Bound for Glory:
Skipping Stones Honor Awards for outstanding books and educational videos

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

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From the Editor

As I write this letter, I can feel the warmth of the April sun. Spring flowers are in full bloom here in the Pacific Northwest. When you receive this issue, perhaps you will already be dreaming about what you might do this summer.

Those of you who live in the Southern Hemisphere enjoy your summers when we are in our deep winter blues. When I was a student in India, summer vacation was during May and June, and the new school year began on 1 July, just like the rainy monsoon season.

Summer is my favorite season of the year. I cherish the sixteen hours of daylight in June. Last Sunday, I prepared a bed in our garden and transplanted strawberry starters. We can’t wait for the first juicy berries of the season. What would summers be without blackberries, strawberries and raspberries fresh off the vines? They’re heavenly!

How do you make the best use of your summer vacation? I begin my summer with a four-day weekend retreat to renew my spirits. As an editor and publisher, I can’t afford to take long vacations. So I try to experience and enjoy the beauty of summer every day. Disneyland or other big trips are not the highlights of my summers.

I enjoy time spent outdoors! I try to find time for morning walks and a few good hikes each month. I use my bicycle as much as I can. I hope for several overnight camping trips to the ocean.

There’s nothing like a soothing beach walk; how fresh the ocean breeze feels! Camping in the high desert or the mountains is great for star-gazing at night. Sometimes you see shooting stars or a spectacular dance of the northern lights!

Our playhouse is right in the garden, so I can enjoy moments of quietness or think of some garden projects in the shade. There are always plenty of satisfying tasks in the garden, which rewards us with greater beauty and tasty produce like spinach, snow peas, potatoes, zucchinis, tomatoes, and peppers. We also buy fresh vegetables at the farmer’s market.

On hot summer afternoons, a swim in a nearby lake or river, or a refreshing dip in cool mountain streams hits the spot like nothing else. If we are short on time, we go to the nearby park to play, or sometimes for an outdoor summer music concert.

On weekends, I opt for a leisurely morning or afternoon, or an art project or a book that has been on my mind. I enjoy an afternoon tea with a neighbor or a friend on our porch. I also like to find quiet time for meditation and reflection.

Maybe, as you read this issue you will come up with some new ideas—good books to read (pp. 6-12), art projects (p. 33), skills to learn, places to visit, nature trips, developing or deepening friendships or writing to pen pals (p. 34)...

Have a great summer!

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Skipping Stones

Art: Jon Bush, Belmont, MA

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April 27: Freedom Day in South Africa
May: Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month;
   Older Americans Month
May 1: Sham Al Nassim (Egypt), May Day & May
   Pole Festival (Europe), Vappu Day (Finland), all
   celebrate spring; International Labor Day
May 5: Cinco de Mayo; Children’s Day (Korea);
May 7: Vaishakhi Lord Buddha’s B’day, Full Moon
May 16: Annual “Turn Beauty Inside Out Day”

June: Lesbian/Gay Pride Month in the U.S.
June 1: Gawai Dayak: Harvest Festival in Malaysia
June 5: World Environment Day, Eid-a-Milad (Islam)
June 19: Juneteenth Festival: African Americans
   celebrate the end of slavery in the South.
June 21: Solstice! Mid Summer Fest in Scandinavia
July–August: Summer (Cultural) Festivals & Fairs
Aug 4: Hiroshima Day, Full Moon, Rakhi (India)
Aug 12: Janmashtami, Sri Krishna’s B’day (Hindu)
All heroes have different qualities, but one they all share is courage. I am not talking about the courage of fighting a tiger without any weapons. I am talking about the small courageous acts; like saying “I’m sorry” when you hurt someone’s feelings or helping someone you don’t know, even if you really don’t feel like helping, or not giving up a goal just because you found some thorns along the way.

My brother has this kind of courage, and that is what makes him different from everybody else and also what makes him a hero. It seems easy, but when was the last time you stopped on the road to help someone change a flat tire—even if it’s raining, and you are tired? The small things are the ones that make the difference. Many times I am surprised when my brother stops whatever he is doing just to help a stranger. He never gives up a goal, even when it’s difficult. He always wanted to be a triathlete, but he didn’t have the money to buy a good bicycle. He had to work very hard for a year to get the money, but he did it. Many times he thought about giving up, but he never did. He also wanted to be a civil engineer, and he had to take a very hard test with 50 thousand other students to get into college. Only five hundred made it. He had spent a year as an exchange student, so he had to study hard to catch up on what he missed. But he made it; he took fifth place out of three thousand students. He is not a wimp; he is a winner, and that is how I want to be.

Also, if my brother sees that he made someone feel bad, he talks to that person. It is such a beautiful act and so simple, but it’s one that we don’t do very often.

I try to develop his qualities, but when I try I see how hard it is. But it is courageous not to give up despite the difficulties. So I won’t give up my goal: to be someone’s hero. If someday I find out that I am someone’s hero, it is because I have good qualities, including courage. I will know that my work wasn’t in vain.

—Guilherme Silva, 14, Pennsylvania
When you’re seventeen, you’re on the cusp of everything. You’re almost out of school, almost an adult, almost able to buy scratch-it lottery tickets. And everyone sees this and begins asking questions:

“Where will you go to school? What kind of work do you want? What are you going to do with your life?” These questions always leave me wondering. In fact, people have asked me so many questions lately that I’ve started to ask them to myself. The following excerpts from my late-night philosophical ponderings have been What’s On My Mind lately.

• Am I going to be happy and successful in my life? (Do I really want to know the answer to that?) What does success mean, anyway? Where will I travel? What college will I go to, and will I be happy there? Where will I work, and will it be worthwhile? Will what I do change the world?

• Who am I? A friend of mine hit this question right on when she remarked, “There’s lots I can say to describe me, but that’s not who I am.”

• How do you make yourself happy? Do you climb trees, sit on roof tops, surf a giant wave or backpack for six days in a desert canyon? Do you dance in socks to music in your kitchen or write crazy haikus with friends?

• What are my assumptions about my life? Everyone has subconscious assumptions that function as guidelines for their decisions. We are unaware of so many of our options and therefore don’t consider them simply because they’re outside our normal experience. I’d like to think I consider all the aspects of a situation before reaching a decision; I don’t like to think there’s some subconscious censor in my brain automatically ruling out possibilities, secretly influencing and biasing my decisions. For example, I always assumed I would go to college and settle down into some sort of a career. I never even considered dropping out of high school, not attending college, or working for only a couple months at a time and switching jobs whenever the mood struck. But now that I’ve experienced a little more, ideas keep popping up that completely contradict what I’ve always believed. What if I worked only six months out of the year, each year somewhere different, and the other six months my only job was having fun? I could kayak, backpack, road-trip anywhere, stopping only to earn enough money to take off again.

Just because I thought of these things doesn’t necessarily mean I’ll follow through on them. But until I looked beyond my assumptions, I didn’t even see them as options. I never thought about fighting fires in Idaho and Montana over the summer. I never thought about leaving the familiar USA to hitchhike for three years from South Africa to Turkey like a friend did. But now that I’ve ferreted out these assumptions, I’ve been able to step beyond my supposed comfort zone and into a whole stew of adventurous possibilities.

Am I doing what I’m doing because it’s what I want to do? Or is it because that’s what someone else hopes I’ll do? After living through seventeen years, I’ve drawn the beginnings of conclusions to these questions and have experienced a few revelations.

• Don’t worry about how others see you. (They’re all busy worrying about themselves anyway!) Life is much better when YOU live it, not when you watch some “perfect” stranger live it through your body.

• Experiencing the bad makes you appreciate the good. After living through a horrible day, even an okay day feels great.

• Friends who are ashamed to be around you aren’t worth being around.

• One of the points of life is to collect as many experiences as possible, to live as many vivid moments as possible. Be open to every experience. Learn from every day. You can only become stronger.

• Get out of your comfort zone. Stretch your definition of self. Take risks. A “risk” doesn’t have to be something death-defying. It can be as simple as going to see a pro wrestling match or listening to a poetry open mic if you’ve never done either before.

• Don’t string people along. Honesty is like ripping a band-aid off quickly. It hurts, but it hurts for less time than it would if you dragged the process out with avoidance, half-truths and empty niceties.

• There are some experiences you shouldn’t try to rationalize. Just let them happen. Enjoy each moment for what it is, not what it could be.

• There are different degrees of future: the next breath, tomorrow morning, six months from now, a year, a decade, your lifetime. Think about all of them.

—Amanda Marusich, 17, will be graduating from high school this June with honors. Also see pages 22-23 and the back cover for her contributions.
Bound for Glory!
The 2001 Skipping Stones Honor Awards

Looking for exceptional multicultural and nature books? Each year we recognize outstanding books, teaching resources and educational videos from both large and small publishers and media producers.

Titles selected for our 2001 awards encourage close relationships with nature and promote respect and understanding for cultural diversity in our world. Our selection committee is comprised of over 20 reviewers: editors, librarians, parents, students and teachers.

We are pleased to present the honored titles below in four categories for your educational entertainment!

Ecology and Nature Books: Promoting an understanding of natural systems, specific species or habitats, human, plant and animal relationships, resource conservation, environmental protection and restoration efforts and sustainable living.


My closest companion for the last 20 years is a cat named Charlie. I thought of her when I read *Do Animals Have Feelings Too?* and my immediate response was, “Of course!”

However, other people may not be as convinced. Some of our cultures, religions or scientists have taught us that animals are lowly and stupid. We have created a hierarchy of beings, with humans on the top. This hierarchy allows some humans to justify treating animals poorly and destroying their habitats.

I hope that this book is widely read. It will help us to dispose of this hierarchy and the resulting pain and destruction of animals.

This book is well-written and illustrated. The author often uses a storytelling style to describe animals’ behaviors, which are based on their feelings. A variety of animals are described, enough that most of the readers will have observed some of these animals, either in person or on film.

