."

When Polish kids want one of three,  
They shout "Ele-mele-dudki."

When Arab children pick who'll play,  
"Hadi-badi" is what they say.

"Amraba chichicoco" you will hear,  
If Italian boys and girls are near.

The Swedish phrase "O-luh-dol-uh-doff,"  
Decides who gets on and who gets off.

Each culture does it differently,  
But I wish that we would all agree,  
That children everywhere would go:  
"Eeny-heeki-hadchi-o."

—Peter Levy, California.

Art: Shannon Lattin.

## My "Broken" Family

My family is a "broken" family  
With parents split apart  
Two places I now call my home  
And talking is so hard  
What happened to the wedding vows?  
The 'til death do we part?  
Why is it that they had to  
Go ahead and break my heart?

—Chloe Lund, 12, Oregon.



Kiln-Fired Hopi Pottery (See page 11).

# Hopi Hands

by Sharon Wollenzien, Arizona.

Dorothy Ami smooths the gray clay with a small stone. Her strong fingers polish the seed pot until the sides are smooth. Then she will decorate it with patterns of flowers or birds or butterflies.

Dorothy lives in first mesa on the Hopi reservation in Arizona. Eleven years ago she quit teaching to devote herself full-time to her pottery. She learned to make pottery from her cousin who learned from his grandmother. She doesn't use a pottery wheel or an electric kiln. Instead, she makes her pottery in much the same way her great-grandmother did long ago.

The first step is a trip to a special canyon on the Navajo Reservation. Dorothy and her husband, Emerson, fill five-gallon buckets with gray clay which is what she uses for her decorative pots. When Dorothy and Emerson get home, they take out half the clay and fill the buckets with water. For three days they stir the water-clay mixture. On the fourth day, they strain the soupy mixture through a screen to catch all the twigs and stones. They strain it again and again until they can pour it through a fine mesh such as sheer curtain or pantyhose. Then they are certain that the clay is clean and free from debris.

The next step is to put the clay into old pillowcases or the legs of old blue jeans and lay them on the sand. The water evaporates and after a few days the clay is ready.

## Making the Pot

First, Dorothy makes the bottom of her pot with a round circle of clay. Then she makes clay "snakes" to coil around the sides of the pot. She does one coil at a time, smoothing and connecting it to the layer below. She uses a piece of gourd that she has sanded to smooth the surface. She also uses a tongue depressor to smooth the jagged edges. When she is satisfied with the size and shape of her pot, she lets it dry.

Long ago the people used sandstone to sand their pottery. Today, Dorothy uses sandpaper. She wants the surface to be smooth so the paint will glide on easily. When it is smooth, she burnishes the surface using smooth stones. In her great-grandmother's day they would have burnished the pot using sheep fat. As she works on each section, she wets the surface with water and then uses her stone to rub the surface of the pot until it glows.

## Decorating the Pot

Finally, Dorothy is ready to paint. She loves to paint things from nature. Her favorite is butterflies. She also paints geometric designs. Dorothy draws her design with a No. 2 pencil. When the pot is fired, the pencil markings will burn off.

Dorothy makes her own paint. For yellow paint, she mixes yellow clay with water. This paint will turn maroon when it is fired. To make black paint, Dorothy boils a mustard plant for six hours. The remaining liquid is boiled down into a thick black paste. A little hematite is added and the paste is mixed with water. Kaolin and water makes white paint. Dorothy's family recently found light purple clay that they can use for purple paint. She experiments with different plants to find colors that work well when fired.

For a paintbrush, many of the traditional potters use the fibers from a yucca plant.

"I tried that," Dorothy says, "But I couldn't get the hang of it." Instead she makes her paintbrush from her own hair.

## Firing the Pot

Dorothy and Emerson fire their own pots. First they burn wood for an hour so they have a nice bed of ashes. Then they make



layers: sheep dung, a metal plate, broken pottery shards, the pots to be fired, more pottery shards and then many layers of sheep dung until it looks like a giant bee hive. The inside of the hive reaches 1400°–1600° F.

The pots stay in the kiln for six hours. Then they are ready to come out. Carefully, Emerson removes each layer. The pots are taken out and laid on a tray to cool. As they cool, the paint oxidizes and changes color. The beautiful pots are ready for delivery (see page 10).

The pot I bought from Dorothy has three peaks painted on its side. They are the three mesas of the Hopi. The "+" marks are a symbol of the corn crop. On the top of the pot are a male and female moth.

"This is a family design," says Dorothy, "so it is special for me." Dorothy is proud that she is making pottery very much like her great-grandmother. She is keeping the tradition alive!



## DEAR HANNA



Every so often I see something written by someone in my high school that is almost incomprehensible. I don't see why someone does not help them. Reading and writing really are not that hard!

—Elizabeth, 15.

Let me introduce you to Malcolm X who might have as much to say on the matter as any American. Because of his political views, Malcolm's father was murdered; his mother was committed to a mental institution. Malcolm X quit high school and survived on the street.

At age 21, he began serving time in a prison for six years. In prison he tried to read the newspapers and all types of literature. He became totally absorbed with the questions: Are white people evil? Should Blacks go back to Africa where they originally came from? Or, should American Blacks and Whites learn to live together peacefully?

Absorbed with the questions as Malcolm X was, he could not understand the meaning of what he tried to read. Living on the street, he had learned the meaning of so few words *that he could not follow any of the authors' ideas.*

He was persuaded that only if he knew the meaning of each word, he would be able to decide which side was right, which side was wrong! So, Malcolm requested a dictionary, pencils and writing paper from the prison school. During all his free time in prison, he followed a self-designed educational program of copying page after page of the dictionary, painstakingly memorizing word after word.

A totally new world opened up to Malcolm. Each sentence challenged him like a puzzle: substituting the meaning of formerly unknown words, slowly each sentence began to make sense to him. Lights went out at 10:00 p.m. in prison, but fortunately a hall light shone into his cell. Every hour a guard walked by each cell at night; Malcolm jumped into his bed and feigned sleep, then returned to his studies, sleeping only half the night.

Having finished learning the words in the dictionary, he requested books from the prison library, written by both Black and White authors.

Out of prison at age 27, Malcolm continued to read, study, and work to improve the lives of Black people in a White society.

Malcolm had a mission in life to which he was totally dedicated. He needed to solve the question: How can Black and White people live together in harmony?

Elizabeth, I wonder whether the answer to helping students learn to read and write, such as individuals in your school, is for each youth to grasp that words create thoughts and ideas. And these ideas give meaning to life. Every life needs purpose, meaning. You, Elizabeth, might very well help others understand the meaning of words and help them discover their life purpose.



Send your questions or comments to:

**Dear Hanna** c/o *Skipping Stones*  
P.O. Box 3939, Eugene, OR 97403

*In Peace,*

*Illustration by Shannon Lattin*

## Laughing Wolf and Quiet Heart

It was during a time of great hardship for our people, the first people. Food was scarce and the children cried. Brave hunters went searching for game, but there was none. Many sacred dances were performed in hopes for better times.

During that time there was a young woman named Quiet Heart and she had a husband named Laughing Wolf, because he would laugh and laugh. They had two children and Quiet Heart had to raise them on her own.

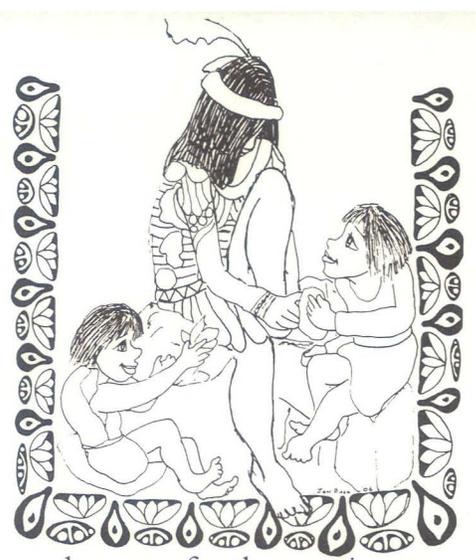
Finally, Quiet Heart could not bear the ridicule her husband brought on her family, and she talked to the Medicine Man. He listened carefully, then said, "He needs to hear the truth, no matter how painful." However, when Quiet Heart came back to their home, Laughing Wolf was gone. Even though he was so difficult, Quiet Heart still cried.

A day went on to three days, and three days to three months, and the tribe decided that Laughing Wolf had ran away and abandoned his family, and he was considered to be beneath contempt.

Then, at dawn one day, Quiet Heart woke up hungry, as they all did every morning. The children were crying. "It will be another harsh day," she thought. But then there was a rumbling, and the very earth shook. "What now?," thought Quiet Heart. She looked down the valley and was amazed. There was a huge herd of buffalo and Laughing Wolf was behind the herd on a horse laughing like a maniac. In that instant, she awoke the brave hunters and even held a spear herself. Only the weak and frail of the herd were trimmed and taken because the first people despised waste.

For the first time in such a long time the tribe ate well and

there was a general rejoicing. Rain came and the pottery jugs were filled to the brim. Laughing Wolf continued his foolish antics, but there was a new feeling of love and respect for the warrior.



That night Quiet Heart spoke to her husband in private. "Next time," she said, "let me know if you are leaving, I will tell no one if that is your wish."

"I feel feelings I cannot understand," said Laughing Wolf. "Things that confuse me and keep me apart from the other hunters, like laughing at nothing."

"But the bravest of the hunters respect you now," she said.

"I'm glad to feed my people," he said. "And perhaps next time you will come with me? It's nice to have a companion on the hunting path."

"I should like that very much," she said. "But what of the children?"

"I'm sure your friend the Medicine Man should feel no burden with them."

That night Quiet Heart dreamt of riding through the buffalo herd and when she awoke she took this as a good sign. She heard laughter down the hillside. Laughing Wolf was playing with the village children. She smiled to herself and thought, "I have a good man."

—Jon Bush, Massachusetts. Jon has African American (from his father's side) and Sioux (from mother's side) heritage.



# Sidra and the Stone

One summer afternoon, Sidra Shale and two of the boys from the neighborhood were leisurely wandering down a grassy path next to their apartment building. They stopped suddenly when each noticed a large, smooth stone protruding from the middle of the path. One of the boys tried to kick the stone, but the stone did not budge. The other boy tried to pull on the stone with his hands, but the stone was too slippery. Sidra had an idea to move the stone; she picked up a stick and tried to push the stick under the stone to lift it from the ground. Sidra could not move the stone either; her stick broke in two.

The children had to continue down the path to meet their families at home for dinner. Sidra went to her room as soon as she finished her supper. She lay down on her bed and thought about the stone. What was under it, she wondered? Sidra's mother came in and told Sidra it was time for bed. She turned down the lights and Sidra fell fast asleep, dreaming about the stone.

In Sidra's thoughts, she imagined pulling the stone out from the ground. When the stone was freed, Sidra looked down into the large hole. She dreamed she could see all the way into the earth, through the center of the world and into another land! Sidra could see children playing and singing and running just like her and her friends.

The next morning Sidra got dressed, ate her breakfast and rushed out the door. She ran straight for the stone. To her surprise, her two friends were already there. They too had been thinking about the stone all night and were anxious to dig it from the muddy ground. One of the boys told Sidra he was sure they would see all the way through the earth to China! Sidra said that she too dreamed of seeing another side of the world.

All morning the trio worked on carving the moist, thick mud from around and under the stone. Sidra felt a rush of excitement when she could rock the stone back and forth with her hands. Sidra imagined her parents and her classmates crowding around her to hear the story of what was revealed under the stone. She even wondered if some of the children she saw playing

in her dream might be her friends someday.

