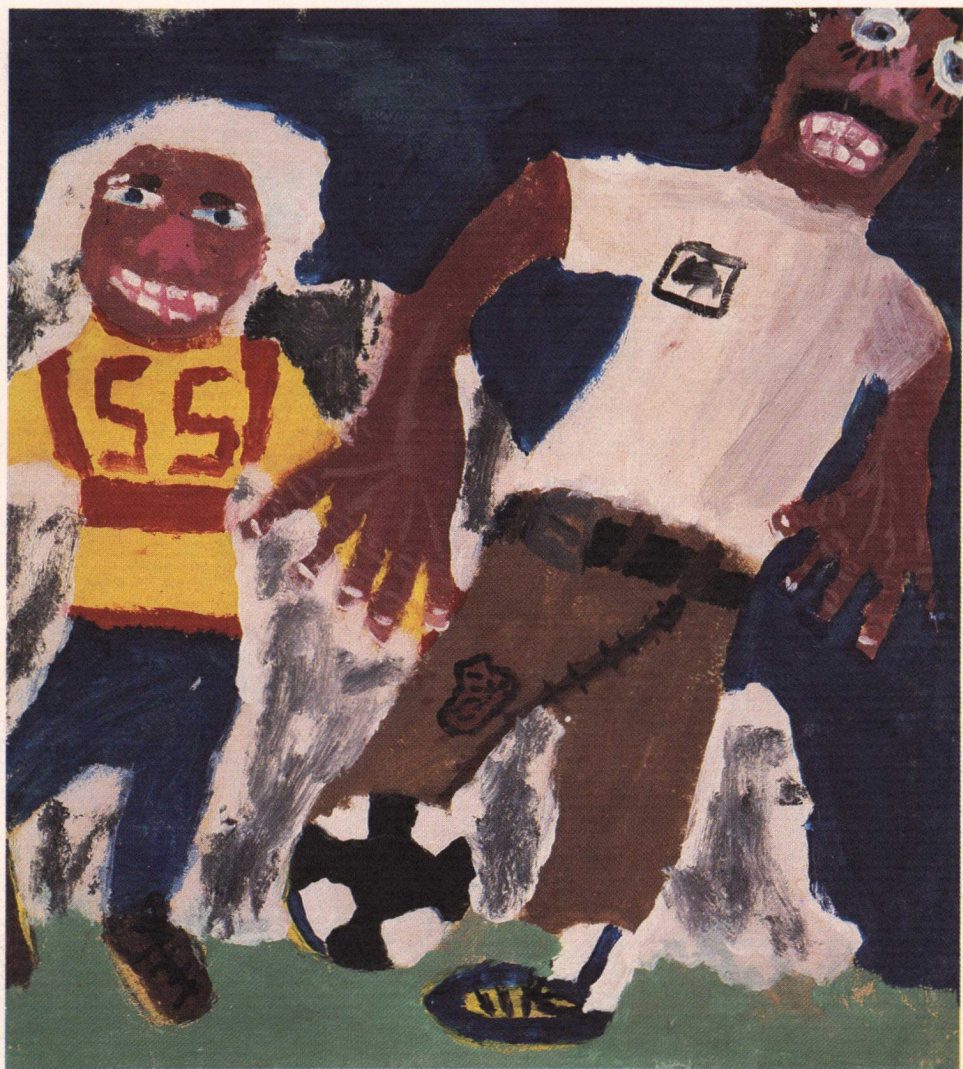


# STONE SOUP

the magazine by children



Volume 14 Number 1    September/October 1985



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COVER: Brett Penman, 10, New Zealand.

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## MEMBERSHIPS

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## SUBMISSIONS

All our child readers are encouraged to send the editors of *Stone Soup* stories and pictures for our review. Written work need not be typed or copied over. Pictures are accepted in any size and color. Children interested in reviewing books please write Ms. Gerry Mandel for more information. Include your name, age, address and the kinds of books you like to read.

We do not publish a representative sample of the work we receive. As editors with a mission, we look for a specific kind of work and are therefore very selective. Through the work we publish we encourage children to use writing and art as a means of serious communication. In particular, we try to encourage children to look to the world they can see and touch for the sources of their inspiration. The more carefully you and your students read *Stone Soup* the better the chances your students' work will be used and the more effective *Stone Soup* will be as a positive force in child art education.

EDITORS: Gerry Mandel, William Rubel.



*Yun Davis, 10, Seoul American Elementary School, Korea*

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## A DEFINITION OF HAPPINESS

THE TENT FLEW up in a flurry of movement. I hurled my sleeping bag and cooler to the ground and watched the rain making patterns on the pool's surface.

My mind kept flitting forward to the race, and I kept reminding myself where I was.

"O.K. Ted," I would say, "you're here, at the race, the valley championships."

As I lay on my sleeping bag, I tried to keep my mind on the book I was reading. Every time my mind skittered away, I would run over to the rankings hanging on the bath house wall. Every time I did this I would say to myself, "Just one more time Ted, one more look."

