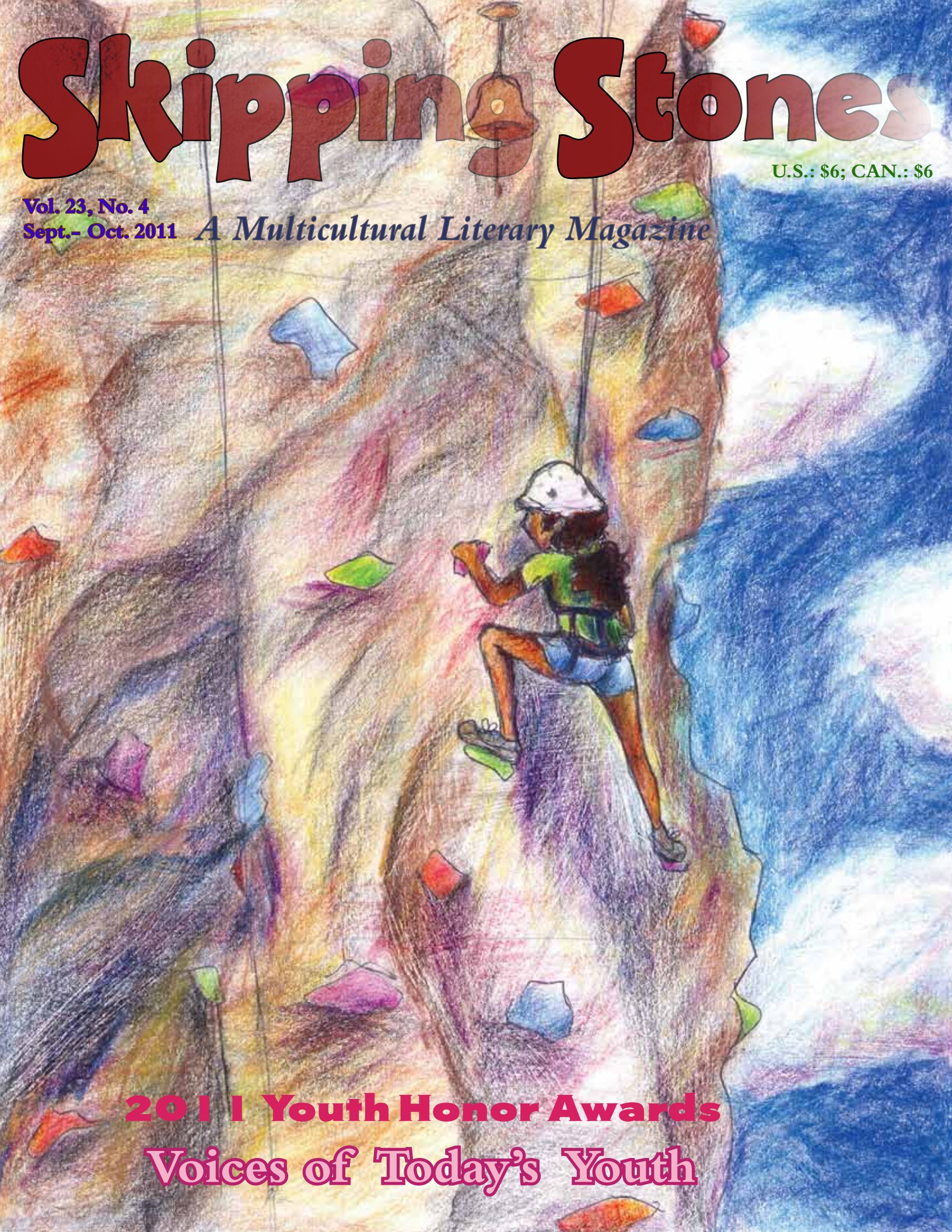


Skipping Stones



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Vol. 23, No. 4

Sept.- Oct. 2011 *A Multicultural Literary Magazine*

2011 Youth Honor Awards
Voices of Today's Youth



Visiting Hiroshima Peace Park

Lilia painted this self-portrait at the Peace Dome after her family's trip to Hiroshima. It received first place at a prefecture-wide competition last summer. Lilia has cerebral palsy and is hearing-impaired.



平和へのねがい

第二次世界大戦の終りごろ、1945年8月午前8時ちか広島に原爆がおとされました。原子爆弾で20数万人の人々が死にました。かみの毛がぬけたりやけどして血まみれになってたくさんのひとびとがくるしみしました。二度あってはいけないことです。平和をいのります。

鎌田リリア 11歳、日本

Heiwa no Onegai

Dai ni ji sekai taissen no owari goro, 1945 nen 8 gatsu 6 nichi gozen 8 ji chika Hiroshima ni genbaku ga otosaremshita. Genbakudan de 20 man nin no hitobito ga shinimashita. Kami no ke ga nuketari yakedo shite chi mamire ni natte takusan no hitobito ga kurushimashita. Ni kai atte wa ikenai koto desu. Heiwa wo inorimasu.

—Kamata Lilia, 11 sai, Nippon.

I Pray for Peace

Around the end of World War II, on August 6, 1945, at about 8 A.M., an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Some 200,000 people were killed by the bomb. Some people's hair fell out, some were burned and were bleeding. Many people suffered. This must not happen again. I pray for peace.

—Lilia Kamata, age 11, Japan.



“Shadow” by Maya Hunter, 8, Colorado.

“If you only look at the shadow, the fly looks so different than if you look at the real fly... And when you think of sunflowers, you don't think that they start as not sunflowers.”

See the **Youth Awards** section on pages 24-36.



“A Secret” by Maya Hunter, 8, Colorado. Also see page 30.

Skipping Stones

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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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I can still remember when I began to grasp the world's problems. War and poverty and climate change and genocide and all of it seemed to appear at once, landing with crushing weight upon my thin shoulders. By the fifth grade, I was already going through a mid-life crisis. I lost faith

in humanity; I doubted our empathy, our intelligence, and our problem-solving skills, for if we were capable of all three how could this still be happening? My epiphany regarding the state of our planet brought up three main issues for me: firstly, I was scared by the effect such problems would have on my immediate future. Massive pictures of melting ice caps and the depleting ozone implied a rather apocalyptic fate for humankind, and I spent many nights awake, thinking about surviving in a barren, infertile, sweltering, flooded world. Secondly, I was appalled that people were selfish and deluded enough to put their own personal luxuries and comforts before the rest of the world. And thirdly, I was terrified by the realization that my parents would neither fully experience, nor be able to fix, any of these problems—the burden was mine.

Since the initial shock of my young discovery, I have regained some hope and determination. I still fear for the state of our world, but I have begun to understand how we can start to reverse our destructive path.

I feel that one of our biggest barriers in remedying climate change is our attitude. We are not in a war with the earth—that implies that the earth can fight back. Rather, we are straining against each other, battling for our own private, greedy dreams, and the earth is becoming a casualty in the process. We are the cause, and therefore we are the solution. We are fully capable of healing the world, but it requires a degree of selflessness and awareness. Small, daily acts of goodness are important, and I fully support recycling, composting, turning off lights, turning off water—the little deeds that we gladly inconvenience ourselves with because we want to do our part. We should not belittle those

daily efforts, but we cannot use them as an excuse to avoid the big stuff. To truly make a difference, we have to change our entire mentality about our relationships to each other and to the earth. If we can shift our paradigm from one of ownership and consumption, to one of respect and moderation, then we can begin to act graciously like the guests we should be. While every living generation must attempt this emotional and mental transition, the youth have to take the lead.

I was horrified by the prospect of being handed a broken and chaotic planet. But since then I have realized that my adolescence is an advantage. The youth have always been the catalysts—the rebellious ones, the free thinkers, the hot-blooded fighters, who love and feel with unparalleled passion. And my generation is equipped with more resources, knowledge, support, and need than any one before it. We are the generation of technology and communication; we can start revolutions across the planet merely by signing into our Facebook accounts. We can have global discussions and global debates and shoot ideas from continent to continent by clicking a button. The world is coming into a new era; there is an opportunity here for new ideals, new institutions, and new ways of approaching old problems. We have reached a point of crisis and passive support is just not good enough anymore. So youth of today: write, read, debate, log on, plug in, charge up, and change the world.

—Selina Fillinger, 17, student intern, Oregon.

From the Editor

• *Beginning with this issue, we're expanding our focus on ecological and energy issues. We invite you to share your thoughts and ideas on various aspects of: energy conservation and efficiency, solar and renewable energy resources, recycling and reusing, watershed protection, nature awareness and ecological issues such as climate change (and their impact). What can our urban societies do to prepare for an uncertain future? The Guest Editorial above is an introduction to the topic!*

Send your submissions (under 1,000 words) to: editor@skippingstones.org.

• *In our last issue, byline for the poem, Waiting, on page 15 should have read: Zach Robertson, 10, grade 5, Colorado. Sorry, Zach, we goofed!*

Peace Starts With Us

“Peace is a state that can be attained by the simplest actions when done with the best intentions.” This is my philosophy in life. I invite every human being to help transform the world into a harmonious place by embracing peaceful behavior through simple, uncomplicated actions. World organizations, leaders and politicians could spend millions of dollars on numerous efforts to achieve peace; however, real peace can be achieved easily by just believing that it is possible. The most important action to start building a culture of peace is to start believing that we can achieve peace together!

I am 11 years old, and I love to spread the culture of peace everywhere I go. I started building a website dedicated to bringing world peace four years ago to show how simple it is to achieve peace. We can recognize human values and respect and make little actions that can contribute toward peace. Many people I meet ask me, “What is the recipe to reach peace?” I tell them:

It is **you** and **I**! I also add that there are hundreds of things that can be done. For instance: be friendly and helpful to people in need; expand a community peace plan; take part in a program that works to eliminate child abuse or promotes activities for child safety; organize a peace meeting and invite the community; simply talk about peace any chance you get. It is a great conversation topic.

Contribute to stopping violence and wars in the world. For so many people this is a difficult concept because they believe ending violence and wars is impossible. However, to reach big goals, you need to start with small steps. That’s why small, good actions can easily help in eliminating violence. Believe that peace starts in the heart and inspire others to feel motivated to work for peace. Don’t wait for others to do it; it is up to you to realize that peace starts with you. Do it now, do it today, make a difference in another’s life, make a difference in your class, at home, at work, and in your community.

Do something as simple as giving a smile to someone instead of a grumpy face. Laugh with others instead of laughing at them. Recognize what makes you upset and work to change that upset reaction into a positive action. Tell others that peace starts inside each one of us. I invite you to visit my website and send me a message about peace.

—Mia Bella Frothingham, grade 6,
Hispanic and European heritage, Florida.
Visit: www.mypeaceplanet.com.



Editor's Mailbag

Readers & Reviewers Respond

I thought that the theme of “**No Child Left Inside this Summer**” was an interesting choice. In reading the Editor’s article, he really showed me how many fun and new things you can do during the summer. For example, I live in Miami, Florida, and it gets very hot here, as it does in many other places. Because of the heat, it seems as though we have nothing to do, but you’ve given me and many others a lot of fun ideas for entertainment.

—Sarah Ann Busse, 10, student reviewer, Florida.

Nana Jean was very insightful. Recognizing your gift(s) is important. My mom, ever since I can remember, always had discussions on what our gifts are. A person (or family) that gets to know who they are and talks about their interests is more likely to live out their gift(s). Also, **Dear Hanna** always has good advice. Sometimes when kids have too much time on their hands, it is hard for them to decide what to do with all that time. But when a child discovers what interests them, planning their time is easier.

—Crystal Carpenter, student reviewer, Mass.

The stories and poems were extremely moving and demonstrated the other side to life—one that less fortunate kids experience. This is by far one of my favorite issues. It held my attention, especially, “*The Letter from Russia*” and “*Haley’s Story*.”

—Kimberly Shen, 17, student reviewer, N.Y.

We really appreciate your support of Maya’s journey. You published her first poem at the age of 8. Now, she is going into 10th grade. Your magazine has definitely given her a good start in writing. She has won many contests and been published in magazines & anthologies. If children practice reading and writing, it definitely helps them towards their future, especially in schooling. Your magazine has given Maya a good opportunity to grow and turned her into a great young writer!

—Pin Gouw, Asian American parent, N.Carolina

Memory

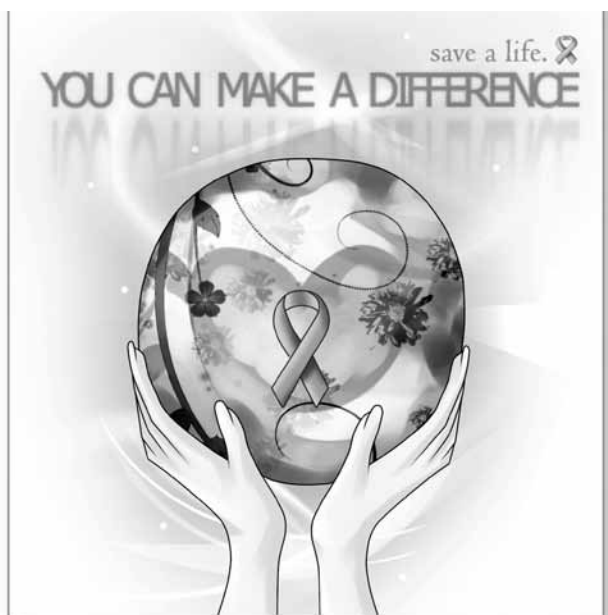
Early September
I still remember
That day
Day of shame
When I was walking out
Out of my house
And I didn't know
That it was my
Last time seeing
That place
For another
Couple of years
But surroundings
Seem new
What was going on
With me
Because I still
Remember that day
Trees whispering something
And falling leaves waving
Bye, Bye

—Pavel Bahmatov, 19, Oregon. Pavel grew up in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. He writes, "I have seen many ghettos and people who need help. I write from my heart, to get my voice out there. I communicate with a funny, positive, sometimes sad, but valuable message."