—Charlotte Behm, board member and educator


*Oil Spills* is clear, informative and shocking. It discusses everything from the world’s largest oil spills and their causes to cleanup techniques and prevention—it makes for a gripping read. The Exxon Valdez oil spill ranked only 36th on the list for total gallons spilled. It’s hard to imagine how horrific the Castillo de Bellver spill, No. 1 at a whopping 79 million gallons, must have been. Oil spills get more publicity and therefore notoriety when they impact coastlines, people, wildlife and jobs. These coastal spills create more headlines as they cost more money to clean up and affect more people.

This book presents information in a fresh, interesting way. It is filled with maps, photographs and off-the-wall facts. I especially liked its section on how we can reduce our dependence on oil. I was surprised to learn that ballpoint pens, guitar strings and even transparent tape are manufactured with oil.

Despite the subject’s tragic nature, the book is optimistic, entertaining and motivational. High recommendations!

—Amanda Marusich, senior, South Eugene High.

“Let’s learn from the creatures, the wisest of teachers, who pass their energy, one to another, respecting and trusting their Planet Earth Mother.”

This rhyming story tells of how energy is passed between plants and animals through the various links of a food chain, while stressing the need for healthy habitats for the continuation of these natural cycles. Lifelike oil illustrations of Earth’s beauty color this story with a brilliance that fuels our imaginations.

—Dave Geare, student, Univ. of Oregon


When I think back to courses I took for a bachelor’s degree in zoology, I would have loved to have had a curriculum written in the same format as What's the Difference? I found the book’s comparison and contrast style of conveying information to be a very effective way to learn about animals.

What’s the Difference? discusses ten animal pairs that are easily confused, for example: leopards and cheetahs, ravens and crows, rabbits and hares, donkeys and mules, and porpoises and dolphins. The book kept my attention all the way through, and I am a person who does not easily learn lists of characteristics that we are often asked to memorize in school.

The book is a wonderful, imaginative information resource for students. Also, it is a marvelous example of teaching strategies for science which will reach a wider range of students than a traditional curriculum.

—Charlotte Behm, educator and board member


I am totally in awe of Anne Collet, author of a book I would have considered impossible to create—until I had read it. As I finished the last pages, the thought came to me that this book could only have been written by a person molded by the sea.

Like the confluence of many streams of waters, many currents of thought blend together into the creation of this magical literary work of art: her formative years of childhood; listening to her inner-voice, tender grasp of scientific facts, and, lastly, recording of the brutal havoc created by drift net, trawl fishing, overfishing, murderous toxic spills and pollution threatening the continuance of ocean life.

Founder of the Center for Research on Marine Mammals in La Rochelle, France, Collet weaves throughout the book the thrilling aspects of her work with whales, dolphins and seals. What does Anne see as the height of her experiences? A sublime gaze shared with a whale, a meeting eye-to-eye. Anne invites us to share with her each moment of her oceanic adventures in her habitual spirit of awe and respect, wonder and acceptance of nature’s grandeur.

I have been transformed by the quiet unfolding of the many aspects of this book. Through it, I have been privileged to journey with a fulfilled person who, in knowing herself, is able to give me, the reader, a pure taste of a life I would never have ventured into by myself. Thank you, Anne Collet!

—Hanna Still, educator and board member

Enter the 2001 Youth Honor Awards by June 20. Visit: www.efn.org/~skipping for guidelines!
Multicultural and International Books:
Focusing on cultural or ethnic diversity or sustainable intercultural and/or global relationships, these books build bridges of communication, understanding, social justice and peace.


This is a book filled with exciting photos of beautiful African American children in every human shade you could imagine. The text is loaded with outstanding metaphors such as, “I am the creamy white frost in vanilla ice cream and the milky smooth brown in a chocolate bar.” The skin color, hair and eye color is compared to different things. This book can be appreciated on many levels.

It is colorful and pleasing to the eye just to browse through, interesting to read, and it would make a great classroom discussion piece.

—Paulette Ansari, Librarian and board member


In the chill of a far north night, two sisters set out to greet the Sky Spirits. As the girls trek toward Coyote Hill in the moonlight, they remember the words of their grandmother, “Wisdom comes on silent wings.” But it is not always easy to remain silent in the exhilarating, snowy landscape, especially when they encounter a rabbit, deer and coyote. After patiently waiting, the sisters are rewarded with the brilliant dance of the Northern Lights. Perhaps the Sky Spirits are truly Sky Sisters.

SkySisters reaffirms the bonds between sisters, generations and between humans and nature. This is a realistic tale about a contemporary Ojibway family, the First Peoples of Canada, but it touches a chord of timelessness. Coyotes still howl in the night; older sisters still get to go first; and the Sky Spirits dance for the sisters just as they danced for Grandmother.

—Michelle Lieberman, assistant editor

My Very Own Room/Mi propio cuartito by Amada Irma Perez; Illust. Maya Christina Gonzalez. Bilingual Spanish/English. Elem. grades. hb$15.95. Children’s Book Press; cbookpress@cbookpress.org

Brilliant colors and charming details by the illustrator enhance this tender story of a young girl who loves and is loved by her big family but who longs for a little space of her own. The juxtaposition of the sweet relationship she has with her five little brothers and her need for time alone leads to a determination that inspires her entire family to help her accomplish her dream. With few resources but inspiring resourcefulness, working together “like a mighty team of powerful ants,” the girl and her family create a room for her from a storage closet in their tiny two-bedroom house.

I fell in love with this book for several reasons. A young girl stands up for her needs and finds support from her family, then returns their love and includes them in her newfound space. Working with what they have, a family acknowledges the dream of their daughter/sister. The sheer excitement and joy in working toward a common goal shines through on every page. This is a lovely, hopeful, empowering story, told from the author’s own experiences growing up with her parents and five brothers in California after immigrating from Mexico.

—Mary Drew, E.S.L. teacher and board member


This wonderful anthology of fiction and poems encompasses nearly every aspect of the Native American experience. Thirty-five different authors,
including six from Canada and one from Mexico, present both traditional and contemporary stories which evoke the full range of human emotion: joy, sorrow, loss, survival skills and humor.

The writings, which incorporate oral storytelling and tribal culture, history and worldviews, portray past and current Native American experiences, while clearly depicting the effects the treatment by governments and other people have had on Native American individuals and cultures. This book is educational, enjoyable and entertaining. I loved it the first time I read it. The second reading provided me with nuances of understanding I missed the first time. I highly recommend this book for literature classes at the high school level and for personal enjoyment.

—Yvonne Young, storyteller and grandmother


César Chávez’s work comes to life in every page of this book. His remarkable compassion, love and strength are palpable through the words of Rudolfo Anaya and accentuated by the beautiful images created by Gaspar Enriquez.

I liked the sweet prose of the author very much and the mourning we feel for the death of César. He moves us from the sadness of his death to the push for action: “Rise, mi gente, rise!”

The collage combinations are very powerful. The symbolism and cultural references moved me. I particularly liked the ones that show César looking in. I recommend the book to all, young and old, to those who don’t know who César Chávez was and to those who know him very well.

It’s my hope that the readers will be able to transpose César’s ideas to other areas in need of change and realize that his was a struggle for oppressed people everywhere. Let’s contribute to justice for all.

—Esther Celis, from Mexico, is our Spanish editor


With a well conveyed child’s imagination, Ms. Yang’s enlightening story grants a view into the hard transition of cultural change and being the new kid at school. Jinna Zhang is a fifth-grade student who has just moved to America from China. She vows to put away the old Jinna and become the new “Gina” in this foreign world. On her first day of school, however, she finds that she cannot utter a single word, in Chinese or in English. Pressured by her teachers, family and classmates, her voice becomes more and more difficult to use until she cannot speak at all! Not until a girl in her class named Priscilla befriends her in spite of her silence does Jinna begin to feel comfortable enough to communicate. Through the stories in Jinna’s own secret world created by dolls of yarn, the Princess Jade-Blossom, Pigsy and The Monkey King help Jinna overcome the struggles of making friends and expressing herself in a new environment.

One of the most touching aspects of this book is Jinna’s powerful inside character. Her secret magical world constructs the tests that Jinna herself will overcome in order to find her voice. As the Monkey King declares that the Princess Jade-Blossom must prove herself clever, brave and noble, Jinna’s tests at school are far more involved than the ones that she’ll get a grade on. Jinna’s journey is felt as a dramatic dance conquering the monsters of change.

The world inside Jinna’s heart, even as Jinna’s outside self might be scared or confused, is filled with grace and love. And the love between Jinna and Priscilla is an example of two people communicating well even under difficult circumstances. The Secret Voice of Gina Zhang shows what happens when love, courage, intelligence and nobility are used to find understanding between people of difference.

—Dave Geare, student intern
**Educational videos:** Engaging and mindful videos for use in the classroom to foster respect and understanding of all people and communities.

**That's a Family!** by Debra Chasnoff. Elementary grades. $75/$150. Women's Educational Media, www.womedia.org. A study guide is also available.

That's a Family! explores the concept of a family by profiling about half a dozen different family possibilities. These include families made up by adoption, mixed-race families, families where the children live with grandparents, families with gay parents, single-parent families, and families with stepparents. Children act as tour guides into their lives and their own unique family situations, explaining what makes their family special and how they, and others, perceive their family. Some of their comments are unintentionally humorous; some are unintentionally poignant; all are educational. The video is an excellent tool for teaching about diversity and tolerance. It also celebrates the unique family situations and why everyone's family will fit the definition of the word, regardless of how or who makes it up.

—Kristen Sheley, student intern from Univ. of Oregon


I must admit that before watching this video I knew next to nothing about the Hmong—and there are 90,000 Hmong immigrants in the U.S. The Hmong culture and history is narrated by a second-generation American Hmong teenager, Lia Yang.

Lia is an articulate young woman who introduces us to her family. We gain an understanding of some aspects of Hmong culture as the family shares their life. We attend a wedding, a funeral and a big New Year’s festival in Green Bay, Wisconsin. We also learn about the tragic costs of racism to Lia’s family.

The Hmong are known for their fin needle work, and the video periodically returns to a *paj ntaub* (pronounced “pun dau”) which is an embroidered story cloth depicting the history of the Hmong, including their immigration. The film outlines how the Hmong helped the U.S. during the Vietnam War during the 1960’s, and how the government did not keep its promise of protection to the Hmong people.

