Summer Reading: Our Honor Award Winners

Also, travels to: Utah • Sweden • Tanzania • Vietnam • The Philippines
Summer Reading:

The Skipping Stones Honor Awards
Our selection of outstanding multicultural and nature books, teaching resources and educational videos

In Praise of the Planet:

The Music of the Earth
Busy Barnacles • How Do Compost Piles Work?
Jennifer: A Tree of Life
Summer Walk • Aspens

Kids At Work
A photo essay

Thu Loan’s Boat
Kim Phuc: A Beacon of Light from Vietnam
On the Street Where I Lived in the Philippines
A Baobab’s Life: The fascinating tree of East Africa
Sweden: Land of the Midnight Sun
I Do It For the Joy It Brings: Cross-country bike trip
The Grand Staircase of Nature in Utah
Writing • WaveTrain • Creation Poem
Family: Grandmothers • Learning to Ride A Bike
A Special Brother • Small Hero

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From the Editor

On 24 April, Shyam, my five-year-old son, saw a “TV FREE WEEK” sign taped to his friend Maya’s TV set. As we came home, he said, “Daddy, I’m not going to watch TV, either.” I said, “Bravo!” He colored and taped the NO TV sign on the screen, and I am pleased to report to you that the sign stayed on for the whole week!

I do not care to watch TV at all, so I was elated with Shyam’s choice. So what did we do in our ten extra hours that week? Together, we had fun doing different things: we went to the Young Writers Glitterary event, a Latin American family conference, the public library, our weekly spiritual singing, and Eugene’s Saturday Market. We went to the park and walked along the river in the warm weather.

TV-Free Week or not, we do a lot of neighborly activities in our intentional community. We often stop and talk with neighbors or go to a nearby playground with other kids. There is a basketball hoop in the cul-de-sac, and soon we’ll also have a volleyball court.

At our weekly potlucks, children find playmates for games before and after the meal. With over thirty members in the community, there are plenty of birthday get-togethers complete with homemade music and songs. One birthday party turned out to be a sit-down meal and a classical music concert! We also have regular celebrations, block parties, picnics, camping trips, and more. We always seem to find occasions to enjoy the folk musicians who live in our neighborhood. Together, we sing De Colores and Guantanamera as well as ballads and carols.

Sometimes, my morning walk turns into less of a physical exercise when I run into neighbors who are out and about. If our neighbors walk their dogs in the early evenings, we might join them. It becomes a social time.

We ask for help when we need it. There is a built-in structure for emotional support in our neighborhood. We know each other’s telephone numbers, and we have our own ‘e-group’ for keeping in touch via computers. Community meetings, a women’s group, weekly potlucks, and Saturday morning coffee hours all help us exchange ideas as well as offer emotional support to members.

Quite often we share, barter, or exchange work and things in our neighborhood. We get more use out of sewing machines, tools, workshops, appliances, hot tubs, pick-up trucks, or lawn mowers, as they are shared by several families. Sometimes we have work parties when we need help with big projects. Members with skills such as woodworking are always willing to share their knowledge with others.

Of course, we are far from perfect and there is always room for improvement. But in this age of isolated family units, we cherish our strong bonds of community and friendship that we have established over the last four years. I have known some of my neighbors for over a decade!

As you can see, we do not depend on TV for entertainment! Perhaps, this summer, you too will not sit in front of the tube, thinking there’s nothing better to do. Whether you travel, attend a summer camp, or just hang out, try a few new things—see page 33 for summer ideas. You might also check out some of the exceptional multicultural and nature books recommended in this issue.

Enjoy!

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Skipping Stones

Page 3
Thoughts on Discrimination

My school is located in an upper middle class suburb and is one of the best in Texas. I have a lot of respect for it academically, but socially it troubles me to see how the students here judge each other on anything and everything they can think of. Our parents talk about how racist their times were. They want us to see beyond the color of people’s skin, but discrimination goes much further than that. Many students here live in the same size home, dress the same, and talk the same, but still discriminate against each other simply because of rumors. Many girls don’t want to be friends with someone who is fatter, has more acne, or is poorer than they are, but then they dislike someone out of jealousy because she is better looking. I see so many people segregate themselves from some really nice students for dumb reasons. I would like to explain to everyone that it’s dumb to dislike someone because he or she wears different shoes. I would like to show students, from a fellow student’s point of view, that our discrimination will only pull us further apart as students and as the society of the future.

—Cindy Jones, grade 11, Houston, Texas

Proud To Be A Muslim

When I go to eighth grade I will be seen differently. I shall be practicing Islamic custom by following all the rules and becoming more religious in my clothing and thoughts. For instance, I will start wearing hijab. Hijab is a piece of cloth a girl wears to cover her hair for modesty’s sake. It’s not shameful to cover yourself. A girl’s beauty is something no one has a right to see. I don’t care if others think I look strange or if hijab’s not in fashion; I think faith is more important. It’s hard to wear hijab, because sometimes people make fun of me, but I do it for a reason, and I’m proud to follow this custom.

—Maryam Quadri, 12, Lincolnwood, Illinois

Fun With a Friend

As my school year comes to an end, I anxiously call my best friend.

We set up plans for the three month break
Like taking a weekend trip to the lake.

When we’re at the lake and I wake up, I smell the summer air, and forget about my makeup.

We go swimming and go on hikes, Some days, we even ride bikes.

Other days, we lie out in the sun, Water lapping at our feet makes us want to run in.

As we lie on beach towels and soak up rays, We don’t care about time—we could lie out for days.

Another thing that we do only on this trip is to wake up early and go for a quick dip.

We also like to try to catch some fish So we can make dinner and serve a great dish.

Every day there are more things to do. It’s just as much fun, even with just us two.

—Emily Fox, grade 8, Belmont, Michigan

Pressure

Shooting a free throw to win the game
Taking a penalty shot for the winning goal
Trying out for a sports team
Explaining to the owner why you stole something from his store
Explaining to your parents why you’re failing a class
Having to choose between your two best friends
Taking a test that will get you into college
Doing what’s right, even though your friends don’t agree: That’s pressure.

—Nik Stavros, grade 8, Rockford MS, Michigan
Dear Hanna King,

Tears came to my eyes as I read the descriptions of your peace garden. I am touched by your thoughtful depiction of areas of suffering worldwide. I am moved even more by your deep care for each individual life lost and the political factors at the root of the destruction.

In my mind, I visualize a gigantic imaginary lit candle at the center of your garden. Inspired by your creative model of spreading peace, some of us who read about your garden can light our candles from your imaginary shining flame. Each of us can then engage in our own deeds of peacemaking wherever we are.

I plan to spread peace through my acts. When I sense that I have hurt someone, intentionally, mindlessly, or unintentionally, I'll dedicate myself to reconciliation with that person.

The quote I am sending to Beech Grove School is by Henry W. Longfellow:

"If we could see in the secret heart of our enemies, we would see sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility."

In peace,

Hanna Still

Illustrations by Brett Forman

Send your questions or comments to: Dear Hanna c/o Skipping Stones P.O. Box 3939, Eugene, OR 97403
Looking forward to a great summer reading adventure? Check out some of the outstanding books we have chosen this year. We considered 132 titles entered by large and small publishers and producers for the Seventh Annual Skipping Stones Honor Awards.

The following selection of multicultural and nature books and two educational videos encourage close relationships with nature, and promote respect and understanding for cultural diversity in our world.

Our selection committee consisted of over twenty reviewers—editors, librarians, parents, students, and teachers. The honored titles in the following four categories are:

**Ecology and Nature Books:**


  Zzum’s life story is fascinating—once you start learning about her, you’ll want to know it all! The text and illustrations sweep you through to the end.

  **El Bebé** describes the life of a honeybee step by step, and every step shows you the wonder of the process. From birth to death the bee works hard and loves its job. It has a secret, too: humans have not been able to find the recipe for honey. There are many things to learn.

  The enthusiasm of the prose and the cheerful and imaginative illustrations make you breeze through the book and encourage you to begin all over again once you reach the end.

  **El Bebé** is a great introduction to the life of the bee. Children of all ages will love it, and will hopefully be inspired by it to learn more about bees. I am sure it will make all of us enjoy every drop of honey we eat even more. Read this book!

  —Esther Celis, from Mexico, is our Spanish editor


  "One child saw the trees torn from the ground; saw oceans stained with waste, no longer blue and clean; saw skies choking, blocking the sun."

  What can one person do about the devastation of our planet? One child whispered, "I know what I can do."

  **One Child** demonstrates that an individual can make a difference in the restoration of our planet’s beauty. Its unique illustrations creatively draw on the imagery of a dirty stained glass window that is gradually cleaned, revealing the underlying color and beauty. Bright, vividly colored pencil drawings bring this story to life.

  —Brett Forman, Fine Arts student, Univ. of Oregon
One Good Apple by Catherine Paladino. Middle grades. $15. Houghton Mifflin.

Before reading One Good Apple, I had never thought much about the difference between commercially grown and organic foods; the main difference I saw was in the price and availability. But in her book, Paladino explains why organic fruits and vegetables are so much healthier for us—and for the Earth. The author uses lots of pictures and clear language to illustrate concepts and define words (like monoculture, pesticide tolerances, and biodiversity), helping readers understand sometimes unfamiliar terms without ever talking down to them.

One Good Apple presents readers with shocking facts about pesticides and their harmful effects, but balances them with good news about organic farming. I especially liked the final page of the book, where Paladino suggests steps we can take to protect the Earth against pesticides wherever we are. A list of names, addresses, and phone numbers to call for more information follows.

All in all, I enjoyed this book and learned a lot, too. A wealth of interesting (and important) facts and beautiful photographs make One Good Apple a terrific resource!

—Laurie Dieterich, editorial staff

Multicultural and International Books:

Focusing on cultural or ethnic diversity, sustainable intercultural or global relationships, these books honor contributions which build bridges of communication, understanding, social justice and peace.

Magic Windows/Ventanas mágicas by Carmen Lomas Garza. All ages. $15.95. Children's Book Press, cbookpress@cbookpress.org.

Ms. Lomas Garza takes her readers on a bilingual and uniquely visual cultural adventure through her life and history in her book Magic Windows. Her "magic windows" of cut paper art, or papel picado, give us a glimpse of important Mexican celebrations, legends and history; food, wildlife and plant life from her native Texas; and her deep love for her family. We watch her mother making tortillas, and her grandfather watering his garden of squash, garlic, chilies, corn, and nopales. Looking through the windows, we see the artist as she learns her art from her mother and grandmother, and as she passes on her culture and talent to her niece and nephews, connecting her past and heritage with the present generation.