Child Mistreatment

Child abuse does not amuse.
What does it give to you?
Does it make you feel good inside
when you hurt them?
It may make you feel good,
but do you think you should?
Do you know what damage you are causing?
You leave kids in pain.
They would rather live with a pack of wolves
than with you.
Child abuse is like an animal that nobody cares for.
You give them pain.
You will never be able to explain,
if you ever are able to stop.
Why do you do that?
Child abuse hurts them.
Please Stop.
—Joe Charland, 13, Pennsylvania.

What's On Your Mind?



October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Computer generated art by Maya Gouw, gr. 10, N.C.

Send your Submissions to:
editor@SkippingStones.org

Long summer nights fill
The ache in my broken heart;
Sand soothes my poor soul.

Seasons change bringing
A new life for all around,
Leaving behind pains.

The leaves change colors;
Wind blowing through the branches
Crisp air fills the land.

With fall comes fashion,
Runways filled with new designs
Style lasts for good.

Bare trees fill the path
To the middle of nowhere
Blissfully living.
—Kendall Marcus, gr. 11, New Jersey.

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



Seven Billion and Still Counting

Right now, as you're reading this, over seven billion people call the earth home. This number keeps rising even as our planet continues to experience unsustainable resource consumption and a changing climate. On July 11th, World Population Day (www.unfpa.org), people were asked to think about how rapidly increasing global population affects the planet's health.

Every Rooftop Matters

Imagine a future where almost all rooftops feature solar panels. Many new buildings in the U.S. and elsewhere have solar panels and/or solar hot water heaters integrated into their designs. Parking lots and garages in some cities have also started including solar panels to shade customers while generating electricity. If your family is interested in going solar, you might check with your local utility company for their incentives.

The Sierra Club started a pilot program in California to spread affordable solar energy. They feel encouraging people to use solar energy is an important step toward establishing a healthier environment.

- Rooftop solar panels are as green as it gets. Every Kwh of solar energy generated replaces electricity that might otherwise come from burning coal. Solar power does not contribute to air pollutants that can lead to health complications such as asthma like coal does.
- Solar power is now more affordable. The materials costs for solar rooftop installations have fallen dramatically, and federal and state tax incentives for installing solar panels can further bring down the cost of systems.
- Solar-leasing programs, where one rents or purchases power from a system for 10-20 years, have made it possible for homeowners to put solar panels on their roofs for very little money while saving on their utility bills. This way you get all the environmental benefits along with a fixed electric rate that will protect you against future soaring energy costs.
- Rooftop solar also helps the economy by providing work for people who design and install the systems. A stronger economy based on good, green jobs helps all.
- Solar power makes it possible to *green* our personal transportation by charging an electric vehicle or plug-in hybrid at home. It offers an ecological energy solution that displaces both coal and oil.

(Source: Sierra Club)

Rivers, Our Lifelines Are Under Serious Threat

Nearly 80% of the world's rivers are severely affected by human societies. Almost 5 billion people depend on rivers every day, and scientists warn that the survival of thousands of aquatic species is threatened.

A 2010 global study, published in the journal *Nature*, examined the effects of many types of human interventions—from dams and reservoirs, to irrigation, the introduction of non-native fish, and pollution—on rivers. It painted a devastating picture of a world with rivers in serious decline.

Professor Peter McIntyre, one of the authors of the study, found that some of the greatest threats are to rivers in the U.S. and Europe. Americans tend to think water pollution problems are under control, when in fact we still face enormous challenges. Aquatic species in the Southeastern states, including those along the Mississippi river, are in serious danger.

Professor Charles Vörösmarty, the lead author and an expert on global water, says the negative impact on wildlife in developed countries results from river systems that have been heavily altered by humans: "For a long time Europeans have altered their landscapes, including the removal of 90% of wetlands and floodplains, which are crucial parts of river ecosystems."

The world's great rivers—the Yangtze, the Nile and the Ganges—are losing their biodiversity and water security, the study shows. Despite their size, more than 30 of the 47 largest rivers showed at least moderate threats to water security. Even the relatively pristine Amazon has experienced human impact in densely populated areas, such as Peru. The human impact then passes downstream into the remote forested areas of the river. Globally, between 10,000 and 20,000 aquatic wildlife species are at risk or face extinction because of the degradation of global rivers. The least affected rivers are those furthest from populated areas, such as remote parts of the tropics, Siberia and polar regions.

The UK's Environment Agency admitted last year that only five of 6,114 rivers in England and Wales are considered pristine and 75% are so badly polluted that they are likely to fail new European quality standards.

We're spending trillions of US dollars to treat the symptoms, rather than the causes, of a problem we created. We must address the root causes of the degradation of our rivers.

(Source: Guardian News and Media)

The Best Game

Sara ran to the car, butterflies tickling her stomach. “I’m going to third grade, and I get to see all my friends from last year,” she sang as Mother drove down the street. Mother parked the car and they walked toward the school.

When they got to the door, Sara rushed in and looked around. She saw a new boy in a wheelchair. His neck fell to one side; his head was tilted back and his mouth twisted. His arms jerked back and forth. She hurried back to her mother.

“I want to go home. I don’t know that boy,” she whispered.

“No, Sara. Stay here. You’ll get to meet him and we’ll talk later.” Mother patted her on the shoulder.

Sara’s eyes teared. She wandered over to a table, keeping her eyes on the boy in the wheelchair. His arms kept swinging like a windmill. Was he trying to hit someone? Why didn’t he sit still?

The teacher asked the children to sit at the tables in the back of the room. She wheeled the boy in the wheelchair to one of the tables. Sara didn’t sit there.

The children wore name tags and each was supposed to say his or her name.

When it was the turn of the boy in the wheelchair, he made strange sounds.

“Thank you, Ricky,” said the teacher.

Sara watched. Was he mean? If he got too close, would he hit her? Could she *catch* whatever was wrong with him? Why did he come to her school, anyway?

When Mother came in, Sara grabbed her hand and rushed out. She got in the car, blinking back tears.

“Was it a good day?”

“No. I don’t want to go back. I don’t know that boy. Why is he in my class?” Tears rolled down Sara’s cheeks.

Her mother hugged her. “You’ll be fine, honey. You’ll get to know him. Maybe he needs a friend. You could be that friend.”

The next morning, as Sara entered her classroom, she didn’t see Ricky.

The teacher asked the children to sit down. “Ricky will be late today. He’s going to see a therapist who will help him. Any questions?”

A boy asked why Ricky had to be in a wheelchair. Someone else asked why his arms keep moving around.

The teacher explained that Ricky had trouble controlling his arms and legs.

“Can we catch it, like chicken pox?” Sara asked.

“No, Ricky was born this way. There was an injury to his brain.”

“Why can’t he talk right?”

“Because the injury hurt the muscles he uses for talking, too,” the teacher explained.

“If we want to talk or play with him, how can we?”

“He understands what you say. If you can’t understand him, ask him to repeat himself. Don’t pretend to understand. That might make him feel bad. I think he wants to be your friend.”

The children were listening to a story when Ricky came in. Sara watched as he listened. When the teacher read a funny part, Ricky’s head jerked back and he made a sound.

Sara said, “Look! I can tell Ricky likes the story.”

Later the children went to the playground. Sara called out to Ricky, “Hey, do you want to play ball? We’re just practicing. No teams today.”

Ricky’s head jerked back and he nodded, “Yes.”

The teacher helped Ricky catch the ball.

Others came to play, too.

Then it was Ricky’s turn. He clutched the ball until the teacher helped him throw it.

Everyone cheered as Sara ran to catch it.

At the end of the day, Mother came to meet Sara.

Sara told her about playing ball with Ricky and how the teacher helped him throw the ball.

Mother smiled. “It sounds like it was the best game. Everyone got to play.”

Discussion Guide

- *Have you ever seen someone in a wheelchair?*
 - *Did you wonder how it would feel to ride in it?*
 - *Would you try it, if you had the chance?*
 - *How did the children help Ricky?*
 - *Pretend you are older now. If your gym teacher asked someone to help a special needs student, would you volunteer?*
- Diane D. French, retired teacher & consultant, Pennsylvania.



Something in Common: *The Ability to Think Freely*

Stacy Poulos is a photographer. Her favorite subjects include children, animals and nature. When she was growing up, she had a different style of learning known as dyslexia. Little was known about the challenges of dyslexia at the time and without the right kind of help, she found herself unable to learn at the same pace as her classmates. To make matters worse, some people called her names. She often felt embarrassed and ashamed of not being “normal.”

While in the seventh grade, Stacy learned that well-known scientist and mathematician Albert Einstein was also dyslexic, though widely considered a genius. After his death, *Time Magazine* named him the most important person of the 20th Century.

The day Stacy learned that Albert Einstein struggled in school just as she did, she stopped feeling ashamed. Knowing she had something in common with an important person, she realized that she had the potential to do great things with her own life.

Dyslexia makes it hard for children to learn to read, write, spell and do math. Persons with dyslexia are visual people, meaning that they think in pictures, not in letters and numbers. They may mentally reverse the letters, so they may read “left” as “felt.” They also have difficulty pronouncing words, so spaghetti could become busgetti. They often see symbols upside down, so a “u” becomes an “n” and a “6” becomes a “9.”

Now that teachers are more aware of the signs of dyslexia than they used to be, a child as young as four can be diagnosed. Once a teacher knows which style of learning works best for a child, a world of possibilities opens up. Dyslexia can be seen in a positive light. As

Stacy defines it, “Dyslexia is the ability to think freely and without boundaries.”

Thomas Edison was a brilliant scientist and inventor despite his dyslexia. He patented 1,093 inventions, among them the light bulb and the phonograph. He is famous for having said, “Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.” In other words, being motivated, working hard, and never giving up are some of the most important traits in life.

Another famous person with dyslexia was Walt Disney, who is often considered the most successful person in the modern entertainment industry. He began his career as a cartoonist, inventing characters like Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. He was able to use his imagination to create fantasy worlds for millions of people to enjoy, because he thought in pictures instead of words.

How many people from the list below have you heard of? When you think of their accomplishments, is it difficult to imagine them as children struggling with dyslexia or similar learning styles? The challenges they faced may have slowed them down at first, but it didn’t stop them from reaching their goals.

Artists: Leonardo da Vinci, Pablo Picasso

Athletes: Muhammad Ali, Bruce Jenner

Politicians: Winston Churchill, George Washington

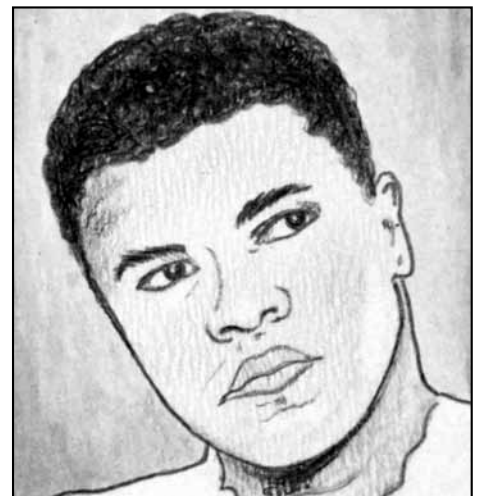
Entertainers: Whoopi Goldberg, Jay Leno

Entrepreneurs: Richard Branson, Henry Ford

What do these brilliant people have in common?

—Janet Reimche, animal lover and advocate, California.

Walt Disney, Whoopi Goldberg & Muhammad Ali (Art by Paula)



Nana Jean *On Love*

“The difference between an obstacle and a stepping stone is how high you lift your feet.”

Love has many forms. In relationships, “unconditional love” allows each person to enjoy and appreciate others based on their very being, not their behavior. Teachers call this giving students “permanent value.”

How has love held our family together? While faith is part of this bond, the love among members of our family has been expressed in unique ways. In 1964, my husband wrote:

*“If I could live on grassy slopes,
And see the world through pines,
I’d culminate my fondest hopes,
And build a home yours and mine.”*

While we have built a physical presence, our efforts for a “family together means home,” are more important.

When President Kennedy was shot in 1963, we were both attending the University of California at Berkeley. As the news swept the campus, many students found their way to the student union to listen to the broadcasts. In the midst of floor-to-floor solemn people, one man rested his head on a woman’s torso. An art student at the time, I thought them an interesting picture and began to draw to pass the time and take my mind off the tragedy.

Some people may say of their beloved, “I loved you before I knew you.” I can say to Rob, “I drew you before I knew you.” Within days, through a dorm mate—the woman in the drawing—I met Rob (who soon became *my* Robbie).