Suddenly, one of the boys yelled out that the stone was coming loose. The three friends gathered tightly together and pushed and pulled with all of their strength. They were able to wedge their hands under the stone and began to roll it from its hole. As quickly as they could, they heaved the stone up and out and peered straight into the dark hole below.

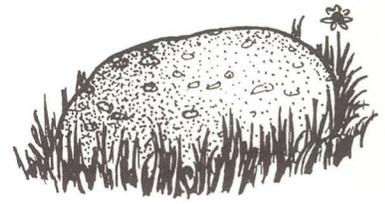
A few seconds passed before Sidra could believe what she saw. Nothing. Just more dirt. It was nothing like she imagined. No children in a far away land. No bright colors. No singing. No playing. Just a big empty hole.

Sidra was so disappointed that she turned away from the hole and ran all the way home. She ran straight past her mother to her room. She dove face-down on her bed and shut her eyes tight. Sidra's mother came into her room to find out what had made Sidra so upset. She told her mother all about the stone and her hopes. Sidra lamented that she would never see anything exciting or dream about anything interesting or beautiful again.

Her mother patted her back and reminded her that this was just one stone and one dream. In fact, it was still early in the day; only lunch-time. Her mother encouraged her not to give up hopes to visit a new place or meet new friends just because one plan did not work out. Every day, all day, there are new opportunities for exciting adventures and dreams to come true.

Sidra's mother left her room but not before she told Sidra that her friends were waiting for her outside. Sidra was still disappointed about the stone, and its big empty hole, but what her mother said made sense. This was just one empty hole. She would have to find another way to see a far-away place. Before she knew it, she was jumping off her bed and bounding out the door. She hopped on her bike and pedaled off with her friends to enjoy the sunny afternoon.

—Laura Ann Baker, Mobile CARE Foundation, Illinois.



# Poetry Page



## When I saw...

### Canada

Red and white are the colors of pride  
Colors showing when we have cheered or cried  
Showing our Love for our country by wearing  
our maple leaves  
Welcome other people with open arms that  
we weave around each other  
Our citizens will always be free to believe in what they will  
The animals in our forests and oceans filled with fish  
Are all part of Canada  
I am proud to be Canadian!

—Andrea Sadowski, 12, British Columbia, Canada.

*“My mother and father were raised on the prairies in Saskatchewan. I was born and raised here in British Columbia. I am learning French in school for three years and I think I would do pretty good in France. Animals are very important to me. I strongly support animal rights. My dream for the near future is to become a famous actress.”*

When I saw the colorful saris swaying with the wind  
When I heard the vendors and the cows along the streets  
When I smelled the mouth-watering curries cooking  
When I ate the sweet *laddoos*  
When I felt the cool, soft water along the Ganges River

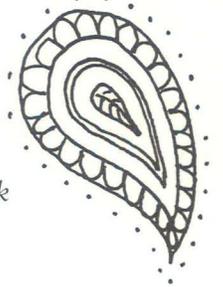
I knew this was my India

*Ente swanthum India*

(My own India)

—Tiffany Thampi, 15,

Indian American, New York



## Ojos

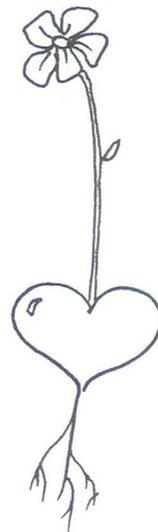
His eyes gaze into the sea  
Looking through the memories of song  
Trying to see what went wrong.

—Ralph Villareal, highschooler, California.

## Moving On

Faking a smile,  
Standing straight,  
Trying to move on  
Back to the person  
She used to be;  
Hiding the scars  
That will never go away,  
The scars in her heart  
Of her self-betrayal,  
She asks herself,  
How could I let myself get this way?  
What happened to the happiness  
That always seemed to shine?  
What happened to the friend  
Who was always there to help?  
Now ready to come back,  
She breathes deep  
And steps back  
Into control of her life.

—Sammi Tirk, 13, Pennsylvania.



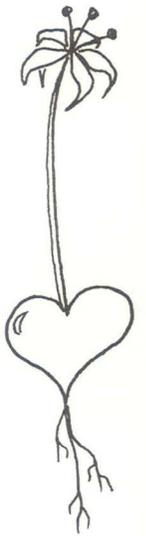
## Dreams: Flowers of the Heart

Dreams are like a little seed,  
planted in your heart,  
there it stays and then it grows  
until it will not part.

Perhaps a little thought, or deed,  
is that precious tiny seed,  
it represents a thing to come,  
or the place from which it's from.

A dream that comes from the heart,  
and from that place it will not part.  
A realized dream is a dream come true,  
and something that has come to you.

—Natalie Youngquist, 14, Chinese Scandinavian, Ohio.  
*“My family is one of the most important parts of my life. I wrote this poem because I hear so many people say they are going to be such-and-such, and it seems to me that it is a dream they work to fulfill.”*



# The Time Has Come for Us to Tune into the World

At exactly this moment, big things are happening in the world: war, terror and many changes that we teenagers and young people aren't really aware of. After all, your and my generation is just a bunch of 16 year old kids lacking perspective; and we think we don't have anything to do with all that!

Or do we? How much do the things that happen in the world touch us or our lives and our understanding of ourselves and those around us?

You'd be surprised, just as surprised as I was. Suddenly, I was confronted everywhere by the Iraq war and alleged torturing of captives by Americans, in Guantánamo and other locations not bound by the Geneva Convention. In German class we are currently discussing whether torture is reasonable and acceptable in certain situations. But who is to say in which situations? And also, does all this concern me?

It certainly does. It makes me feel ashamed, not explicitly for being an American or a German, but somehow for being a person and not being able to do anything about it, especially because I am not able to make up my mind whether or not it is acceptable.

I can of course understand torture in certain situations. After all, what would you do if you had the chance to prevent terrorists from dropping a bomb on New York City, with this guy sitting in front of you, who knew all about it, but wouldn't say a word? Would you use torture to get the information you needed so badly?

On the other hand, however, it is common knowledge that violence is not an answer, especially not in retaliation to violence itself. Even the Bible says "If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." (*Matthew 5:39*).

But how many blows can we take? What are the chances that someday, trying to fight violence, we become violent ourselves and eventually turn into that which we wanted to rid the world of?

But who am I to talk? These are complicated and difficult questions and far more important and far more intellectual people than I have given their opinions on these matters and have made a clear case for both sides of the argument. I do not strive to follow them. I will not lie; I do not have a clear opinion of when torture is right or wrong, or if it should be used at all.

Maybe I'll never be sure, doubtful to the last, until someday I'm confronted with having to make a choice one way or the other. This is a mere example of the problem I am trying to explain: we youths don't really know, understand, or are interested enough to form a clear opinion, or, when the matter is complicated and serious, at least a clear picture of what's going on.

How much do we, the future generation, need to know? How much should we try to understand? I think we don't realize how dramatically everything that happens in the world, whether it be a mile or a thousand miles away, affects our lives. We must gain a new perspective: we must show more interest in those around us so that when our turn comes to lead the world and make the decisions, we will not fail due to lack of knowledge and understanding.

It is very important to become aware and strive to learn more about our world each day, so that someday we can look back and say, contentedly, we know how to handle difficult situations. Perhaps, most importantly, we may have made mistakes of our own, but at least, through learning and understanding, we wouldn't have made

the same mistakes as our forefathers.

—Katie  
Grosser, 16,  
German-  
American,  
Germany.  
Katie also  
wrote the  
German ver-  
sion (p. 17).



## Die Zeit ist Gekommen, Unsere Ohren für die Welt zu Öffnen

In genau diesem Moment passieren bedeutende Dinge in der Welt: Krieg, Terror und viele Veränderungen, über die wir Jugendliche uns gar nicht so im Klaren sind. Schließlich sind deine und meine Generation doch nur ein Haufen perspektivloser 16-jähriger Kinder, die sowieso nichts mit alledem zu tun haben.

Oder doch? Wie weit berühren uns die Dinge, die in der Welt vorgehen, wie weit berühren sie unser Leben und unser Verständnis von uns selbst und denen um uns herum?

Du wärst überrascht, genauso überrascht wie ich. Plötzlich wurde ich überall mit dem Irak Krieg und vermuteter Folter von Gefangenen der Amerikaner in Guantánamo und anderen Orten, die nicht an die Genfer Konvention gebunden sind, konfrontiert. Sogar im Deutschunterricht diskutieren wir darüber ob Folter in bestimmten Situationen vernünftig und tolerabel sei. Aber wer soll festlegen, in welchen? Und überhaupt, hat all dies eigentlich etwas mit mir zu tun?

Und ob es das hat. Ich schäme mich dafür, nicht unbedingt für die Tatsache, dass ich Amerikanerin oder Deutsche bin, sondern eher dafür, dass ich ein Mensch bin und nichts dagegen tun kann, und vor allem weil ich mich nicht entscheiden kann, ob Folter akzeptabel ist oder nicht.

Ich kann es in gewissen Situationen verstehen. Was würdest du machen, wenn du die Gelegenheit hättest, eine Bombe auf New York City zu verhindern und vor dir säße einer, der über alles Bescheid weiß, aber nichts sagt? Würdest du Folter anwenden um die Informationen von ihm zu bekommen, die du so verzweifelt bräuchtest?

Andererseits ist es eine Selbstverständlichkeit, dass Gewalt keine Antwort ist, schon gar nicht als Vergeltung von Gewalt selbst. Sogar in der Bibel steht geschrieben: „Wenn jemand dir auf die rechte Wange schlägt, halt ihm auch die Linke hin.“ (Matthäus 5,39).

Aber wie viele Schläge können wir noch einstecken? Und wie groß ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass wir irgendwann im Bemühen, die Welt von

der Gewalt zu befreien, selbst gewalttätig werden und uns schließlich zu dem umwandeln von welchem wir die Welt eigentlich befreien wollten?

Aber wer bin ich, dass ich darüber rede? Das sind komplizierte und schwierige Fragen, zu denen schon weitaus wichtigere und intellektuellere Personen als ich einen klaren Standpunkt für beide Seiten der Debatte abgegeben haben; und ich versuche nicht ihnen nachzuahmen. Ich werde nicht lügen; ich habe keine klare Meinung zu der Frage, wann Folter richtig und wann sie falsch ist, oder ob sie überhaupt verwendet werden darf.

Vielleicht werde ich mir nie sicher sein, zweifelnd bis zum Schluss, bis ich mich dann irgendwann einmal der Entscheidung stellen muss, sie anzuwenden oder nicht. Dies alles ist lediglich ein Beispiel für das, was ich versuche zu erklären—wir Jugendlichen wissen nicht genug oder verstehen nicht genug oder interessieren uns nicht genug, um uns eine klare Meinung bilden zu können, oder, wenn die Angelegenheit kompliziert und ernst ist, uns mindestens ein klares Bild machen zu können.

Wie viel müssen wir, die Generation der Zukunft, wissen? Wie viel sollten wir versuchen zu verstehen? Ich glaube, wir realisieren in einem viel zu kleinen Ausmaß, wie dramatisch alles, was in der Welt geschieht, egal ob eine oder tausend Meilen entfernt, unser Leben verändert. Wir müssen eine neue Perspektive bekommen, müssen mehr Interesse an denen um uns herum zeigen, sodass wir, wenn es an uns liegt, die Welt zu führen und die Entscheidungen zu treffen, nicht zurückweichen und scheitern wegen mangelndem Wissen und Verständnis.