A study guide includes Hmong history and culture, experiential activities, folktales and recipes. The film deals honestly with themes of death and war, so I recommend it for a mature audience.

—Kristina Whipple, student intern


This three-part video discusses the struggle and celebration of diversity through the eyes of nine children. Each child tells of her/his experience of being different and how they came to live comfortably with themselves and amongst their peers. The children speak of race, learning disabilities and gender roles, plainly and honestly as only children can. Issues surrounding hearing impairment, English as a second language, physical disability, and appearance are also addressed. The stories are non-scripted and come from individuals ranging from 9–11 years, which makes the information easily accessible to youth. Each story offers ways of dealing with the challenges of diversity. The videos come with worksheets and a teacher’s resource book, which includes reading lists for both teachers and students.

—Laurel Loughran, student, University of Oregon

**Teaching Resources:** All educators, be they parents, teachers or librarians, will find these books extremely helpful in their work with students and children to develop multicultural and nature awareness.


I knew that parenting would be challenging (we adopted a child from India 13 years ago and an African American child 8 years ago), but I didn’t know it would be like having a piece of my heart walking around outside my body.

Inside Transracial Adoption is an excellent guide for creating a map to successfully navigate through the challenges and opportunities of
being a multiracial family. The authors point out the obvious dilemma: you and your child will never share a racial experience. No matter how hard we try or how much we want to, we alone cannot meet all of our children’s complex needs in the essential area of race. As parents, we must help our children feel part of the race with which society will identify them, yet we have no direct experience. This book is a great resource for understanding these issues as well as learning how to help our kids gain a sense of racial identity. The authors suggest mentors and family friends of your child’s race to serve as role models.

Along with regular adoption issues (e.g., open adoption, siblings in adoptive families, single parent adoption, gay and lesbian families, and kids with special needs), the added dimension and complexity of raising adopted children of a race other than your own is also explored in detail. Each chapter also suggests resources for further information and contains a “The Experts Speak Out” section. Their first-hand points of view are heartfelt and helpful.

While I thought I knew a lot about being a multicultural family, I found Inside Transracial Adoption to be a thought-provoking book that has made me plan to do several things differently.

—Debra McGee, M.Ed., L.P.C.


This is a comprehensive manual for adults and youth on confronting intolerance and encouraging appreciation of diversity. The writing is clear, direct and very readable. Parents and adult caretakers are encouraged to take an active role in intervening with youngsters who have been either targets or perpetrators of intolerant acts. (See Parent/Teacher Guide, Vol 13, no. 2 for more about the book.)

—Mary Drew, educator and board member


This excellent reference summarizes 275 lesbian and gay-themed books. It also includes books for educators, parents and other adults and profiles a number of the authors featured.

In the forward, Nancy Garden writes: “The greatest contribution the books on this list make...is that they help bring the gay community out of invisibility [and] into the light of understanding and acceptance. That light in turn helps our young people to grow up to be strong, healthy members of society, and helps society realize that those same young people matter and deserve to be recognized, included, and accepted for who they truly are.”

This book will be of great use to young adults feeling marginalized by their sexual orientation and to adults who wish to help these youngsters feel accepted and help their peers learn to appreciate them as people who deserve respect and care.

—Mary Drew, educator


The goals of Hands-On Nature are to spark curiosity, give opportunities and assume responsibility for caring for the environment. Hands-On Nature stands out from other books because of its approach. The authors present a holistic view of nature. They treat nature as an interdependent, intelligent system and teach reverence and respect for its power, organization and beauty.

The book is organized by systems: adaptations, habitats, cycles and designs of nature. Individual section topics speak to their systems approach, for example: Life in a Field, Hunter-Hunted, Teeth and Skulls, Forest Floor, Animals in Winter, Fly Away or Stay?, Variations on a Leaf, and Inside a Flower.

Information is presented through comparison and contrast and questions and answers. Activities (like puppet shows) are simple enough to be effective and understandable, but deep enough to offer insight. The book is well-organized and easy to follow. It inspires me to just get right out there and explore, watch and listen.

—Charlotte Behm, educator

Good Conversation! A Talk with Christopher Paul Curtis by Tim Podell (Tim Podell Productions). In this 22 min.-long video, we meet the author of the Newberry Award winning book, Bud, not Buddy. Curtis, an African American author, not only reads excerpts, but shares his writing process, family life, and views of racism in our society. Ages 10 and up.


In my Heart, I am a Dancer by Chamroeun Yin; photos by René J. Marquez (Philadelphia Folklife Project). Cambodian culture is explained through one man’s life. We learn about his history as a war refugee, his hobbies of cooking, gardening and teaching, and of course, his passion for Cambodian court dance. Ages 8 and up. ISBN: 0-9644937-2-1.

Magda’s Tortillas/Las tortillas de Magda by Becky Chavarria-Cháirez; illustr. Anne Vega (Piñata Books). On her seventh birthday Magda’s abuela teaches her to make tortillas. Her tortillas are certainly not round like Grandma’s, but perhaps they are works of art. Ages 7-10. ISBN: 1-55885-286-7.


Song for the Whooping Crane by Eileen Spinelli; illustr. Elsa Warnick (Eerdmans Books). A poetic celebration introduces the unique beauty of these rare birds. Delicate watercolor paintings complement the grace of the cranes. Ages 5-10. ISBN: 0-8028-5172-x.

Mystery of the Dark Tower by Evelyn Coleman (American Girl). It’s 1928, and Bessie’s father has suddenly taken her to live in Harlem, New York, without any explanation. As she searches for clues to the mystery of this move, she finds herself in the midst of the Harlem Renaissance, meeting musicians, writers and artists. Ages 10 and up. ISBN: 1-58485-085-x.


A Walk in the Rain Forest by Rebecca L. Johnson; illustr. Phyllis V. Saroff (Carolrhoda Books). We take a tour of the rain forest and learn how the plants and animals work together. Photos and text explain complex ecosystems. Ages 8-12. ISBN: 1-57505-154-0.


Subira Subira by Tololwa M. Mollel; illustr. Linda Saport (Clarion). In this retold folktale, set in contemporary Tanzania, we see the taming powers of love, patience and song. Ages 5-9. ISBN: 0-395-91809-x.
The Art of Creation

Art

Life is a huge white paper.
Blank. Fresh. New.
It waits for you to wake up
And live your dreams
Win the championships
Fail to succeed
To lose everything you’ve got
You are the paint brush.
Small. Solid. Tall. Strong.
You wander into a million colors
Agreeing and disagreeing
Your journey, your path
Paint your life
The brush slowly begins to move
Marking your turning points.
—Mikaela Crank, 14, Arizona.

Blinded

Giant strides enclose me within lavish walls of shimmering gold
and polished silver as my pride follows close behind.
The throne remains patient by the ensemble of a thousand drums, waiting to
be struck with my mighty palm.
Distracted, towering curtains inching open as my mind ponders silence, falling snow upon the anxious people.
Blinded, frozen as a fearful animal I become, witnessing the
ambiance of the hall overcome my pride and wither the prestigious throne to mere wooden block.
My hands become angelic instruments, elegantly beating upon the drums, bellowing low sorrowful woes.
The gentle beating grows to choppy, furiously pounding notes, feeding upon my fear and anxiety.
My heart and hands strike passionately as one until the din fills the magnificent abyss, ending with a deafening boom.
My eyes open gently as a baby’s would when entering the world as I view the silhouettes of the many faces.
One’s emotions cannot be judged; however the silence concealing the awe, awakens my pride.
—Neil Bhalerao, 14, CA.

Dance

When I feel empty inside,
When I want to run and hide,
I head to my room.
But instead of burying myself in a tomb,
I put on my pointe shoes and dance.
I do jazz when I’m glad,
Tap when I’m mad,
And even ballet when I’m sad.
All my worries float away,
As I bend and do a grand plie.
When I do this, nothing bothers me,
Because a dancer is what I was meant to be.
—Julie Bastianini, 13, Bakerstown, Penn.

Music

Music notes fly through my ears.
Soft sounds float in the air like they are floating on water.
Music is like a paintbrush painting sound in the sky.
A warm sun shining bright, clouds drifting far away in the night to the sounds of music.
Music is nature’s friend, as one paints our earth and the other fills our hearts.
—Tara Carn, 10, OR.

"I am an Indian American who tries to integrate his culture into his day-to-day life. I have been learning tabla, a classical Indian percussion instrument, under the tutelage of the renowned Pandit Swapan Chaudhary. After studying the art for seven years, I’ve formed only a basic understanding of the instrument, though I have performed a few times. In this poem I have tried to capture my emotions and thoughts during one of my performances. I felt overwhelmed when I entered the stage, but as I regained my composure, I was able to perform to my full capability."
—Neil Bhalerao, 14, CA.
The Hide and Seek of a Poem
Where do poems hide?
They hide in the deepest wrinkle of my brain,
just waiting to be set free.
I seek them in my most vivid dreams
that seem to be forgotten the moment I wake up.
They hide in the smiles that seem to fade away
after a laugh that lasts long into the night.
I seek them in the joke that was once told,
but somehow isn’t funny anymore.
They hide in the clean, crisp lined paper
unused and packaged neatly.
I will continue to seek them until the perfect
poem finds me.
—Amy Schepp, 18, Louisiana.

Beat
Beat: a single stroke or blow,
especially in series.
I beat my drums when I get home,
or any time that I’m alone.
I crash and bang and smack and hit,
simply for the fun of it.
The neighbors might hate it,
when I play.
But I keep beating,
alright and all day.
You might beat someone
in a game,
Or beat up your brother,
and take the blame.
But instead, beat on your drums.
Just to play, just for fun.
—Kevin Allgaier, 13, PA.