The intricate art illustrating this informative book becomes even more fascinating when the viewer realizes that everything depicted must connect with something else to hold the design together, much like the past connects with the present. Each realistic detail makes us feel as if we are actually looking through Ms. Garza's windows. Artists and art lovers, Spanish and English speakers, and people of all ages will enjoy this delightful experience.

—Beth Erfurth, home educator, mother of four children, and host mom to fifteen exchange students

Honoring Our Ancestors: Stories and Pictures by Fourteen Artists edited by Harriet Rohmer. For all ages. $15.95. Children's Book Press.

Honoring Our Ancestors is a brilliant collage of pictures and stories as diverse as its creators. Fourteen artists become the authors of their own stories which attract the eye and the mind in this important book about personal history and cultural pride.

This book is filled with colorful pictures
in a variety of media, each depicting pieces of the artist’s family history. Exciting and fun to look at, each colorful drawing reveals the personality of its creator while teaching us the importance of remembering our ancestors and those who have touched our lives. From Carl Angel’s father’s adventures in the Philippines during World War II, and later as a U.S. sailor, to Mira Reisberg’s honoring Albert Einstein, Groucho Marx, and her grandparents who died in the Holocaust, each page moves and inspires the reader. This precious and memorable book encourages us to think about who we are and where we came from.

—Brandi-Ann Tanaka, Japanese-Hawaiian, is our student intern from the Univ of Oregon


In Search of the Spirit proclaims the title, and the two authors have indeed found it. Their book succinctly presents the spirit of Japan’s culture as reflected in traditional arts and skills.

After World War II, Japan was in ruins. The traditional arts seemed about to be swept away by the power of commercialism, consumerism, and the allure of foreign material culture. The country was desperately poor, but in order to save their precious heritage, the Japanese government decided to support outstanding masters in various fields with grants of money. Now there are about a hundred living national treasures in Japan.

I lived in Japan for eighteen years, and graduated from Sophia University, as Ms. Ohmi, one of the book’s authors, did. From my very first day in the country I was deeply impressed with Japanese workmanship, which very often rises to the level of art. Someone said that art is something made so well that it cannot be improved upon; it goes beyond mere perfection to become the best it can possibly be. That workmanship is what amazed me—it was everywhere. And it drew me back to Japan, where I lived many years in the midst of quietly pleasing artistic beauty.

This book introduces six master artists and craftsmen, and tells each of their stories clearly and simply. They are stories of sacrifice, hard work, dedication, and skill, all qualities that are traditionally highly valued in Japan.

Let me list a few national characteristics that create the environment for Japan’s workmanship. First, there is the national passion for perfection, which sometimes soars to art and always strives for excellence. Next comes the famous Japanese love of nature. Third, it seems that no art form ever dies out in Japan. No matter how obscure or how far back in time it flourished, someone somewhere is still doing it. Most importantly, there are the many people who are able to appreciate fine things and to demonstrate their appreciation by buying them, often at prices they really can’t afford. This makes it possible for craftspeople to continue making fine things. How many people from other cultures would pay thousands of dollars for a piece of cloth, a sword, or a basket, simply because it is exquisitely beautiful and the finest of its kind? Finally there is the Japanese love of secrets: young artists must struggle and persist to obtain the closely guarded methods of their chosen craft, and when they finally master these methods, they value them highly.

The authors, both of Japanese ancestry, have achieved the same sort of mastery as their six subjects by crafting a superb display of, and at the same time an example of, the level to which crafts can rise. In Search of the Spirit is a book well worth having, reading, and studying for anyone interested in Japan, in art and artisans, and in how to make a good book.

—Bill Hessling, craftsman and one of our board members, Cottage Grove, Oregon

This is the story of Molly Bannaky, the grandmother of Benjamin Banneker. It was Molly who taught Benjamin that his grandfather was the son of a king in Africa. She also taught him about her past as an indentured servant in America, and before that as a dairy maid in England. She taught Benjamin to read and write.

This is a well-written story of a woman who did not give in or give up. She made a life for herself after finishing her seven years as an indentured servant. Needing a strong farmhand, she bought Bannaky off a slave ship to help her with her farmwork. She gave him his freedom after the first harvest, and later, they married, disregarding the law forbidding marriage between colonists and slaves.

The book's illustrations cover the entire page, and greatly enhance Molly's story. The artist draws people with very clear features and expressive faces. This is a great addition to early American and African American history.

—Paulette Anasari is a Skipping Stones board member and a librarian in Springfield, Oregon


The author was taught as a child that all people are connected by the earth's heartbeat. With Ms. Coleman's profound words and Ms. Robinson's beautiful illustrations, the history of African Americans is recounted to the rhythm of the drums. As you read the words you can feel the beat of these drums. The text enters your mind as a beautiful poem, stirring up images of the past and the present. Each page of illustrations is a mosaic of people, color, texture, strength, and emotions.

—Paulette Anasari, African American storyteller, librarian, and mother

It Doesn't Have to be This Way: A Barrio Story
No tiene que ser asi: una historia del barrio

This bilingual story is about a young Chicano boy named Monchi who lives in Los Angeles. He is a good, friendly kid who enjoys school. One day Clever, an older kid and a gang member, approaches Monchi to tell him it is time to join the barrio gang Encanto Locos. Monchi agrees. His cousin notices that Monchi has changed, and tries to help him.

After a dangerous turn of events and the advice of his family, Monchi realizes that it doesn't have to be this way. He begins focusing on other interests and rejects gang life.

I enjoyed this book very much. It's short and simple, but there is so much to learn from the story. The lesson is valuable, and comes from a Chicano kid so Hispanic readers can relate.

Excellent illustrations bring this story to life. I highly recommend It Doesn't Have to be This Way to people of all ages who want to learn something about courage and honesty.

—Elke Richers, 16, Mexican-German-American, student at South Eugene High, Oregon
Return of the Wolf by Steve Grooms.
Upper grades. $16.95. Creative Publishing Int’l./

For centuries, the voice of the wolf has gone unheard and unappreciated. From old fairy tales such as "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Peter and the Wolf," to relatively modern stories inaccurately depicting wolves as vicious killers, the tiny place that our society has carved out for these animals is small and historically uncompassionate.

In his book Return of the Wolf, Steve Grooms demonstrates that wolves are more than just hunters—they are cooperative, communicative pack members and sentient beings, each with its own unique howl. Through his writing and beautiful color photographs, the author describes many of the wolves of North America, including the Southeastern red wolf, the Great Lakes' timber wolf, the Mexican wolf, and Alaskan wolves. Grooms sheds light on the little-known intricacies of wolf personalities and society, how they hunt, and how they interact with their young. He also recounts measures that have been taken in the past to eradicate this species entirely, reminding us about what has been done to destroy wolves and their native habitats.

Return of the Wolf encourages a better understanding of these often misunderstood and mistreated animals. Although they remain a symbol of the wilderness for many people, Grooms offers the opportunity "to see wolves not as symbols, but as wolves."

—Erin Leffler, student intern, Univ. of Oregon

Jasmine and Coconuts: South Indian Tales by
Cathy Spagnoli and Paramasivam Samanna. For
teens and educators. $24. Libraries Unlimited,

A book that sets a gold standard for education in a specific culture, Jasmine and Coconuts is an ideal resource for anyone—traveler, storyteller, ethnic descendant, or educator—who seeks an introduction to the culture of southern India. It presents an engaging collection of traditional South Indian stories that provides moral instruction and entertainment while illuminating the soul of a population. The stories are arranged by seven themes: the value of simplicity and the problem of greed; devotion and faith; respect for family and elders; hospitality and friendship; hard work and study; heroes and inspiration; wit and humor.

In addition to its centerpiece of fine stories, Jasmine and Coconuts provides a sketch of the history, geography, daily life, arts, religion, and popular festivals of the region. Also featured is an interesting chapter on South India's storytelling traditions. This 172-page book is handsomely illustrated with line drawings as well as photographs in color and black-and-white. As a bonus, authors Spagnoli and Samana include a glossary, bibliography, and a list of resources.

This sensitively written, attractively illustrated volume—a quality production from the World Folklore Series of Libraries Unlimited—is a real treasure, and receives my highest recommendation.

—Pavani Nagaarjuna, author, Eugene, Oregon;
Pavani has just returned from a trip to South India

Also see The BookShelf, page 34, for many more great multicultural and nature books.
The Civil War may have ended slavery legally, but it did not bring "liberty and justice for all," in reality then, just as now. Geography of Hope deals with the small number of freedpeople who chose to leave the South after the Civil War. The majority of this group, about 20,000 people, headed west, dreaming of owning their own land and living from the fruits of their labors.

Some interesting information from the book:
- As more African Americans migrated west and established settlements, they formed organizations to recruit people and to support those who arrived at their new homes.
- St. Louis became the gateway to the "Promised Land" for black would-be homesteaders. When the city's mayor sought to prevent the arrival of more homesteaders, blacks took care of their own, taking families into their homes and donating money to the relief cause. Many towns organized Aid Associations, funded by both whites and blacks.
- Some people believed that the West should be kept free for white settlements only, and resisted and sabotaged the black migration.
- Many blacks settled among Native Americans, and when whites carried out their "Indian removal," blacks accompanied their friends to new settlements in the west.

Jim Haskins provides both a wonderful adventure story and an analysis of an important part of U.S. history. He also dispells common misconceptions about the economic and political reasons behind the Civil War. Geography of Hope's many photographs and drawings bring the stories to life. The book is suitable for teenagers and adults, and as a resource for all grades.

—Charlotte Behm, educator, Eugene, Oregon


Multicultural Voices is a valuable book and a treasure-trove for teachers and librarians, particularly those in elementary and middle schools.

This book celebrates and introduces forty authors from different ethnicities, from Cuban Americans to Native Americans. Each author's sketch contains a personal quote, photograph, brief history, list of publications, and reviews of several significant works. These sketches facilitate the bond between reader and writer, providing a rich literary experience and a deep understanding of people of other ethnicities as well as ourselves. Suggestions for the classroom are included with each review.

Assessment forms in the appendix enable teachers and administrators to evaluate their multicultural education programs. Evaluating Children's Books for Bias offers guidelines for assessing books from a pluralistic perspective, and Optional Activities suggests exercises that may be used with any of the author units.

Other useful material includes authors' birthdays, a multicultural calendar, and a list of resources for educators, librarians, and parents. An index of illustrators, titles, and subjects allows easy access to information contained in the book.