Es ist unentbehrlich sich bewusster zu werden, zu erstreben, jeden Tag mehr über unsere Welt zu lernen, damit wir irgendwann einmal zurückschauen können und zufrieden feststellen können, ja, wir wissen, wie man mit schwierigen Situationen umgeht. Und was vielleicht am wichtigsten ist: Wir haben vielleicht unsere eigenen Fehler gemacht, aber wir haben zumindest, durch Lernen und Verstehen, nicht dieselben Fehler wie unsere Vorgänger gemacht.

—K. G., Deutschland.

## Scrambled Eggs Pancake Stew

There was once a girl named Allison. She was seven years old, and she liked to go to her grandma's cooking school with her cousin Maddie, who was also seven.

"Do you know how to make upside down pizza?" Grandma Mimi asked the girls.

"No," said Allison and Maddie.

"What do you know how to make?," asked Mimi.

"Pancakes," said Maddie.

"Scrambled eggs," said Allison.

"Then, let's make scrambled eggs pancake stew," said Mimi.

"WHAT IN THE WORLD?," the girls asked.

"What is that?," asked Allison.

"It doesn't sound like a recipe," said Maddie.

"How do we make it?," questioned the girls.

"Scramble some eggs and mash together. Make the pancakes and put some scrambled eggs on top of them. If you have some leftovers, put them in a bowl and put them on top of each other. Pour some syrup all over everything," said Mimi, "When you mix it all together it will make a wonderful delightful stew."

*PS: Do not make scrambled egg pancake stew or else you'll have a joke for breakfast.*

—Maddie Tolly, 7, Nebraska. Photos: Allison and Maddie.



## Smile

To Smile: The change of facial expression  
In which the eyes brighten  
And the lips curve slightly upward  
Especially to show:  
Amusement, pleasure, approval, or scorn.

My mom always told me:  
Smile to be polite,  
But laugh to show friendship.  
A smile means nothing  
Without a whole-hearted laugh to go with it.  
Your smiles and laughter  
Always brighten up someone's day.  
And with each smile and each laugh,  
There is a special memory with every one of them.

Well, apparently I listened.  
Because this is my motto today:  
Why pout and frown,  
When I have the ability to be smiling and laughing?

—Cailey Sanborn, 13, Pennsylvania.

## A Peaceful Swim

Excited dolphins jump out of the clear blue ocean  
Blueberry juice surrounds mountain land  
Fluffy clouds drift slowly away  
Beautiful plants border the luxurious land.

—Minnie Pham, grade 4, Illinois.

# The 2006 Skipping Stones Honor Awards



This year, we honor 25 wonderful books with the *13th Annual Skipping Stones Honor Awards*. Together, these books encourage understanding of world's diverse cultures, as well as nature and ecological richness. They promote cooperation, non-violence, respect for differing viewpoints, and close relationships in human societies. Check them out in your local library or book store; they offer a great variety of learning experiences for all ages. Welcome to the world of words!

## Multicultural and International Books:

**The Librarian of Basra:** *A True Story from Iraq* by Jeanette Winter. Picture book. Harcourt; [www.harcourtbooks.com](http://www.harcourtbooks.com).

**The Librarian of Basra** is a true story about a courageous and dedicated librarian who has saved 30,000 books from Basra's Central Library in Iraq.

Alia Muhammad Baker is this extraordinary librarian. Her library was a meeting place where people came to discuss matters of the world and the spirit.

When war broke out in Iraq, she became very afraid that bombs might hit the library and destroy her beloved books. Alia asked her government for help, but was refused. She decided to begin moving the books to her and her neighbors' homes. When the bombing eventually reached Basra, Alia engaged her friends and neighbors to help her move the remaining books to safety. Then her worst fear was realized and the library was destroyed by a bomb.

Alia still dreams of peace and a new library so she can once again become the Librarian of Basra. The publisher plans to donate a part of the profits to help rebuild the collection of Basra's Central Library.

—Beth Erfurth, host mom and home educator.

**Circles of Hope** by Karen Lynn Williams, illustr. Linda Saport. Picture book. Eerdmans Books; [www.eerdmans.com/youngreaders](http://www.eerdmans.com/youngreaders).

I like **Circles of Hope** because Facile tries to make the trees grow with love and care. He faces many problems but they all get solved eventually. My favorite part of the story is that with Facile's faith and hard work, the mango tree establishes itself on the mountainside.

—Lena Schulz, 8, African-American.

Even though so many of us wish the world would change for the better in the blink of an eye, in reality

it takes many tiny and determined actions to gradually build a better world. Young Facile needs this determination when he plants one...two...three mango seeds in the mountains of Haiti in honor of his new baby sister. His *tikado* (gift) must grow strong to protect baby Lucia as she grows. Their Papa says, "A strong tree protects its *timoun*" (child), and with his faith and love, Facile makes sure Lucia's tree is a good one.

—Kathy Danz, lover of children's books.

**Of Corn Silk and Black Braids** by Vincent L. Johnson, M.D., illustr. Linda Crockett. Picture book. Marzetta Books; [www.marzettabooks.com](http://www.marzettabooks.com).

Sarah is a young African American girl with hair that is sometimes challenging to comb and style. In Sarah's eyes her hair is not attractive and she longs for beautiful hair. She admires the long blond hair of a little girl in her neighborhood. Sarah's Aunt Lubelle comes for a visit and she decides to comb Sarah's hair into a style Sarah sees as beautiful. About five hairstyles later Aunt Lubelle finally completes one that Sarah loves. Now she agrees with her mother. Her hair didn't have to be blond to be beautiful. Her shiny black cornrows were very beautiful. The illustrations are in full, bright, and very attractive colors. The illustrations enhance a story well told.

—Paulette Ansari, librarian and board member.

**Let Them Play** by Margot Theis Raven, illustr. Chris Ellison. Picture book. Sleeping Bear Press; [www.sleepingbearpress.com](http://www.sleepingbearpress.com)

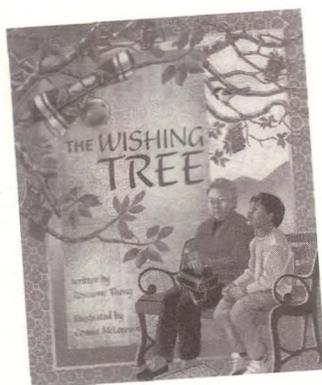
**Let Them Play** is a touching, true story about a black team called the Cannon Street All-Stars. They wanted to play in the Little League World Series. What was supposed to be a friendly, fun baseball tournament turned into a segregation issue. Due to racial prejudice,

the team was boycotted; all the white teams in the state withdrew from the Little League State Tournament, rather than play against a Black team.

Although the All-Stars were the state champions, they had not won a single game to advance to the World Series. So the officials ruled that the team wouldn't be able to play in the play-offs. However, they were invited as guests.

As the All-Stars took the field for their warm up, the crowd rose to their feet and yelled, "Let them play, let them play," when they saw what the All-Stars could do. Although the boys weren't allowed to play, they had won the crowds' hearts. They returned home to their proud families and friends, with smiles on their faces.

—Emily Erfurth, 16, homeschooler.



**The Wishing Tree** by Roseanne Thong, illustr. Connie McLennan. Picture book. Shen's Books; www.shens.com.

Every Lunar New Year, a boy named Ming and his grandmother visit a special tree in the middle of their village. There's the excitement of making wishes, realistic or unrealistic.

When his grandmother becomes ill, Ming visits the Wishing Tree alone to wish for her recovery. He is disappointed and bitter because his grandmother dies.

Several years later, Ming is invited by his friend to return to the village for a reunion. While they are talking near the tree, Ming is overcome with sad memories of his grandmother's death. He feels that even though his last wish wasn't granted, his grandmother's wish has come true. She had always wished the same thing, *his happiness*. He realizes he is happy with his new life.

During this last visit to the tree, Ming doesn't wish for anything for himself, but instead wants to express appreciation and give thanks to the tree for all of the fulfilled wishes and happiness that it has brought into his life.

—Emily Erfurth, 16, homeschooler.

**Playing War** by Kathy Beckwith, illustr. Lea Lyon. Picture book. Tilbury House; www.tilburyhouse.com.

When it's too hot to play basketball or ride bikes, Luke and his friends play "war." They gather up pinecones and sticks, choose sides, and set out into the trees to guard their territories. Sameer, the new kid, has never played before. Through the stories he tells of his home country, he shows Luke and the others that "war" is more than just a game.



In today's world of global conflict, where thousands of people are still being persecuted in many places, it remains still all too easy to treat war lightly. This is especially true for children, who may have a hard time conceptualizing such an abstract topic. The horrors of war are thankfully far removed from the daily lives of many kids. But it is still invaluable for them to realize compassion for the millions of other children in the world who have not been so lucky.

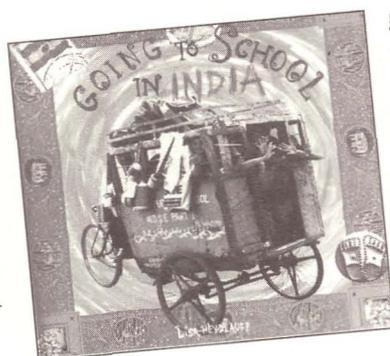
Sameer tells briefly of his experiences with war, without resentment or bitterness. He is an example of the resiliency of children in traumatic situations, and will help remind all kids of the importance of being sensitive of others' situations. Beautiful watercolor illustrations help narrate the story, with loose brush strokes that allow the children in the book to be any children, anywhere. ISBN: 0-88448-267-

— Shannon B. Lattin, student intern, U. of Oregon.

**Going to School in India** by Lisa Heydlauff, photos by Nitin Upadhye. Elem. & middle grades. Shakti for Children/Charlesbridge; www.charlesbridge.com.

Imagine your school "day" beginning at night after you have worked all day to support your family's basic needs. Maybe your school is the platform of a railway station and you go there even on Saturday to bathe and get food to eat. Some of you may attend a government school that rests in the middle of a lake. Imagine participating in your lessons in a mango tree field. If you live in the desert, you may be called to school by a flashing mirror instead of a bell.

This book is a colorful, informative journey through



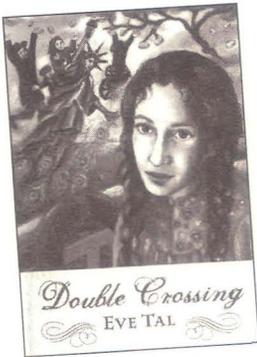
the daily lives of school children in the various regions of India. Discover how these children attempt to keep their dreams and passions for learning from dying; how, against what we in the West may consider insurmountable odds, the Indian children tenaciously push forth and realize their goals. Learn how even getting to and from school can be a huge challenge. Discover the creative alternatives for education designed by the street children.

This inspirational book is highly recommended for its colorful photos of the children, their schools, the regions where they live and even the food they eat. A discussion and interviews with the children are included concerning their hopes and dreams for the future.

—Anna Lankutis (with help from Elena Borie and Morgan Dysher, third graders at Eugene Waldorf School).

**Double Crossing** by Eve Tal. Middle grades. Novel. Cinco Puntos Press; [www.cincopuntos.com](http://www.cincopuntos.com).

**Double Crossing** by Eve Tal is a gripping, emotionally moving tale of the trials and challenges faced by a Jewish man who leaves his family to immigrate to America with his daughter, Raizel, to avoid conscription into the Russian army. Unexpected hardships cause shocking developments. Raizel's talent as a storyteller and thirst for learning open unexpected doors. Tal tells this story, which is based on her own grandfather's experience, in Raizel's voice, weaving into it the history and her Jewish heritage.



—Yvonne Young, grandmother, storyteller, retired teacher.