A voice suddenly blared over the loudspeaker, "Boys ten and under, twenty-five yard breaststroke, report to the bullpen." I walked over, not feeling the ground under my feet.

The next thing I knew, I was on the blocks and swimming for dear life. I felt like a machine, saying over and over, with every breath, "Win, win, win." I hit the end of the pool after what seemed an eternity. I was sure I had come in last. I clambered out of the water to have one last look at the pool. Then it hit me. The other people were still swimming! I was so happy I almost skipped over to the tent. The rankings said I was seeded second.

Time swept me up in a wave that kept telling me, "The first three places in the finals get a medal,"

again and again.

I barely heard the P.A. system blast out the race number before I was over at the bullpen. At the bullpen, time slowed to an interminably dragging pace. My feet felt like lead as I slowly carried my body over to the blocks. Everything was as if I was watching it in slow motion. I could hear people cheering but most clearly I heard a steady cheer coming from my team.

As I stepped on the blocks, I don't know why, but I was thinking, My parents will love me no matter what.

I flew off the block at a speed of a horse bursting from the gates. I kept thinking of my humiliation if I lost *this* race, *the* race. I saw someone pulling ahead of me and closed my eyes, not even bothering to think anymore. I hit the wall in my final plunge. I struck the wall, clambered out of the pool, and practically flew back to the tent.

I got the medal a little while later. I must have looked like a pouter pigeon, strutting around with my chest stuck out. But that experience was, and probably always will be for me, a definition of happiness.

*Ted Nelson, 11, Weybridge School, Weybridge, Vermont*

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THESE WOODS?

TODAY I'M GOING off with my father. His hobby is painting, and sometimes he hops in the car with all his tools and goes off to the middle of nowhere and paints. Today he offered to take me with him.

As we were driving along in the car, on this old dirt road, we suddenly bounced up in the air. "Look!" my father exclaimed. "Somebody has been along here with a bulldozer and ripped all these trees out. Now it really looks horrendous!"

Silently, I agreed. I usually enjoy going off in the woods because everything is serene and beautiful. Now, I thought to myself, nothing will ever be the same in these woods.

The car stopped. I got out and walked along a path. Suddenly a huge, fallen-down tree loomed in front of me. It looked very old, since all the bark had fallen off, and it was very smooth and gray colored. Vines covered the end that was lying on the ground.

"Hey, Stu," I yelled (Stu is what we all call my father).

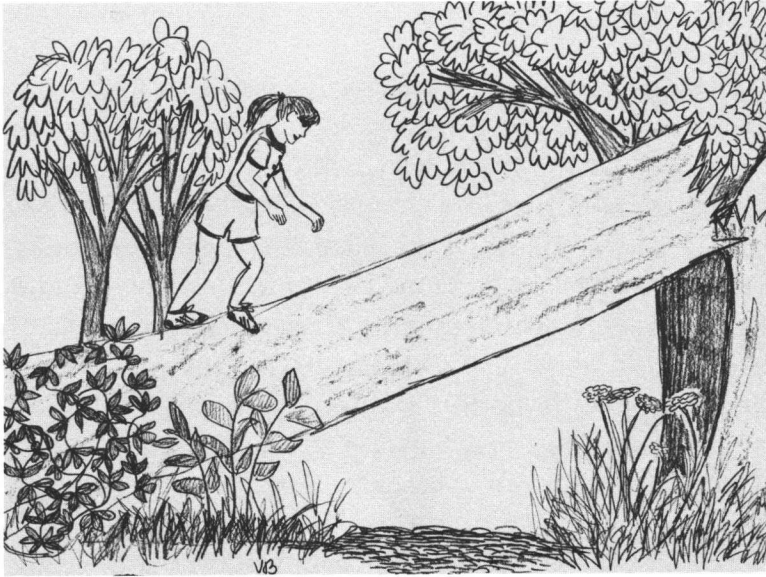
"What?"

"Are these leaves poison ivy?"

"No."

"Good!" I said and climbed onto the tree. I walked all the way up to the top. On the way I noticed a pile of sawdust and brushed it away.

Sitting on the top where the tree had been broken,  
I saw that the limbs had been sawed off.



“Somebody’s been getting a lot of firewood,” my father observed, coming over to the tree.

“Yep! Somebody built a fireplace, too,” I said, pointing to a circle of cinder blocks, with ashes in the middle.

“Uh huh. Did you know there used to be a farm here?”

“No.”

“Well, there was. Kept horses, too. And that tree you’re sitting on was brought here by someone. It’s a sycamore, and they aren’t native to the woods around here.”

“I nodded and he walked off with his sketching

board under his arm.

"What are you painting?" I shouted after him.

"Grapevines."

He must be working on leaf patterns again, I thought.

I slipped down off the sycamore and onto the ground beside the fireplace. I followed two tire tracks. A car or truck had been here recently, and the tires had pressed down the tall grass blades.

I passed a place where, inside a grove of young trees, there was a heap of junk. I stopped and looked at it. It was ugly; old tin cans rusted, parts of a mattress scattered around, worn tires, old scraps of things people hadn't wanted. Someone had actually come all the way out here to dump their trash? Actually going out of their way to ruin a once beautiful and clean spot? I walked on.