Multicultural Voices belongs in every elementary and middle school library, and in the personal library of everyone actively involved in multicultural education or other pursuits that promote acceptance and understanding of all people.

—Yvonne Young, educator, Eugene, Oregon
These engaging and mindful videos for classroom use foster respect and understanding of all people, communities, and natural resources.

**Educational Videos:**

**Recycled, Re-Seen:** Folk Art from the Global Scrap Heap by Museum of Int’l Folk Art. 35 min. $85. Crystal Productions, tel. (847) 657-8144.

This video highlights the creativity and resourcefulness of folk artists everywhere. Their raw material is trash, the disposable goods produced in the factories and assembly lines of the industrialized world that overflows our landfills.

**Recycled, Re-seen** is a refreshing and eye opening look at how what many people would consider to be junk can be recycled and reused to create beautiful quilts, national music, consumer items, costume headaddresses, and religious kitsch.

We watch with amazement as Arbie Williams creates her “britches quilts” from worn out pants, jeans, and other garments. She transforms a pioneer craft into present day art. We learn the fascinating history of the pan music of Trinidad and Tobago. These two countries used the fifty-gallon oil drums that littered their countryside to create their now world-famous national music. Misprinted, unusable metal sheets from factories become the raw materials for two entrepreneurs from Dakar, Senegal, who use them to produce everything from rice steamers, briefcases, and trunks to colorful toys. These businesses are an integral part of the economy of Dakar. Jose Ingacio Criollo has become well known and respected in his hometown of San Rafael, Ecuador, for his costume headdresses used in religious rituals. In addition to traditional objects, he uses discarded plastic baby dolls and light bulbs. Lee Carter of the U.S. and Roberto Granados Chavez of Mexico have a joint venture in Catholic religious kitsch based on Mexican traditional tin work with a contemporary twist.

This video teaches youngsters that recycling can be useful, fun, and economical. It helps us appreciate artists’ creativity and ingenuity, and demonstrates how the Museum of Int’l. Folk Art in New Mexico gives children a hands-on experience with recycling and reusing discarded items.

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**Keepers of the Water** by Al Gedicks. Middle and upper grades. 39 min. $99. Lucerne Media, tel. (973) 538-1401.

The Wolf River in northern Wisconsin is one of the few unpolluted rivers left in our country. Conservationists have been working since the 1930’s to keep its waters pure and clean, and no pipes carry any kind of waste into the river. The state of Wisconsin has declared the river to be an outstanding resource. Several Native American tribes live along Wolf River, which flows into Rice Lake, the home of the traditional rice beds of the Sokoogon Chippewa people. This rice is used for food and in ceremonies, and is believed to be a sacred gift to the people from the Creator.

Exxon wants to build a large underground metallic sulfite mine one mile upstream from the lake where the wild rice grows. Opponents of the mine insist that the byproducts of mining will ruin the water of Wolf River forever. The Chippewa and Menominee people, along with local conservationists and organizations like the Sierra Club, are fighting to save the waters of Wolf River.

In this video Sokoogan Chippewa people explain the background of the struggle and the importance of the river in their lives and in the lives of everyone. Footage of a march on the state capital is included, along with beautiful shots of the river itself and the rice harvest. I was inspired by the dedication of the people who have worked for hundreds of years to protect our precious natural resource, water. I was horrified by the prospect of an outside corporation being able to intrude on this beautiful landscape and exploit it for their own profit. The video is clear in its message and provides an excellent model for communities who want to protect their natural resources.

—Mary Drew, board member and fifth grade teacher in Creswell, Oregon

Thanks to our Awards Selection Committee members—students, parents, teachers, and librarians—for reading and reviewing the many entries we received!
The Music of the Earth

When I go down to the river, when I go down to the stream,
I hear some music, the horns choose it,
The horns are the water and frogs.
Far-rar-ree-yarah, Far-rar-ree-yarah, Far-rar-ree-yarah-no.

When I go down to the ocean, when I go down to the sea,
I hear some music, the drummers choose it,
The drummers are fish and the waves. Tum-da-dee-dum-ta,

When I go down to the cavern, when I go down to the cave,
I hear some music, the violinists choose it,
The violinists are echoes and bats.

When I go down to the meadow, when I go down to the field,
I hear some music, the dancers choose it,
The dancers are the butterflies and bees.

When I go up to the mountain, when I go up to the hill,
I hear some music, the flutists choose it,
The flutists are the stones and the wind.
Lee-mee-arah, Lee-mee-arah, Lee-mee-arah-lo.

When I walk around this planet, when I walk around the earth,
I hear some music, the musicians choose it,
The musicians are you and me.

The musicians are you and me, flowers and bees,
Dogs and cats, bears and bats.
A symphony of harmony:
Life is the music of the earth.

—Aliyah Meena Shanti, 10, homeschooler, Olympia, Washington
The Busy Barnacle

Have you ever seen a barnacle? I bet you have—you just didn’t know what you were seeing.

Sailors don’t like barnacles because these little sea creatures attach themselves to boat bottoms and cause all kinds of problems. Barnacles work quickly, covering the entire bottom of a small boat in about a month. Their miniature cities of igloo-like houses can cut the speed of a ship in half. Sailors will tell you that this animal is responsible for nearly one billion dollars’ worth of damage a year to boats of all kinds. Many ships can carry up to 600,000 pounds of extra weight in barnacles!

Keeping this in mind, imagine how these little fellows may have changed history. Many battleships might not have arrived on the battle scene because of barnacles. Just think: we might be celebrating Columbus Day in June instead of October had the Santa Maria not had a hull covered with these tiny sea creatures!

In addition to sticking to boats and rocks, barnacles attach themselves to turtles, horseshoe crabs, and whales. A whale, for instance, can carry as much as one thousand pounds of extra barnacle weight. This doesn’t hurt the whales, but does slow them down considerably.

So what exactly are barnacles, what do they look like, and what is their purpose?

Barnacles belong to the crustacean family, which includes crabs and shrimp. The most common kind of barnacle is the acorn barnacle. Shaped like a volcano, igloo, or acorn, this creature is about one fourth of an inch wide. Its soft body is covered by a hard shell, and it uses six tiny feather-like legs to feed itself. It can live up to five years stuck on the surface of an object. Barnacles are an important part of the ocean’s ecosystem: they filter water, oxygen, debris, and microscopic plants through their systems, and are a source of food for fish.

While some people in foreign lands eat barnacles in soups and stews, another use for this small sea animal has recently been discovered. The American Dental Association is investigating the possibility of using barnacle glue to repair cavities. Once it takes hold, barnacle glue doesn’t let loose!

The next time you’re at the beach, take a look around. You may find barnacles on an old piece of wood, a large seashell, or a rock. But beware—the edges of a barnacle are very sharp!

—Anne Wallace Sharp, Beavercreek, Ohio
Waves
Waves go by like streaks of light.
They pass my face
And seem to say,
"Hello, dear friend, how are you today?
I'm in a hurry
And must move post haste."
And off they'll go
Like cheetahs hunting prey.
—Aaron Noparstak, 10, Northbrook, Illinois

Summer Night
The feeling of cool
silky sheets under my hot sweaty feet.
The sound of crickets chirping their evening song under my window.
Cool wind blowing from the air conditioner.
Summer night.
The sound of my dad's fingers plucking the strings of his guitar creep up to my room.
The silent street outside that hums in the morning with early workmen.
The feeling of the cool blue pillow against my sunburnt cheeks.
Summer night.
—Abby Resnick, Cincinnati, OH

The Night
When the night is still and the stars shine bright
I sit and wonder about the night.
The crickets chirp as the breeze blows by
I see a twinkle in the sky.
The twinkle is small but shines so bright as all the stars are in my sight.
—Katie Cibak, 9, Roswell, NM

The Dive
At the diving board,
I stand at the edge Peering over.
Arms over head I jump with the wind in my face
I dive down, down down Splash! Water erupts
Light comes through the murky water As I float up up, up.
—Rachel Kohlbrand, 13, Midland, MI

The Waterfall
At all times of the year I like to sit and listen and think beside the beautiful waterfall.

In the summer and fall the water runs hard and fast and rough over the churning waterfall.

All year long the birds whistle and cluck, and sing songs around the noisy waterfall.

In the spring, summer, and fall the squirrels scamper and hunt and play around the restless waterfall.

All year long it is nice to sit and watch and listen and think beside the glorious waterfall.

—Kalyn Kappelman, 13, Gibsonia, Pennsylvania

Waves
Waves go by like streaks of light. They pass my face And seem to say, "Hello, dear friend, how are you today? I'm in a hurry And must move post haste." And off they'll go Like cheetahs hunting prey.

—Aaron Noparstak, 10, Northbrook, Illinois

The Night
When the night is still and the stars shine bright I sit and wonder about the night. The crickets chirp as the breeze blows by I see a twinkle in the sky. The twinkle is small but shines so bright as all the stars are in my sight. —Katie Cibak, 9, Roswell, NM

The Dive
At the diving board, I stand at the edge Peering over. Arms over head I jump with the wind in my face I dive down, down down Splash! Water erupts Light comes through the murky water As I float up up, up. —Rachel Kohlbrand, 13, Midland, MI
Jennifer

Roy was a child when his father planted Jennifer, a sapling named after his mother. Roy’s mother had been feverish for over a month, but during one of her periods of coherence she asked a favor of her son: “Roy, I would like you to bring me a small pot filled with soil and some seeds from Christina.”

Christina was named after Roy’s grandmother. The tree graced the family property with its lovely contour and leafy branches, and served as shade on sunny days. Grandma had passed away before Roy could remember, but his parents often mentioned her kindness and great admiration of nature. They also told him that she was buried beneath the tree she loved. It was a source of happy memories for his mother, since it was where Jennifer’s mother had taught her to knit, read, and sing the songs that Jennifer had shared with Roy.

The young boy did as his mother had asked, and quickly returned to her side. Jennifer then looked at the winged seeds, chose one, and pushed it into the potted soil with her finger. She watered it and had Roy place the pot on the windowsill. It was mid-spring, and they spent their last moments holding hands and looking through Jennifer’s bedroom window, out over the garden and to the lovely tree.

The months that followed were difficult for Roy and his father Thomas, because they missed Jennifer’s gentle presence. Thomas was a farmer who talked to his large fields of grain, fruit, and vegetables more than he talked to the neighbors, but he was always fair and kind when the merchants came to buy goods. Knowing this, nearby villagers and friends of the family wanted to care for Thomas and Roy when Jennifer died.