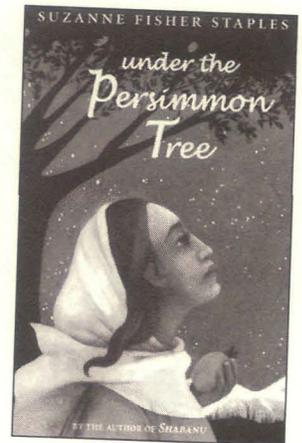
**Under the Persimmon Tree** by Suzanne Fisher Staples. Novel. Middle and High Schools. Frances Foster Books; [www.fsgkidsbooks.com](http://www.fsgkidsbooks.com).

**Under the Persimmon Tree** is a gentle, rolling story about Najmah, an orphaned Afghan girl, trying to find her way from her village in the province of Kunduz to Peshawar in hopes that she might find her father and brother. Nusrat, or Elaine, is an American woman who is married to Dr. Faiz, an Afghanistани American doctor. When Faiz returns to Afghanistan to create a clinic to help his countrymen, Nusrat fol-

lows him to Peshawar where she stays near her in-laws and forms a school for refugee children: The Persimmon Tree School.

The novel is the story of Najmah and Nusrat trying to find their way into the world again. The language is sweet and simple and very emotive. The book is respectful to Islam and paints a very believable and beautiful picture of Afghans and Afghanistan.

—Zuheir Desai, 17, exchange student from India.



**Keeping Heart on Pine Ridge** by Vic Glover. Upper grades to adults. Native Voices; [www.bookpubco.com](http://www.bookpubco.com).

Vic Glover shares his experience on South Dakota's Pine Ridge Reservation in these compelling, short narrative tours. He gives the uninitiated a taste of the sacred: a seat in the sweat lodge, a place at the feast, a dance round the fire to the beat of the drum. He takes us up the bumpy back roads deep into the stark realities of his world. It's a world ravaged by the chaos of desperate poverty, specter of despair and suicide, horrors of alcoholism, and which is at the same time held together by the strong bonds of traditional culture.

Glover's description of his personal involvement in relationships with his people and his active participation in the still-healthy rhythms of his tribe's ancient ways offers the reader unrelenting honesty. Each sketch offers a richly complex view that integrates the author's harsh anger at the brutal circumstances, great sorrow, loss, and continuing emergency thrust upon "the Rez," with his great respect for the bravery and traditions of the ancient warrior culture, balanced with eloquent warmth and humor. The portrayals of the selflessness of the tribal elders and U. S. veterans are particularly touching.

This book is a quiet but stunning indictment that is at once fierce and humble. Comfort is not an option the reader is offered. This series of essays creates a brief access to the texture of the social and political challenges of the Lakota Oglala people. Vic has shared his pain, courage and devotion to keeping heart.

—Sherry Black, avid reader and mother of two teenagers.



**Mother Teresa** by Demi. Biography. Elem. grades. Simon & Schuster; [www.SimonSaysKids.com](http://www.SimonSaysKids.com).

Mother Teresa's life and words are always inspiring. This simple biography goes further—exquisite gold filigreed illustrations depict scenes from Mother Teresa's life. Her story is told eloquently, and does a particularly good job of describing the call this simple nun felt to serve the poorest of the poor in Calcutta. The daily life of the sisters is compellingly rendered. The narrative does an excellent job of portraying the development of the work, taking the reader through the process from the first simple acts of selfless charity to the eventual world wide impact of Mother Teresa's various pursuits. The book concludes by summarizing the necessary steps to recognize Mother Teresa as a saint. The omission of Mother Teresa's struggles with faith and belief, which humanize this immense figure and make her accessible to the common person, was disappointing. Overall, however, this book does an excellent job of portraying the inspiration of Mother Teresa's life.

—Leila Snow, Quaker, volunteer in schools and mother.

**Powerful Words: More than 200 Years of Extraordinary Writing by African Americans** by Wade Hudson, illustr. Sean Qualls. Middle and high school grades. Scholastic; [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com).

Presented are thirty-four famous African Americans—powerful writers or speakers. The text is divided into fourteen sections, beginning with Benjamin Banneker, who wrote a letter to President Thomas Jefferson. Then it ends with Lauryn Hill, one of the leading stars of hip-hop music. This is a first-person peek into the life and times of each individual. You don't get a complete biographical sketch, but the author has captured the essence of each. We get to read the very words spoken or written by each individual. Many of the portraits have been distinctively drawn in black & white and soft grays.

Until we begin to understand American history through the eyes of different cultures, we understand nothing. This is a very worthwhile read. The book also contains an index and an eight-page time line of important events pertaining to African American history, since the 1500s.

—Paulette Ansari, librarian and board member.

## Bilingual Spanish Books:

**Quinto's Neighborhood/El Vecindario de Quinto** by Ina Cumpiano, illustr. José Ramírez. Picture book. Children's Book Press; [www.childrensbookpress.org](http://www.childrensbookpress.org).

This charming, bilingual book depicts a child's neighborhood and a strong sense of community through the eyes of a little Hispanic boy named Quinto. His entrancing community is full of unique characters with non-traditional jobs that all seem to be connected to each other in one way or another, giving the reader a sense of true support and family within a neighborhood. Simply told and beautifully illustrated in hot oranges and cool blues, this book makes the reader want to join Quinto for a romp through his neighborhood.

—Bridget Snow, 17, senior, South Eugene High.

**Trisba & Sula: A Miskitu Folktale from Nicaragua/Una leyenda de los Miskitos de Nicaragua** by Dr. Joan MacCracken, illustr. Augusto Silva. Picture book. Tiffin Press; [tiffinpress@aol.com](mailto:tiffinpress@aol.com).

The bold and colorful art of Nicaraguan artist Augusto Silva sets the stage for this re-telling of an ancient Miskitu folktale from Nicaragua. Pediatrician Joan McCracken brings the story to life as we follow the young hunter, Trisba, into the deep forest and witness his learning of an important lesson. Sula, the deer-woman, is a fine teacher and speaks well for her people: The balance of nature, true compassion and respect for all the creatures is learned in a lesson that Trisba won't soon forget.

—Kathy Danz.



**The Frog and His Friends Save Humanity/La rana y sus amigos salvan a la humanidad** by Victor Villaseñor, illustr. José Ramírez. Elem. grades. Piñata Books; [www.artepublicopress.com](http://www.artepublicopress.com).

This is a humorous tale of creation that portrays human beings with a loving innocence and a sense of true purpose that we all hope to see in humanity. As the first defenseless human baby is born on Earth, the animals wonder what possible purpose it could serve and why it was introduced so late in the creation process. As the story unfolds, a profound discussion of transformation intertwines with the sublimely ridiculous. This combination gives a fresh perspective to the story of creation and to the purpose of humans in this world.

—Bridget Snow, 17, senior, South Eugene High.

## Nature and Ecology Books:

**Near One Cattail: Turtles, Logs and Leaping Frogs** by Anthony D. Fredericks, illustr. Jennifer DiRubbio. Picture book. Dawn Publications; [www.dawnpub.com](http://www.dawnpub.com).

At first, the wetlands appear to be rather plain and empty. Upon a closer look, through the eyes of the author, we find a very busy little kingdom.

Near one cattail in the wetlands, there abounds a multitude of animals from frogs and turtles to backswimmers and muskrats. This book by the same name, **Near One Cattail**, is a very fun and informative read in a clever poetry format. We learn about seven very different critters that live in the wetlands and also some of their habits.

The detailed and colorful illustrations enhance the text and we get lost in this wonderful 'web of life in this soggy land.' Field Notes offer descriptions for each of the critters, along with a fantastic fact! For instance, did you know that in winter, when water freezes in the wetlands, backswimmers walk upside down under the ice? The author has included some of his favorite

resource books for further reading pleasure.

This book is very timely since our wetlands are in danger. More human houses, highways and shopping centers are being built on wetlands.

—Beth Erfurth, host mom, editor and home educator.

**Hotel Deep** by Kurt Cyrus. Picture book. Harcourt; [www.harcourtbooks.com](http://www.harcourtbooks.com).

**Hotel Deep** is a most rare superstar! It takes us on an intimate discovery of life in the vast ocean waters. Each page opens up for us a vivid visit to the lifestyle of ocean species.

Brilliantly orchestrated, one lone sardine lost the thousands of its kin, as in one swoosh they found secure hiding places.

Like a mesmerized child, wandering unobtrusively from ocean vista to the next, observing always with an eye out for the hiding sardines, the sardine models an admiration and joyful appreciation of the wisdom and magic of nature.

Among the book's many gifts, I cherish the spirit of acceptance of nature's order and reasonableness, and the sensitivity of presentation. For example: *mother octopus constantly watches until all eggs are hatched and swim out into the sea, and then she quietly sleeps into a peaceful death.*

The spirit of viewing nature is a gift for every reader's lifetime. Thank you, Kurt Cyrus!

—Hanna Still, educator and board member.

**Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes** by Damian E. Yumei, illustr. Nicole Tamarin. Picture book for young readers. Illumination Arts; [www.illumin.com](http://www.illumin.com).

**Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes** is a story of a young girl playing in the garden. She explains what it takes to grow the "little yellow pear tomatoes" that she loves so much. She incorporates everything from bugs and worms to her Mommy and Daddy and all of Heaven and Earth. Because, as she says, without these things,

there wouldn't be any little yellow pear tomatoes. It explores the circle of life through fun, read-a-long rhyming verses.

The large illustrations are full of incredible details and are very pleasing to the eye. Each and every page introduces something new for little ones. If you read this book to a tiny tot like I did, be ready for lots of finger pointing. In fact, there are so many details, your little one may point out something you didn't even see. **Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes** is a fun book for all!

—Stephanie Willhite, working parent.

**Awesome Ospreys:** *Fishing Birds of the World* by Donna Love, illustr. Joyce M. Turley. Elem. and middle grades. Mountain Press; www.mountain-press.com.

"Awesome Osprey" is not used *lightly* in this book. Ospreys catch their food by diving under water, seizing their prey with their feet and are found throughout the world! It gives us a comprehensive look into a bird's family life throughout the year—from chick to adulthood. Unless one of the mates dies, ospreys usually raise their young ones together for life. Can you imagine a bird about two feet tall with a wingspan of six feet? Sometimes their nests weigh around 1000 pounds.

We learn about the osprey's many names in various cultures, where they live and how they are regarded. My interest was captured by the detailed information, illustrations and the challenging nature activity boxes.

This book is intended for a juvenile audience. I believe it could be used by anyone interested in learning about birds and nature in general. The resource list in the back of the book is a comprehensive invitation to continue the study of osprey to one's heart's content.

—Ann Brown, nature preserve docent.

**Un día más y otras historias:** *Cuentos sobre animales en peligro de extinción* by Edna Iturralde, illustr. Pablo Lara. In Spanish. Middle grades. Alfaguara Infantil; www.ednaiturralde.com.

These are ten short stories about animals in danger of extinction. We listen to a mountain song, travel with *Tatú*, the giant armadillo, and swim in the ocean with *Chac-Chac*, the green tortoise. We also meet a small hummingbird who teaches us about the dreadful Mr. Smog, and a mother primate (*Chorongo*) who shares with us the hope of living one more day.

Edna is a well-known author of children's books in Ecuador and other Spanish-speaking countries. Her

books have been recognized with several national and international awards. She introduces the stories by reminding us that we human beings share the earth with all sentient beings. The extinction of one of them affects us all equally in the great pyramid of life.

—Esther Celis, board member and parent.

**Only the Sea Keeps:** *Poetry of the Tsunami*; editors: Judith R. Robinson, Joan E. Bauer and Sankar Roy. High school to adult. Bayeux; www.bayeux.com.