Art
intricate, smooth
shaping, developing, expressing
it's broad, but compressed
life
—Julie Buck, 13, PA

Summer Sun
Sun beats down on me
As I stroll the beach
Radiant, shining and pure.
—Emily Hickey, PA

Sorry for Being Blind
Dedicated to two friends who passed away
recently due to drugs and alcohol.
Hey you, a long time has gone by, almost a year since
you left, and still we wonder what happened that night.
How were we so blind? Why couldn’t we notice that
you were crying for help? Why didn’t you come to me?
Why did I leave you, when I knew you were in the wrong
way? Why didn’t I hold you back when I had the chance?
Was I so blind?
Were we all so blind? Why couldn’t we see that the
people by your side were not your friends? Why did we
trust them and then let them ruin your life? I’m sorry that
I realized too late, too late to save your life, too late to
grab your hand and take you with me. Please forgive me
for being so blind. The worst part of all is that we know
who they are. They are still pretending to be okay and to
be our friends when we know that they took you away.
We can’t speak out loud and scream their names, or
they will take our lives away. Oh, my dear friends, please
forgive me for letting you go, for not being there when
you needed me the most. Forgive me for not telling you
all that you meant to me and
what wonderful friends you were.
Every day that goes by, I try not to cry but to
fill my emptiness with all those wonderful
memories that we left behind and all the good
moments we had when you were by my side.
I’m sorry I was so blind that I didn’t hear
when you were screaming for help. I’m sorry I
couldn’t take your hand and show you the light.
I’m sorry for trusting those who called themselves
your friends. I’m sorry it’s you who left and not I.
I’m sorry for being so blind.
—Stephanie Potter, 18, American School of Guatemala.

Wonder
I wonder why people pass away
I wonder why people can’t breathe under water
I wonder where heaven is
I wonder why people get sick
I wonder why planets are faraway
I wonder why I wonder
—Stefan Segall, 9, NJ
My Celtic Connection

Music has always been a very important part of my life. I began lessons at a young age, learning saxophone, drums and bass guitar. Although I enjoyed these instruments, something seemed to be missing. Then it happened. At age 14, I was introduced to the music of my ancestors and to the instrument that would become as much a part of me as my arms and legs. I learned to play the bagpipes.

Of all my activities, I find that learning to play the bagpipes has been the most challenging and rewarding. I have always had a real interest in my heritage, and I have sought different ways in which to learn more about the Irish people and culture. I found my "Celtic soul" when I became a piper. I feel that playing the music of the pipes honors my ancestors and gives me a real connection with my Irish roots. Thanks to an extraordinary instructor and a lot of hard work, I have been able to develop my skills to the level of competitive piper and instructor. My teacher nurtures my desire to be my very best. He encourages me and coaches me. He pushes me and suffers with me as I strive to master this very difficult instrument.

In the untold number of hours required to master the bagpipes, I have learned to persevere and be disciplined and focused like never before. These qualities have transferred to all parts of my life and have actually improved my ability to concentrate. This, in turn, has helped my grades steadily improve each year. As a result of my success with the pipes and in school, I have become more confident and self-assured. (Anyone who has to wear a kilt must develop self-confidence!) I am the only piper in my class of 360 and, indeed, in my entire school. I’ve become comfortable with being different and thus comfortable with all types of people. I have earned the respect of my classmates and they think it’s “awesome” when I play at school or wear my kilt when performing Macbeth in English class!

Playing the bagpipes is more than my hobby; it is my passion. When I am teaching a young person, competing or marching with the band, I get a wonderful sense of pride and fulfillment, and I have lots of fun, too. I am thankful to have learned more than just the love of the pipes. I have learned to push myself and to look deeply inside myself to find the commitment, confidence and discipline that it takes to become a respected piper and to persevere toward my goal of world-class status. How incredibly fortunate I am to have this experience!

—Christopher J. Mullin, 18, New York.

Fierce torrents of rain pelt down
upon the field
making the grain
sway back and forth.

A shocking blast of lightning
illuminates the black sky
for a split second
before turning
the darkness loose again.

Thunder rumbles nearby
shaking the saturated earth
with a mighty roar.
At last it is over,
the thunder booming softly
in the distance
the rain slowing to a stop.
The air smells
of wet grass and mud.
Spring is the bridge
between winter and summer.

—Kevin Duensing, 13, Penn.
Miroslav sat in the corner of his small apartment and dragged the bow across his cello. The music that he made brought a smile to his wife, Magda’s face. Whenever the staccato firecracker sounds of gunfire echoed across the city square, Miroslav played his cello to create an envelope of peace for his family.

Miroslav, Magda and their baby, Christina, lived in Sarajevo, a city that once hosted the Winter Olympics. Residents of Sarajevo were proud of their beautiful city with tree-lined streets. Parks and modern buildings stretched across the cityscape.

Sadly, war had come to their city. Trees were cut down for fuel in the winter. Many of the tall modern buildings were deserted or destroyed because of the fighting. The city residents lived in fear. It even became dangerous to buy groceries at the outdoor markets.

One day Miroslav could no longer play his cello. He sat in his chair with the brown polished cello between his knees. He held the bow loosely by his side. Magda waited for the beautiful music to begin. She looked at her handsome husband and saw tears running down his cheeks. She knelt next to him and looked into his sad blue eyes.

“What is wrong, my husband?” Magda asked. Miroslav sniffled and wiped the tears from his face with the back of his hand.

“War is madness, Magda!” he said. Magda saw a newspaper next to Miroslav’s chair. It reported the story of a young husband and wife struck by the bullets of war. “Oh, Miro,” she sighed with great sadness. They hugged and cried together.

Miroslav cleared his throat. “Magda, these men with guns have stolen innocence, beauty and love from the world. We are not meant to live in darkness and fear. It must stop!” He then announced, “Tomorrow I will play in the city square.”

At 11:30 the next morning, Miro was dressed in his black tuxedo that he wore when playing with the city orchestra. Magda straightened his bow tie and kissed him on the cheek. “Be careful, my love,” she whispered.

Miroslav carried a small chair and his cello down three flights of stairs to the street. He nervously glanced to his left and right before proceeding out the door. He walked to the market area greeting stares from the people he passed. Miro placed his chair next to a fountain that once danced with flowing waters. He removed the cello from its case. The deep rich finish of the instrument glowed in the sun. Miroslav took a deep breath and began to play.

Miro’s cello seemed to come alive with each passing of the bow across the strings. The cello released the deep groanings of his heart and soul. He played for those who lived in the city and those who were lost to war. Mostly Miro played for innocence and beauty.

The music filled the square and caused people to pause and listen. Some people stared at Miroslav and said he was insane. Others dismissed him as a fool. But for most people the music touched something deep inside them that could not be forgotten.

Miroslav played in the square every day at noon in all kinds of weather. After a while people called him a hero and a brave man. People began to leave flowers and baked goods for Miroslav. One man, a plumber, secretly fixed the fountain, so the waters could dance as Miroslav played. One day a juggler came to the square and performed as the music floated in the air.

Although Miroslav could not stop the war, everyday at noon he gave his city a glimpse of beauty, peace and the spirit of love. People ventured out to hear the cellist from Sarajevo take the aching of their hearts and turn it into notes of music that soared and lifted their spirits.

—Michael B. Lex, New York.
Along life’s journeys there are those relationships that not only enrich our souls but also teach us valuable lessons. Such was the case of my friendship with Thu Thuy Nguyen during my senior year in high school. She was Vietnamese, petite, painfully reserved and pure-hearted.

I was able to win her confidence and convince her to open up to me. Her family had moved to the U.S. when she was eight years old. They had escaped the atrocities of war in her country after an arduous and frightening voyage.

Despite all the turmoil in her life, she was able to begin school with students her age, even though she knew no English! How terrifying it must have been for her to be surrounded by people that she could not understand. I suppose it was a sink or swim experience that propelled her to learn the language so that she could keep up. She not only kept up, but by the time she was in high school, she was excelling.

Her intelligence was fascinating and personally challenging. We shared several classes, and as we discussed the course material we were able to engage on a refreshing intellectual level. Yet all the while her modesty was always prevalent.

In those moments when she felt comfortable enough with our friendship, she would share some of her family’s customs and traditions. Her father owned a print shop where the whole family worked. Also, at an age when dating was so important, I was shocked to know that she was not able to date or even speak to guys without her father’s approval. Despite the fact that she longed for more freedom, she conveyed a respect for her father and a real sense of unity with her family.

Another unusual practice was the fact that she was expected to cook for the family regularly. In an era when most families rarely cook to begin with, much less require the teenagers to do so, I was admirably amazed. One morning Thu arrived to my English class with a small paper bag.

"Here, I cooked this for you," she said quietly, placing the bag on my desk.

"You cooked this for me?" I felt the bag. It was still warm. "What is it?" I asked with anticipation as I peeked inside.

"It’s kind of like a Vietnamese egg roll. I fried them this morning."

I not only couldn’t wait to taste the treat, I was truly honored that she got up at 5 a.m. to cook for me. I thanked her and put the bag away until later.

When I told a friend about my unexpected blessing, I was given a rude awakening.

"You’re gonna eat that?! How do you know it’s not dog meat?"

Her words stung as if a wasp had just pierced my heart. At first I was stunned, but then I began to get angry. There were lots of things I wanted to say to her like: “And this is coming from a Cajun who sucks mudbug heads!” or “When was the last time you got up at the crack of dawn to fry breakfast for your friend?” or my worst thought, “I hope it’s your dog.”

I controlled my anger, “You better believe I’m gonna eat it!” I opened the bag and began eating the savory snack. My friend just walked away.

When my anger over my friend’s prejudice subsided, I began to feel sorry for her. Her racism would keep her from marvelous relationships and experiences that come from knowing others with backgrounds different from one’s own.

After graduation, I lost touch with Thu. I went to one college and she to another. Ten years later, I met a mutual acquaintance, quite accidentally, while on a plane to attend my high school reunion. The lady sitting next to me was a co-worker of Thu’s. She filled me in on Thu’s life. After graduation from Tulane University on a full scholarship in chemical engineering, she was employed in a chemical plant. She had married a European American and had changed her name to Jane. I wondered if she had changed her name to avoid discrimination. I don’t know if I will ever be able to see Thu again, but her memory is forever etched into my heart.