I was smitten by Rob’s poetry, which sometimes came daily. We hiked and enjoyed motorcycle rides around the Bay. After a few months I accepted his proposal that we be married the following June.

When we think of our early romantic days, one scene stands out. We were newlyweds, traveling to Salt Lake City to meet my father and his wife, before continuing by car to the East Coast for the rest of our honeymoon.

On the bus trip, we noticed a woman walking the aisles and talking to the other passengers. As she came even with us, I heard her say, “...and they even have the nerve to be wearing rings.” We found out later that there was still a law on the books in Utah against interracial marriages.

We decided it was safest to wait in a dark movie theater until it was time to meet my parents. When we went to the hotel, we were told there was no record of a room reserved for us by my father. We then asked for my parents, who should have arrived. The clerk could not find their name on the register either.

We slowly walked out of the hotel with little money and no idea of how to contact my father in this hostile environment. On our way out, we glanced into the hotel dining room and saw my parents, eating and waiting for us.

My father went to the desk and insisted that we be given a room. He and his wife had had no problem registering because they were both black. During our courtship and our marriage, this is the most blatant discrimination we have faced.

As a couple we like to travel, ski and spend time with our grandchildren. We’re not sure, but we think part of the glue for our love is our determination to answer the naysayers to our marriage who inevitably said, “This marriage may work for you, but what about the children?”

When they were teenagers, one of our sons said, “If I tried to draw a picture of how much the two of you love each other, it would take a lot more hearts than what is shown on this card...I am very grateful to both of you for being together and for a solid family.”

Our other son added, “...What is most important for me now is knowing wherever I am I can always come home or call home and find two loving and supporting parents. That number, two, is so important to me; people have told me they almost can’t believe what a relationship the two of you have, and I realize how fortunate I really am.”

These sons are in their 30s now, with children of their own. In December 2010, during a family visit, we were all around the dinner table when a blood clot entered Robbie’s brain, causing a stroke that did not allow him to talk coherently. We had him at the hospital emergency room within eight minutes. Thankfully, he was given medication that relieved the blood clot, restoring his ability to talk.

Before Robbie was given the medication, he was asked to give his name, age, and tell where he was. He could not do it. Then the doctor pointed to each of our sons and asked him to speak their names. He could not do it. Finally, the doctor pointed to me, his wife of 45 years. Robbie looked into my eyes, and I could see him trying to get some words out. He could not say my name. A couple of words did come though: “my love.” The emergency room crew collectively exhaled, and one son started crying.

This poem came from Robbie on a Valentine’s Day: *“The Love we’ve shared since sixty-three
Has grown beyond just you and me.
Our three beige babes have left the nest
And the years ahead may be the best.”*



My sister

I have this little sister,
She's as cute as can be.
She loves to sing and dance,
And play hide and seek with me.
When I have my friends around,
She likes to tag along.
We always try to include her,
To not, would just be wrong.

Sometimes I feel bad for her.
She seems different from the rest.
But she always tries her hardest,
So to me, she is the best.

My sister was born with Down's Syndrome,
But it doesn't get me down.
As long as I have her in my life,
I'm the luckiest kid in town.

—Cailyn Peccioli, 11, Illinois. Photo: Cailyn & Cathrine.



My sister

My sister can't speak or move her legs, but she can say "I love you" very well, and she's good at baseball. One day we played baseball, and she hit and... "smack!" The ball hit my head. And I thought, "She has talent."

My sister eats well, so my dad and mom are happy all the time. When we watch a movie together she becomes wild. When there is a funny part, she laughs, and if there is a scary part, she becomes scared. I think my sister could be a big star in Hollywood because of her emotions.

My sister is very cute and funny, so I don't care that she has a disability. I love my sister.

—Jio Kamata, 12, Japan. English is Jio's second language.
See page 2 for an art piece by Jio's twin sister, Lilia.

Making Her

I praise my Shadow for dancing
around my sister and making her glow
like last night's moon.

—Ashley Esquivel, African-American, Michigan.

The FIFA World Cup

The FIFA World Cup is much more than just
Vuvezuelas.

My family is the World Cup,
Fun, suspenseful and rewarding.

My father is the referee,
In charge and always aware.

My mother is the stadium,
From Soccer City to Nou Camp.

She's supportive and welcoming to all fans and players.

My younger brother is one of the playing teams,
Seeking motivation from the crowd.

And I am the crowd,

Blowing their noisy Vuvezuelas,

And encouraging my younger brother to be the best he can be.

—Khaled Aziz, 12, Pennsylvania.

Papa Do You Love Me More Than the Stars?

"Papa do you love me more than the stars?"

"Yes, I love you more than the shining stars," he answered.

I asked again, "Papa, do you love me more than the stars?"

"I love you more than the stars."

"Do you really?" I asked.

"Yes, I do," Papa replied.

"But maybe a star will try to fight me," I said.

"Then I will defend you," Papa answered.

"What if the stars drink all the water?" I asked.

"I will make them spit all the water out."

"And what if they eat all the food?"

"I will teach you how
to hunt so you will always
have food."

"You do love me
more than the stars," I said.

And we lived happily
ever after.

—Kiahra Boynes, 4th grade,
St. John, U. S. Virgin Islands.



Once upon a time, a young man named Ma Liang lived in a small village in China. Ma was a hard worker, but did not make much money. Every day, he helped a rich man named Deng Ding tend his cattle in exchange for a small amount of money which was barely enough to feed his family.

Ma often got bored while watching over the cows. To entertain himself, he would take out his paper and draw beautiful pictures of the mountains, the valleys, and the country. With his amazing art, Ma could cope with having a boring job.

One day, after a long and hard day of work, Ma walked home and went straight to his bed. He immediately fell asleep and had a vivid dream.

In Ma's dream, an old man walked toward him as he watched the cattle. He looked familiar, but Ma could not recognize him. The old man handed Ma an old paintbrush and told him, "This is a magic paintbrush. Although it looks old, it can bring whatever you draw to life! I have seen your hard work and your kind heart, so I want you to use this to help your poor neighbors." Surprised, Ma took the paintbrush from the wise old man. The old man faded away, and Ma woke up startled.

Unsure of what to believe, Ma looked around. On top of his desk, Ma found the same paintbrush the old man had given him in the dream.

From that day on, Ma used the paintbrush whenever people needed help. When he saw that the poor farmers had no water for their fields, he painted a river, and it came to life. The people could now bring water from the river to the field, saving them time and energy.

When Ma saw that it was difficult for people to till the hard land, he drew a cow for them. Using that cow, the poor people did not have to exhaust themselves to till the soil. True to his promise, Ma used his magic paintbrush to help his neighbors.

Soon, many people in his village found out about the magic paintbrush. When Deng Ding heard about the magic paintbrush that turned everything into life,

Deng became very curious. Deng was a greedy man, and he wanted to steal the paintbrush. Deng knew that he could make more money by using the paintbrush's power, so he sent his servants to Ma's home and arrested him. After locking Ma up, Deng went to his house and stole the paintbrush.

Then, Deng invited many of his closest friends to come to his home. He wanted to flaunt the power of the paintbrush before them. After standing up in front of the curious crowd, Deng began painting pictures. First, he drew a picture of a dog; however, it did not come to life. Surprised, Deng drew a bird, but again, the picture did not come to life. Angry and a little embarrassed, Deng sent his servants to get Ma and force him to draw with the magical paintbrush.



When the servants came back, they threw Ma in front of Deng. Deng said to him, "I know about the magic of your paintbrush. I have found out that only you can use its powers. If you draw some pictures for me and turn them to life, I will set you free."

Having worked for Deng for many years, Ma knew that he was a selfish man. He did not want to help Deng until he came up with an idea. He said to Deng, "I can help you, but you must keep your part of the deal to set me free. Now, tell me what you want me to draw."

When Ma said this, Deng became excited and said, "I want a golden mountain. I want to gather gold there and get even richer. If you do this, I promise that I will set you free!"

After Deng untied him, Ma walked outside to paint, but instead of drawing a gold mountain, he drew a sea. Deng became furious and yelled, "Why did you draw a sea? I do not want this. I want a gold mountain. Draw it now, or I will tie you up again!"

Faced with this threat, Ma drew the gold mountain in the very middle of the sea. Deng saw this and became very excited. He said, "Draw a ship quickly! I want to go there right now!" Ma quietly drew a ship. Deng jumped into the ship and called for his

friends and family to join him. Together, the greedy group sailed far away toward the island of gold.

When Ma saw that Deng's group had reached the island, he began to draw gigantic waves that destroyed the ship, leaving Deng and his friends stuck on the island with no way back. Although Ma knew they couldn't hear him, he called out, "You caused this to happen! If you had only helped us rather than forcing me to do what you wanted, I would have gladly given you some gold. Now, you must live on that island, with more gold than you could ever imagine, but with no way to spend it!"

After that, Ma returned to his home. He continued to help the people of his village whenever they needed it. When he grew old, he passed the paintbrush on to his son, who passed it to his son. Along with this heirloom, they passed down the legend of the magic paintbrush, keeping it alive and spreading it to the rest of China and beyond.

The translators and contributors of this Chinese folktale are all members of GOAL, Gathering of All Languages. The photo below shows students: Aaron Choi (of South Korea), Jehyun Park (of South Korea), Sharon Zhang (of China), Cathy An (of China) and Kyung Kim (of South Korea). Not included in the photo is Patrick Zhou (of China). They created GOAL in Georgia (USA) to translate traditional stories from many lands into English.



Dear Hanna: *My friend was in a car accident and hurt her back. She will never be able to walk. Can you suggest ways to be her friend?*

—Frieda

Dear Frieda,

Not long ago my mother sent me some boxes of old family photographs. To my delight there were additional surprises tucked into the big boxes. I found some old fashioned booklets that were bound together with red paper. In neat, orderly rows my grandmother had written hundreds of words in both her native language, German, and in English. She was teaching herself a foreign language by looking each word up in a dictionary.

At that time (more than 70 years ago!), I was in high school taking an English class and I could buy books in English for 35 cents each. When I finished reading a book, my grandmother would borrow it. She looked each word up in her little German-English dictionary and wrote everything down. It looked like this:

Ich bin... *I am*

Du bist... *You are*

She then memorized each English word. In her own way, she would thus understand the books I was reading. We were all so proud of her!

Now, meet my friend Paul! Paul, who was a Biology teacher, had gone blind from a disease. One time I took him on a boat ride. When Paul heard a bird singing he could tell me everything about it. I was amazed. He had listened to a record of bird songs and learned to identify the passing birds although he could not see any of them.

Speaking for myself, Frieda, I often have to use a wheelchair. But I feel that sometimes I am quicker than other people who are walking next to me. I move quickly, pushing with both my feet and my hands. It's fun to move between people in a crowd.

I admire my grandmother and Paul for their courage and their abilities. And I'm grateful for having them as my role models. My grandmother was hard of hearing but she pushed herself to learn a new language. Paul trusted us to keep him safe in a rowboat and he taught us how to listen and identify many different birds.

With these two role models in mind, I am sure that you can help your friend in some special way that will help her to become happier, more content and more able. Listen deeply to your friend and together you two can achieve miracles, as did Paul and my grandmother.

In Peace,

The Globe Club at Centennial High Makes a Difference

Centennial High School in Gresham, Oregon serves a diverse body of over 1800 students. Four years ago we developed a new tactic of keeping Russian-speaking students from dropping out. Drawing on my extensive experience as a teacher of English and American Studies in Russia and working at Centennial High as an E.L.L. (English Language Learners) assistant, I created the Globe Club in September 2007.

The challenges faced by Russian-speaking youth sometimes go unnoticed by local high schools, so not many of them reach out to Russian speakers. At Centennial High School, Globe Club is an extracurricular activity that includes, but is not limited to, Russian students. Our goal is to give young people an opportunity to communicate and receive support, while showing them that the world is much bigger.

Slavic students often feel isolated and lost in American society. It is difficult for their families to adapt to American culture. Many of these students came to the U.S. when they were two to four years old and speak English perfectly, while their parents' English is very poor. Being born or raised in the U.S. gives these kids the ability to freely express themselves, unlike their parents.

When these families immigrated to America, they left behind their native literature, art, music and other cultural traditions. However, they didn't care to learn more about American culture. My students had no idea about the contributions of Jack London, Walt Whitman, George Gershwin, Igor Stravinsky, Frederic Remington or Thomas Kinkade. Russian-speaking youth should be able to learn about American customs while understanding their own culture and being proud of their heritage.

It shocked me to discover that the only Russian author my Slavic students were familiar with was Alexander Pushkin. Even he was just a name to them; they had no knowledge of his works, epoch or biography. They didn't know anything about Russian Maslenitsa and Ukrainian Kupala Night, still widely celebrated in both places. The names Anton Chekhov, Olga Kobylanskaya, Mikhail Glinka, Mykhailo

Verbitsky, Isaak Levitan and Arkhip Kuindzhi were meaningless to them.

They were surprised to learn that the first person in space was the Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin and that Russian aircraft test pilot Valery Chkalov took the first non-stop flight from Moscow to Vancouver, Washington.