We face many mysteries in the course of our lives. Some exquisitely beautiful such as a baby's first laugh. Others, like the tsunami of December 26, 2004, are painful and terrible beyond measure. When we learned of the horrific event, no matter where we were on the planet, we knew that such a fate could happen to any of us. And yet, we are still here, and many of our sisters and brothers are not.

*Only the Sea Keeps* offers readers a chance to learn how poets from around the world and survivors of the catastrophe understand the event and its accompanying mysteries. As the forward to the book explains, "They seek to...share with others the expression of what so often seems inexpressible; the experience of being mortal, and the consciousness of this human condition—unique in each poet's voice, but universal to us all."

More than 80 poets, from many countries, share their perspectives, feelings and visions about the tsunami. Reading the volume, I was quickly moved to tears, to awe, to wonder and also to hope. *Only the Sea Keeps* helped me learn valuable insights about this incomprehensible global tragedy and the common bonds that still unite humanity, despite the distances and experiences that separate us.

—Kara Steffensen, parent and educator.

## Teaching Resources:

**A Broken Flute:** *The Native Experience in Books for Children*; editors: Doris Seale & Beverly Slapin. For parents, teachers and librarians. Altamira Press and Oyate, www.oyate.org.

**A Broken Flute** is an invaluable resource for all school teachers, as well as professors of education and children's literature. This wonderful book is simultaneously enlightening, challenging, and disturbing.

The forward, introduction, and the "living stories"

told by Native Americans about their personal experiences. The reviews of children's books are written either by Native Americans or from a Native point of view. The thoughtful reviews of well known, widely read standards in children's literature illustrate how deeply ingrained cultural stereotypes are in this country. Now that this resource is available, teachers would be well-advised to read the review of any book whose content includes the Native American experience before presenting it to their students.

The short "living stories" and longer essays reveal the depth of pain, anger, and hurt Native American individuals feel when confronted by stereotypes and expectations to fit into our cultural norms. This enables us to understand the importance of presenting historically accurate material. Native Americans want their children to know the truth about the genocide attempted against their race in American history.

Cultural appropriation of Native American stories by non-Native authors is rampant. Many beautiful books of individual Native stories were actually retold and published by non-Native authors. Teachers are challenged to search out authentic material. Such authentic resources are reviewed in this book, along with those which are not acceptable to Native Americans.

As teachers, we can begin to change the culturally-ingrained stereotypes about the Native Americans by making appropriate choices of literature for use in our classrooms. **A Broken Flute** provides a tool to help achieve that goal.

—Yvonne Young, retired teacher, storyteller.

**Evolution of the Insects** by David Grimaldi and Michael Engel. For nature lovers and educators. Cambridge University Press; [www.cambridge.com](http://www.cambridge.com).

**Evolution of the Insects** is a remarkable, beautiful, scholarly book by two entomologists. It traces the evolution of insects, the most prolific and diverse group of living creatures on our planet, by integrating the history of fossil insects with an examination of the diversity of living insects.

The authors spent four years researching, writing, and imaging this work. Knowledge that previously had to be pulled together from diverse sources is contained in this one volume. It presents the big picture in the context of phylogeny, biogeography, ecology and the fossil records with detailed technical material. Seventy

pages of references reveal the scope and depth of this endeavor.

The authors worked on this at the American Museum of Natural History. They traveled world wide to examine and image important specimens and consult with colleagues in their field.

The authors' goal was not only to provide a valuable resource for those studying entomology, but also to make this book appealing to anyone with an interest in insects. The nearly 1,000 images, including detailed drawings, and colored micrographs and photographs, help achieve that objective. There is much to be learned from the images and captions. A fascinating, scientific resource book for all college libraries and high school science departments!

—Yvonne Young, grandmother, teacher and storyteller.

**A Generation at Risk: The Global Impact of HIV/AIDS on Orphans and Vulnerable Children**, editors: Geoff Foster, Carol Levine and John Williamson. Cambridge University Press; [www.cambridge.com](http://www.cambridge.com).

This a resource book presents the plight of millions of orphaned and vulnerable children in the wake of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Experienced practitioners and researchers offer current and insightful perspectives into bettering the lives of these innocent victims and survivors of this devastating disease.

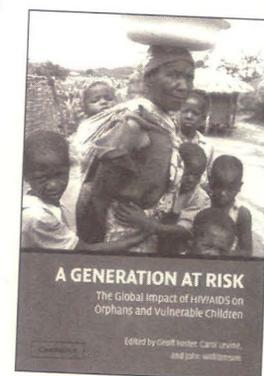
Approaches by governments, international organizations and religious groups to help remedy this situation are discussed; but to date the most beneficial results have come from the victims' extended families and their communities.

Needs in the areas of education, economic strengthening at the household and community levels, community mobilization, the protection of the children and fulfillment of their rights are outlined in this comprehensive book.

This book contributes to a clearer picture of this critical situation facing the entire world.

—Beth Erfurth, home educator and host mom.

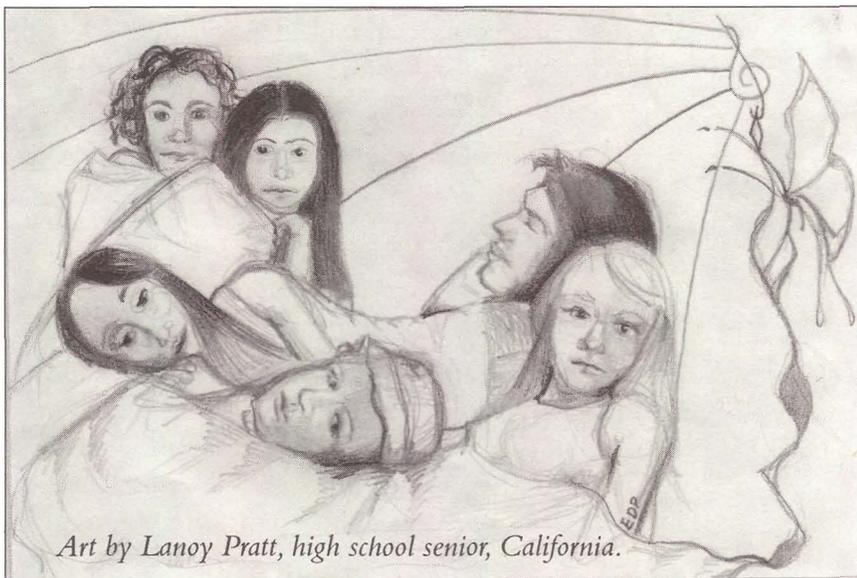
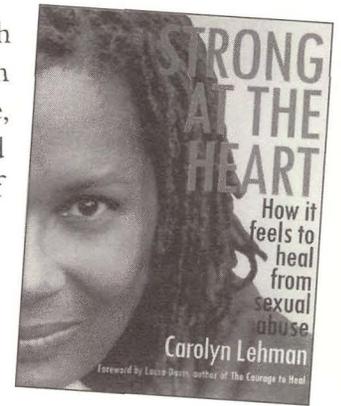
**Strong At The Heart: How it feels to heal from sexual abuse** by Carolyn Lehman. Junior High school to adult. Melanie Kroupa Books; [www.fsgkidbooks.com](http://www.fsgkidbooks.com)



**Strong at the Heart** Children and adults from all races and backgrounds in North America have found the courage to share their experiences, traumas, and healing from sexual abuse in these heart-rending and heartening stories. As survivors of sexual abuse, these individuals share their shattered lives and healing processes to move onto strong and fulfilling lives. By relating their experiences, they are able to reach out and offer a ray of hope that will give courage to other victims of abuse.

The stories are first person accounts and presented in a very readable and appropriate manner. They will make readers aware of this societal illness, become more compassionate toward survivors, and reach out to others who have not found the support to come forward to begin their healing.

—Beth Erfurth, educator and editor.



Art by Lanoy Pratt, high school senior, California.

## Transformation

Cocooned in sleeping bags,  
Haphazard on the floor,  
Thirty wriggling caterpillars dance in the semi-dark.  
And tonight, we learn by beauty.

We are fed by poems whose words  
Are caught in the web of our heads  
As butterflies caught in a net.  
A song whose notes have hung gracefully in the air for centuries  
Crafted to echo off cavernous cathedrals  
And vibrate the spidery glass.  
Songs in languages we cannot comprehend,  
But with warming harmonies  
Like spiraling tendrils of steaming cocoa.

Wrapped in our cocoons, rocking in the arms of the boat,  
Protected from the drumming rain that haunts us,  
We worry only about peace.

—Becky Wright, high school senior, California.

*Transformation* was inspired by my memories of the summer camp LPC (Leuthi-Peterson Camps), to which I've been going for five years. LPC was founded by my great-aunt after World War II so that children from different sides of the war could realize that people were people, no matter what country they came from. Last summer, I went to a little town called Heidenskip in the Friesland region of the Netherlands for four weeks. We get to know each other quickly and learn many things from each other. We shared 14 different languages, translating every announcement and learning songs in over a dozen.

Understanding and acceptance are important for many reasons, partly because I have relatives from several different countries, and now, thanks to the camp, I have many close friends around the world that I am still in touch with. However, I also believe acceptance is important because of my younger brother, Danny. He has both ADHD and Asperger's Syndrome, a mild form of autism, and he has to struggle immensely to just be normal. Taking time to understand a person and the reason behind them is important to me because I have seen the pain and frustration that Danny has to deal with because people judge him without knowing or caring who he is.

—Becky Wright, 17, California.

## Weavers of the Legacies: *Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Violence*

Often home is not a place of healthy relationships, but a place for unpredictable danger. Some of you have seen or witnessed domestic violence in your home or community, and it leaves you or your friends with a lower self-esteem. Did you know that low self-esteem can hinder your ability to solve problems nonviolently, to develop meaningful relationships or attachments to caring adults, and that it can cause difficulties in social interactions with friends? Do you ever begin to wonder why you feel afraid, unprotected or abandoned through direct or indirect abuse, neglect or witnessing parental or community violence?

How do you react when you are caught in the middle of a family fight? How do you create a safe place for yourself? Where do you go to play? Does playing help you feel more in control? Where do you go to pretend to have power over what is happening at home? How do you express yourself to feel more resilient? What acts of non-violence have you taken to protect yourself?

Domestic violence and child abuse occurs more often than we can imagine. It is not limited to a culture, religion or geographic region. And, oftentimes, many of the victims of child abuse end up becoming abusers as adults. Yet, there are ways to get help. You can share your feelings and experiences with those whom you trust—a grandparent, parent or teacher, for example.

I am a grandmother who is concerned about this societal problem. I'm preparing a workbook for teachers, parents/guardians and community leaders to help them make a difference in the lives of children living with domestic violence. Let's work together to bring hope in place of fear.

I would like to hear from you. I invite you to share your indirect or direct experience with domestic violence and/or child abuse through your poetry, prose or any other creative work.