A Tree for Life

The two appreciated this kindness, but it was a little sapling that was their greatest source of encouragement. Both found that each time they tended to the sapling there was a feeling that Jennifer was nearby caring for them. With time, sunshine, and enough water, the sapling became a tree and was planted above the young woman’s burial place. The tree, planted near Christina, grew tall and lovely with the help of caring hands.

On their afternoon walks, the neighbors often stopped there to reflect on the memory of the two women and on the wonderful gifts of nature. Roy, who grew into a healthy young man, always had time at the end of the day to greet the beautiful trees. He would pat their bark and remember his heritage. The trees were testaments of love, and Roy often considered this when his body became weary after planting and farming the land.

Seasons passed and Roy was married. Soon there were new generations to care for the land. Thomas, who had slowed down with age, spent his later days under Jennifer, planning crop schedules and recollecting tales and folk songs. The grandchildren loved listening to him while they sat under Jennifer. On the day Thomas passed away, another seedling sprouted, and as time passed, a new tree graced the land.

Today, generations continue to embrace the stories and traditions by planting a tree to symbolize each evolving life. They are taught that, like a tree, each life is forever merged with the spirit that connects living things. And, like their ancestors, they do not look for a gravestone when walking down the road. Instead, they stop to enjoy the beautiful trees, greeting them by name.

—David Ritter Star, Eugene, Oregon
**A Summer Walk**

Bad days have been plentiful recently, but today has been one of the worst. There is one thing that calms me, and that’s the forest. I have never figured out why the forest has this effect on me, but there is no doubt that it does. I retreat there, running through the trees and leaves that I know all too well. My heart pounds with silent rage and my eyes burn. Somewhere in my mind I decide to go to the big birch, and in that same instant I tell myself that the world was never meant for me.

I like to consider the forest my realm because no one else comes here. I have been coming here since I was a little girl. My parents never understood my love of the forest, but they let me come as often as I pleased. Now I am thankful they did.

I let myself fall to the ground and the forest drains my rage from me. It’s several minutes before I’m able to look up. My eyes scan the world around me, and suddenly I realize why I love the forest the way I do. It’s the way things continue in the forest, despite all the problems in the world, that makes me forget everything that worries or bothers me. Nothing changes in the forest and that gives me a sense of security, a feeling that when all else fails, the forest will continue to produce and nourish the same life that only minutes before I so easily brushed aside.

I get up and see the trees with their branches spreading far and wide and hear birds filling the air with their songs, and I know that I am part of the chain in the forest. I start off for home with new eyes and ears, ready to embrace the world.

—Nicole Kast, 13, Wausau, Wisconsin

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**Language of the World**

Dewdrops glisten on the petals of a rose in the early morning sunlight.
A rainbow watches over the land after a day of rain.
An eagle slices gracefully through the sky.
Waves crash peacefully as they come in from the ocean.
Morning sunlight peeks through the trees of a heavy forest.
The sun sets behind a mountain leaving only a splash of bright colors.
What do you see? I see it too. We all see beauty in the same language.

—Allison Porzio, 14, Lafayette, New York. Art by Matthew Manos, Redwood Shores, CA

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**The Aspens**

We were in the car on our way back from hiking to the north rim of the Grand Canyon when I first saw the cluster of aspen trees.

The sun drifted through the leaves, creating speckled shadows on the ground, and the delicate white branches glowed with the radiance of a successful day’s end. The forest surrounding the trees was dark and shaded, as if the aspens bore the last light of the evening. But it wasn’t just their physical appearance that caught me. All around the trees was an aura of mystery that I couldn’t explain.

This image flashed by in a split second, and I called to my dad, “Wait a minute! We have to take a picture of those trees!”

My whole family looked at me with tired faces. They had had enough walking for one day and didn’t want to walk anymore.

“Dad, I’m serious!” I pleaded. “Please? I just have to take this picture.”

Finally Dad made the turnoff. I got out of the car and walked towards the trees, but suddenly I stopped. To my surprise, I saw a deer near the aspens. It majestically lifted its head, and I watched in silence along with my family until it bounded away.

So Mom took a picture of me and those graceful aspens swaying in the breeze. Somewhere behind them was the deer, such a beautiful woodland creature. If we had passed by, we would have missed its beauty and never known it. That experience will remain in my mind forever.

—Jennifer Bokoch, Encinitas, California
Kids At Work

All around the world, in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, kids work. Some sell things to bring home whatever they can, while others do jobs on the family farm, collect water, or fish. There is little time for real play, but when kids work together there is usually some play involved in the job.

Helping the family, whether it be through providing small amounts of money or bringing home the water for the day, is something kids do gladly. To contribute to what the family eats and drinks is not seen as a chore, but as a way to help the family live better. It doesn’t matter if it’s a day spent herding the family’s camels or caring for a younger sibling, helping out is the reality of life in the developing world.

Unfortunately, many kids miss school while they help their families, but as Sorie in Sierra Leone says, “I’m sorry I have to miss school, but I’m glad I can eat. That’s why I work in the rice field instead of studying every day. I do go to school after the harvest, and it’s nice to go with a full belly from the rice I helped grow.”
Child Labor and Exploitation

It is important to distinguish between beneficial and intolerable work. Much child labor falls into a grey area between these two extremes. Over 250 million children around the world—in countries both rich and poor—work, and many of them are at risk from hazardous and exploitative labor. According to the UNICEF child labor is exploitative if it involves:

- full-time work at too early an age;
- too many hours spent working;
- work that exerts undue physical, social, or psychological stress;
- work and life on the streets in bad conditions;
- inadequate pay;
- too much responsibility;
- work that hampers access to education;
- work that undermines children’s dignity and self-esteem, such as slavery or bonded labor and sexual exploitation;
- work that is detrimental to full social and psychological development.

The impact of work on a child’s development is the key to determining when such work becomes a problem. Work that is harmless to adults can be extremely harmful to children. Among the aspects of a child’s development that can be endangered by work are:

- physical development, including overall health, strength, coordination, vision, and hearing;
- cognitive development: literacy, numeracy, and acquisition of knowledge needed for normal life;
- emotional development: self-esteem, family attachment, feelings of love and acceptance;
- social and moral development: a sense of group identity, the ability to cooperate with others, the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong.

As Fatuma in Sudan told me, “I’m proud I can help my mother with the water. That makes one less job for her each day.”

On the front cover, you see (clockwise):
- selling tapestries in Chichicastanengo, Guatemala;
- doing laundry in Asbetefari, Ethiopia;
- basket-weaving in Lombok, Indonesia;
- and delivering fish from Lake Victoria, Uganda.

—Photos and text by Cristina Kessler, who currently lives in Bamako, Mali. Her book, All the King’s Animals (Boyd Mills) received our 1996 Honor Award. This year, her novel No Condition is Permanent was published by Philomel Books.
Thu Loan's Boat

Thu Loan felt the small round basket in her desk that was her boat, and wished the day would end. All week long, her fourth grade classmates had brought in different kinds of models and pictures of cars, airplanes, and boats for their transportation projects. As the only Vietnamese student in the school, Thu Loan already felt different; she was certain her boat project would show everyone just how different she was.

Finally, Mrs. Tomczak called on her. Thu Loan reached into her desk and brought out the small basket. She felt her stomach dance inside as she walked to the front of the class. She swallowed and said, "This basket is a type of boat that people use in Vietnam. It is called a thuyen thung or bucket boat. It's made of bamboo and is used by fishermen to reach their boats anchored in deep water."

She unrolled a painting she'd made of a starlit night above a dark and foamy sea. In the foreground of the picture was a bucket boat with several people in it. Thu Loan brushed back her long dark hair, took a deep breath, and began her story. "The thuyen thung was not only used by fishermen. There was a time when these boats were used by my family and others to reach freedom.

"After the war ended in Vietnam, many people wanted to come to the United States, but soldiers prevented them from leaving. Roads and airports were closed. My family escaped to freedom by the sea.

"On a night when there was no moon and the sky was wrapped in a blanket of stars, my grandmother bundled her five children into a bucket boat. She had sold many of her family's possessions to pay for a trip to freedom.

"Quickly and quietly my family climbed into the thuyen thung. There were over ten people in the boat. Silently they paddled the boat far out into the South China Sea. A blue fishing boat with ruby red trim waited for them off shore.

"Over one hundred people crowded on board that fishing boat. They sailed for three days before running out of fuel. Many people became scared. Some feared that the boat would be swamped by a storm, but others were more afraid of the pirates that sailed the waters of the South China Sea.

"My mother, who was ten years old at the time, my age now, prefers to remember the stars. She said, 'Each evening sky was a night of a thousand lights.' My mother imagined that each star represented the prayers and hopes of each person on board. Those stars helped her deal with her fears until the morning's golden sunrise.

"On the eighth day of the journey, there was no more drinking water. People were angry and felt they had been cheated by the boat operator. Many of the people on the boat began to give up hope. My grandmother sang Vietnamese folk songs to keep her children calm.

"As evening approached, my mother scanned the sky for the first stars. Red and green lights seemed to be getting closer—people realized a ship was approaching. My mother watched as it sailed closer to the fishing boat. Its flag had white stars on a blue background. Red and white stripes fluttered in the breeze. My mother was certain that this was the answer to her prayers.

"A ship brought my family to freedom. The journey began with a thuyen thung, a bucket boat. The basket held my family and its dream of freedom. That is why I'm proud to share this boat with you."

For a moment the whole classroom was very quiet. Then it exploded into applause for Thu Loan and her bucket boat. She left the small basket on her desk, glad to have shared her story.

—Michael Lex, Clarence, New York
Kim Phuc: A Beacon of Light

Nine-year-old Kim Phuc sat in the dark corner of the Buddhist temple with her cousins and seven siblings. She and her family had hidden in the temple for three days to escape the battles raging in the countryside.

Kim shut her eyes and breathed in the fragrant incense sticks burning in honor of departed ancestors. She thought of her grandfather and remembered how he would let her ride on the back of his water buffalo. Kim pictured the bright green rice fields near her home and her mother’s loving smile.

In a flash of explosive light, Kim Phuc’s life changed forever: a bomb dropped on the temple where the children were hiding. She could not find her cousins in the debris around her. As Kim and the other children ran down the road to escape, a curtain of fire rained down on them from exploding napalm bombs.

Kim emerged from the smoke and flames with her clothes burned from her body and her arms outstretched in agony. Nick Ut, a photographer, captured the moment on film, and then rushed the young girl to the hospital for emergency treatment.