Here are a few other facts my Russian-speaking students found amazing:

- *Russian-American pioneer of aviation, Igor Sikorsky, was the first person to achieve large-scale helicopter production. American presidents still use Sikorsky's helicopters today.*
- *Russian emigrant Vladimir Zvorykin invented the first TV set and founded the first TV station, NBC.*
- *Outstanding American composer George Gershwin was born Jacob Gershowitz to Russian-Jewish parents who emigrated from St. Petersburg, Russia.*
- *The famous American saxophonist, Kenny G, was actually named Innokenty Gorelik by his Ukrainian parents.*
- *The author of "God Bless America," Irving Berlin, was born in Mogilev, a Slavic county of Belarus.*

Centennial Globe Club makes a huge difference in the lives of Slavic-American youth. Members meet during lunch to learn more about their native holidays and traditions, or just to talk to each other. Our Globe Club has grown from eight students when it started out in September 2007, to 36 by April 2008. That April was the first time that the students participated in the 12th Russian-Speaking Youth Leadership Conference at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham. They were very enthusiastic about being involved in the conference. The number of participants, as well as their curiosity and imagination, was eye-opening. The Globe Club not only encourages young people to become better students, enter college and find a good career, but also builds a bond between cultures. Everyone can benefit from remaining open to learning, sharing and understanding differences. As we reach out to others, our lives are enriched and our tolerance expanded. The more we learn about different cultures and people, the more we recognize our similarities.

—Olga Volnycheva, Centennial High School, Oregon.



Friends, Let's Join Our Hands!

From Then To Now



I chose to attend an off-reservation boarding school. I was dealing with a lot of problems at home in Fort Belknap, Montana. My parents were on the verge of a divorce, my father was in the hospital a lot, and my sister had kicked me out of the house. I was getting in trouble with the law and missed a lot of school, so I was placed in foster care. My older siblings weren't the role models I needed, as they introduced me to a host of poor choices. I had an alcoholic mother who couldn't have cared less whether or not I went to school, and a father who tried his best to keep me attending school until he ended up in the hospital with an amputated leg. These factors led to my decision to attend Chemawa Indian Boarding School, an off-reservation school in Salem, Oregon. So, at the age of 15, I made the journey to my new school.

The prospect of being away from my family and friends was frightening. I had to make new friends and get used to dorm life. I had to live away from my family, and especially from my father, in an entirely different state. My father's support was what kept me going, as well as support from my boyfriend. I had no clue how green Oregon was. I was so amazed by how often it rained, how warm it was throughout the winter, and by all the beautiful trees, plants and flowers. After being at Chemawa for about a month, I started to see life through a different lens. I no longer thought of it as a sad, lonely thing; rather, I looked at it as a good opportunity.

I returned to Chemawa for my junior year, still in pain from the loss of my sister, aged 23, and my uncle over the summer. The loss of my sister was especially hard because she was so young. The only thing that kept me going was my father. He always told me he would be the happiest man alive if one of his daughters graduated from high school, and he wouldn't feel as though he had failed as a parent. So I made it my goal to complete high school no matter how hard it became. I didn't want to end up like all of my sisters who dropped out of high school and got their GEDs. Even though my heart hurt badly from the loss of my

sister and my uncle, I kept telling myself, "What does not kill me will only make me stronger."

I thought my senior year was going to be smooth sailing, but I was wrong. During the winter break, my family and I had a wonderful Christmas dinner with lots of laughs. When the time came for me to return to school, my father passed away. This tore my heart apart. I felt as if all I had done was worth nothing. I knew I was not going to be able to return to school so soon, because I could not get over the fact that my father was gone. I felt alone and left behind and I cried myself to sleep for nights. My sisters and I had to find a way to keep up with the bills because my father had been the one taking care of them. I started looking for a job; I got lucky and found one at my tribal courthouse. I didn't completely drop out of school as I was able to do some work online. I continued to work, while I watched my niece and nephews and did my schoolwork. After three months, I felt I had the strength to go back to school.

A few days before I was to return to Chemawa, my mother was admitted to the I.C.U. as a result of her drinking. She fought for her life for a week in the I.C.U. and was then transferred to a regular care unit. I stayed home an extra week to make sure she was going to be alright, before finally returning to Chemawa.

With a month and a half left until graduation, I was welcomed back to Chemawa with open arms. This was a major reason why I was able to stay so strong. I kept myself going because I knew my father would have wanted me to walk across the stage to get my diploma. So I made a promise that I would finish the year and walk across the stage in his honor. It seems like every time I think about him I start crying, but I know that he wouldn't want me to weep for him. Rather, he'd want me to have as much fun as I can in my senior year.

Graduation is going to mean so much to me; it's going to be the best present not only to myself but also to my father, who will be watching from above.

—Zanetta Lester, 18, from Assiniboine Nation, Montana.



Twister

Ha ha ha.
My brethren
Watch and learn
As I, the Twister, decimate cities.

Originating high above the ground
In my swirling spiral.
Next my wavy center,
Until the most destructive part swarms the ground.

I am made up of many things.
The dust and crops swirling around, tickling me.
Cars, people, and cows caught in me.
All define my wealth and power.

All of this is from up close.
But from far away
All you can notice
Is my brownish red color.

I am pink and fizzy from the top,
Like a sparkling strawberry soda.
But then, lower down, where the occasional cow flies,
I become darker and darker, like a sleepless night.

Unimaginable rubble swirls
When I get to the darkest part.
Stuff flies in.
Substances fly out.

I bring terror to people,
I destroy their houses,
Their possessions,
Their family.

No one can stop me.
Watch and learn,
My brethren.
As I, the Twister, decimate cities.

—Anguel Hristozov, 14, originally from Bulgaria, lives in Illinois. Anguel describes the twister (tornado) with his pen and imagination. This year, we experienced dozens of deadly and destructive twisters in the midwestern, southern and eastern regions of the country.



Raindrops splashing down
Breaking through the barriers
You put between us.
—Elise Vertefeuille, 17, Connecticut.

Nature Poems

Farm

With no delay we got on the bus
Our parents waved goodbye with no fuss.
We stepped off the bus,
Looked and said awesome.
The farm had animals of all species and
The weather was autumn.
Quickly we explored the farm,
Feeling chilly but saw its charm,
The food was organic and we ate it with no panic.
We thought of dessert and the vegetables wouldn't hurt.
We took turns pushing the plow,
Feeding the animals and milking the cows.
We paid attention when Farmer Tom
Taught us something new
Not to mention we didn't have a clue
Four days we made new friends
With all odds and ends.
We went for five days with no shower,
When we arrived home we told about
Our trip with great power.
It was the best trip ever,
Next summer I will go back and stay forever.

—Hunter Littman, 11, New Jersey. Hunter says she wrote the poem after her amazing four day class trip experience to a farm in rural Massachusetts.

Falling Colors

After summer comes the fall
with school, harvest, and football.
In the middle of fall, trees are bare,
without a single leaf to spare.
Aboard the bus kids go to school.
since there is no more time for the pool.
Into the cave, bears are sleeping,
before we pile leaves ever so heaping.
Fall has now come as we get ready for winter.

—Chris Grguras, 12, Pennsylvania.

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Chippey's New Best Friend * * *

There was once a little blue beetle bug named Chippey. He lived in an African rainforest in a big, strong baobab tree since he was a baby. Chippey and his mother loved to look at all the other animals in the tree. They sometimes looked at the robin's nest nearby to see if the eggs had hatched.

Chippey was looking for some friends to play with. He looked down by the waterfall, in the dark cave near the baobab tree, and by the flying fish river, but he didn't find any friends. One sunny afternoon, he asked his mother if he could go deeper into the rainforest to make friends, and his mother said, "OK."

Chippey packed some termite cupcakes, grass cookies and coconut water in his colorful backpack, and he was off on his adventure. As he walked into the rainforest he realized that the sky had gray clouds. He decided to make a tent out of leaves and branches, and put banana leaves on the ground inside. He sat down and ate all the snacks and drank all the coconut water. It started to rain, so he decided to take a little nap.

After he woke up he continued his adventure. Chippey walked for a long time but didn't find new friends. He was very sad. He decided to go home. When he was walking back, he realized he was lost. So he shouted, "Help, I am lost!"

A huge brown and white pelican flew next to him. The bird said, "I will help you find your way home. Climb on my back." The pelican flew so high over the trees that Chippey had to hold on really tight. The pelican told Chippey, "My name is Juan."

While they were flying Chippey said, "There is my home!" and Juan landed. Chippey thanked Juan and then decided to ask him a very important question. "Can you be my friend?"

Juan said, "Yes."

Chippey was so excited he did cart wheels, flips and jumped up in the air. They played games like tag and hide and seek. They also went on a fishing trip. Juan caught the most fish because he had a very big beak. When it was sunset, they waved good bye to each other.

Chippey's mother asked him, "How was your day?"

Chippey told his mother, "I made friends with a pelican named Juan. We had a lot of fun today."

—Alyssa Ayana Paris, 4th grade, St. John, U. S. Virgin Islands.

The Sunrise that Brought Carnival

It was 6:30 in the morning. The roosters helped me wake up in a flash to get ready for Carnival. The shining orange color of the rising sun brightened the room as it came through my window.

Since I had overslept, I could only take a ten-minute bath. Next, I made a ham and cheese sandwich to carry with me, although I really wanted an egg sandwich.

Then it was time to get dressed. I had to wear a blue Hawaiian shirt with white flowers all over it. I wanted to wear my black pants, so I chose my skinny jeans. I also chose to wear my black and white Converse. I was ready to hit the door and go to Carnival.

I play the "Double Second," which is two pans. When I play it, I feel like I'm in my own world. I always think about what my mother told me when she played it when she was 11, the same age as me. She said it made her feel like she was rich, had a big house and could relax. The sounds of the pan always calmed her down. And now it does that for me. My mom gave this special talent to me that I didn't know I had.

I made it in time to do a little steel pan practice with my band, The Love City Pan Dragons, thanks to the sunrise. The orange sunrise that struck my bedroom had turned the sky blue. I know that the sunrise had an amazing part in Carnival. It brought light to the fantastic festival. Now everybody is having a great time—especially me. And it brought a smile to my mother's face.

—Kemisha Hoheb, 6th grade, St. John, Virgin Islands. Photos: Alyssa (left) and Kemisha (right).



Travels in Four Continents

Germany

In the hills of Germany
castles from ancient times linger
music and laughter are unavoidable
during annual celebrations
winter comes and snow falls down
merciless to the cold ground
as the Alps fill with tourists
trying their winter skills
fancy cars go down the street
and smog chokes the city air
look out to the Rhine river
and watch the cruise ships float by
the nightclubs wake up
only when the sun goes to sleep
go shopping in the city
and taste the original bratwurst
crowds cheer nosily
for their favorite sports teams
but all is quiet and still
in the German countryside.

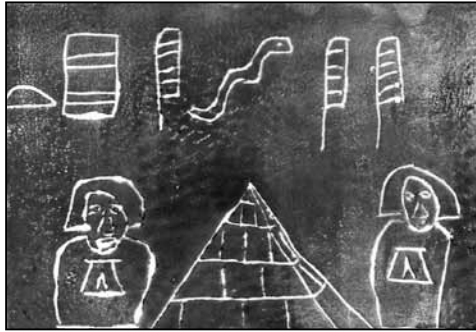
—Emily Wilson, *highschooler, Virginia.*

Aussie Streets

Accents flying in many directions
Stores that I have seen in my home country
But they aren't the same
From the business people walking through the outback
To the kangaroos hopping through the outback
Reefs dominate the east side of the continent
You feel like you are in a tropical haven
But a few miles away the cities boom
Australia is the whole world stretched onto a continent
Different cultures, accents and people.

—Callie McNamara, *Irish and English, Texas.* Callie adds,
“My parents take us all around the world having us
explore the world outside of our tight family bubble. My
dreams are to have a happy well bonded family. My inspi-
ration for this piece was my trip to Australia. My parents
took my brother, my cousins, and I on a trip all around
Australia and on a boat for ten days.”

Got amusing intercultural or international travel stories? Share with: editor@skippingstones.org.



“Egypt” by Vaughn Stavropoulos, 11, N.J.

New York, New York

Every morning she rises
coffee and bagel on the go
Leaving the house alone and quiet
Walking down fashion flooded streets
“Taxi, taxi, take me to...”
Pop and hip hop all the way
More streets filled with faces,
She's never seen
Cups and bells ringing for money
“But I have no coins, just 100s...”

—Olivia Van Horn, 12, Illinois.

Forever In Egypt

The cold sun burns the dark mountains,
As the desert sand sweeps across the land.
As the heavy dark clouds loom over the triangular pyramids,
The souls of the long gone swim in the realm of the sky.
These great structures were created at the beginning of time.
As the sun falls behind the horizon,
The land darkens.
When the eerie wasteland of sand is shrouded in darkness,
The pyramids will stay strong.
Forever.

—Theo Noparstak, 15, Illinois.

Never Again

(In remembrance of the Holocaust)

Never Again
Will you have to suffer because of your Faith.
Never Again
Will you have to be frightened of losing your Loved Ones.
Never Again
Will you have to question if you will live to see next Sunrise.
Never Again
Will you mean Nothing.
Never Again
Will you have to hide your Beliefs.
Never Again
Will you have to fight for your Life—
You are Safe, you are Special, you are God's child.
Never Again.

—Morgan Saemann, 16, New Jersey.