By sharing your experiences, you'll help us develop an understanding of the need and urgency to address the effects of domestic violence on children and youth all over the world. Your voices will be included in the workbook. To help you express your pain, fears and survival, you might

### Violence Festers in the Home of the Soul

Violence festers at the home of the soul

The child in us cries

Our world shattered by war

left unprotected, abandoned

like a cancer crawling through the  
canvas of our mind

Passing disbelief of hatred

from our ancestors to our children

Spoken threads of war

Wreaking havoc in the home

Witnesses of the very abuse the elders  
carried as children

passing this legacy to their offspring

haunting our childhood like a broken record

Threads interwoven

Forgotten promises of justice and equity

Beads of many cultures

Embracing families across worlds

Grandmothers speaking in prayer

Singing songs in her native tongue

Across charted territories

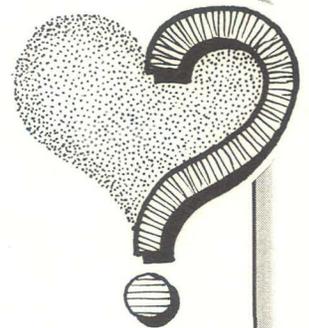
children bear witness not to bear arms

The song of ancestral wisdom

Caught in the embrace of grandmothers' lullabies

Whispering in the ears of future leaders of tomorrow

© Marti Harmon March, 2006.



wish to use any of the following questions—

1. *How do you show empathy and understanding of others who experience violence in their family?*
2. *Is there any fighting where you live? Please draw a picture of what you see/hear.*
3. *When you experience violence, what does the monster look like? Where do you hide? What's your worst fear?*
4. *How do you create a safe place?*
5. *Who do you trust when trust has been broken at home?*

Thank you for giving hope to the many children who endure violence within their homes. You can write to me c/o *Skipping Stones* magazine.

—Marti Elizabeth Harmon, California.

# The Lost Boys Of Sudan

## The Journey

In the late 1980s boys as young as five watched their parents killed and their small villages burned down, destroying everything they had. Their villages consisted of mud-and-grass huts on the hot grasslands of southern Sudan. The boys fled the guns and bloodshed and started on a journey that, for some, covered over 1,000 miles. Some walked, barefoot.

These Sudanese boys were refugees of a civil war between the Northern and Southern people of Sudan. Government troops reportedly killed all the adults, enslaved the girls and burned down the villages. This left groups of orphaned young boys, mostly from the Dinka and Nuer tribes.

Not knowing what to do they just started to walk. On their journey many were attacked by wild animals or shot at by soldiers. Much of the time they had very little to eat or drink. Sometimes they just ate leaves or mud. They walked across swampland, grassland and the steaming hot desert.

## Safety in Ethiopia?

After walking for about three months, they settled in an Ethiopian refugee camp. They had to build makeshift houses to live in. They felled small trees in the nearby forest using long knives, finding clever ways to wedge the sticks together to make walls.

But in 1991, war broke out in Ethiopia also. Their refugee camp was hit by shells that blasted apart their little shacks. The boys took off walking again to escape the killing and destruction. This time the boys walked back toward Sudan.

## Lion Attack!

The nights in the forest were filled with animal sounds—the roar of lions and chilling laugh of the hyenas. Terrified, the boys clung to one another. Lions attacked and ate those that could not keep up with the group. Older and stronger boys tried to carry as many of the weaker boys as they could. They could see lions and hyenas stalking them in the tall brush.

When they came upon Ethiopia's raging Gilo River, the boys did not want to cross it, but there were soldiers behind them. They shot at the boys, forcing them to either jump into the water or get shot. Many could not

swim and were swept away and drowned; others were eaten by crocodiles.

After many months, the surviving boys walked back into Sudan. The villages that were still intact didn't have much food and the soldiers had destroyed their cattle. Sometimes, a big plane with a "red cross" on it would fly over and drop food for them. One day a plane flew over their heads and as they looked up, it didn't drop food; it dropped bombs. Not knowing what else to do, the boys began to walk again! They traveled mostly at night hoping that they wouldn't be seen.

## Off to Kenya

Thousands of boys walked south and out of Sudan. Months later over 10,000 boys walked across the border to Kenya and into a refugee camp. It was now 1992. The boys arrived with their ribs sticking out, swollen, blistered feet and eyes, enormous from years of hunger. No one knows for sure how many more thousands of boys did not make it. Some news reports suggest perhaps seven thousand boys died during the ordeal.

Unfortunately, life in the refugee camp was also harsh. Dysentery and malaria plagued the camp and rations were small. They ate mostly wheat flour and dried corn. They slept on plastic sheets on top of the dirt. School was outdoors with up to one hundred students in many of the classes.

## A Brand New Future

In the year 2000, the boys learned that their story had been heard in different parts of the world. They were told that over three thousand of The Lost Boys would be given new homes in the United States of America.

Most had never seen a television, lights, or snow! Some of the "boys" were now men over six feet tall, but weighed only 120 pounds (54 Kilograms)!

When they arrived in our country, they had to learn to turn the doorknob to open the door, how to cook on a gas or electric stove, and, of course, not to put lettuce in the freezer! Walking through an automatic opening door would throw some into fits of giggles.

In the United States, they faced "strange" customs,

## Human Suffering in Darfur, Sudan

*Years of civil warfare have left more than five million Sudanese uprooted from their villages. The United Nations estimates over 1.9 million Sudanese people have died of war-related causes.*

*Another report says that the Sudanese have more war-related deaths than any single population in the world. Genocide is happening again now in Darfur and the world community has done little to stop these killings.*

*The U.N. Security Council should create a response force that can send troops and equipment to places where genocide is taking place. This would also send a message to all governments that the world will respond to any mass killing of civilians.*

—S. P.

and sometimes, prejudices. They were surprised to see homeless people pushing along their belongings in a cart. In their tribal culture, if someone was sick or mentally impaired the people in their village took care of them. Nobody there was ever homeless until the war.

They also had a hard time grasping some concepts like not having to pay with cattle for a wife. When one saw a sign that read, “Dead End,” he wondered if he went down there, was he going to die? Explaining an elevator to them was almost impossible.

When the boys arrived in the United States most owned nothing. Not even a birthday! With no parents some had to just guess at their age. They were all given the same day of birth: January the first.

### **Now. . .**

Most of the “Boys” are now young men in their 20s and have adjusted surprisingly well here. Two things are really important to them: work and education. Most have jobs and are working on increasing their education. In a very short time, they have developed new technical skills such as using a computer, something they didn’t even know existed!

They are handsome young men with beautiful and genuine smiles. They are grateful for the opportunity to just be alive after the horrible ordeal.

They are truly an extraordinary example of the will to live and the strength of the human spirit!

—Shirley Ann Povondra, California.

Sudan was a British-ruled country from 1898 until 1956. During that time, the country was split into two sections: the south and the north. A civil war began in 1955 that resulted in the north and the south declaring self-rule.

We seem to be uninformed about the humanitarian crisis in Sudan. The country was in its second civil war for over 20 years. During the war women were raped and young children were made slaves. The ongoing civil war displaced more than four million southern Sudanese. Some went to other cities and others went to the neighboring countries of Chad, Kenya, Uganda, Egypt and Ethiopia. Malnutrition and widespread hunger now plague the displaced southerners as they can’t grow food to eat.

In 2003, a new rebellion began in the western part of Darfur, Sudan, during which the government committed terrible atrocities through a group called the *Janjaweed*. The word *janjaweed* means “a man on a horse with a gun.” The *Janjaweed* have been at odds with the African farmers, who are darker skinned. Their dispute has mostly been over natural resources, land resources and water. The *Janjaweed* go to non-Arab farms and steal their cattle. They have become more aggressive in the last few years, after two southern groups began to rebel against the government. In response, the *Janjaweed* have begun pillaging villages inhabited by members of the African tribes, where the rebels had come from.

The government refuses to accept responsibility for these attacks. While violence continues to occur, many government officials sit back and allow this genocide to happen.

Some 300,000 people have been killed in the Darfur region in an “ethnic-cleansing” campaign against the black-African villagers. Over two million people have fled their homes and become refugees. In the recent months, the violence has also spread to neighboring regions of Chad. The U.S. government has recognized the genocide for three years, but has done nothing to stop this human suffering. Many now suggest that the United Nations should take over the security tasks in Darfur from the 7,000 African Union peacekeepers.

—Mary Beall, 14, Montana.

# A Dawning

Alice lay back as she daydreamed of sofas and pillows, of curry and spices, of air conditioning and swimming pools; any place other than that truck bed.

She groaned, thinking of the bruises blossoming into grotesque rainbows on her back. After so many months of this lifestyle, Alice thought she would have learned not to complain. From the moment she pulled up to the refugee camp in Chad, she realized that the whining that had gotten her anything she wanted back home would not do the trick here. Her complaining would not change the small ration of canned meals she was given every day as her diet, would not get air conditioning installed in the smothering makeshift huts or clean the bathrooms. But she didn't want to think about it. Not now. Now she was pretending she was on a beach in Spain, sipping a margarita with someone massaging her feet.

Well, at least in a few weeks, the time period she signed up for would be finished. She would pack and take off without a look over her shoulder. She would play with the buttons on her chair and chew ice all the way home. She would flush the toilet in the bathroom until a flight attendant made her stop.

When the scent hit their vehicle, her thoughts were reigned in instantly. "What can smell that bad?"

"Burnt houses, burnt hair, burnt skin." The man sitting next to her looked sideways at her, a look of pity and disgust on his face as he watched her pale face turn the lightest shade of green. It matched her eyes.

"I don't think I needed to hear that," she gasped, trying to say it without inhaling any air through her mouth.

"You're going to be seeing it in a minute."

"Oh God."

The truck jolted to a stop and the group slid out. The village was burnt to the ground. The veteran volunteers didn't bat an eye at the bodies strewn on the ground, or the taste of blood in the air. Alice, on the other hand was horrified. She did not even have time to think before the tears gathered in her eyes and trailed

down her cheeks, leaving pale tracks in the sweaty mess of her unwashed face and making her cracked, dusty lips sting. The taste of the salt woke her up and set her into action. Her thoughts of home and luxury were dispelled and the realization of the world she lived in, the world she had a duty to, came rushing to her.

Alice followed the example of the other members of the group. They cautiously entered the village, looking before each step, for mines, for limbs, or for injured people who still had a chance of surviving. After an hour, the group had searched throughout the whole village. They reconvened near the pickup.

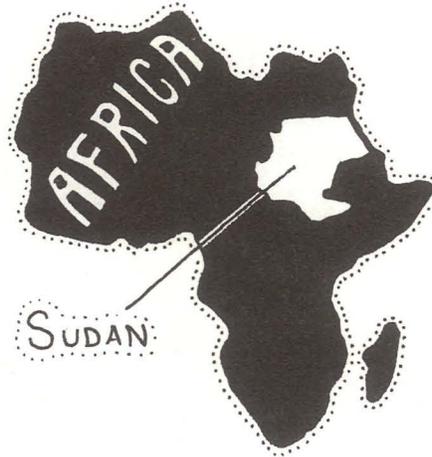
"So, what happens now? Do we go on to the next village?" Alice asked timidly. She could barely speak after seeing the horrors lying in the rubble. She felt as if she had made some huge mistake and the

deaths were all her fault. Of course, the groups could do nothing to stop the Janjaweed, but if they had gotten there sooner, there may have been some survivors.

"No, most survivors aren't found in the village. They will have hidden in the desert. They will come back in a few hours, but we don't have that kind of time," the leader of the group, a tall woman from Chad, replied. "We split up. Make sure your communication systems are up. Head out into the desert. Don't go so far that you can't see the village. If you find anyone, make sure they know that you want to help them, and then bring them back." The woman was answered by nods, and each person headed out into the surrounding landscape. Alice's old instincts kicked in. She was tired, her feet hurt, couldn't they eat breakfast first? No. No chance. There was work to be done.

Alice headed towards the east. She wanted to be the first to know that the sun had risen. After about half an hour, she had found no one, so she turned and headed back towards the thin line of smoke rising on the horizon. As she grew nearer to it, the sky above her changed into a bruised shade of gray, and the back of her neck was warmed by the rising sun.