Overnight, Ut’s photograph of Kim was published in newspapers around the world. The picture of the nine-year-old illustrated the savagery of war upon the innocence of life, and touched the hearts of many who saw it. The cries for an end to the Vietnam War became louder.

Despite the notoriety of the photograph, Kim became largely a forgotten casualty of war. She suffered through seventeen operations for burns and was hospitalized for fourteen months. In the hospital, Kim feared that her scars would prevent her from ever knowing love or marriage, and dreamed of becoming a physician. Neither her fears nor her hopes came to pass.

Kim began medical school in 1982 in Ho Chi Minh City. Her education was discontinued when government officials returned her to Trang Bang to give press interviews about the famous picture. She eventually was permitted to study in Cuba, where she met a fellow Vietnamese student named Toan Huy Bui.

Kim and Toan married in 1992 and celebrated with a honeymoon in Moscow, Russia. On the return flight, the plane stopped to refuel in Canada. Kim and Toan defected and eventually settled in Toronto, Ontario.

Kim still feels the pain of her burns every day. Her scarred back is a topographical map of the insanity and inhumanity of war. Yet her heart has not turned to bitterness and hate, but has flowered to bear the fruits of forgiveness and hope.

On Veteran’s Day in November 1996, Kim spoke at the Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial in Washington, D.C. She proclaimed to the world, “Even if I could talk face to face with the pilot who dropped the bombs, I would tell him we could not change history. We should try to do good things for the present and the future to promote peace.”

After her speech, Kim met a man who claimed to have ordered the attack on Trang Bang. Through his tears, she embraced and forgave the man for his role in the attack on 8 June 1972.

Kim Phuc has devoted her life to promoting peace. She created the Kim Foundation to provide aid to child war victims. She is an outspoken critic of land mines, which maim and kill children long after battles have stopped. She and photographer Nick Ut often give joint presentations to promote peace.

Kim is a deeply religious woman who finds great strength in her beliefs. She believes that she was spared in order to spread a message of forgiveness and to demonstrate the healing power of love. She says, “I have learned one true thing: the human heart is good. People want peace.” She urges today’s students “to be well educated for the future of love, peace, sharing, and forgiveness. It is necessary to do your best to stop war and violence.”

In a small apartment in Toronto, Canada, Kim laughs with her sons, Thomas and Steven. Peace is within her, and it is her gift to the world. She softly sings, “Love lifted me when nothing else helped, love lifted me...”

On the Street

This is a story of how ordinary citizens cast out a crooked president by sitting peacefully for three days on the street.

After many years of suffering, under President Ferdinand Marcos, a military general named Ramos and a government official named Enrile rebelled. This sparked what Filipinos call the EDSA Revolution, which lasted from the 23rd through the 25th of February 1986.

EDSA is a main avenue in Quezon City, the capital of the Philippines. The rebel forces of Ramos and Enrile stayed at Camp Aguinaldo and Camp Crame, which are located on EDSA. During the revolution civilians stayed on the streets and guarded the camps. Their rallying cry was “People Power,” and they kept Marcos’s forces away just by forming a huge human barricade. After three tense days, Marcos left.

Although Joey is fictional, the EDSA experiences are true, gathered from people who were there. Joey’s house does exist, and a monument to the EDSA Revolution is just a stone’s throw away from the house’s front steps.

“Joey, quick—wake up!”

My older sister Mel sounded desperate. Yesterday, Enrile and Ramos joined forces against President Marcos, and the Cardinal, an official in the Catholic Church, called on the people to prevent a civil war. President Marcos ordered radio and TV stations to stop broadcasting, except for a station that he controlled. However, one rebel radio station managed to remain hidden from the president, and it was broadcasting furiously from an unknown location.

I rushed downstairs. Mama and Mel were making sandwiches. I grabbed one and instantly felt a slap on my wrist.

“Those are for the people in EDSA!” Mel scolded.

“Why do we need to feed them?” I asked.

Mel explained impatiently, “Because they refuse to leave the street until Marcos gives up.”

The radio crackled to life. “More and more people, young and old, walking and in wheelchairs, have now descended upon EDSA! It is rumored that the president is getting ready to use tanks, planes, and helicopters to break the insurgency.”

Papa looked worried.

We lived right behind Camp Aguinaldo, and Camp Crame was five minutes away. If things got really hot, we’d be in the line of fire.

“I was listening to someone who was there yesterday,” Julie, the cook, told my mother. “It was like a fiesta. People were singing, talking, sharing food, and telling jokes.”

The number of people in EDSA had swelled to the point where no vehicles could pass though easily. Soldiers came with guns, but people put flowers in the barrel holes. Nuns held up rosaries to the soldiers, who simply stood there, confused and ashamed.

Marcos sent tanks and troops with teargas canisters marching on the other side of our subdivision. I felt like our house was in the eye of a typhoon. But I wanted to be out there in EDSA—I wanted to be a part of history.

Mel did too, and she pleaded with Mama and Papa until they gave in. The same did not work for me. That night, Mel told us stories about soldiers leaving their trucks and tanks and crossing over to where the civilians were.

On the third day of the revolution, someone opened fire from above. One house in our area took a direct hit. The U.S. intervened and told Marcos to give up the presidency and leave the country. He finally gave in and left for Hawaii.

Everybody was ecstatic and proud to be Filipino. But I was heartbroken because I wasn’t...
at EDSA. Then I saw the pictures, homemade videos, and films on TV. I saw hands pushing tanks, hands reaching out to soldiers. I saw many happy faces during the first days, grim and determined ones towards the end, and jubilant, crying ones after Marcos left.

Now I realize that I was part of it—I was a witness. The ordinary citizens at EDSA stood their ground for themselves, for their families, and for people like me. We were all in the revolution together. There was no escaping it.

It feels great not to be afraid of Marcos anymore. But now I must do my part: to remember, and to tell the story to others so that they might learn. I need to tell people how it was possible to stand firm in our convictions, and not to give up.

—Almira A. Gilles, Palatine, Illinois

Author's note: Today, although the Philippines is no longer ruled by a dictator, it still bears the wounds of the Marcos years. The road to recovery is long and difficult. Filipinos have had three presidents since Marcos left: Aquino, the wife of Marco's murdered archrival; Ramos, one of the EDSA Revolution's heroes; and Estrada, a former movie star who was elected in 1998. Most Filipinos are still poor, crime in the streets and dishonesty in the government are still common, and the country's rainforest is quickly vanishing, but at least now nobody is afraid to speak up. Elections are held on a fairly regular basis, and during the last one, more than six political parties participated! Many groups in the Philippines watch the government closely to make sure it does what is best for the country. Filipinos, like bamboo that bends with the wind but does not break, are sure to face the challenges ahead with the same courage and hope with which they endured over 300 years of rule by Spain, four years by Japan, and 40 years by the United States.

Severe drought caused Obeth and Leya to leave their homeland to search for water. Hot and dry, they came to rest beneath an ancient gray tree. Its massive trunk shaded them from the blazing summer sun, the first relief their parched skin had received that day. Before drifting into a midday sleep, Obeth stuck his long knife into the tree's thick bark for safe keeping.

Slumber was quick and deep for the tired travelers. Obeth dreamt of a place where water was plentiful and food abundant. As if to add to that pleasure, the heavens began to release
Obeth and Leya were the beginning of the village that sprawls out below me. Now you understand why I am the most valued member of the Tanzanian countryside. Beauty isn't everything.

- Linda Grennell, Blackduck, Minnesota

Obeth carefully cut out a small block of the trunk. It was soft and fibrous inside. He gave it a squeeze and out poured water. Obeth stood up to get a closer look at this amazing tree. He ran his fingers over it and placed his hand at the top of the trunk. He found that it was hollow and filled with pure water. “Leya,” he said, “let’s build our home here at the foot of this upside-down tree.” She agreed.

They built a small house with a straw roof and began filling it with children. They soon learned that the tree’s young shoots and leaves were good to eat. They used the seeds for coffee, oils, and candy. The white, tart pulp made a lemonade-like drink. The baobab’s pulp flour mixed with milk became an excellent yogurt. In fact, all the family needed came from baobab. It provided material for clothing, hats, baskets, and mats. They made bowls, water dippers, strings, ropes, soap, and even paper from the tree.

Leya and Obeth rejoiced in their abundance and in their children. But one day, their youngest child became sick. The parents did everything they could to make their son better, but he remained ill. The house with the straw roof was silent with sadness.

When the other children were told of their brother’s sickness, they were very concerned. “I wish he just had a stomachache,” the oldest said. The rest of the family nodded in agreement. They knew that drinking some milk mixed with pulp from the baobab would remedy that problem. A gleam of hope came into Leya’s eyes. “Baobab has sustained us in every way. Perhaps it will save our sick son as well.”

The family took turns giving the little boy regular doses of the pulp mixture. The next day his fever was gone.

Leya and Obeth thought back to that first day they had rested under the baobab tree. How glad they were that they had made their home near this amazing tree of life!

Facts About the Baobab Tree

The baobab tree can grow to be very large. The largest reported tree is located on the southern slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro; it measures ninety-two feet in circumference.

In Tanzania this tree is sometimes called a bottle tree. It is estimated that a tree of about 7,000 cubic feet will contain up to 37,000 gallons of water. Humans and animals alike benefit from this. Elephants especially like eating the bark and wood as a nice juicy snack.

Baobabs provide villagers with an endless supply of their daily needs and wants. It seems as if this tree gives them almost everything but firewood (it’s too wet to burn well).

The baobab tree is nourishing as well as useful. The pulp of the fruit is rich in vitamins B, C, and calcium. Mothers commonly give it to their babies to prevent fever and dysentery. Toothaches, anemia, influenza, tumors, and even kidney problems are among a few of the ailments it is used to treat.

The number of beneficial properties that come from this one form of plant life are amazing. What other benefits do we reap from nature?

—Linda Grennell, Blackduck, Minnesota

Obeth and Leya were the beginning of the village that sprawls out below me. Now you understand why I am the most valued member of the Tanzanian countryside. Beauty isn’t everything.

— Linda Grennell, Blackduck, Minnesota

art by Cara Stoddard
Swedish: Land of the Midnight Sun

Would you like spending the summer where it’s light from three in the morning until almost midnight? If you would, Sweden’s the place to be! There are no dark nights in Scandinavia during the summer, just a dimness that lasts three to four hours before the sun rises again. In northern Sweden the sun doesn’t set at all during the month of June. It’s easy to see why Sweden is called “Land of the Midnight Sun.” Do you think Swedish kids have trouble sleeping with so much light in the summer?