—Denise Rousell, Texas.
Stilt House Community in the Philippines

The Philippines are located between the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea in the heart of Southeast Asia, with 7,107 islands in all, stretching more than 1,056 miles. Cebu City is the oldest city in the Philippines. It dates back to 1521, when the Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan, laid claim to the islands for the king of Spain. In 1898 the Americans defeated the Spanish in the Spanish-American War and took control of the country until World War II when the Japanese occupied the islands. The Americans returned to the islands toward the end of the war, and the Philippines were granted their independence shortly thereafter. As a result of the American occupation, the Filipinos learned English. The Philippines is the third-largest English-speaking country in the world. It also has Indonesian, Malay, Chinese and Spanish influences on its culture.

Just outside of Cebu City is a community of about 700 people that live in houses built on stilts over a river. All of the homes are connected by rough plank-like walkways, creating a tangled web of wood. Without electricity, running water or indoor plumbing, these homes are the epitome of indoor/outdoor living. Baths, showers, laundry and cooking are conducted in doorways or upon the crude, uneven flooring of the corridors. People fish for food from back porches or windows and keep pigs and chickens in pens as additional food sources. Drinking water is collected and stored in a central location accessible only to a group of families within that radius. Each
area is nearly self-sufficient, with a small shop selling just the bare necessities.

What struck me the most about this community of people was their generosity and hospitality to a complete stranger. Everyone proudly offered me a tour of their home and allowed me the privilege of photographing their children. Although they lacked many material comforts and possessions, they seemed content and happy. As in other isolated island communities, these people rely on each other for friendship and survival.

Every twisted turn along the narrow labyrinth of rickety wooden boardwalks led me into another world where a whole new group of families resided. It was so easy to get lost among the endless pathways that I often had to stop and ask directions to find my way. But as is the gracious nature of the Filipino people, I was given instead an escort to guide me through this man-made maze and assure my safe return.

© Caryn B. Davis is a writer, photographer and documentary producer based in Chester, Connecticut.
Last year, in mid-May, I went on a four-day trip to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. This area is right on the border between Canada and the U.S., above Minnesota and Wisconsin. It contains hundreds of fish-filled lakes with campsites scattered around them. On the very first day of our vacation, my paddling skills and courage were tested to the limit.

When we arrived at the boat landing, it was a beautiful morning with the bright sun peeking over the mountain tops around the lake. It felt like paradise. I had been there before, and I was looking forward to another great time with my dad, my brothers and my friends. I couldn't wait to get going. My brother, Abel, and I shoved our canoe into the water before everyone else, and we paddled out into the lake with me in back, steering. As we paddled around a bend in the lake, I turned my head for a last glance at the landing where our car and all the reminders of our city life had been left behind. Slowly it slipped behind the trees until I couldn't see it anymore.

As I paddled, I gazed up at the mountains, covered with dark pine trees that towered on either side of me. I admired the beautiful sunrise and the blue, purple, pink and gold that covered the morning sky with giant fleecy clouds scattered throughout. I loved just being there, in the peaceful calmness of the wilderness. I watched sea gulls squawking as they soared above me, and I laughed at a family of ducks, with a proud mother in front and six fluffy babies following behind. Then we saw my favorite wild bird - the loon. I could see its glossy black and white feathers as we paddled cautiously closer. Its bright, alert eyes watched as we neared. When we were about 10 feet away, it dived, shooting smoothly beneath the surface of the water and leaving hardly a ripple behind. I sighed, for I was sure that it was gone, and we wouldn't be able to see it again. But Abel gasped and whispered to me, "Emily, it's going under our canoe!" Startled, I looked down. About three feet below our canoe, I saw the loon. I was amazed at how big it was, at least two feet long, not counting its outstretched feet. And it was so fast! The giant webbed feet pumped back and forth as its streamlined body glided through the water. Then, in a few seconds, it was gone. Abel exclaimed, "Wasn't that something?!"

"I've never seen one that close before!" I agreed.

As we picked up our paddles and began catching up with Dad, I realized the weather had changed. The wind was picking up, and small whitecaps dotted the surface of the lake. I saw the trees bending with the wind. The air smelled damp. As a towering black cloud rolled in front of the sun, the storm hit. The rain came pouring down with the wind driving it into my face, each little drop stinging with the force of the wind. The lake was wild. Everywhere I looked, roaring mountains of water charged across the lake, crashing into rocks on the shoreline and buffeting the trees by the water's edge. I felt the canoe rise and fall with the waves. My first reaction was, "Rats! We're going to get wet and cold." Oh well. It couldn't be helped. Then Dad, who was alongside us, yelled, "Keep the canoe straight! If one of those waves catches you sideways, you'll flip over!" Suddenly, I was scared. I realized that it wasn't just going to be uncomfortable, it was dangerous. The water was icy cold. A dunking in the lake could mean pneumonia, hypothermia or worse. I looked at Dad and could tell he was worried about us. "Don't worry!" I yelled. "I can do it. We'll be fine!" I didn't convince myself, and I don't think I convinced him either.

The next half-hour or so was like a bad dream. I paddled and paddled, constantly fighting the waves to keep my canoe straight. My shirt, dripping wet, clung to my arms, and my muscles began to ache from the strain, but I didn't care. All I wanted was to get safely to the land. I prayed, probably harder than I ever had before. "Oh, God, help me! Please, please don't let us tip over!" I do not recall exactly how long it lasted.
Then I heard Dad yelling at us above the noise of the storm: “Come over here! Follow me!” Without thinking, I turned my canoe and headed over to where he was going, on the opposite side of the lake. While we were paddling there I vaguely realized that we were turned sideways to the waves. But Dad had told me to come, so I came. It was a miracle that we didn’t tip on our way over.

When I reached Dad, I saw that he was in a small bay, protected from the wind by a narrow promontory with tall pines that acted as a wall. It was so different from the roaring, angry lake that I had just been on, and I was surprised. I paddled over to Dad and asked him why we were here and what we were doing. “I’m just taking a break before we go on,” Dad replied. “We’re almost to the portage. It’s just around the next bend.” I suddenly realized that my face was wet; I didn’t know whether it was rain or tears. I sank down to the floor of the canoe and let out a long, shuddering sigh of relief. I was so glad he wanted to stop. I needed a chance for my nerves to relax and my arms to stop shaking. As we sat there, silently relaxing in the peacefulness of the bay, I tried not to think about the storm or the lake or anything but just calming down.

Eventually Dad said we had to go on. On the inside, I shrank from going out into the raging lake again, but I knew that we had to continue. The rest of the way we stayed close to shore where the wind was not quite so bad, and we made it safely to the portage. It really wasn’t far from the bay where we had stopped. When we finally reached the portage, and I stepped out on dry land, soaked to the skin and freezing cold, I collapsed on the ground. It felt so good to just lay there, firm and secure, without being tossed around by waves. I prayed, “Thank you, God.” I heard Dad telling Abel that with the wind behind us, we had made it to the portage in record time. I didn’t care. I would’ve much rather gone twice as slow in calm weather than zip through the water in a nerve-racking storm. As we trudged across the portage, I thought about the next lake. I fervently hoped it wouldn’t be anything like the one we were just on. Fortunately, that lake was smaller, and the storm was lessening, so we made it safely to our campsite without incident.

Now, when I am home, warm and dry, I can look back on that day and be proud—proud that I could actually steer my canoe without tipping, proud that I had the ability and strength to do it, and proud that I didn’t totally panic. Although I feel good about it now, when I was actually there I did not feel good. I was scared stiff and just wanted to be home in my bed. It made a big impact on me. I had never been in the Boundary Waters before when it was dangerous like that. Now I realize more fully what kind of danger and perils there are. But that is not going to stop me from going back. I love the beauty, the wilderness, the serenity, the birds, the chipmunks, everything that makes it such a special place. Even if there are times that I don’t like it, I still love it, and if I could go there again tomorrow, I would.

—Emily Gustafson, 14, Wisconsin

**A Disturbance**

A tree sways in the wind,
A bird sings in the early morning dawn,
A deer skips through tumbled leaves,
A swarm of bees works busily ’til the day is done.
A hunter’s footsteps are heard walking through the woods,
A gun shot is heard in the distance.
The tree falls to the ground,
The bird stops singing its sweet melody,
The deer falls in pain,
The bees fly away.
Where has our beautiful nature gone?

—Jennifer C. Lewis, written at age 10, West Virginia.
Whitewater Words: Kayak-Speak

“Marten’s Rapids were pretty pushy yesterday, and there was a little wood above Clover. Brown’s Hole gets kind of sticky at this level, but don’t worry; it’ll still flush you out.”

Huh?

Didn’t catch all of that? Don’t worry. Kayak-speak is like a foreign language, and it’s learned best through total immersion. In this case, that means getting wet.

My first boating trip introduced me to all sorts of words and phrases like those above. A great number of these slang words are kayaking euphemisms for ugly (dangerous) river situations. Instead of saying, “Watch out for those strong, swift currents; they’ll flip your boat,” most kayakers say, “That rapid is a little pushy today.” Or instead of “There’s a recirculating hydraulic at the bottom of that hole,” one hears, “Yeah, such-and-such rapid is sort of sticky.” If a certain rapid is “sticky” enough, like Brown’s Hole on the McKenzie River at low water, then it transforms into a “keeper.” In extreme forms, this is what’s known as a terminal hydraulic: what goes in does not come back out. Or it only comes out after a long time, longer than the average adult’s two-minute lung capacity. Fortunately most rapids aren’t keepers and, like the kayaker said, will “flush you out.”

Perhaps this euphemistic slang makes the danger seem less dangerous, or the crazy boaters halfway sane. But if you’re serious about river running, steep creeking (paddling narrow, highly vertical creeks), or playboating (pulling off white-water rodeo moves in river waves or holes), kayak-speak is a prerequisite.

To begin with, there’s the character of the river: pool-drop or continuous. As you might guess, continuous means nonstop, while pool-drop denotes alternating rapid and flatwater sections.