Back at the village, everyone else had already returned. Two survivors were found. They were sitting



**A Dawning** *continued from the last page*

on the ground eating some of the power bars that the group had brought. One was a grown woman. She was tall, and not so much bony, but skeletal. Resting on her hip was a baby. After she had gotten enough to eat and nursed her child, she was helped into the truck. Alice stared at the baby in her arms. Its eyes were huge.

The woman was exhausted. Who knew how many family members she had seen killed today. Her whole figure drooped like the burnt out crust of a village that was slowly disappearing behind them. She was falling asleep and the baby shifted awkwardly in her arms. 'Well, I'm not touching it. It stinks. I wonder if we have any diapers we could let the mother use.' A different part of her head coaxed her, 'All you have to do is hold the baby for a few hours. It would make such a difference.' Here goes.

Without waking the woman, Alice reached over and plucked the child from her arms. She held the warmth of the body close to her and let its nearness wash away her aches and complaints. She let out a deep breath.

"We just got some news." The call from the front of the truck made Alice alert. "There is another village we need to get to. As soon as we drop these two off at the border, someone will be waiting to pick them up, we can take off for this place without stopping for a break. Is that gonna be okay?"

The group did not say anything. Their weary affirmation was implied. Alice looked down at the baby. Yes, it's okay. It's all gonna be okay.

The sun rose. The baby and its mother slept. Someone hummed under their breath. And for once, Alice did not day-dream.

—Gracie Brown, 16, California.

**This Compost**



What is this compost?

This bucket sitting on my counter haunting me  
Every time I eat something that has a remainder  
I have to look at this compost bucket.



Why is it so foul? Why is it so taunting?  
Why does it sit there and stare, as I jump from day to day?  
Why do I dream about it? Why, Why, Why???



There is something to be learned from nature;  
When encountering it, you try not to destroy its beauty  
You try to encompass the entirety of its all-knowing thought  
But when you try to grasp its worldly knowledge, you only succeed  
in perplexing yourself  
If you are resolved from the beginning you will not be perplexed,  
but you'll still be astounded by the beauty and the thought of nature

There is not only love and beauty in nature, just as there is not only  
love and beauty in compost, nor in life

In nature there are things that even the bravest lion or the fastest  
eagle will not encounter  
Things that make toxic waste and chemical spills look like a picnic  
in a lovely park

Things like death and disease that turn people and animals into  
savages and murderers  
Things that turn the sweetest babe into a creature that would scare  
even the Grim Reaper himself

But out of the bowels of the earth, out of the deep, dark, dank  
recesses if the earth comes the epiphany of human endeavor  
(at least it should be)... Compost

It is made of all and all are made of it  
From the moment of conception we are consuming energy, food,  
water, air, all that Earth has to offer. It is made from everything:  
Rotten food, death, decomposing corpses, the ejectiles of all things  
Yet, our powerful, all-knowing Mother takes it all under her wing  
She takes it and changes it into the things that we want  
And if we change it into things that She totally hates, She kills us off  
She'll huff and She'll puff and She'll blow our lives in!!  
She'll stamp her feet and make the earth shake  
She'll splash in the tub and cause vast areas and people to wash away  
She'll get hot and mad and inflamed and burn our trees down  
And then She'll cry and cool everything down  
Everything horrible and terrible will eventually wash away back  
down into the earth and be made anew by Her  
Everything, you, me, Her, us, them, it, they, he, she...  
Everything and everybody, is essentially made of... Compost

—Joe Piccolotti, 17, Senior, SEHS, Oregon.

In a village in West Africa lived a farmer. His two sons would never help him on the farm. They spent their days lolling under the giant tree at the village square.

The farmer worked so hard to feed the family that he became ill. All the herbalists tried in vain to save him.

Sensing his death, he called his two sons to his bedside. "I don't think I've any more days to live," he labored to say in his faint voice. "But before I die, I've an important secret to reveal to you that will make you very rich."

The boys drew nearer to their father in order not to miss a single word of the privileged information he had for them.

"I've hidden a pot of gold in the field," he revealed. "Unfortunately, I can no longer remember exactly where I've buried it. I know if I don't tell you about this and die, you will sell the land, as you don't like to till the fields. Then somebody else will work the land and find the gold."

"Thank you, Father," they said gladly.

The following day their father died.

"Let's go look for the pot of gold now," the elder brother said as soon as the body was buried.

"Sure," the younger one answered. "We'd better do that before someone else finds the treasure."

With their long hoes, the two brothers dug the land till the burning sun began to slide down the horizon but they didn't find the pot of gold.

"Where do you think Father hid the pot of gold?," the elder brother asked on their way home.

"I wish I knew," the younger brother said in a sad voice. "But I guess we must continue working the land till we find it."

The following day they got up before the rooster crowed and rushed to the field. They worked harder than the previous day till sundown. Still they didn't find the precious metal.

"Do you think we'll find this gold?," the elder brother again asked as they clumped home.

"The pot must surely be hidden in the untilled part of the land," the younger one assured. But on the third day they still went home empty handed.

Yet, since they were determined to find the pot of gold and become rich, they continued to dig out the land until it had all been turned over.

"We've worked the whole land but we didn't find any gold," the elder brother complained bitterly as they plodded home, now totally discouraged. "Do you think we heard Father right?"

"Sure," the younger one replied. "He did say the pot of gold was buried on the land."

"Then, how come we didn't find it!"

"I don't know."

"Maybe Father fooled us."

The younger brother moaned. "You know, he's not a man to do such a thing."

"Then what can the matter be?"

The younger brother shrugged.

"Well," the elder brother said after they had eaten their evening meal of pounded yam and light fish soup and were relaxing outside their hut, "we can't work the land and leave it like that. The rains aren't far away. I guess we'd better plant something on it."

They planted corn in the field and took care of it until they had a bumper harvest a few months later. Selling it at the market brought them money.

"Maybe we'll find the pot of gold during the next farming season," the elder brother persisted.

The younger brother thought for a while. "I think there was no pot of gold at all."

His brother faced him with wide eyes. "What do you mean? You'd confirmed yourself that Father had said so."

"Sure. But I guess Father had wanted to teach us a lesson. He knew we're lazy people. If he'd told us to till the land and we'd become rich, we'd have refused and the land would have gone waste. But look how well off we are now."

His brother's face lit up. "Sure, I see it now. Father used the ploy of a hidden pot of gold to get us to till the land." He nodded with understanding. "Now I know only hard work brings success."

"Yes, and it's worth its weight in gold."

—Akoli Penoukou, Togo, West Africa.

## Just Because



Just because I'm Mexican  
Doesn't mean I can eat only beans  
Doesn't mean I can only work at McDonalds  
And doesn't mean I can speak English just like you

Just because I'm Mexican  
Doesn't mean I'm poor and homeless  
Doesn't mean I need help from the government  
And doesn't mean I'm a wetback, but

Just because I'm Mexican  
It does mean that I have a culture  
It does mean that I'm a hard worker  
And it does mean that I have family values

Just because I'm Mexican  
Why should anyone care?  
What's the difference?  
Can't you just like me because I'm me?  
I think so!!!

—Gerardo Guerra, 18, Colorado.

## Bahá'í

I'm Andrea and I am a Bahá'í. the Bahá'í faith is a religion that originally came from Iran. On Sunday, my family and I go to Day Star. Day Star is kind of like church only we learn about the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh instead of Christ. I enjoy going to Day Star. We have Day Star at a middle school that we rent. But soon, we will have a building of our own!

Every 19 days is a new Bahá'í month. At the beginning of each month my family and I go to feast, a gathering with other Bahá'ís usually held in someone's house. At feast we say prayers and then the parents talk about things while we play. Finally, we get to have a real feast! Yummy!

—Andrea Laura Mandt, 9, Washington.



## Cultural Collage

### I Wonder Why...

I wonder why bears are brown,  
I wonder why kings wear a crown.

I wonder why red is danger,  
I wonder why green is nature.

I wonder why the world is unfair,  
I wonder why there's sorrow everywhere.

I wonder why there's so much war in the world,  
I wonder why peace cannot take hold.

PERHAPS the world's problems will never end,  
But the fate of the world is in our hands.

—Maya Gouu, 8, New York. Maya is a Buddhist Chinese-American. At home she speaks English, but also knows some Spanish, Indonesian and Chinese.

### Being Panamanian

Being Panamanian means a lot to me  
Because my culture is beautiful and so is my country  
We have a national dance called Tipico when we wear intricate clothing  
With the pollera dresses covering everything and the shoulders showing  
We have an annual February festival  
Where people come to dance and this is called Carnival  
People come from all over to see the Panama canal  
A lot of people would agree that Panama has got style.

Panama has a lot of jewelry and gold  
The people there are beautiful, kind and bold  
Our famous dish is tamales and souse  
Once you taste it, you'll always want the taste in your mouth.  
Panama has people from different countries so we're like a mixing pot  
The people are so embraced in the culture they're tied in a knot  
As the music hits your soul your body sways from left to right  
You will end up dancing to the morning light  
I love my country and my country loves me  
Because we are all one and display unity.

—Yani Brown, Panamanian-American, grade 10, New York.

Let's Meet:

## Hazel Concepcion



Do you love art? Do you love to draw? Do you believe you can do it? Then go for it!

I was a young girl growing up in Manila, Philippines, when I developed a love for art. It became my favorite subject as soon as I started attending school. Crafts, sketching, painting—you name it, I

wanted to do them all! I grew fond of colored pencils and watercolors.

I used to think that I had to go someplace far like Italy to get my inspiration, but really, wherever you are there is something that can inspire you. My favorite subjects to draw are people, children, Philippine and Asian culture, nature and my faith. I hold these very dear to my heart.

One of the obstacles that got in my way when I started to draw was the fear that other people might think my work is ugly. I would draw a lot, but showing it to people was a different story. I'd always end up apologizing for how it looked or that I should have done it differently. But you know what? As I grew up, I realized that the confidence you have in your skill greatly affects the results of your work. The more you worry about what other people might think, the more you tend to get dissatisfied with what

you are doing, and your work becomes a “half-baked” art. It really takes the fun out of everything! To overcome this, I joined clubs, entered contests, read picture books, just so I could exercise my artistic side. I knew for sure that making art would stay with me wherever I went.

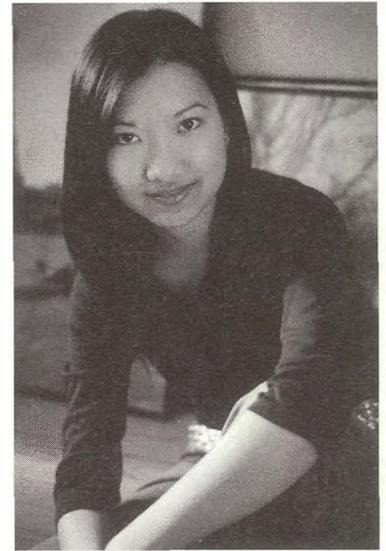


Photo: © 2006 Wendy G. Johnson

I was privileged enough to study for a Bachelor's degree in visual communications. There, I realized that being an artist is not only about confidence, but also humility. Learn how to take each criticism as your stepping stone for improvement. I remember how some students were so upset when a professor made not-so-flattering comments. These are not meant to destroy your spirit; they are meant as an opportunity to sharpen your skills.