“I sleep well!” says nine-year-old Cecilia Johansson. Cecilia lives outside of Linghem, a small town in southern Sweden, with her parents, and a seven-year-old brother Robert. Cecilia and her family don’t have problems sleeping because they are accustomed to the gradual change from dark winter days to long, bright summers.

Cecilia is in the third grade and attends school from August to the end of May. She is studying English, as do all third graders in Sweden. Her mother has been giving her a head start by teaching her English words at home.

When Cecilia is sixteen she will choose a gymnasium to attend. In Sweden, a gymnasium is not a building where sports are played but a specialized high school. Some gymnasium prepare students for college while others teach them a trade.

Besides going to school, Cecilia loves to ski, ride a toboggan, and build snow castles in the winter. When it’s summer, she rides her bike and swims every day in one of the many lakes nearby.

The Midsummer celebration is one of Cecilia’s favorite holidays. This is when the Swedish people welcome the sun after a long, dark winter. This national holiday is celebrated on the Friday closest to 21 June, the longest day of the year. On Midsummer morning, Cecilia, her mother, brother, and farmor (grandmother on her father’s side) gather wildflowers to make wreaths to be worn in the hair. All young children wear these wreaths on Midsummer Day. Also during the morning, the townspeople decorate a twenty-foot pole, the Maypole, with flowers and branches. Later in the day, the Maypole is raised in the middle of town as hundreds of people dance and sing around it.

Swedish food is another important tradition. “Var så god!” can be heard in households all over Sweden. It means, “Come and eat!” Cecilia’s favorite dinner is platter (Swedish pancakes) served with jam and cream. Pancakes for dinner, you ask? Well, Cecilia thinks we have things mixed up. Our breakfast is her dinner and her breakfast is our lunch.

A typical breakfast in Sweden is open-faced sandwiches with sliced tomatoes, cucumbers, cheese, and cold sausage or a bowl of natural yogurt. Usually potatoes, soup, meat, or fish are eaten at the early afternoon meal. Dinner, a lighter meal, is eaten around seven in the evening and is often pancakes, fruit soup, or rice porridge.

Cecilia would like to tell us more about her beloved Sweden, but she knows it’s time to say, “Hej då!” Goodbye!

—Loretta Ichord, Hickman, California

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I Do it For the Joy it Brings

In the spring of 1997, Sarabeth Matilsky, age seventeen, departed on a cross-country bicycle trip, beginning in Yorktown, Virginia, and ending in Florence, Oregon. She traveled through ten states, averaging 50 miles a day and usually camping overnight. The following are excerpts from the journal Sarabeth kept during her trip and from a letter she sent to family and friends after her trip.

It all began on August 31, 1996, at precisely 10:01 p.m. I was sitting in the Seattle Airport and anticipating my red-eye flight to the East Coast with very little joy. I had just spent a week at a camp for unschooled teenagers, and it had been an incredibly inspiring week: what a bummer to end it all with a trip on an airplane. So as I sat there I said to myself, “There has got to be a better way to do this! I’m going to ride my bicycle to camp next year.”

In the months that followed, preparations took every ounce of my energy, as I spent time working to make money, poring over huge books about touring and mechanics, apprenticing at my local bike store to expand my rudimentary knowledge of bicycles, buying gear, contacting homeschooling families and intentional communities with whom I could stay along the way—and beginning to feel the pangs of self-doubt as the enormity of my plans began to hit me and people made negative comments about my trip.

In mid-October, I developed tendonitis in my wrists. I was told to rest them and that, “No, it’s probably not a good idea to ride a bicycle.” So until February I didn’t ride my bike, and I wondered a hundred times if this crazy scheme of mine were going to work out after all. But I kept doing everything else I could do to prepare, I celebrated my seventeenth birthday, and I continued trying to answer other people’s questions and some of my own. As soon as I could ride again, I set a date to leave. I decided that I would rather spend lots of time in the beginning doing only a few miles than spending time at home, training. I couldn’t wait.

The Journal

Lately I’ve started recognizing a difficult aspect of planning this trip: the fact that other people are so doubtful, skeptical, fearful, admonishing about it. “We don’t understand it,” they seem to be saying, “so it must be fraught with danger.” “Why do you want to do it, exactly? Aren’t you afraid? Isn’t that... dangerous? You could get raped.” And the inevitable, “You’re going alone?!” usually spoken in a tone that tries to conceal displeasure, disapproval, and fear but seldom succeeds. All of that and much more comes out of people’s mouths every day, and little by little it’s chipping away bits of my confidence. It’s doubly hard because some of my dear friends are the doubting ones. And I don’t want to smile and try to soothe everyone’s worries without recognizing that yes, of course there are dangers—probably more than I can imagine. But if I acknowledge in these conversations that I’m aware of the dangers, then it’s, “So why go?”

Right now I feel like I must face new dangers. After all, I will be leaving behind some dangers—ones I’ve lived with for seventeen years, like pollution, and getting killed in an automobile accident—that I face just by living in a city. I have to examine a new set of unknowns, circumstances, and challenges.

March 7, New Jersey: In the last few weeks, I’ve felt like there is a rope tied around me, pulling me inexorably toward the crevasse that lies between myself and Something Else (adulthood?). Lately that rope has been tugging so hard at times, making me scramble over and around all sorts of physical and mental obstacles. I have to take this trip.

April 18, Virginia: As I turned onto Route 43 towards the Blue Ridge Parkway, I shifted into my lowest gear and climbed. And climbed and...
climbed and climbed. But oddly enough, I realized that I was actually enjoying the climbing! It's hard and slow, but that's part of its attraction. It's quieter, going slowly, and I think about all sorts of things. There are also times when the difficulty and very physicalness of it makes me concentrate solely on my body: one pedal stroke at a time, push pull push pull, breathe, look at the road, watch for cars, steer the bike. At those times I'm simply riding, and life is condensed into one single goal: making it up the mountain.

When I made it up onto the Parkway, I promptly forgot about stray dogs and potholes and everything else and pulled over to the side of the road. I leaned my bike up, sat on a broad rock, ate peanut butter on crackers, and sank into the blissful blueness of those gorgeous mountains. And after that, all day in fact, I was utterly and totally enchanted by the ethereal, mist-like intensity of these mountains. I watched them rise and fall ahead of me as I pedaled and drank in great, deep mouthfuls of their magical blueness. Even as I struggled up their frustrating ascents, even as I was chilled by the winds, I gasped with the majesty of them... and it's so alluring not to know what's on the other side.

May 15, Kentucky: Litter, much of it several years old from its looks, lines the roads here, and there are trash heaps in the bends of the road. It's been several days of striking contrasts—in some places there's the barren and desolate coal-mined land, in others there are gorgeous, May-colored hillsides simply bursting with springtime; there's the depressed state of the economy; the people who are sometimes suspicious or rude but are most often kind; the deserted, gloomy junkyards and run-down mobile homes. It all intermingles and saddens me. This morning I began to ride as the mist rose with the sun. I shared the road with ungainly coal trucks that lumbered purposefully to the mines. They pulled out, loaded with several tons of coal freshly and carelessly taken from the earth, and loomed out of the smog and mist of the valley like determined turtles. The sun glittered on my bike and my breath hung frostily in the air. The exhaust fumes hung in the air too, and when cars and trucks went by they spewed me with sooty blackness. The whole landscape was surreal, the richness and poorness and beauty and ugliness of this land all rolled into one.

May 30, Missouri: As we [Wyeth and Jeff, two other cyclists I'd met in Illinois] were packing, up rode a man on a touring bicycle. "You must be Sarabeth," he said to me! Roel Mazure is from the Netherlands. He muscles up hills faster than everyone (especially me) and makes disparaging (and unfortunately mostly true) and fascinating observations about American people.

On Wednesday I experienced the most amazing downhill ever. We had climbed up a series of hills, and as we reached the final summit the road appeared to drop off the edge of the world. And for the next two miles, the Ozarks proved themselves to be a giant, self-propelled roller coaster. I went shooting down one hill, only to pop up on top of the next without pedaling. This happened several more times, and a huge smile was plastered on my face. I went 44 mph. I felt the exhilaration of the speed and the wind and the realization that I better not mess up or else!

July 5, Wyoming: I am safely cocooned in my tent, and outside there are millions upon millions of mosquitoes. I have never ever ever seen so many of them. I set up camp, made dinner, shoveled my gear inside my tent, and got in myself in an amazingly short period of time. I think I probably set some kind of record... and if I have to go to the bathroom tonight, I'm holding it in.

July 8, Wyoming: At one point today I stopped my bike for a moment and just listened. It was totally, quiet and still—at that moment there were no birds, no cars, no crickets, no buzzing power lines, no wind. I never heard so much silence.

July 24, Montana: There was a flaming red sunset over the mountains tonight, and as the sun set, the sagebrush-scented winds blew in a storm. The sun lit up the immense thunderhead, and I could see the fingers of rain, fiery red in the light.

August 15, Oregon: I did it!

—Sarabeth Matilsy, Brighton, Massachusetts
The sun quickly drops behind the sweet vermilion canyon cliffs. The intense desert heat fades to a mild, comfortable temperature. Stars above come out to say hello as bright and clear as you will ever see. The moon rises, casting a beautiful pale light into the canyon, bright enough to make a flashlight seem silly. With your tired feet warming dangerously close to the campfire, you stop to think, “Wow, life really isn’t that hard.” The peaceful loveliness of southern Utah settles over you like an old familiar blanket.

There is a kind of poetry, even a kind of truth, in the desert that is waiting to be explored. It is a vast world as complex as the sea. Here you will smell the earthy aroma of the well adapted juniper tree and hear the cries of the moon-eyed coyote. The steep canyon cliffs tell a story of our past. Layer upon layer of sediments date back to centuries ago. The lucky explorer can find remnants of Native American ancient cliff paintings called petroglyphs. Each rock and shrub, each tree and flower, each stem of grass is diverse and separate, but all work together in harmony to create a sense of peace and solitude. Take your shoes off and submerge your bare feet in the cool red sand. Let the breeze blow through your hair. Breathe in the fresh canyon air. Gawk at the glory of a natural arch created by the forces of wind and water. Stop for one moment and just be.

By leaving technology behind, your senses will come alive. You may feel a strange sensation of clarity. Don’t panic—that is just your body adapting to its surroundings. In the desert there are no deadlines or appointments, just life trying to continue on. Time is just the journey of the sun and moon. Between the clean crisp sunrises and the crimson sunsets, the day is yours. You will find a truth about yourself by just putting yourself in the desert.