Czesc! Hi! I am Polish-American; my mother was born and raised in southern Poland. I am very proud of my Polish background. Poland has a very deep and powerful culture that is woven into the lives of the Polish people. It is admirable that even though Poland has been through so much turmoil throughout its history, its people stand proud and united.

A particularly vibrant and beautiful aspect of Polish culture is dance. As a Polish dancer, I know that our Polish culture comes alive through the costumes, music and steps. The dances tell stories of Poland's rich history. The Krakowiak is a very famous Polish dance that comes from Krakow, the old capitol of the country. It tells about Poland defeating the Tartars back in the 13th century and also about the Vistula River (one of the longest rivers in Poland). There are many other dances in Poland, each one from a different region of the country. There are the Oberek, Kaszuby, Lublin, Kurpie, Cieszyn, Warmia and Beskidy, to name a few.

Polish dancing is a unique and beautiful form of dancing. As a dancer, I am aware of how important it is to keep the Polish culture alive.

My inspiration for my poem (*see the next page*) is how bravely Poland fought during World War II. Our people didn't just give up when the German army invaded Poland. They tried their hardest to withstand the powerful forces. Learning about this made me want to write something about how courageous and strong the people of Poland are. I want people to



know how brave this country was and still is.

There are so many brave and well-educated Polish people. Tadeusz Kosciuszko, also known as Thaddeus Kosciuszko, was born in Poland but became a colonel in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. He is both a hero in the United States and Poland. Marie Sklodowska Curie, or Madame Curie, was a Polish woman who won the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in physics and later for her work in chemistry. These Polish natives, because of their hard work, have shaped history, but they are not the only ones. Pope John Paul II, Copernicus, Frederick Chopin and Saint Maximilian Kolbe are all Poles who made huge impacts in religion, science and music. Poland is overflowing with brave, hard-

working, educated people, many of whom will never be recognized outside of their neighborhoods, but should not be forgotten.

My Polish heritage has helped shape my life. My family has carried on many Polish traditions. I express my culture through dance and writing. I admire our many Polish heroes. I hope by reading my poem about Poland (*see next page*), you will also see how wonderful a country Poland is. Its culture is strong and true, along with its people. *Dziekuje*. Thank you.

—Margaret Naczek, 14, Wisconsin. Photo above shows Margaret, wearing the Opoczno costume from central Poland. It was made with 100% wool. The stripes on the dress and apron represent the farming fields. The dance being performed is the lively Oberek, one of the national dances of Poland.

Polska ~ Poland

A country proud and strong
Stands tall with dignity and power
Bold colors of red and white
An eagle holding it together
A country of heroes
Fighters, scholars
A country of joy and laughter
A country of oppression and war
A country that will fight
For independence
Fight for their heritage
Fight for their people
A country where everyone is united
By their culture
By their strength
By their spirit
Polska: Kraj z pòkuj i jedności
Poland: A country of peace and unity

—Margaret Naczek, 14, Wisconsin.

Polish Words and Traditions

Dziendobry {gien- gobry}: hello

Proszę {pro-sie}: please

Dziękuję {ge-cu-je}: thank you

Drzwi {ge-ve}: door

Jedzenie {je-dze-n-ie} food

Czekolada {che-ko-la-da}: chocolate

Uśmiech {us-mech}: smile

Słońce {Swon-ce}: sun

Slon {swo-ni}: elephant

"My favorite tradition is the Christmas Eve one. On Christmas Eve, no meat is eaten for dinner. We join together with family and friends and share an "opłatek." We have 12 dishes, one for every month of the year

(or for each of Jesus's 12 apostles). If you do not try every dish, you will miss out on one fun thing that month, according to our belief. After, we sing Christmas carols. In Poland, as children, we build our own nativity sets and go to people's homes to sing carols. If you sing well, loud and clear, they reward you with ten dollars."

—Julia Clementine Gladysz, age 10.



Around And Around We Go

Polkas: The Polish-American Legacy

I'll never forget the feeling of twirling around and around the dance floor at numerous Polish weddings when I was a child in the 1960s and 1970s. Back then, Polish weddings were marked by days of feasting, religious ceremonies, fun with family and friends, and the happy music of my culture, the polka.

A polka is a lively dance, almost always played in the 2/4 time signature. Depending upon the style being played, some of the instruments in a polka band include accordion, drums, bass, clarinet, trumpet and concertina. You may also see musicians playing tubas, pianos, fiddles, saxophones and banjos.

Polkas are interwoven with the cultures of many ethnic groups that found their way to the U. S. in the late 19th and early 20th century. The polka comes in Slovenian, Conjunto, German and Polish styles. Polkas are being played somewhere in our country every Friday and Saturday night. Polish-Americans are perhaps the group most closely identified with polkas.

The polka today is very different from the folk songs and customs that the first Polish immigrants knew. Those early songs focused on the traditions of the 'old country.' Themes included love, marriage, community or agricultural events, such as spring planting and harvest time. From the 1920s until the 1960s and even into the 1970s in some places, polkas were found at almost every celebration in the Polish-American community, including weddings, baptisms, holidays, festivals and birthdays.

As the immigrants changed their ways and became a part of the American melting pot, so did the polkas. Old musical stylings became influenced by Dixieland, jazz and even rock-and-roll. The tightly knit ethnic neighborhoods found in many big cities in the East and the Midwest grew more diverse. Polka bands were hired less and less for milestone events in the lives of the people.

It may be no coincidence that as the Polish, German and Slovenian Americans left the big cities of the East and Midwest for points South and West, the polka music moved with its fans. Today, there are bands and organizations in Western states that were not in existence in the middle part of the 20th century.

Organizations such as the U.S. Polka Association and the International Polka Association help to promote polka music by handing out achievement awards, similar to

the Grammy Awards. They also hold polka conventions, where a dozen bands may play day and night for an entire weekend!

Today, polkas are very different from what the first Polish-Americans listened to in the early parts of the twentieth century. In those days, the songs were often sung completely in the Polish language. As time went on, and more of the audience was distanced from the old country, the songs changed as well. Today, while many musicians still sing traditional songs and compose new songs in Polish, the lyrics may not mean much to the audience, as most musicians and the audience speak little Polish.

The music itself has evolved, too. Early polka bands, especially on the East Coast of the U.S., were really small orchestras. Before there were electric amplifiers and sophisticated sound equipment, the music would often be played in small clubs or church basements, where the audience was never far away from the band. As time passed on, and rock and roll became the prevalent music on the radio, polka musicians began to emulate the rock and roll style with heavy, driving rhythms. For example, today, progressive bands such as Chicago's Freeze Dried play in a unique style that sounds more like a rock band than a polka band at times. The Polka Floyd Show of Toledo uses the basic rhythm of Polish-style polka to play music from the classic rock band Pink Floyd. The trained ear will recognize the polka, waltz and oberek tempos used in the traditional songs. Other bands, such as Badinov, also from Toledo, are writing new songs in Polish that blend traditional Polish styles with contemporary themes.

Paczki Day and Dingus Day are two important celebrations where polkas are prevalent. Paczki Day is celebrated traditionally the day before Ash Wednesday, much like Mardi Gras before Carnivale.

Dyngus Day, celebrated on the Monday after Easter, is a time to welcome spring and say goodbye to the strict observance of Lent and the joy of Easter. The traditions of Dyngus Day come from pagan celebrations, which were around even before Christianity was recognized as a religion 2000 years ago. The boys would go after the girls they liked, usually with their parents' permission. They would sneak into the girls' bed-



Randy Krajewski, *photo by the author*

rooms and throw water on the girls, waking them with buckets of cold water. The girls would respond by chasing the boys with pussy willows and striking them. Small gifts would be exchanged, as part of the Easter holiday.

Today, polka music forms an important part of Dyngus Day celebrations in several United States cities. The Polish communities in Buffalo, New York; South Bend, Indiana; and Toledo, Ohio, hold parties where it is common to find people carrying on the old tradition with modern methods.

Of course, polka music has its place on the Internet. At least two websites offer polka music live 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: www.247polkaheaven.com and www.polkajammernetwork.org. No matter how you choose to listen, if you are willing, you will surely enjoy the unique ethnic music we know as polka.

—Margaret Zotkiewicz, *author and journalist, Ohio.*

No Place Else I'd Rather Be

People playing and splashing all day,
in the ocean where the sea creatures lay.
Sharks and minnows above and below,
swimming and killing their pray as they go.
The people are like dolphins, filled with joy.
And the children sit near the shore with their toys.
The waves crash on the sizzling sand,
and destroy some castles by their hand.
There are boats that sit miles away,
docked at ports that lie in the bay.
Lifeguards blowing their whistles loud,
watching the ocean over the crowd.
Surfers ride the waves as they pass,
catching them all until it's time for their last.
As the sun goes down as far as I can see,
the sea creatures stay while the people leave.
The moon starts to rise above the beach,
and looks like a spotlight, shining on the sea.
When I look out my window and out to the sea,
I realize there's no place else I'd rather be.

—Natalie Pyle, *12, Pennsylvania.*



Eid

I wake up early on a chilly autumn day,
Excited for the impending food and play.
Today is Eid and we're going to celebrate,
The fasting of Ramadan is over and it's getting late.

I quickly put on my new pair of ethnic clothes,
Put on my shiny shoes and socks to cover my toes.
My family members gather and get ready to pray
There are thousands of people
And we must find our way.

After early morning prayer we head to brunch,
There was baklava, sweets, rice, meat and snacks to munch!

My, oh my I could not eat much more!

My favorite part is about to begin,
I get to spend time with my family within.

All of a sudden, the Eid day goes by,
I go to bed almost wanting to cry.
Because the celebration was so amazing,

And all I thought of that chilly night,
Is when will a new Eid day be here for my delight?

—Ahmed Sheikh, age 10, Muslim American, New Jersey. Eid-ul-Fitr (falls on August 30th, in 2011) celebrates the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. And, Eid-ul-Adha marks the end of the Hajj, the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.



Skipping Stones Stew

We Are Only Human

Caged by the binds of reality, discipline, responsibilities
Chain linked fences closing in, intricate diamond patterns,
branding our flesh
We are human
Shown in the coils of our minds
The lies clouding our eyes, poisons clouding the skies
We are human
Sit back, there's nothing we can do
Fate is inflexible, don't ever try to change it, give up
We are human
Storms brewing, blunted steel knives rusting in closets,
finally get to see the sun
Aware we should put the brake on ourselves; our reason
for destruction covers everything
"We are only human."

—Kali McFarland, 15, Texas.

A Day on the Farm

Oh, the summer days go on
As I think when I wake at dawn.
There are cows to milk, and chickens to feed,
And gardens to plant with varieties of seeds.
There are eggs to pick up that chickens have laid,
And there're sheep to be
sheared so coats can be made.
But, best of all there's hunt-
ing to do,
So we can have squirrel and
fresh deer meat, too.

—Haleigh Mace, 15, Ohio.



Hardworking Gymnast

Around the gym they tumble hard and fast.
Across the stiff beam, they flip,
above the sky they soar when they jump.
About the big floor, they dance.
During the tough practice, they focus.
Toward the heavy vaulting table, they sprint.
On the metal bars, they hang and swing.
Over the vault table, they fly fast and high.
Within the best champions, they are!

—Maddie Kurlandski, age 12, Pennsylvania.

Health Rocks!

Sprouts Are Superfoods!

Sprouts have been called “Superfoods” and they have been harvested as a low-calorie, high benefit food source for over 3,000 years. They have many health benefits, especially by the variety of both raw and cooked sprouts in our daily diets.

Sprouts are highly bio-active baby vegetables. They are rich sources of enzymes and living nutrients that are easily digestible. Also, they are really ‘local’ agriculture. Food doesn’t get any fresher than this unless you grow it yourself. Sprouts contain super-concentrated levels of natural plant compounds and nutrients (sometimes as much as 50 times more than those of full-grown vegetables) that promote health and protect against disease.

Did you know that...

- Including sprouts in daily diet helps combat diabetes and obesity because sprouts are low in calories and fat. Alfalfa sprouts contain “saponins,” organic compounds that lower bad LDL cholesterol and stimulate the immune system.
- Nutrients, enzymes and plant compounds in sprouts can help combat coronary artery disease.
- Green leafy sprouts contain high levels of antioxidants to offer protection against the effects of aging.
- Phytoestrogens in alfalfa, clover and soy sprouts could increase bone density.
- Broccoli sprouts produce the anti-tumor enzyme, sulforaphane, in levels 50 times higher than in the mature vegetable.
- Sprouts hold great promise to help prevent, slow and reverse many forms of cancer.

The range of health benefits that come from the nutrients and other natural plant compounds in sprouts are just beginning to be understood. Eating sprouts regularly can lead to better health and wellness, and increased longevity.

In addition to being good for your body, sprouts are delicious and easy to incorporate into any type of diet. There are hundreds of ways to include sprouts in your diet, and consumers and chefs are inventing more ways to enjoy sprouts every day.

Learn more about sprouts and discover great-tasting sprout recipes at <http://www.isga-sprouts.org>.

Fast Foods

Fast food is convenient, cheap, and tasty. That’s why billions of people eat it and will continue to eat it. But the truth is, fast food restaurants are destroying us. We eat it with little regard to the harm it does to us and our society. While once there were mostly quaint, locally owned, organic restaurants where you had to wait for your food, there are now tons of huge corporate chain restaurants where you can drive up and get your meal in under a minute. It’s addicting, too: the food causes your brain to send a message saying it wants more, more, more. This can cause healthy and fit people to become sick and overweight. I used to eat fast food myself, until I realized what would happen if I continued.