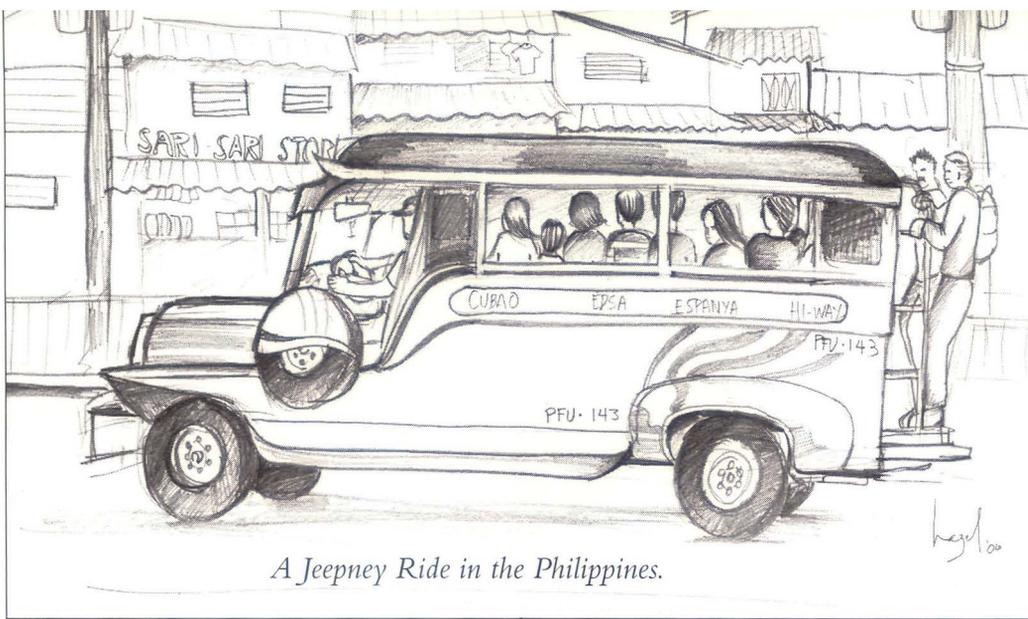
Every artist has a turning point in his or her career: I was teaching in a summer art workshop for children when I decided to move to New York. There was a lot of adjusting to be done on my part. The weather was one thing, especially in wintertime. Another was how fast-paced life is. Everybody always seemed to be in a hurry. However, I didn't have a problem being an artist of multicultural origin; it is a melting pot with hundreds of cultural influences.

I really did not know what was in store for me, but I knew it was an opportunity I dared not pass up. New York is an exciting place for someone on a journey to find his or her “path.”

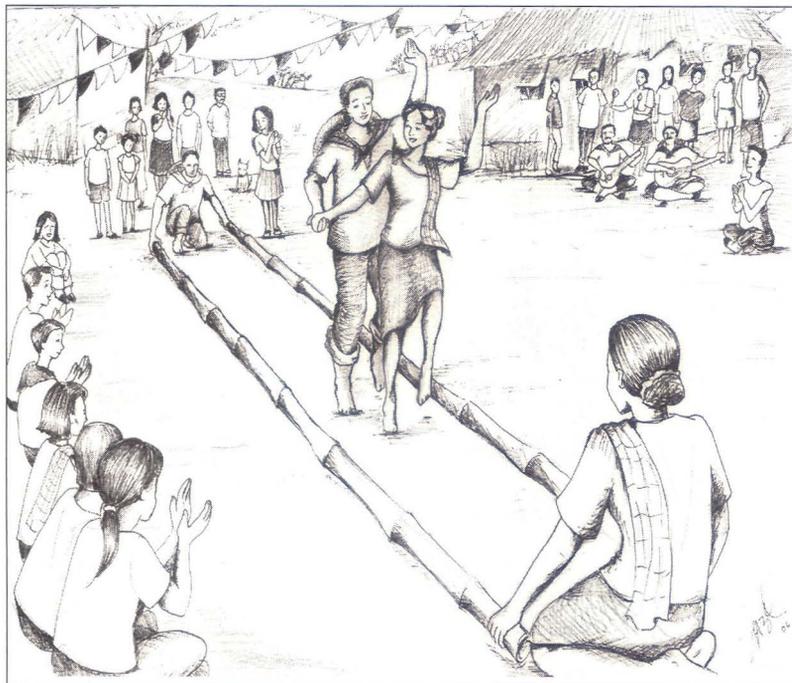
In the beginning, I worked with jewelry production in the Diamond District. It was a great learning experience! I learned a lot about working with people and communicating in a professional manner. I also did freelance design work when I could. Since I was starting out on new ground, I did a lot of projects for low fees. I wanted to build up my portfolio.

—Art & text by Hazel Concepcion, New York.  
*An open air market in the Philippines.*



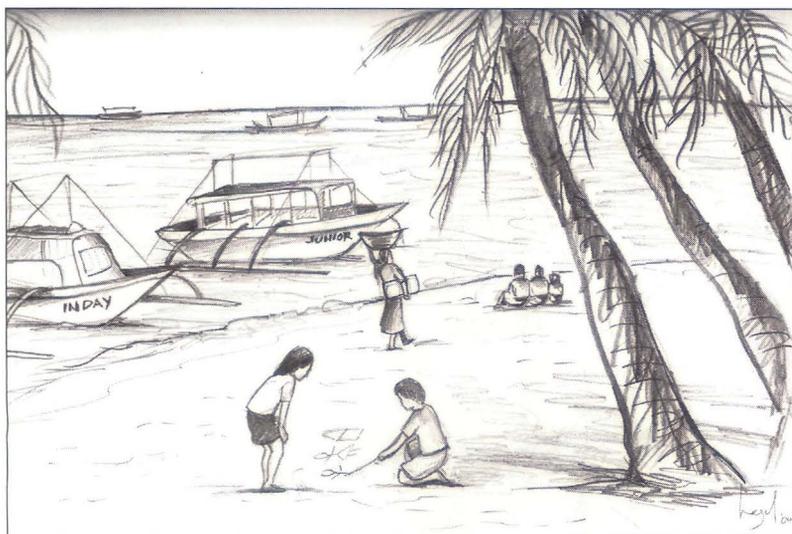


*A Jeepney Ride in the Philippines.*



**Mano Po:** In the Philippines, to show respect for our elders, we greet them by taking their hand and touching it with our forehead, while saying *Mano Po*. This symbolizes their blessings as we come in or take their leave.

**Tinikling** (Bamboo dance) originated in the Visayan Islands of the Philippines. It is like rope jumping, but instead of a spinning rope, two bamboo poles are hit against raised blocks on the floor and then together. Two dancers operate each end of the poles, and one or more dancers move in and out of the poles. Dancers try to imitate the tinkling bird's graceful moves as they walk between grass stems, run over tree branches, or dodge bamboo traps set by rice farmers.

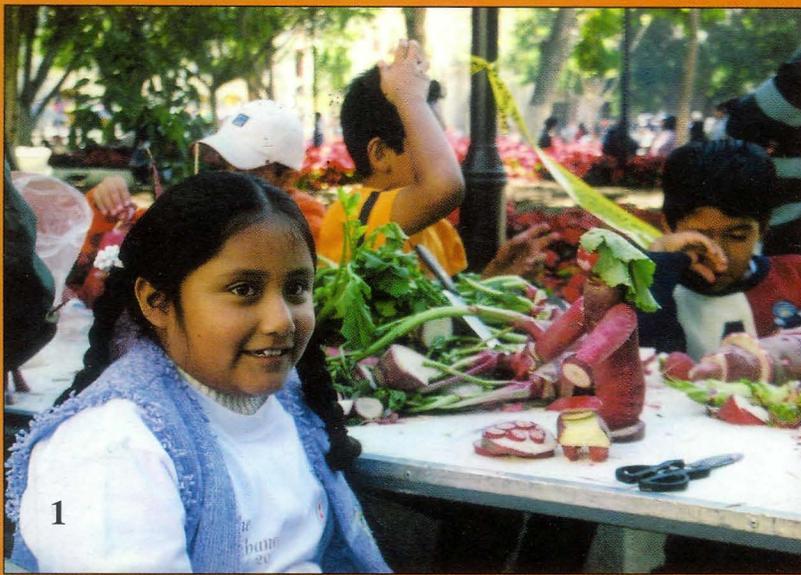


*Children at a beach in a rural area of the Philippines.*

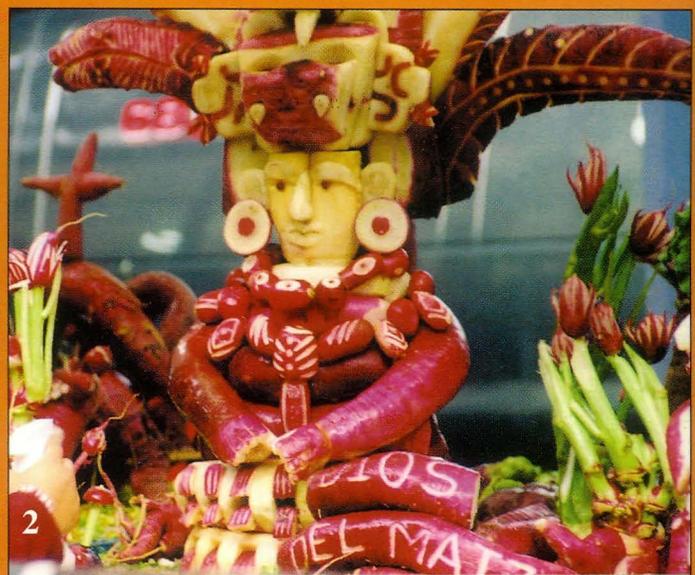


**Banga** (Clay pot dance): Igorot maidens display their grace, agility, stamina and strength as they go about their daily task of fetching water and balancing the *banga*, clay pots full of water, on their heads.

Art by Hazel Concepcion, New York. For more information about the Philippines, visit: [seasite.niu.edu/TAGALOG](http://seasite.niu.edu/TAGALOG).



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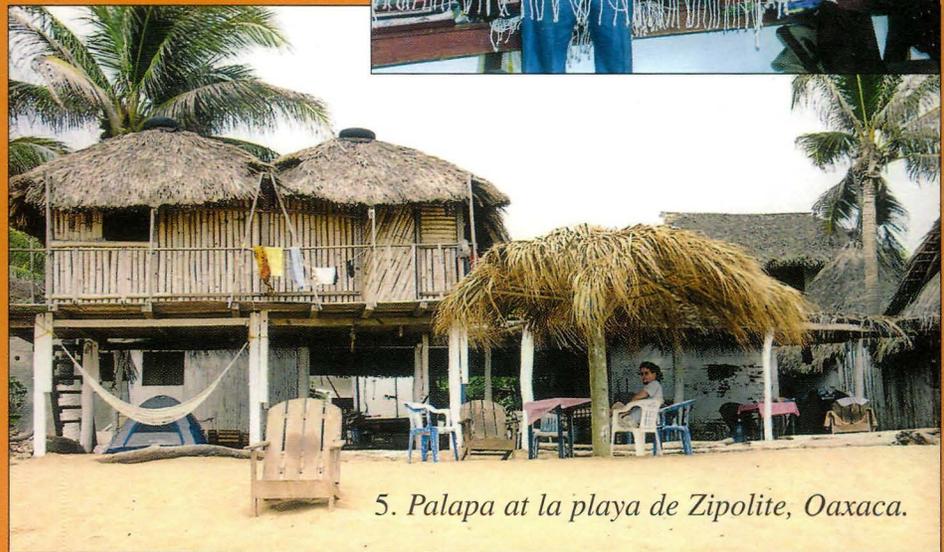


3

1. Children carving radishes in the Zócalo, Oaxaca City.
2. Radish carvings for "Noche de Rábanos."
3. Aztec Dancers.
4. Rug seller in an open air market.



4



5. Palapa at la playa de Zipolite, Oaxaca.

**Let's Go to Mexico!**  
 —Michelle Lieberman, California.

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