Then there’s the type of rapid. Most rapids are ledges, chutes, holes, wavetrains, or boulder gardens, which translates as lots of rocks interspersed with big waves. However, some rapids contain a combination of these elements. For instance, a rapid may have waves leading up to a ledge and then a monster boat-eating hole at the bottom. Marten’s, which houses the local boat-eating hole on the McKenzie River, is a prime example of such a rapid. The key to running it is staying between the hole on river-right and the rocks on river-left, river-left being the part of the river to your left as you move downstream. If you judge your line just right, you will encounter splashy waves on top, followed by some boulders, a small(er) hole in the middle, and then a rewarding wavetrain, a succession of four to five foot waves, at the bottom. Once while running Marten’s in an inflatable kayak, I missed my line and ended up augering-in to the notorious hole. Needless to say, I swam the rest of the rapid.

Kayakers, out of necessity to explain what’s around the river bend, have also invented a whole litany of words to describe the internal features of a rapid. There’s pile, boil, curl, riffle, whitewater, greenwater (the unbroken part of a wave), shelf, slot, chute, horizon line (an unnerving rapid characteristic which warns of an imminent drop of indeterminate height), eddy, eddy line and eddy wall. An eddy is where the water passes around an obstruction like a rock and circles back upstream; the line where the opposing currents visibly brush against each other is called an eddy line. An especially strong eddy line is an eddy wall. If a boater isn’t careful, or isn’t paying attention, the turbulence will flip the boat.

Once you have learned the basic vocabulary and armed yourself with such safety words as “self-rescue,” “throw-rope,” and “T-rescue,” it’s
Exploring Paria Canyon

We are both active outdoor lovers, always gearing up for our next trip skiing, rock climbing, kayaking and camping. This spring break, through a chance visit to the Univ. of Oregon’s Outdoor Program, we found ourselves backpacking with 8 other students and community members through the remote Paria Canyon (a tributary of the Grand Canyon, flowing through Utah and Arizona).

There is a certain joy we derived from our competence in the wilderness. Living out of our backpacks for 6 days and over 40 miles gave us sights and emotions unavailable anywhere but in the middle of nowhere. We refocused our lives to only our primal needs: where to sleep (out of reach of flash floods), where to find drinking water (the water was alkaline, so we had to filter from the scattered springs), and how to ration our food. While simply surviving, we allowed ourselves to soak in the 800 ft red-rock cliffs rising up from the little river. They were stained with red and black waterfall streaks, perhaps residue from ancient, clinging moss. The terrain was studded with boulders and softened by quicksand. At times the canyon walls were so narrow that we could touch both sides with our hands as we waded through the water. Twice we camped on high ledges cut into the rock, reminding us of Anasazi cliff dwellings. Several days farther into the canyon, we saw ancient Anasazi petroglyphs of people, mountain goats and scorpions.

The haikus [see back cover] were inspired by the vast, red Nevada desert and various experiences of our expedition. We jotted them down from afternoon to dusk on the long van ride home to our green Eugene.

Civilization
Bleeds miles of broken thought in
To a desert beautiful

A cool melting sun
Lushly vibrant dustiness
Immutable bliss

—Amanda Marusich
—Brad Schallert

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An Exercise in Sports Poetry

**Double**

As I step up to the plate, one last swing; concentrate.
I step out of the box looking for a signal: swing.
Back in the box my cleats dig in, my wrists begin to sway: ready.
The towering pitcher nods, he throws; fast ball.
It's like a speeding bullet, I take a quick, sleek swing.
My bat like a predator hunts its prey: connection.
The ball darts to center.
Like a cheetah I round first, while the ball is fired from center.
I coast to second.
It's going to be close, I glance toward the ump; safe.

—Tommy Richardson, 11, Maryland.

**My Dream**

I dreamed
I was Jeff Emig
In a pro motocross
Soaring off of huge jumps
Carelessly

—Kyle Connolly, 14, Gibsonia, PA.

**Victory**

I stood there frozen with fear
Waiting for my turn to draw near
My pulse was racing with fire
My soul full of desire
The ball flew through the air
Kicked with the utmost care
Silent and true like an arrow
Closing on the goal so narrow
The goalie left

The crowd fell silent
The ball hit the net
The crowd was exuberant
It's passed
It's done
It's far away
Nothing else matters
When you score a goal this way!

—Jill Merrick, 12, Kentucky

**The Race**

Everything is silent, as if it were a vacuum.
There is only me and the water.
I must concentrate on my approach into the pool,
It is time to prepare for the start.
I picture myself diving into the water smoothly and with ease.
The gunshot goes off like a crack of thunder in the sky.
I overcome the water with strength and power,
I won't let the other girl in my race beat me.
I am the bullet, which was released from the gun,
My arms soar through the water like airplane propellers.
I feel the wall coming in front of me.
With an explosion of power, my hand reaches the wall.
What seemed to be only a short few seconds ends the 30-second race.
I am first because I believe in myself:
Winners are believers.

—Sara Gellis, 15, New York.

**Gymnast**

strong, flexible
swinging, balancing, flipping
twisting through the air
acrobat

—Kayla Flowers, 13, PA.
Pedal Power!

What happens when the ultimate paperboy grows up?

a) Founds a bicycle delivery service.
b) Becomes a bike mechanic.
c) Creates a bicycle-orientated school.
d) All of the above.

If the paperboy is Jan VanderTuin, the answer is all of the above. Jan (pronounced Yan) is the founder of the Center for Appropriate Transport (CAT), an alternative transport mecca in Eugene, Oregon. CAT promotes community involvement in manufacturing and using human-powered transportation.

The motivation for a car-free lifestyle grew out of Jan's three-and-a-half year stay in Zurich, Switzerland. During that time he got around on bikes, trams, buses and trains. He almost never used a car, yet the quality of life he experienced surpassed anything he had previously known.

While in Europe, Jan got involved in a community farm project. He realized the need for an alternative to truck delivery, so he began researching and building cargo bicycles. Thus the idea for Pedalers Express was born. "You can replace a car for many jobs," Jan said. "In any city there are lots and lots of fossil fuel vehicles moving small packages around. It's kind of absurd."

The Pedalers Express courier service was just the beginning. The center, which opened in 1992, now includes a community bike repair shop, a bicycling magazine, a "Ridable Museum" with unusual bikes for rent and purchase, and a full curriculum of classes for middle and high schoolers. Students can attend the school either full or part time, and they learn the basics of bike building and running a business. They help with everything from welding and sewing to frame design and marketing strategies. Everything is a team effort. Jan stresses the importance of hands-on experience. "Are we going to have a culture of people who can pluck away at a computer or a culture where people can actually make things?"

Bicycles for a Healthier World

John Tripp, 19, has been attending the CAT school for three years. He values the experience-based approach of the school and especially enjoys teaching others to repair bikes. Some of the bikes he helped design include the Dragon Wagon, the Cyclone (a 3-wheeled recumbent) and a folding recumbent. John appreciates the laid back atmosphere of the school, the small class sizes and the one-on-one attention. "This is much more relaxed [than a traditional high school]. You get a smile while you're working."

Founding a school requires an extraordinary amount of dedication and hard work, but you can help in your community through much simpler projects. "My personal take," Jan says, "is that if you do something good in one locale, it will be copied and spread." He says it is important not to have a greedy approach in activism projects. Just put a good idea out there, something simple that people can duplicate, and it will spread.

Some projects that can be started in any area include a community bike repair shop, bicycle education programs, cycling clubs, and of course, the best way to help—riding your bike! More bicycles on the road equals less pollution and better health for you and the environment.

For more ideas and information about the Center for Appropriate Transport, check out their web site: www.efn.org/~cat; e-mail: cat@efn.org

—Michelle Lieberman, assistant editor.
The day was hot. Sweat trickled down her face. Ingrid had just finished her last practice for Sports Day tomorrow. She would be taking part in one of the field events, the high jump.

Ingrid’s grandfather had been an athlete. He never made it to the national level, but he hoped that one day Ingrid would. Both the old man and the girl in black braids shared the same burning passion for sports. Ingrid chose high jumping because of her height. She was a short girl, and high jumping was a challenge to her. For every jump she made, she gained an ounce of confidence.

When she reached home that evening, the house was very still and quiet. Her mother greeted her with a worried face. “Grandpa is not feeling well today. Go and keep him company. He would love to talk to you.”

Grandpa had been sick for the last few months. Like many aging people, he had shuttered away his illness as a side effect of old age. When he saw Ingrid, he gave a tired smile and asked, “So, how did the practice go?” Ingrid told him about her day. They talked cheerfully for a while before he told her to get some rest.

“One question, Grandpa,” Ingrid asked, tilting her head slightly. “How tall are you?”

Her grandpa wrinkled his brow and tried to remember. “Well, I used to be a towering 1.85 meters, but I’ll be lucky if I measure half of that now,” he said jokingly. “Any reason for asking?”

Ingrid nodded. “Someday, Grandpa, I’ll make a jump as tall as that.”

Her grandpa tousled her hair fondly. “That’s a big leap for a short girl like you,” he said, “but I’m sure you’ll make it. Heck, you could even jump higher than that.” He gave her a kiss and sent her to bed.

The next morning before she left, Ingrid peeped into her grandpa’s room. He was still sleeping, so she stole up quietly to kiss him goodbye. It made her sad to see him looking so pale and shriveled. He seemed so different from the healthy, robust man she used to know.

The field was already filled with competitors when she arrived. She jogged around a bit and did some warm-up exercises. Seeing the long-legged girls around her, she felt conscious of her short, stubby ones. But she smiled at the thought of what her grandfather once said: “Long legs are no good, Ingrid. They get tangled up with those crossbars. Long legs or no long legs, if you can jump, you can jump.”

Soon, parents and spectators began pouring in. She saw her mother and ran toward her. There was something in her mother’s expression that disturbed her. “Is anything wrong, Mama?” she asked.

“Come.” Her mother gently pulled her closer. She was silent for a while. Ingrid knew even before she spoke. “Grandpa died this morning, sweetheart.”

“Oh,” Ingrid was surprised at the flatness of her own tone. Stiffly, she pushed her mother away and walked back to the field. The high jump event was just beginning. Eventually she heard her name called out.