The reality is, our bodies need nutrients from fresh food like fruits and vegetables. We need lots of whole grain in our diets. The bun of a fast food burger isn’t whole grain: it is made using only one part of the grain and that isn’t the most nutritious part. Then, if we’re still talking burgers, we come to the meat. The beef comes from cows slaughtered assembly-line style and torn apart by dirty machines. Cleanliness is not a factor. Feces often contaminate the burgers.

We are all independent people. We have the ability to make our own decisions. I’ve decided not to give my money to fast food companies. Ultimately, consumers have the power over the fast food corporations, as they make what we want. If the public wants and needs healthy, whole food, and we all do our part to get that need met, then fast food chains will either conform or fall out of business. A hard choice awaits us, but I truly believe that by doing what is healthy and smart, the whole world will benefit.

—Julian Mullins, 15, Oregon. (Entered for the Awards)

Reducing Salt in School Meals

Responding to the health needs of students, JTM Food Group, a company which provides meals in over 7,000 school districts, has introduced many new products that exceed the proposed national Sodium Reduction Goals. Sodium levels in their 150 school menu products will be reduced by about 25% by 2012, and by 45% by 2013. Their offerings will now also include whole grain breakfast muffins and pancakes.



Thomas The T. Rex: *Journey of a Young Dinosaur to Los Angeles* by Michael Smith, illustr. Gayle Garner Roski (*East West Discovery*). ISBN 978-0-98216-753-3. This book features vibrant watercolor paintings and photographs from the 2003 discovery of the 66 million year old T-Rex fossil. The dinosaur is on display at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles. Ages 6–9.

Grandma's Chocolate/El chocolate de abuelita by Mara Price, illustr. Lisa Fields (*Piñata Books*). ISBN 978-1-55885-587-8. *Bilingual Spanish*. When Sabrina's grandmother visits from Mexico, she brings many gifts that make Sabrina feel like a Mayan princess. Sabrina learns to appreciate her cultural heritage. Ages 6–9.

Hindu Children's Modern Stories, Book 2: Ten Tales About Religious Life (*Himalayan Academy*). ISBN: 978-1-934145-09-8. These illustrated tales, set in contemporary situations, teach ten Hindu observances, *Niyamas*, giving a meaning to daily life. It's also a great introduction to the Hindu way of living for non-Hindu children. Comes with an audio MP3 CD. Ages 9–14.

Amazing Africa: Projects You Can Build Yourself by Carla Mooney, illustr. Megan Stearns (*Nomad Press*). ISBN 978-1-934670-42-2. An entertaining and informative book about Africa, its geography, plant and animal life, cultures and history of the African people. Includes many African words with simplified definitions and suggestions for a variety of simple do-it-yourself projects—foods, games and jewelry that bring Africa closer to you. Ages 8–13.

The Silk Road: Explore The World's Most Famous Trade Route by Kathy Ceceri (*Nomad Press*). ISBN 978-1-934670-62-0. The Silk Road played an integral role in the commercial development and cultural exchange between Europe and Asia. It linked the cultural centers on both continents, from Eastern China to Venice. Since its beginnings in Roman times to its closure in the mid-15th century, many courageous travelers used this trade route to make their long journeys. Ages 9–12, interested in geography, people and cultures.

Suitcase Full Of Dreams by Hoy Kersh (*Cozilove Enterprises*). ISBN 978-0-9823165-1-1. Ms. Kersh, an African American songwriter, musician and peace activist living in Northern California woods, shares her childhood memories of poverty and racial segregation in the Jim Crow South in this memoir. Grades 9–12.

Cry of the Giraffe by Judie Oron (*Annick Press*). ISBN 978-1-55451-271-3. Outcasted by their neighbors in Ethiopia, teenager Wuditu and her Jewish family trek to Sudan hoping to reach Jerusalem. Ages 13–17.

Five Thousand Years of Slavery by Marjorie Gann and Janet Willen (*Tundra Books*). ISBN 978-0-88776-914-6. This book chronicles the many types of human enslavements that have existed throughout history and shaped our society. It follows the trail of slavery from Biblical times to modern day and describes the various faces of servitude. Illustrated with ancient documents, propaganda, world maps and artwork, it is an easy-to-read reference. Through chilling images, quotations and literary excerpts dating back thousands of years, it serves both as a study on human behavior and an historical documentation of past cultures. Ages 11–18.

Where the Streets Had a Name by Randa Abdel-Fattah (*Scholastic Press*). ISBN 978-0-545-17292-9. Thirteen-year-old Hayatt tries to forget her painful past as she grows up in Bethlehem. Curfews, identity cards and security checkpoints bring a mix of humor and hardship when she and her best friend decide to cross the West Bank wall to get to Jerusalem. Includes a glossary of Arabic words. Grades 5–8.

Parenting and Teaching Resources

The Conscious Parent by Shefali Tsabary (*Namaste Publishing*). ISBN 978-1-897238-45-5. This extraordinary book shows us we can raise our children as conscious adults if we, the parents (and educators) allow ourselves to reach a higher level of consciousness. The author shifts the focus away from the traditional “*Know it-all*” approach to a mutual parent-with-child relationship where we can learn alongside the children. Then mutual kinship and spiritual partnership become the norm of the parent-child journey. A conscious person is naturally loving and authentic. *For all parents & educators.*

Celebrate People's History edited by Josh MacPhee (*Feminist Press*). ISBN 978-155861677-6. For the last dozen years, the author commissioned and produced over 100 posters that pay tribute to revolution, racial justice, women's rights, gay/lesbian issues, labor struggles and creative activism. This book presents these posters as a way to understand the hidden history of human and civil rights struggles. A resource for upper grades.

The 2011 Youth Honor Award Winners!



- * Poems by Sarah Mae Smith, Age 14, Grade 10, California
- * Worlds Apart by Irtiqa Fazili, 15, Tennessee
- * Essays by Haluk Akay, 16, and Leyla Akay, 15, Turkey
- * Empower Orphans: Neha Gupta, 15, founder, Pennsylvania
- * Zaj Lus: A Bilingual Hmong Story Book by Students in Wisconsin
- * Poems: Kylie Hunter, 10, and Photos: Maya Hunter, 8, Colorado
- * Writings by Students at Julia Morgan School for Girls, California
- * Poems by Students at Laurence School, California
- * Art & Poems by Students at Naʻau, Hawai'i
- * My Grandfather Ben by Maya Young Wong, 11, California

Noteworthy Mentions: Athena Gerasoulis, 12, New Jersey, p. 34, and Julian Mullins, 15, Oregon, p. 23

Poems by Sarah Mae Smith, 14, grade 10, California

The Sea

The sea rolls in, the sea rolls out,
She never slows her task with doubt.
She surrounds the land in a turquoise gown,
The foam crests her brow with a silvery crown.
Seaweed thick; her flowing hair.
Coral reefs; her throne, her chair.
The sea swells with song. Her brother the tide
Emerges from the depths where he does abide
Together their voices, sad and sweet,
I heard join in song the ships to greet.
Her father, the sky. Her mother, the lakes.
Her sister rules, in the sky, the drakes.
I scream out my fears to break my chain,
The call of a seagull mocks my pain.
The pangs of my sorrow are lost to the sea,
She dragged them away, along with the key.
At last I feel relief. My pain is gone.
Pain goes with the night, hope comes with dawn
I feel I can breathe, in this fresh salt breeze.
Swept away by her beauty, I fall to my knees.
Here I belong, this is now my home,
Where the sun, on the waves has always shone.
I need my space, need to be free,
Need the sand and the waves, need the sea.

"I've always loved the ocean. No matter what you're going through in your life, the roar of the sea seems to drown out all your problems. In so many ways the ocean is like a person."

The Living Tree

Touch its trunk, stroke its bark.
Know the shelter that it gives;
Birds in nests, mice in dens.

Feel the life beneath the ground;
Roots run deep; roots its heart.
Feel the life flow under bark;
Sap runs thick; sap its blood.

Hear the wind blow through the leaves,
Shaking, quaking in the breeze.
Soft and gentle is its voice,
Whispering all it has seen.

See the history in its rings,
Count the rings to count the years.
Through the ages it has grown.
From small seed to mighty oak.

Know the tree that greens our earth,
Touch its trunk, stroke its bark.
When we were young, it gave us play
When we are old, it still will stand.

"In Los Angeles, everything is concrete, asphalt, brick or metal. Nothing is green outside of the carefully groomed parks. There is no wildlife. I'm not a big eco-green, 'tree-hugger.' This poem speaks of how I feel when I'm surrounded by trees. My inspiration comes from everywhere—the wind, tree, ocean..."

Worlds Apart

“Let us know about your world!”

The sentence jumps out at me from a website’s Travel and Culture Contest guidelines. It stops me short.

The contest should suit me: I travel. I am a part of different cultures. I write. But what am I supposed to say about my world?

I am not sure of my world. I am like a ghost, walking between the worlds, but not truly fitting in or feeling at ease in any of them.

One of my worlds is a nice house in a nice suburban neighborhood, the sound of the TV in the background and the buzzing of my phone as I receive a text message from a friend. I’m in this world right now.

My other world is across the globe, a place of family—but also of armies and guns and lockdowns and some days when getting food is impossible. The streets are dusty and strewn with trash. The trash isn’t conveniently picked up from the curb once a week and deposited somewhere out of sight. Dogs roam the streets in packs, especially at night, because it’s illegal to kill them. But there is no such limitation on humans, who are fair game for the army because of draconian laws. People are killed every day. The horror of everyday life almost overshadows the natural beauty there.

This is the world I visit; I was there just over a month ago. Despite everything, I love this world. I have family there and joy even through the sadness. There are weddings, traditions and a culture that is older than its troubles. The people are resilient—they shoulder the pain bravely. They live with fear and uncertainty in a way that few people can.

I tow the line between these worlds. Here, I am not truly “American,” because of my clothes, my religion, my headscarf and my values. There, I am the “American,” different because of my birth and my ignorance of social etiquettes, and because I can escape. I am not truly one of them because I don’t live and suffer through everyday life like they do.

No one says these things aloud, neither here nor there. But I hear it in the silence like when someone says, “You don’t like astronaut ice cream?!” That’s un-Amer—” and then they stop suddenly. Or when I’m talking on the phone with a relative who tells me that the army has broken all of the windows of their house—and I’m the one that’s silent. I am left speechless. I can’t find the words to relate.

My worlds are separate spheres. I am the traveler, the middle man. The two are tied together only in my mind, different as night and day.

But all things, no matter how different, always have a similarity. The similarity here is that both places have a spot in my heart.

Both worlds make up my world...

I come from two lands: one in the American south, the other in the Indian north. Both my homes boast mountains.

Here, the Appalachians dip and rise. Tree-covered, they are green in summer, ablaze in fall. They’re gentle, with rounded tops: friendly mountains that hug the sky.

There, the Himalayas soar up from the rice fields of the valley, their snow-covered peaks reflected in clear icy lakes. They are majestic despite the rolling clouds of instability swirling around the peaks.

The people are like their mountains, here and there, and the valleys sing of the people’s cultures. Here, where the crooning guitars make love to Rocky Top Tennessee, the culture is music and football, and pools in the sweltering summers. There, the hum that speaks of Kashmir is almost buried underneath the civil strife and violence, but still it tells of a culture that is food and cricket, and shawls in the bitter winters.

My valleys and mountains—both sets of them—are naturally beautiful, albeit different.

Here, it’s easy to see nature from the wide, paved paths and tourist traps. The sunlight sneaks through the foliage to kiss the ground, leaving dappled golden twilight behind. Walking here feels safe and warm.

There, climbing the mountains is hard work. The roads are narrow, winding and treacherous. But I am not alone. I trudge up, arm-in-arm with many other people. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins—they are faces that laugh and cry and point out the beautiful spots when I cannot see them myself. There are lakes, so blue and still that they look like mirrors embedded in the ground. There are the white glaciers, carving out huge paths in the rock behind them. There are the stars, clear and bright and whispering, just like my memories.

Here and there, I have climbed the mountains, looked at the valleys below, and come down stronger for it.

—Irtiqā Fazili, *American-Kashmiri-Pakistani*, 15, Tennessee.

A Trip For Service: *The Turkish Village of Kuytuca*

The Republic of Turkey is home to the world's 16th largest economy, and it has a soaring rate of development. Yet it is dotted with villages, particularly in its eastern realms, where education and quality of living drag behind the leaping standards of the rest of the country. Every spring, the eleventh grade class from my school travels on a service trip to an impoverished village in Turkey, far from our hometown of Ankara (the capital), to help a village school as much as we can in two days. Last June, I went with my classmates to the village of Kuytuca in the far eastern part of Turkey, near the Armenian/Georgian border. It would prove to be one of the most powerful experiences of my life.

The preparation for the service trip began months beforehand with drives to collect items such as used toys, children's books and crafts from affluent families in our school for the village children. The weekend before our trip, a truckload of our donation drive items puttered off to Kuytuca, where we headed two days later. We left the air-conditioned international Ankara Airport with its indoor artificial rivers and arrived in the Eastern city of Kars, where our jet was the only airplane in sight around the airport. After two and a half hours on a bus (which seemed to move more energetically up and down than it did forward) we arrived in the village of Kuytuca. Due to recent downpour, the dirt roads had become mud roads and the manure-brick walls bordering the shacks had gone pungently soggy.