—Brett Forman, Univ. of Oregon, Eugene
Writing

When I write I enter a world
that is known only to me.
A world very unique, not of this Earth,
where thoughts are free to run wild with
memories, cherished like hot chocolate
on a cold winter night,
and trees, filled with words like books.
Where rivers flow with sentences
that get washed onto the banks,
and jumble, combine, fuse, blend, scramble,
connect, and link
to form beautiful poems and stories of
adventure, mystery, and romance.
When I need inspiration
I climb a tree and pluck some words,
or have a conversation with a thought,
or stroll along the river banks
and read some tales.
But when the day dissolves into night,
the sun begins to fade
behind the hills and trees,
and the WHOOSH of the
rushing, rambling river
calms to a hum of gentle waves, then
my journey must end.
As I leave my small, beautiful world,
I whisper goodbye and think
of tomorrow’s adventure
and what it will bring
to the awaiting page.

—Emma Watson, 12, Prospect, Kentucky

WaveTrain

the paddle rests across my sun-baked legs
droplets of water hiss against my kayak.
the river moves slowly,
steadily down.
I am surrounded by layers of feathers that
cushion my every move.
the water begins to rumble,
throbbing, pulsing
as it rams unrelenting into obstinate rock.
the feathers become fingers,
grasping, clawing
reaching for my kayak.
they threaten to pull me down
and crush me against the beckoning rocks
one
swift
paddle stroke and they are silenced.
my eyes take in the danger before me.
analyze it, memorize it—yet
unhesitatingly, instantly
I map my path in the eternity of a moment
aim my fragile float down it and
ride

euphoric waves of thrill.

—Amanda Marusich, 14, Eugene, Oregon

Creation Poem

And did a quadruple backwards flip.
After creating my first picture
On my first day of school,
I said, “Cool!”
And did a double cartwheel.
After creating my first sand castle
When I first went to the lake
I said, “Now I’ll bake a cake!”
And did a triple somersault.
After creating my first cake
When I first learned to cook,
I said, “Look!”

After creating my first speech
When I first had a debate,
I said “This is great!”
And did a quintuple butterfly.

After creating my first invention
When I was first a scientist,
I raised my fist
In victory!

After creating my first book
When I was first writing
I said, “Let’s stop all the fighting!”
And did a peace sign.

After that
I said, “Time to rest!”
And I did.

—Terrence Williams, 14,
Chicago, Illinois
Family:  

Does your grandma cook as well as my grandma? Does she sew some of your pillows and clothing? Mine does, and I’m going to tell you about my grandma and what I mean to her.

My grandma looks like a turtle. She’s round and short, and walks very slowly because she’s 86. She has brown, wrinkled skin and blue eyes.

My grandma is so helpful. She cooks and cleans the dishes, does laundry, and even sews some of my clothing. When my grandma is sewing, she never gives up.

I like my grandma because she does a lot of good things for me. She buys stuff for me. She cooks for me. She loves me, and is always there for me. When my brother, mom, and dad were gone, my grandma watched me. When I’m by myself, my grandma will sometimes be with me.

I’m very special to my grandma. Before I was born, she did a lot of stuff by herself. When I got a little older, I made her life easier. When she cooks, I help her cook. She says that she loves me a lot and wants to see me grow up. When she is sad, I make her laugh. I make her very happy.

When I smell my grandma’s food I think about her cooking, and how good she has been to me. Then I remember how much I love her and how much she loves me.

—Mike Alcorn, 9, Filipino-American, Chicago

Grandmothers: two portraits

My grandmother’s name is Regina, but everyone calls her Grandma Reggie. She is beautiful inside and out. Even though she is eighty-five, Grandma still has beautiful, shiny black hair and sparkling blue eyes. She wears her long hair up in ponytails or down with colorful clips. She is not one bit embarrassed or ashamed to be seen in public like that because she knows she looks as good as everyone else around her. Grandma Reggie might sound a little wild, but she is really one of the sweetest and kindest people I know. She is bursting with energy and life.

Grandma is an incredibly athletic and outgoing person. She plays basketball with my brother (and always wins!), helps me practice gymnastics, coaches a baseball team, and takes swimming lessons twice a week. In the evenings, Grandma dances the night away. Believe it or not, she was pretty shy as a teenager and didn’t have a very big social life. Now people greet her wherever she goes! Grandma has even made friends with my friends. My grandmother is truly an outstanding and amazing person. She is brilliant as well as beautiful, and smart in more ways than one. I love my grandmother and so does everyone else who has met her. She is a truly unique human being!

—Tanya Budilovskaya, 13, Brooklyn, New York

Learning to Ride a Bike with You, Dad

Stepping, sliding onto the slippery pedals  
With both of my trembling feet  
Looking into your eyes, like shimmering marbles  
Confidence, reassurance, strength  
A warm glow overcame my body  
Knowing you would catch me if I fell  
An extra safety net at a circus  
A sudden push, my world moved suddenly  
Security, like a child’s blanket  
Warm and comfortable  
I almost fell to the concrete.  
“One more time,”  
You said, knowing I could do it  
Stepping, sliding, shaking, once again  

Determination dreadfully detailed my mind  
My world was going faster, then  
I felt another push  
I couldn’t stop  
Large muscular arms swept me up  
Like a newborn baby  
Swinging me to and fro  
anxiously awaiting another awesome adventure  
I will remember always  
A delightful hour  
When you, Dad,  
taught me  
how to ride a bike.

—Laura Phillips, 13, Goshen, Kentucky
A Special Brother, A Special Friend

On 24 April, 1992, my brother Matthew John was born. I didn’t think much of it then, but as I look back, he changed my life forever.

My brother was born a healthy, happy baby, but as he got older we noticed something different about him. We later learned he was autistic. That means his brain doesn’t work normally, that he lives in his own little world.

Matthew has made a major impact on my life, because I learned that not everyone is the same. When I was little and saw a retarded child or adult, I thought he or she was just weird. I didn’t know about mental illnesses or disabilities. Now when I see a person like that, I understand and don’t stare or make fun of them. Another thing Matthew has taught me is how to handle people. He has taught me patience. Whenever people give me a hard time, I don’t yell at them. I try to work it out, most of the time.

Even though he has problems that make him different, that doesn’t mean that he’s weird. Matthew has taught me more than just how to share, like normal kids, but how to cope with people. I am glad he became my brother, because I don’t think I would have learned these lessons if it weren’t for him. I love him. He is my brother and my friend.

—Kristen Messina, 13, Gibsonia, Pennsylvania

Answers For “A Nature Crossword” Vol. 12.2

ACROSS:
1. clove 13. jaguar 28. mistletoe
3. avocado 19. medicine 30. sandalwood
5. chicken 21. hummingbird 32. boa
6. spice 23. shampoo 33. periwinkle
8. witch doctor 25. peanuts 34. coconut
12. chicle 26. ant

DOWN:
2. bamboo 14. gorilla 24. poinsettia
4. ocelot 15. rain 25. python
7. aspect 16. palm oil 27. howler
8. wicker 17. furniture 29. coffee
9. corn 18. tomatoes 31. dung
10. orchid 20. seeds
11. toucan 22. banana

Small Hero

Joseph, my little cousin, is eight years old. He is always telling his friends all about me. His mother told me how much he looks up to me and that I’m his hero. I really didn’t think that I could be a hero. I always thought heroes were baseball players who hit seventy home runs in a season, or golfers who shoot under par. I never thought that I was doing anything great, but little did I know that I was making a difference in Joseph’s life.

Joseph’s father left his mother, his two sisters, and him. They live in a run-down neighborhood. My family goes to visit Joseph and his family a lot. We went to a baseball camp together, and he stayed at my house for the entire week. He loved it, and now he says, “I can hit the ball hard, just like Blake.”

Sometimes Joseph and I sit around and play video games. Sometimes we just watch TV. He always wanted a big brother and a friend. I’m always here for Joseph, and I always try to set a good example for him.

One night my father, brother, and I took Joseph to a baseball game. We had so much fun! We bought Joseph a baseball hat to remember the wonderful time. Later that night when his mother called to thank us, she told us that he had gone to bed with the hat on.

Joseph is very special to me, and he has taught me a lot about life. Joseph survives in a world that is very different from mine. He has no father to play ball with, to walk through the woods with, to take him to baseball games, and to watch him hit home runs. He lives in a place where he can’t even play outside for fear of his life. He survives in a school where kids must learn how to defend themselves. But in spite of all this, he cares about others and wants to do the right thing. He doesn’t feel sorry for himself, and he makes the most of the good things in his life. Joseph is not only my cousin and my friend, but my hero.

—Blake Schmitt, 13, Gibsonia, Pennsylvania
Ukraine

International Friendship Club members want pen pals. Write: Nalepka In1'1 Friendship Club at Secondary School 38
3 Nalepka Street, Chernivtsi, 58025

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

Mexico

Diana Dolores Jarquin -Arango, girl, 18
Carretera International S/N,
San Pedro Totolapan, Tlac.
Oaxaca, Mexico C.P. 68000
Int: painting, books, volleyball

High school students interested in writing to new friends from other countries. Write: c/o Prof. Augusto Jimenez A.
Escuela, Secundaria Federal Simbolos Patrios
Carretera Panamericana Km 823
Coloniad Maitires 31 Julio Juchitan,
Oaxaca Mexico

United States

Sarah Tomscha, girl, 8
1490 — 21st Street N.E.
Salem, Oregon 97301
Int: reading, animals, nature

Nicolette Duke, girl, 10
9600 Mason Creek Road
Norfolk, VA 23503
Int: sports, computers, art, piano

Two prisoners (18, 19) wish to correspond with people from other countries and cultures. See their artwork here. You can contact Mike Salazar (P.#402763)
Carlos Castillo (P.#741431)
c/o James V Allred Unit
2101 FM 369 N.
Iowa Park, TX 76367
**Satisfying Summer Suggestions**
- Attend an art class; act in a play
- Be a Big Brother/Big Sister; go bird watching
- Cook a Chinese meal; compost kitchen scraps
- Draw; take part in a drumming circle
- Exchange hugs with pals; eat with the elderly
- Finger-paint, fly a kite
- Grow a garden
- Hike a high hill; help the handicapped
- Ice skate; make ice cream at home
- Juggle; play on a jungle gym
- Knit; keep a journal
- Write a letter; learn a new skill
- Make music; meditate
- Play with your neighbors; nourish yourself
- Observe an artist or orchestra; visit an orchard
- Plan a potluck party in a park; write poetry
- Quit a bad habit; make a quilt
- Relax; read to youngsters or the elderly
- Sit in silence; serve in a soup kitchen; swim
- Tell stories; tap dance, have a tea party; tutor
- Undo a wrong you did; play Ultimate Frisbee
- Volunteer at a nursing home or a rehab center
- Walk in the woods and wade in the water
- Play the xylophone; exercise outdoors
- Practice yoga; learn to yodel; make yoghurt
- Visit a zoo; bake a zucchini bread; study Zen!