The morning light pierced her eyes, and the crossbar looked higher than usual. I won’t be able to make it, she told herself. I’m too short. She heard a whistle blow. Slowly, she ran up the runway. Her legs felt weak, and as she jumped, her body hit the crossbar. She fell on the mattress with a dull thud.

Suddenly her tears began to flow. Her grandpa would never see her receive her first medal, and knowing that hurt her. She cried to her heart’s content and was oblivious to the stares from the spectators. She was a failure, a disappointment.

Then she remembered. She remembered the good times she had spent with her grandpa, the practices they had taken together when he was still healthy, and the conversations they had. She heard her own promise to him: “Someday, Grandpa, I will make a jump as tall as that.”

She had not failed yet! It took three failures to get disqualified, and she still had two chances left. Once again, the announcer called her name. Once again, she took her place. This time, she would succeed. Short as she was, she would never be short of confidence.

—Teh Guih Poo, 22, Malaysia.
My older brother often dominates our family conversation by making nasty remarks about kids at school. Do you have a cure for an unrepentant gossip? –N.D.

Dear N.D.: Likely, your brother is an unrepentant gossip because he is persuaded that his remarks are evidence of possessing intelligence and a good sense of humor. The following story may bring to light the damaging consequences of spreading tales:

There was once a well-respected, honest mayor in a small Czech village. He sought to be a helpful mayor, always aiming to work for the welfare of the village. In the course of a friendly conversation, a young woman confided in him that she would like to marry a certain young man, except for the fact that he was always talking about other people, freely telling tales about them whether the story was true or just rumored gossip.

The mayor decided to help the young man get over his thoughtless habit. He went to his attic and stuffed a few large handfuls of feathers stored there into a pillow case. He invited the young man to his house and addressed him in a serious manner, “Everyone in town is sick and tired of your gossiping. It brings pain and evil to our whole village. It’s time to put an end to it! Now take this bag of feathers and go throughout our village placing one feather on the doorstep of each house. When you are finished come back to my house. I will be waiting for you!”

The young man did exactly as he was told. When he returned to the mayor, he was surprised that a second task awaited him. “Now,” said the mayor, “retrace your steps and put every single feather you left at each household into this empty bag and bring it back to me!”

“But, Mayor, that is impossible! The feathers flew hither and yon. I have no idea where they landed. The wind will have blown them away. I could never find them again!”

“That’s true,” said the mayor. “Just as the feathers scatter in any and all directions, blown by the wind, so it is with the rumors you spread and the gossip you repeat! Once said, you have no control over the damage you have set loose.”

As you likely know, people who gossip often sense that they are thereby raising their own self-image. Spreading rumors about others may actually cover up their own sense of inadequacy. So do you think you could be helpful to your brother by taking him aside and discussing why he needs to churn a rumor mill? Giving support and affection may be your best ally.

In peace,

Illustration by Laurel Loughran

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Vicente

“Tía, are you awake?”
It’s 10 a.m. on the first day of vacation.
“No,” I grumble, but he perches on the edge of my bed, not willing to lose a minute of this day.
“What are we going to do first?”
“Ay, hijado, quiero descansar un rato mas. Andate!”
“Tía, look what I got for my birthday!”
“Your birthday was four months ago!
I’m asleep, remember?
Tío Victor is going to yell at you if I tell him you woke me up.”
“No he won’t. He told me at breakfast you were lazy.”
“He told you what?!” I sit straight up in bed. I see a broad smile on his face.
“Now that you’re up, Tía, what are we going to do today?”
—Marge Gianelli, Texas.

Mi Mamá

Mi única amiga, mi confidente.
Tú solamente me das alegrías
y yo solamente penas.
¿Cuándo llegarás el día
en que nos podamos encontrar?
Te quiero tanto y pareces saberlo, lo sé,
pero dentro de mi corazón siempre estarás.
Pensar en que algún día puedas llegar a no estar,
me hace comenzar a temblar.
Yo sin ti no funciono, no vivo y me muero.
Perdóname por todo...algún día lo pagaré.

Tus noches en vela serán tres
veces peores para mí.
Me pareces perfecta:
Inteligente, preciosa y comprensiva.
Pareces ser una estrella que brilla
para iluminar mi camino,
la luz que nunca se apaga,
la llama que nunca se extingue
y la vela que arde por siempre,
pero ante todo,
te quiero porque eres mi mamá.

—Etty Cohen, 17, American School of Guatemala.

My Family

My family is a tropical beach
Bursting with variety grasped together by understanding
My father is the unpredictable looming horizon, silently
protecting and inspecting
Everything in his omniscient sight.
My mother is the murmuring waves of the ocean,
soothing yet
Capable of breaking out in an uproar.
My sister is the stunning seashell
Accenting the setting with its rare and fascinating shape,
retaining its own unique qualities.
My brother is the cinnamon toasted sand,
occupied with playful castles and toys
and an attachment with the ocean.
I am the starfish, adaptable to each component
of this diverse beach,
with a tough exterior,
and soft concealed feelings immersed inside.
—Saumya Dave, 14, Indian-American, Marietta, GA.

—Rachel Castro, 16, Native American student Arizona.

Dear Pauline

Black and gray tablet faces, visions of my heritage.
Pulling my soul forward, is your gaze.
Do angels watch the way you do, Grandmother?
A collection, never knowing what beheld.
Pale, gentle lips, a softened brow,
like mine, ghost-like.
Belongings taken past,
yet the same a current tapestry.
In my mind, you’re still the same.
Standing lifeless guardians.
Pillars resounding faith, memory,
habits cultivated.
Recall great feasts,
and the loving clasp of hands.
Spoken, a windy profound legacy.
Ocean beholds a new wavy renewal
as memories rise,
afloat in a sea of reclamation.
Ringing ears hear your lullabies from long ago.
Sighing love, my father’s is the same.
I will remember you.

—Rachel Castro, 16, Native American student Arizona.
Always My Dad

For fourteen years I’ve wondered what my life would be like with my father in it, but the truth is I’ll never know.

On a Motorcycle Weekend in 1984 my dad, Charles Leslie Edward Hobbs, was at a party. They were all drinking and doing a lot of drugs. My dad decided he wanted to go for a ride. He went outside and hopped on one of his friend’s motorcycles. He didn’t even think first; he just got on and drove. He lost control of the bike and hit a telephone pole. The impact of the crash sent his helmet to the top of a tree. By the time the ambulance got there he was dead.

I wish I could explain it all in more detail. I was only two when all of this occurred. My grandmother tells me he was the nicest guy you could ever meet, and he loved my mom and me very much. She didn’t believe he was into drugs. I think she just didn’t want to believe it. My mom tells me that all he cared about were his drugs, stealing and me. She said he would never do anything to hurt me. I hear so many things; it’s hard to know what to believe.

The thing I’ve been asking myself for the past couple of years is “Why me? What did I do to deserve this?” I’ve always wondered who would walk me down that aisle. He’s the one that’s supposed to give me away, to tell me that he’s proud of me, and he loves me, and everything will be okay. There have been times when I’ve said I won’t get married because he won’t be there to give me away.

It hurts to know that I will never have anybody to call “Dad” for the rest of my life. I’ll only have memories. I have written a poem to bring my story to an end:

I know you will never read this
But I will still seal it with a kiss
You are and always will be my dad
But as I write this I am sad
I know you’re looking down on me
But if you could only see
For all the time we shared
I want to let you know I cared
I was daddy’s little girl
And I shined like a pearl
You made a bad choice
If you only heard my voice
I know that we will meet again someday
Somehow and someway
Until that day I will love you
And hope that you love me too.

—Cheryl Hobbs, New Hampshire.
Have you ever thought that going to a new place was going to be easy? Well, think again. In August 1996 my mom, grandma and I made a cross-country odyssey from the state of Colorado to the Commonwealth of Virginia to start a new life. There was nothing easy about it. You see, my mom had been given an opportunity for a terrific new job, but sometimes trying for something better means leaving some pretty good stuff behind.

The home I left behind was in Denver which, in my opinion, is the most beautiful and fun place on Earth. There is plenty of snow in the winter and lots of skiing, tubing and sledding to do. My fondest memories of Denver are of playing in the backyard on my swing set with my friend, Sarah, under the deep cobalt-blue sky and feeling the warm breezes on my face. I remember being able to see all the way to Long’s Peak from my backyard and feeling the earth swaying gently beneath my feet. I remember feeling my ears pop as we drove up to Rocky Mountain National Park and even seeing giant moose by the car.

When my mom told me we were moving to Virginia, I was five years old. I thought she was joking, but I soon found out she was not. It was not a particularly happy revelation, but the future never seemed brighter.

On the day we moved and packed up all of our stuff, I said goodbye to my dad, and we began our trip through several different states. We would drive throughout the day, until we were too tired to go on. Then we’d find a hotel, have dinner, go swimming and go to sleep. After we traveled for what seemed like months (I’m exaggerating; we were only on the road for two weeks!) we finally arrived in Virginia.

Mom found a new school for me and an apartment for us in Fredricksburg. It was time to go to kindergarten. At school I met a lot of new friends, and there were some nice things about Virginia, like seeing the United States Capitol.

After two years we had to move again, this time to Centreville, Virginia, because my mom had accepted a new job at the Pentagon. So again we had to get everything packed, and it was time to move. After a while on the road, we ran out of gas! It was up to me and my mom to go out and get more gas. We had to walk a long way until we got to a gas station, but we still needed a can to carry the gas in, so we walked to a store to buy it. After we got the gas, we had to hitchhike to get back to the car and my waiting grandma. The guy who gave us a ride was really nice. Hitchhiking can be dangerous, but Mom’s philosophy is that most people are nice, and angels abound waiting to do good deeds for people in need.

In the three years I have been in Centreville, I have met a lot of new friends. London Towne Elementary School has been a great experience for me. My grandmother works in the cafeteria, and my mom attends a lot of Parent-Teacher Association events. I’ve done really well on my tests, and I’m happy in school.