The school consisted of two buildings, one with the dimensions of a good-sized locker room, and the other twice as large. Two hundred students from kindergarten through eighth grade attend the school every day. Our task was to improve the environment of the school and the quality of the children's

education as much as we could in the next two days.

We decided to divide our time between improving the school and interacting with the students. In the period of two days, I helped paint a wall mural, make bookshelves, and assist a classroom of eager students in making artistic crafts. The mural, designed by one of my friends, featured a warm orange sun in the center, with beams radiating from the orb in all directions. A different theme could be seen in each beam, ranging from music to classic Turkish pottery designs. In the foreground of the mural, a pair of doves soared between two clouds. The village is in close proximity to the Georgian and Armenian borders with Turkey. I felt this symbol of peace was hopeful in an area that had known much conflict over the past centuries.

One of the aims of our trip to the school was to give a library to the village children. For several hours, I slammed nails into wood, kneeled on the dusty floor, and made bookshelves for the books we had sent from Ankara. The final product of our efforts was the invaluable atmosphere that rows of bookshelves bring to a normally vacant classroom. Children constantly peered

excitedly into our workroom, anticipating the joy of having a library in their school for the first time.

When it finally came for us to say goodbye, we were sent off only after endless hugs from reaching, skinny, sunburned arms, and shouts of farewell from both smiling and sobbing children. As we bounced away on the dirt road in the small minibus, my friend remarked, "You know that feeling once you've really done something for someone?" I couldn't begin to explain how right she was.

—Haluk Akay, 16, playing violin in Kuytuca, Turkey.



Changing the World: One Resolution at a Time

The Spirit of Model United Nations

The auditorium is deathly silent; I peer over the top of the podium and gaze at the sea of faces before me. Around 100 high school students are seated before me, some twitching uncomfortably in their shiny suits and pencil skirts. “Honorable delegates, distinguished chairs,” I begin. “The issue of protecting immovable cultural objects in areas of armed conflict has been...”

It is the last day of a week-long Model United Nations conference held at my school in Ankara, Turkey. Each year, about 20 schools from around the world gather in March for the world’s only Model UNESCO conference, or “MUNESCO” as it is fondly referred to. Model United Nations, commonly known as MUN, is a simulation of the United Nations. Middle school, high school and even college students convene at various locations for a three to five day period of debating, speech-making, and resolution-writing. MUN conferences are often hosted by a high school and feature several different committees, including the Human Rights Council, the Economic and Social Committee, and sometimes an International Court of Justice where students act as prosecutors and judges.

During the past years, our school has attended many MUN conferences, including TIMEMUN (The Israel Middle East Model UN), THIMUN (The Hague International Model UN), TIMUN (Turkish International Model UN) and our own MUNESCO. At every conference I attended, I was surprised at how a roomful of 14-year-old “delegates” could produce such innovative solutions to current issues.

Perhaps the most enlightening and rewarding experience for me was traveling to Israel for a MUN conference held in Tel Aviv. There, Jewish and Arab students gathered to share their thoughts and ideas for a better world. The resolutions they passed, dealing with the Palestine-Israeli conflict, were full of hope and promise for the future. Seeing children from cultures that had had such a turbulent relationship come together to fix their parents’ mistakes truly gave meaning to the concept of MUN. The real concept of Model United Nations, after all, is not only becoming the “main submitter” of a resolution, or passing your resolution in a General Assembly. MUN also provides

a means for the students of today to become a more informed, capable generation of tomorrow.

Now, on this slightly rainy day in March, I am delivering my speech. Yet I have no stage fright; my voice does not tremble, my hands do not shake. For I truly believe that with every speech, every fruitful debate and every resolution comes a better future for all of us. Each time a delegate takes part in a debate, he or she learns to speak out against the wrongs and for the rights of our world, an invaluable skill in today’s society. And now, at the conclusion of my speech, the air is filled with applause, and as I look toward the rows of students, I feel hope for our future.

—Leyla Akay, Turkish American, 15, grade 9, Turkey.

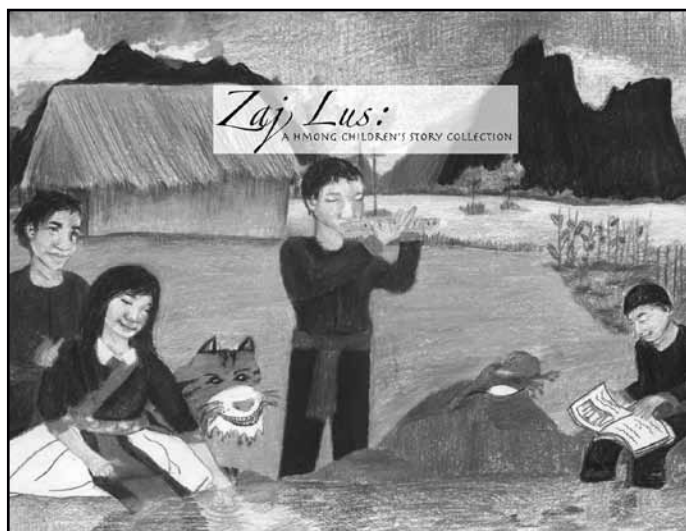
Empower Orphans: Neha Gupta, founder

The successes of *Empower Orphans* have been derived from the conversion of empathy into action. If I had merely accepted the misfortune of the children and taken no voluntary strides to bettering their lives, *Empower Orphans* would not have been so successful. Through determination and perseverance, we have impacted the lives of over 2,000 orphaned and underprivileged children worldwide.

Once I turned my empathy into action, it opened my eyes to the fulfillment we receive in helping others; the smiles, hugs, and goodwill are the best feelings we can experience. By interacting with the community, I have gained confidence, marketing and communication skills. Accepting rejection and persevering despite it is just part of the process. Becoming involved with issues at hand in the world has opened my eyes to the poverty and challenges faced by people, in all cultures. Furthermore, the experience and fulfillment that I have received by making a difference in the lives of orphaned and underprivileged children, is incomparable to any other experiences I have had or any accolade or gift that I have received.

—Neha Gupta, 15, Indian American, Pennsylvania.





I am a member of the Oral History Project club at D.C. Everest High School. Our mission is to share the stories and experiences of those in our community as well as those around the world by recording them in books, to be published and distributed to many.

A recent project I was involved in was **Zaj Lus: A Hmong Children's Story Collection**. The book includes four Hmong folktales that were collected from our local community. It is a bilingual book, written in both English and Hmong. Not only is the book a mixture of two cultures, but it also allows parents and children to bond through storytelling before bedtime.

This book is especially important to the Wausau area because Wausau has a dense Hmong population. It is vital to share the Hmong culture with those in the surrounding area and across the world. These folktales help to pass down the Hmong culture to younger generations. We believe it is crucial to embrace culture, be it your own or that of others. Everyone has a story, and in this book, we share a glimpse of the Hmong's.

—Yer Thor, h.s. senior, was one of the three project leaders.

All work on the book, including the design and layout was done by the Hmong students working with the student-led Oral History Project. There were three project leaders, four assistants and thirteen student volunteers. The illustrations were done by Bao Lee and Noghibelinda Yang, both seniors at the D. C. Everest Senior High School in Wisconsin. To order the book (\$12) or other books, visit: www.dceorallhistory.com.

The Uneducated Boy and His Glasses **Tus Tub Tsis Keej Ntawv thiab Nws Daim Iav**

Long ago in Laos, there lived a young boy who had never gone to school. He wanted to be able to read but could not because he did not have an education.

Next door to the young boy lived an old wise man who wore glasses. Every day this man would sit outside on his porch and read. Seeing this, the young boy believed that the old man's glasses gave him the ability to read.

Because the young boy wanted to read, but did not know how, he decided to buy a pair of glasses. He searched in every store from morning until night, trying on every pair of glasses he could find, and yet he still he could not read.

The young boy became frustrated and yelled at the store owner, "All of your glasses are no good! I still can't read!"

The store owner replied, "Just because you wear glasses, does not mean you can read."

"I guess I thought that if I had glasses, I'd be able to read," said the young boy.

As a result, the boy finally understood that wearing glasses would not give him the ability to read. In order for him to be able to read, he would have to go to school. Education is important. It is not a gift, but a privilege that is acquired through hard work.



Kylie Hunter, age 10, and Maya Hunter, age 8, Colorado

Plant A Seed

Plant a seed
and don't neglect it,
nourish it with love
and hope

Offer life to one delicate creation
contribute to the world's beauty
with one seed
and watch it boom

Thanking you for the admiration
you bestowed upon it
by displaying its jade green shoots
to the world
by blossoming velvety petals
and blessing the world with
One wildflower

Inspiring others
to plant a seed
and nourish it with affection
until a field of wildflowers
sways in the breeze

An array of vibrant colors
greeting all migrants
who will want to create more wildflowers

Until a once
dull, dry earth
becomes full of life,
a lovely place
to dance and sing
out of pure joy
a place to admire
the beauty
all because of

A planted seed
that was not neglected
and instead
was nourished with
Love

—Kylie Hunter, 10, Colorado

The Fork in the Road

Connecting with purple
blooming with green
dancing with yellow
these are my dreams

To connect
to blossom
to dance
with life

To reach great feats
to try with all might

To help others live
every moment with pride
to be happy to be simply alive

To change with the leaves
to change to the best
to hope to be brave
to observe all the rest

To be spiritual
and to look at both sides
to be a great leader
to follow the wise

To try to make choices
good ones not bad
to understand being

To watch mortals in action

—Kylie Hunter, 10, Colorado.

Kylie adds, "Plant A Seed encourages people to help make our earth more green. But it is also metaphorical. Encouraging people to nourish wild beauty in all its forms is one of my goals as I enter my teenage years. What a wonderful world it would be if we all felt free to dance and sing with pure joy and all feel nourished and loved.

"The Fork in the Road is about myself and my hopes and wishes for the future... Words give me comfort and goals give me direction."

Maya's Photography, p. 2

"**A Secret** is a close-up of a sunflower that has not become a flower yet. I like this one because when you think of sunflowers, you don't think that they start as not sunflowers. **Shadow** shows a fly and its shadow. I chose it because if you only look at the shadow, the fly looks so different than if you look at the real fly. I like that!

"My cultural background is a mix of Ojibwa (Native American), Polish, Russian and Scottish."

—Maya Hunter, 8, Colorado.



Writings by Students at the Julia Morgan School for Girls, California

Lucky

Diego, a poor boy living in a city in Mexico.

Lilly, a girl in an upper-class neighborhood in the U.S.

I'm 9 and already have to help support the family.

I'm 9, err, 9 and a half. Every Friday when we drive to the pizza place to order an extra large, stuffed crust pizza with everything on it, I ask my nanny for a couple of quarters.

Life has been hard, so I have been asked by my parents to buy three boxes of gum for five pesos and then sell them for ten pesos each day. With these profits I can slowly save enough to help my family.

I take the quarters into the corner store, pop them into the brand new gumball machine, turn the knob and watch three round, colorful gumballs roll out: blue, yellow and pink.

The store where I buy gum is all the way across town from where I resell it, but thankfully it's only 20 minutes from school. The walk used to make my feet feel like sandpaper, but luckily my dad was able to get me some shoes, to replace my old sandals, so now my feet don't hurt as much on the long walk.

What I love most about the pizza place is that it's so close to the huge house on Mulberry Street where I live. I could walk, but who wants to walk when Daddy has just given the nanny a new car?

Today at school I heard that Juan gets to go to America...

Today at school I heard that Charlie's parents are taking his whole family to New York and staying in the fanciest hotel, with a room overlooking Times Square!

Some Coyotes will take him over the border for cheap... but still at a price my dad and I can't afford because we don't make enough money.

They get to fly for free because his dad has "air miles."

I bet that the ride will be bumpy, he will be sweaty, and the Coyote will be extremely rude.

Think about it, waking up every morning and getting to see Times Square! Now, wouldn't that be something? Something I don't get to do! I should really talk to Daddy about this.

Everyone seems so much luckier than I am...

Everyone seems so much luckier than I am...

—Wanlin Shue, Chinese American, 13, California.

"Generation Screenager"

(Forwards)

It can be changed.

We are ruining this place
and there is no way
our world can be saved.

Pollution
is taking over
and happiness
is dying out.

Gray smog
everywhere,
it's a new age.

It can be changed, but
the fact is
screenagers are taking
over the world.

Great, right?

Go green?

Yeah right.

One of us alone
is the same as us
"all together."

Together we can fix this.

Without technology,
will we function?
doing everything
with robots everywhere.
Can we risk our world?

Our new generation
needs
the solution to all this.

This is what I see.

Factory smoke
not

a sky with no clouds,
endless blue.

Despair

not

hope.

This is what I see.

(Backwards)

This is not what I see.

Hope

not

despair.

A sky with no clouds,
endless blue

not

factory smoke.

This is what I see.

The solution to all this
needs

our new generation.

Can we risk our world?

With robots everywhere
doing everything,
will we function?

Without technology
together we can fix this
is the same as us

"all together."