**Just Kidding**

Why are the days longer in summer and shorter in winter?
Answer *Things expand with heat and contract with cold!*

What happens when water becomes ice?
Answer *The PRICE goes up!*

What's heavier: full moon or half moon?
Answer *Full moon is LIGHTER!*

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**India:** Because DDT is still being manufactured and used in India (as in Mexico and China) to combat malaria, the level of DDT in the food chain is over ten times higher than in the U.S.

**Israel:** The Israeli Ministry of Education has banned animal experiments in its high schools and junior high schools in response to demands from animal rights groups.

**Japan:** Taishi Shokuhin Kogyo, one of Japan's largest tofu companies, has decided to not use genetically modified soybeans for making tofu.

**UK:** Britain's Soil Association has turned up evidence that naturally grown (organic) produce contains more nutrients, vitamins, and cancer-fighting secondary metabolites than conventionally grown crops.

**USA:** On Mother's Day, more than a million mothers marched on the Mall in Washington and elsewhere in the nation to lobby for strict gun control laws to make communities safer.

**United Nations:** There are only 5 to 7,000 wild tigers left in the world today. One hundred years ago, there were about 100,000 tigers!

**Symposium 2000** will celebrate Albert Schweitzer and J. S. Bach from 30 Sept. to 15 Oct. in Nashville, Tennessee. For more information, contact symposium2000@webtv.net.

**Children's Crusade 2000,** 11-13 August 2000
Children's Crusade in Farmington, Pennsylvania is a festival for kids of all races and religions. Its purpose is to celebrate life and to find an answer to world violence, hate, and suffering. Kids and their parents will work, play, sing, dance, think, and share cultures and need. Tel. (724) 329-8573.

**Did you know that...** Karl Benz test drove the world's first gasoline car at 9 miles per hour in 1885. ...Less than one hundred years ago, oil was discovered in the Persian Gulf, which has fueled oil-based global industrialization. ...The United States' interstate highway system was authorized by Congress in 1956, and has served as a model for many countries. Now we must deal with global warming. *How should we undo the damage?*

(Source: *Earth Island Journal and WorldWatch*)

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**Educators! Librarians! Teachers! Principals! Parents!**

**Dive into our Millennium Sale of timely and timeless back issues!**

$100 for a set of 40 issues
$20 for any five issues of your choice!
We also recommend these books (see pages 6-12)

**The Cross by Day, the Mezzuzah by Night** by Deborah Spector Siegel (*Jewish Publication Society*). This thrilling tale captures the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition and the strength and determination of one young girl to preserve her family and culture at any cost. Young adult novel for ages 12 and up.

**Dave at Night** by Gail Carson Levine (*HarperCollins*). In 1926 New York, the orphan Dave sneaks out of a home for boys to explore the world of the Harlem Renaissance. A great novel for ages 10-13.

**Earth Care: World Folktales to Talk About** by Margaret R. MacDonald (*Linnet Books/Shoe String*). Stories and proverbs from around the world on human and ecological themes. Includes tale introductions and notes. Teaching resource for ages 7-13.

**Extraordinary Girls** by Maya Ajmera, Olateju Omolodun, and Sarah Strunk (*Charlesbridge*). Ages 8 and up. (Reviewed in Vol. 12, no. 1.)

**Family, Familia** by Diane Gonzales Bertrand, illust. Pauline Rodriguez Howard (*Arte Publico*). Young Daniel doesn’t share his dad’s excitement over a family reunion. But once there, he makes a happy discovery about the meaning of family. Ages 6-11.

**Hope** by Isabell Monk, illust. Janice Porter (*Lerner*). With vibrant illustrations and endearing characters, Hope tells of one girl’s awakening to the strength and beauty of her rich biracial heritage as explained through her loving aunt’s family stories. Ages 6–12.

**Moon Cakes to Maize: Delicious World Folk Tales** by Norma Livo (*Fulcrum*). This engaging anthology includes recommendations for activities and extensions to the stories. Good resource for teachers of all grades working with multicultural units.

**Share the Sky** by Ting-Xing Ye, illust. Suzane Langlois (*Annick Press, Canada*). Fei fei is full of doubts about her new life in America, but they disappear when she sees a beautiful kite on the wall of her new classroom. Picture book for ages 4–9.

**Stormy Night** written and illust. by Michèle Lemieux (*Kids Can Press, Canada*). The imaginative drawings and thought-provoking text provide the perfect place for children to start looking for their own answers to the really important questions. Ages 8–17.

**Shower of Gold** by Uma Krishnaswami (*Shoe String Press*). Ages 10–18. (Reviewed in Vol. 11, no. 5.)

**Tea With Milk** written and illust. by Allen Say (*Walter Lorraine/Houghton Mifflin*). Beautifully illustrated, this is a moving tribute to the author’s parents and their discovery of where home really is. All ages.

**Apple Batter** written and illust. by Deborah Turney Zagwény (*Ten Speed*). While Loretta coaxes the first apples from her orchard, her son Delmore practices his swing for baseball. It reminds us that one of love’s best rewards is striving side by side. Poetic. All ages.

**The Crab Man** by Patricia Van West, illust. Cedric Lucas (*Turtle Books*). A compelling story of a young Jamaican boy who must choose between earning money or treating animals fairly. Ages 4 and up.

**Exotic Species: Invaders in Paradise** by Brenda Guiberson (*Millbrook Press*). This book illustrates what happens when one species, flora or fauna, moves into another’s native habitat and threatens it with extinction. Illustrated. Ages 11–18.

**Follow that Fin! Studying Dolphin Behavior** (*Raintree Steck-Vaughn*). *Follow That Fin* presents an overview of dolphin social behavior and summarizes the latest observation techniques. Ages 7–12.

**Keeper of the Swamp** by Ann Garrett, illust. Karen Chandler (*Turtle Books*). In this dramatic coming-of-age story, a boy confronts his fears and learns from his grandfather the secrets of the swamp. Ages 6–12.

**Living World Encyclopedia** (*EDC Publishing*). From mountain peaks and steamy jungles to animals’ behavior, this fascinating book introduces children to the world of nature. Colorful illustrations. Ages 8–12.

**Shelterwood** by Susan Shetterly, illust. Rebecca McCall (*Tilbury House*). In this eloquent story, a nurturing grandfather fosters growth and an understanding of nature in his granddaughter. Ages 8–10.

**Ruby Bridges** (Video by *Disney Educational Prod.*). portrays the true story of young Ruby Bridges, one of the first black students to integrate public elementary school in New Orleans. 95 min. Ages 9–14.

**Peanut Man: George W. Carver** (*Grace Products*). A teenager faced with tough choices is transported back to the past to meet Mr. Carver, who also faced many challenges in his life. 34 min. handbook. Ages 11–18.
A Guide for PARENTS & TEACHERS

We are grateful to our grandparents and the founders of our town for building it in the most beautiful area near the Volga. You needn’t walk or take a bus to enjoy nature—in the western part of town, you can see the majestic Zhiguli Mountains from your windows.

The eastern side of town is like another world; there, at a huge automobile factory, a new car leaves the assembly line every three-and-a-half minutes. Downstream from the Volga, there is a dam, seven kilometers long, and a hydroelectric power station.

Carefully looking at the green panorama of the Zhiguli Mountains, we can see big white wounds where limestone is mined. Bathing in the reservoir, we can see a thick layer of green algae on the water’s surface. Thousands of new cars decorate the streets of the town, but at the same time, they pollute the environment. Technology often comes into conflict with the beauty of nature. How can the two coexist peacefully? This question is answered in Gymnasium 77’s concepts.

Our gymnasium’s first rule is to protect nature. This can be done in many ways, but we choose to encourage our students to learn about the environment. Their knowledge, ideas, and experience allow them to find harmony with both nature and culture. The scientists and teachers of our gymnasium educate our students about nature all throughout their school years. We have successfully offered new subjects such as environment, natural laws, and folk medicine, as well as different extracurricular activities: planting bushes and flowers in the school park, cleaning national parks, caring for the gymnasium’s houseplants, and participating in activities at the Institute of Ecology here.

Our gymnasium successfully cooperates with high schools, science centers and international ecological establishments and associations. The Povolzhskaya Environmental Association was founded and works on this basis, and includes twenty-seven high schools and colleges.

Our gymnasium also cooperates with foreign schools and culturally/ecologically oriented organizations. In 1999 we were accepted into the International Association of UNESCO schools for folk art. Our students participate in the international project called Legends of Peace for young people worldwide, creating a culture of peace through the magic of myth and story. Locally, our school is the founder of a colorful ecological educational magazine called Spring which is distributed not only in the Samara area but also in other regions of Russia.

Another of our gymnasium’s rules is that both students and teachers must have freedom of choice. We offer elective classes, and some courses are taught at different levels of complexity. Teachers pay attention to their students’ talents, and help them find their way in life in harmony with their abilities and interests.

We believe that a school should be a place of beauty and pleasure. The beauty and coziness in our gymnasium are created and supported by its inhabitants: students, teachers and parents are actively involved with both the indoor and outdoor gardens. The birch grove, the garden of peace with its decorative plants, flower beds, and the sports grounds please the eyes. Students are responsible for watering the flowers and the spring planting.

We also believe that we should provide all the necessary facilities for the education and training of our students. After classes, our studios, laboratories, and sports halls are filled to capacity. Here, children enjoy playing volleyball and basketball, and rehearsing for performances. We also promote children’s multicultural creativity. At the Povolzhskaya center and the Samara State Academy of Culture and Arts, we work with multicultural and international magazines like Skipping Stones.

An important part of our work is the establishment of relations with scientific and educational associations worldwide, including an exchange of information about environmental projects and participation in international educational programs, competitions, and seminars.

The great peacemaker M. Gandhi observed that the creation of harmony in the community and the world begins with the free development of children and their good deeds.

—Ludmila Andreeva, Vladimir Ionesov, Svetlana Merkulova, and Valentin Mikhailkevich, Gymnasium No. 77, Togliatti, Samara, Russia.