Moving to Virginia has been a life-changing event for me. I guess there has been nothing else to match it, except maybe being born. In a way, it is almost like my whole family was reborn when we moved to Virginia. We are different now, but good-different, not strange-different. I will always remember and love Colorado because it is the place I came from, but Virginia holds my future.

—Gerhardt E. Stiller, 9, Virginia.
If I Had a Wish...

If I had a wish, I’d wish to set with the sun and rise into oblivion, to fall into a day where a new contrast is waiting, where your shadow is your best companion.

If I had a wish, I’d wish to soar throughout the harsh blacks and cold blues to the center of fiery reds and peaceful peaches, to swallow the spectacle as one and be able to retell the mystery of it all.

If I had a wish, I’d wish to waltz through the glowing fields and swim in the clear waters of a place where I have never been, to drift to sleep on a distant shore and let the unpredictable wind carry me to my next destination.

If I had a wish, I’d wish to live in a place where all dreams run free and each crevice is filled with extraordinary amounts of imagination, all the while fluttering within a closed vessel, captive to what the future has to hold, freeing only murmurs of a soft goodbye.

A Wishing World

I wish I could speak with dolphins, To understand their clicks, beeps and whistles, To talk with them about the depths of the vast ocean, Hear their wisdom from years of being the grand sea, To see their problems with us humans, And strive to change their ideas about us.

Yet I know this is not possible, For the scientists of this world have not created, The technology that holds the key to my wish. So I’ll keep trying, To bring humans from the dark, And make my wish come true.

—Iris Hefner, 13

My Wish

I wish that I could let you know, How much you mean to me. How much you help and motivate. I wish that you could see. I wish that I could pay you back, For everything you do. I wish that I could win a meet, Just to make you proud. I wish that I could tell you things, I cannot say out loud. To sum it up, I wish that all My wishes will come true. I hope that you are happy, ’Cause my wishes are for you.

—Liz Meals, 14
My New York

Brownstone Brooklyn is a mix of tunes, side streets, alleyways, backyard blues. Nightclub Harlem, crying guns, drugs are the truth, what happened to ragtime? Yankee Bronx, smack! a home run. Cheers, he cleared the base. What’s the truth behind the baseball? Chinese Chinatown, the county of counterfeit, five dollar paradise, Is everyone a schemer? Jingly India world, an assortment of smells, colorful dreams, immigrant mall place, ...The City Beat.

Oh Kiss Me Kate, Brian Stoke Mitchell bellows, Andrea McGardle falls in love with a beast. A grotesquely deformed face hides behind a mask. “Bang!” Bernadette Peter’s gun goes off, A prison gang clanks along the stage, ...The Broadway Beat.

As I walk through Carrol Gardens, watching me from their porch, old men and women smoke pipes, and talk about the good ‘ole days in Italy. Mr. Scotto yells, “Hey, Emma, how’s your dog?” Little Gracie wobbles up, “Play flute for me!” Vincent picks me an apple and pear from his trees Mrs. Romano hands me a bag of tomatoes, ...Yeah, that’s Carrol Gardens.

—Emma Morrison, 10, New York

Barbed Wire

Mohammed Dubbagh: born 1945, Jerusalem. A lover of peace, and Islam and family. Not allowed back to his place of birth Subject to intrusive searches by Israeli police, Barbed wire separating the shantytowns in which he lived from prosperous shops and hustling people. He stood with others, young and old, grasping sweaty palms on the barbed wires, without a homeland to call his own, A Palestinian.

Mordicai Pasternack: born 1945, Jerusalem. Dreams of a peaceful Jewish state where he can live in harmony with others, Without the bloodshed and horror he has witnessed. Children who’ve not yet reached the age of eight throwing rocks and screaming “Dirty Jew.” Without the destruction of his people by enraged terrorists. He would like to enjoy the yellow and brown countryside, its fresh-smelling, fertile orange groves and sprawling deserts. Without the camouflaged soldiers that blend in so well. His friends and family exposed to violent outbursts, to discrimination because of his race. A Jew.

Parallel lives, yet incongruous. Both residing within one half hour of the other, within the borders of New York State. Mohammed and Mordicai would like to go home—they can’t. Fanatics on both sides have blood made of steel, and will not budge. White doves do not fly, in the sky above Israel. Barbed wire, sharp jagged and forbidding is strung instead in order to prevent peace in the holy land, in Israel.

—Kate Distler, 17, New York
Odds & Ends for Aspiring Artists (and Environmentalists)

Many things around our homes look like junk at a first glance but could easily turn into fabulous art and hours of fun! With a little imagination, we can save lots of money on art supplies and turn would-be garbage into creative expressions. There are no limits or rules to art; everything counts. The following are a few ideas to get you started, but don’t stop here. Anything can be a work of art waiting to happen.

**Fabric Creations:**

Old clothing and fabric scraps hold many possibilities. *(Make sure not to choose a shirt your sister still wears or Mom’s sentimental old dress):*

- Cut fabric into bandannas and scarves, patches to jazz up a pair of jeans, or a rag doll for a younger sibling.
- Glue fabric to a jar or other container to make an interesting holder for pencils, toothbrushes, flowers, small tools, etc.
- Sock puppets never go out of style. Decorate socks or gloves that you still wear and surprise your friends when you kick off those shoes!
- Larger pieces of cloth can be made into curtains for your room or a unique lamp-shade. Bend wire hangers into two hoops and tape translucent cloth to the frame. *(Make sure the cloth is far away from the lamp so it doesn’t overheat)*

**Painting Projects:**

You don’t need professional canvases, horsetail paintbrushes and a beret to make beautiful paintings. *(Spills and splashes always happen, so wear old clothes and cover the floor with newspaper or a tarp.)*

- Leftover house paint is excellent for artwork. Latex paint is best—it washes away with water.
- Cardboard is great to paint on. Just cut the panels of a box into flat pieces and paint away!
- Scrap wood is another of my favorite things to paint on. I even nail pieces to each other to create sculptures, furniture or anything else that comes to mind.
- Paper bags are fun to paint on and always easy to find. Cut them apart into flat sections or paint them “as is” for a 3-D effect, a mask or a puppet.
- If no paintbrushes are available, sponges are a good choice. An old sponge can be cut into smaller squares and dipped in paint. This will give a unique texture to whatever you paint. Old towels and rags can also be twisted together and used to apply paint, and if all else fails, use your fingers!

**Make a book:**

You don’t have to work at *Skipping Stones* or any other publishing company to make your own book or magazine. The most basic format is to find some blank sheets of paper, fold them in half and staple them together. If you are more ambitious, you can punch holes in the pages and sew them together with twine, yarn, etc.

- Clippings from old magazines, newspapers and fliers can be collage material for your book. Re-combine interesting words and pictures into your own statement.
- Decorate the covers of your book with pieces of wrapping paper, old greeting cards or other fancy paper.
- Fill your book with your own poetry, drawings, stories or thoughts. *(Maybe you’ll want to submit some of them to *Skipping Stones.)* Or make a quote book of funny things your friends and family say.

Finally, one of my favorites, found object sculptures. This concept was made popular during World War I by a zany Frenchman named Marcel Duchamp. The idea is that any object or group of objects can be art; it all depends on what the artist sees and how she or he puts it together. So sift through the recyclables *(Stay away from tin cans; they tend to give nasty cuts to unsuspecting artists)*, scraps of wood, broken toys or that mysterious pile in your garage and start sculpting. The items can be attached by glue, staples, tape or nails. Anything goes!

—Michelle Lieberman
Russian students want pen pals. They wish to learn about other people, places and cultures. Send penpal letters c/o: Katherine Adaryacheva, teacher SCHOOL OF ARTS KOPERATIVNAYA ULIZTA, 2 BOLOGOYE, TVERSKAYA OBL. 171070 RUSSIA Helen Narushevich, girl, 16 Drozda St. 6, Apt. 66 Minsk 220035 BELARUS Int: modern music, sports, disco, tennis Raminta Putraite, girl, 14 Geliu 42 4316 Kauno raj. Garliava LITHUANIA Int: internet, cartoons Nastya Agatonova, boy, 15 D. Serdicha str., 6-74, 220082 Minsk BELARUS Int: drawing, dancing, swimming, Abdul Hamid Fuseini, boy, 14. P. O. Box 96 Techiman, B/A GHANA, W. Africa Int: soccer, writing letters. Oppong Yeboah Eric, boy, 14. P. O. Box 101 Sampa B/A GHANA, West Africa Daniel Antwi, boy, 13. P. O. Box 971 Sunyani, GHANA, W. Africa Int: soccer, reading. Ghanaian boys want pen pals! Kwasi Sekyeye, 12; Samuel Boadi, 12; Dickson Asante, 12; Gaylord Asante, 13; Seth Owusu, 14; Samuel Kwasi, 14; Samuel Sekyeye, 15; Samuel Okoffo, 15; and Thomas Nana, 16; Write them c/o P.O. Box 2190, Sunyani, B/A, GHANA, W. Africa.

Enter your best multicultural or nature art, photos and/or writings for the annual Youth Honor Awards! Mail by 20 June to: Skipping Stones P. O. Box 3939, Eugene, OR 97403 USA For details visit: www.efn.org/~skipping
The Great Pen Pal Exchange Lettergram • Cartograma

Name ____________________________

Age / Edad: __ About myself & my family... Algo acerca de mi y mi familia...

Address ____________________________________________

City/ST ____________________________

Zip /Country ____________________________

My favorite recipe, activities or celebrations: Recetas, actividades o celebraciones que me encantan: मेरी पत्रिका की सूची:

In my family portrait you see... En este retrato de mi familia... मेरे परिवार के इस चित्र मे...
Shade floats across earth
Bush angels squat stagnantly
Resigned dignity

Toes lick windy cliffs
Lidded eyes see the sun, all
Embrace nirvana

Tumbleweed fires
Blow through settling darkness
Lightning strikes onward

Smokescreen hidden eyes
Deer in dusty black valleys
On the interstate

Paria Canyon in Utah and Arizona: Portraits and Haikus by Amanda Marusich, 17, and Erica Benedict-Barta, 17, Oregon. Also see page 23.