One of us alone?

Yeah right.

Go green?

Great, right?

Screenagers are taking
over the world.

It can be changed, but the
fact is

it's a new age
everywhere.

Gray smog
is dying out

and happiness
is taking over
pollution.

Our world can be saved
and there is no way
we are ruining this place.

It can be changed.

—Anna Coerver, 13, California.

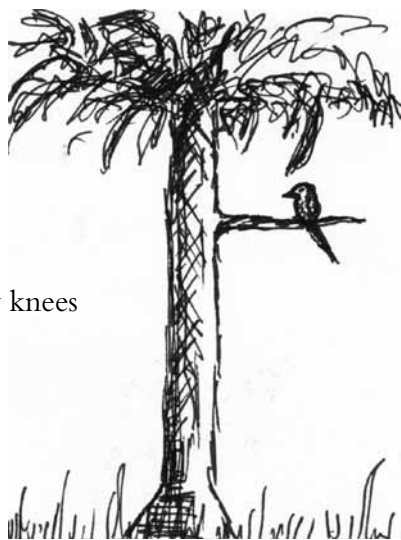
Some more entries from students at the Morgan School for Girls will be published in our upcoming issues.

Poems by Students at Laurence School, California

Mother Nature

Mother Nature,
such a sight to see
birds are flying
from tree to tree
bees are buzzing
pleased to be free
the ocean is splashing up to my knees
the dolphins are breaching,
playing tag through the sea
the palm trees are swishing,
dancing to the breeze
the flowers are blooming
looking up at me
saying, "Help me Mother Nature, please!"

—Avery Gillette, 2nd grade.



The Lonely Fox

My warm house in Colorado
Snow dancing gracefully.
Stepping on broken ice
In the new morning frost,
The red fox has his tail between his legs
In the chilly forest, clear ice and harsh snow.
In the blue sky, gray clouds open up to a rainbow.
The red fox looks into my eyes
as if he is reading my mind,
And dashes away as if he were a lightning bolt.
He comes back outside the glazed window
Glares sharp, drops the dead bird, stares darkly
Feels my growing tension, breathes deeply Gone.

—Noah Bedrosian, 5th grade.

Send Us Your Best Creations!

Send your creative writing (stories, poems, essays, opinion pieces) and original artwork for publication in our pages. Share your ideas, experiences, dreams and visions. Prose (1,000 words), poems (30 lines), photos and art (8 pieces, max). Include a cover letter!

The 2012 Youth Honor Awards

We invite your creative writing and art on: Cultural Diversity, Family & Society, Nature & Ecology, Youth Activism, Creative Conflict Resolution, Peace & Justice. Send by **June 25** to:

Editor, P. O. Box 3939, Eugene, OR 97403 USA

E-Mail: editor@SkippingStones.org

My Nature Classroom

The wind blew cold,
rustling the trees around me.
The trumpet flowers
blew their horns.
The red and yellow bell flowers
hung down and chimed.
The birds chirped along to
the melody of the wind.
The bamboo grew wildly,
as high as a house,
meeting the wind in the sky.
The waterfall rained,
joining the wind's song.
The lemon and orange trees
filled my nose with delight.
The Calla Lily stood proudly
in the fountain as the sun went down.

—True Behrendt, 3rd grade.

(Tree sketches by Julian Mullins, 14, Oregon)



(Untitled)

Waking up sleepy
early morning, in the still, damp safari
a golden deer scampers by
looking at the stained-glass sunrise, warm
In the bottomless ocean
slow waters rippling, relaxed,
a sudden splash, only a meek fish
no bothersome people, no dirty trash, peaceful
In the afternoon sky, a friendly owl says good night
The sunset, with bright colors
sparkling turquoise and shimmering gold,
warm breezes brushing through my feeble feathers
looking down, a young boy in a deep sleep
The first stars shine,
I am the boy
relaxed, sleepy
Remember being the blue whale in the slow waters?
The golden deer scampering by me,
the small bird in the sky,
the boy on the ground.
waking up, hazy.
Just a dream.

—Zach Rabishaw, 5th grade.

Art and Poems by Students at Na`au in Honolulu, Hawai'i

Kolea Messenger of the Gods

If I had but two little wings and were an extravagant
kolea bird or Golden Pacific Plover,
I would whisk through the wide grassy fields
of Ala Moana Beach Park.

I would glide above the ground
until my fragile feet gracefully touched the wet
emerald grass.

I would dig through the soft fields
in search of mollusks, crustaceans and small animals

And as the weather gets warmer
I'll eat as many berries and seeds as I can
until I fatten myself up to the point where I have
enough energy
to fly 2000 miles non-stop to Alaska.
And once I get there I will lay my four eggs
then tend to my young chicks.

Then I'll return to my guardian, *Kumakahi*,
to tell him the secrets of the gods.

—Shelby Ladra, 15. See her Kolea illustration on p. 36.

The Crimson Moonlight Reappears As Grandma Rebano Sings

An eerie and enticing song in remembrance
of those who perished during
the Bataan^{*} Death March in World War II.

Cries of the dead will forever
be embedded in the muddy soil
where Japanese soldiers brutally
forced thousands of innocent men,
women and children to walk
for sixty perilous miles.

Families torn apart as they watched
their loved ones' lives being taken away
and each day passed in the excruciating sun
of the great demon days.

Grandma's tears stain her face
tears recalling every detail
that happened,
a pang of pain entering Grandma,
recalling her helplessness
to save others.

^{*}Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines. —Joshua See, 14.

The Crimson Sunlight Spills

Into the skies over Hong Kong
as Popo tries to teach me Canotnese
and I try to teach her English

I am explaining to Popo
how to say "Yes" in English
She sounds funny
trying to work it out.

She teaches me how to say noodles, *fun*, at a restaurant.
Chow fun is what we eat at the restaurant. *Luk-sick* is
green—what I see at the park in *Lei King Won*.
Green vegetables, *choi sum* is what we buy
at the market.

At the store, I try to teach Popo
how to say "Good" after eating Chinese pie.
She smiles and says, "Good."

In the mall, I teach her how to say, "Like"
when I see something I want.
She says, "Expensive"
but she gets it for me.

In the bus to the airport
I say "Loud," because the engine is loud.
At the airport I call out to her and say, "Goodye,"
but this time all I hear is her crying.
—Austin Hamamoto, 13, loves sports and writing poems.

The Stormy Sky

Spills velvety water
which lightly soaks
the cool rainforest
of the Ko'olau mountains.

The cerulean water
washes over from the peaceful streams
that feed the indigenous 'ilima plants.

Watching a phenomenal waterfall
splash into a glassy pool
is a legendary sight.

The relaxing sound of rainwater
soothes the beautiful
but endangered O'ahu 'elepaio
Water gives life to us all.

—Lance Chee, 15.



A Traditional Hawaiian Girl

—Ella Blu Auli'i Pakele, 7.

My Grandfather Ben by Maya Young Wong, 11, California

From China sailed my Grandfather Ben.
He came to America when he was four plus ten.
His Guangzhou village was small and poor
There he helped his mother with farming chores.
Every morning he gathered bits of firewood
And drew water from the well, as much as he could.
From morning to night he slaved like an ox.
But it was never enough to fill the rice box.
So his parents said, "You'd better leave home
And go to America where you can roam.
Until you find a great place of your own."
America, Gold Mountain, is the place to go
Big and wide, and high and low.
Everything is yes, and there are never any no's.

But here in America life was hard
And it wasn't like a birthday card.
Golden Mountain didn't have jobs
For Chinese men, and that made them sob.
From San Francisco to Saint Louis
Chances for Chinese were least to fewest.
Still his heart never gave way
Cause he knew hard work always pays.
So Grandpa Ben worked hard again.
Slaving in a laundry from five to ten.

And he lived in important USA times
Starting from cool Jazz Age crime
Right on down to the Great Depression's,
"Brother can you spare a dime?"
Until finally his big chance came
To show Americans and Chinese are the same.
He joined the army in World War II
And fought in Europe for the red, white and blue.
All over he fought bringing supplies
To American soldiers on the lines.
Until one day he was shot in the back
And his jeep flipped over and he got smacked.
He didn't win any fame or medals
Just came back home to wed and settle.

Still to me he is The Greatest Hero.
Cause he never gave up and he never said no.
He loved America through both good and bad
And taught his five kids not to be sad.
Work hard, dream big, and never give up.
And one day Gold Mountain will live up
To what is written on the Statue of Liberty
Chances for all and the gift to be free.

To my Chinese Grandfather,
Whom I love and honor.

Note: Maya Young Wong was the national winner of the "Celebrate America" Creative Writing Contest (www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org). Her poem was chosen from over 6,500 entries nationwide.

Noteworthy Entry: Color on Color

Before I wrote with black ink,
before I dressed in red,
I always did my things in white
not different colors instead
The greens were too bright,
the pinks were too pale,
the blacks were too dark,
and the browns were too stale
That day I went outside,
and an African girl waved her hand,
green filled my snow white coat,
like growing grass on land
And when I passed an Indian,
she smiled her wrinkled lips

my shoes turned a rosy pink
starting from the tips
So then I turned a corner,
a Chinese nodded her head,
and my hair fell down my grassy coat
and filled a copper red
By the time I finished walking,
my hands were the only ones white,
so I grabbed the nearest black-inked pen,
sat down and began to write.
My hands turned to silver,
as I rolled on every word,
reflecting every colored voice,
like they were all being heard.

—Athena Gerasoulis, 12, New Jersey

Art by Students at Na`au, Hawai'i



(Clockwise, from above): **Koi Pond** by Jenna Yamami, 8 • **Taiko Drummer at Obon Festival** by Cole Tuisamatatele, 14 • **The Gentle Sea Creatures** by Brooke Suzuki, 9 • **Beautiful Sakura** by Lauren Sachie Gaza, 8 • **Fish of the Sea** by Davin Ohata, 8 • **The Very Rare Black Bamboo** by Royce Katsura, 9.

All of these colorful art collages (also see the back cover) illustrate poems written by students at Na`au in Honolulu, Hawaii. See p. 33 for four of the 80 poems they entered.



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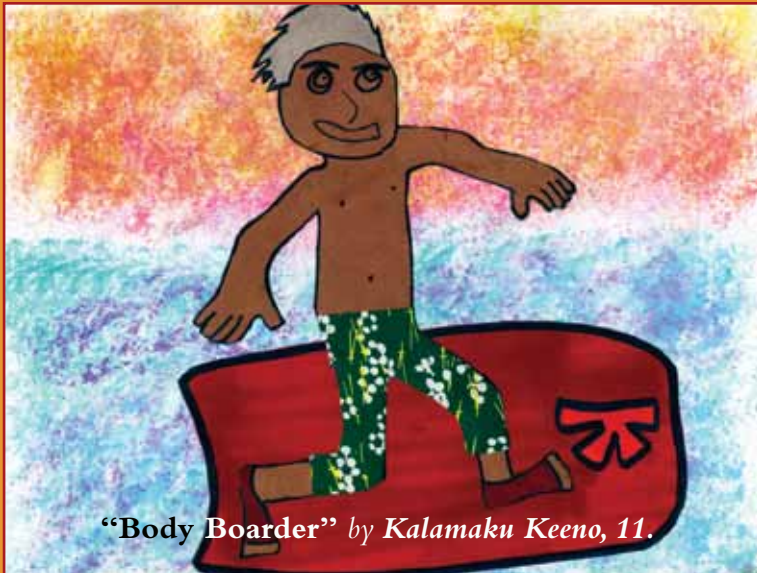


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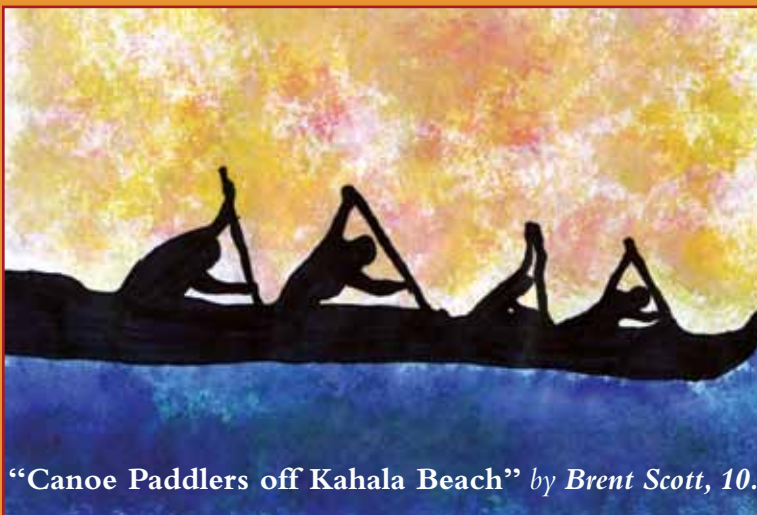
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“Year of the Dragon” by Jordan Chen, 10.



“Body Boarder” by Kalamaku Keeno, 11.



“Canoe Paddlers off Kahala Beach” by Brent Scott, 10.



“Kolea Messenger of the Valley” by Shelby Ladra, 15.



“Cut That Hair, Nanay!” by Rana S. Ballesteros, 9.

Youth Honor Award Art by Students at Na`au, Hawai`i. See pages 24–35 for more winning entries.