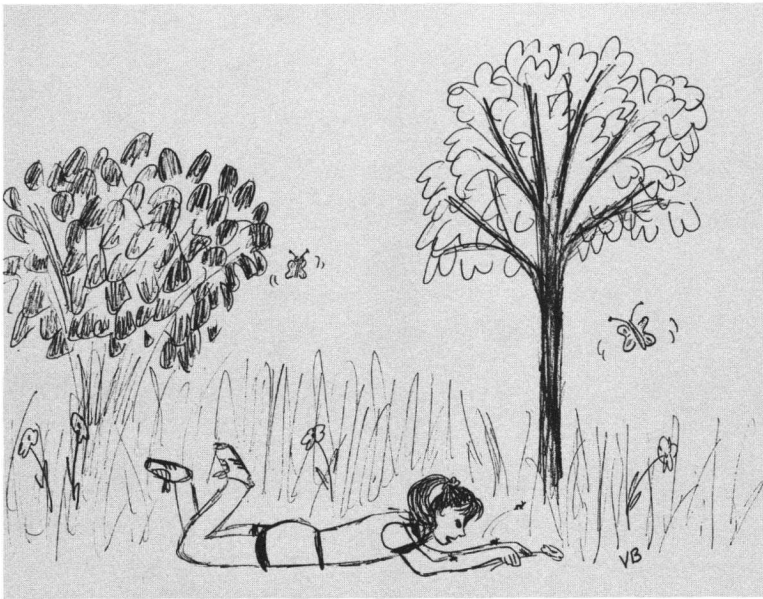
Field daisies bloomed all around me, and bright yellow dandelions too. The fresh spring grasses parted before my feet. Soon the fire tracks ended, and a narrow path took their place. I passed my father, sitting in front of a mass of vines yelling at a bee who was distracting him.

I looked around me again. The field daisies had disappeared, and tiny white flowers bloomed in their stead. Darker shades of grass rose up to my knees and swished as I walked. I began to run.

The path divided, but I stayed on the one I'd been traveling on. Tall green milkweed plants stood there like soldiers guarding a queen's courtyard. Leafy little bushes grew like dwarves in a helter-skelter manner.

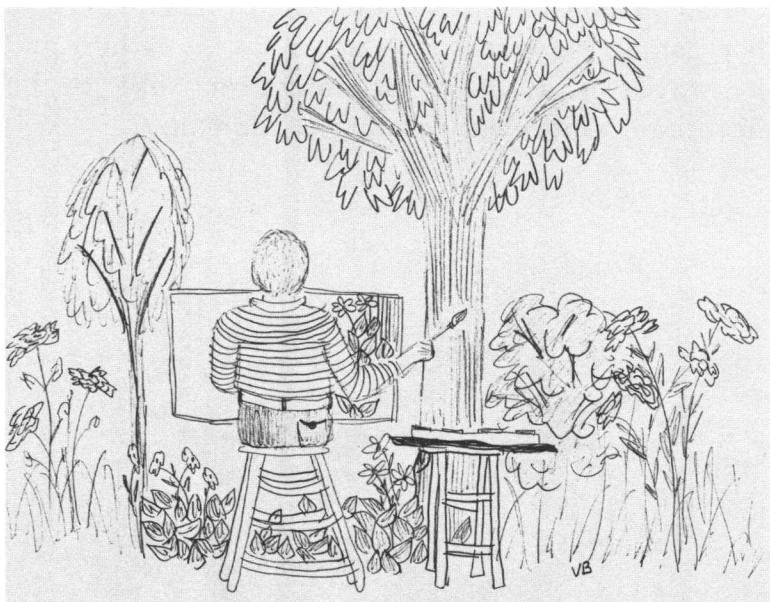
I stopped running. The path went on into a cluster of trees. Beyond them it seemed like there was a clearing, and I could see the tops of higher trees farther away. I wanted to go on but didn't. Something held me back, or maybe I was afraid of what I might find ahead.

I stood there for a minute, then turned and ran back along the trail. I was nearly to my father, and I slowed to a walk. He might not like to be disturbed while he's painting, I thought.



Next to the trail there was a large place where the young grass was pressed down. Something must have been lying there. I decided to lie down there, too. It was so soft, and it smelled warm and sweet.

I closed my eyes and felt little prickles on my arm. I looked. Miniature, green crickets were hopping all over me. I stared, fascinated. Suddenly a spider skittered across. I squeaked in alarm and jumped to my feet.



“Something bother you?” asked my father.

“Yeah! A spider crawled across my arm,” I explained. He went on painting the grapevines.

I went back to the sycamore and lay on the warm, smooth trunk. I felt the sun beating down on me and saw the cloudless, clear blue sky above me. The hum of bugs surrounded me. A horse neighed twice, far away. I could hear cars zooming by the highway. An airplane passed, high in the air. I

thought to myself, all these things are signs of civilization around me. The trash is part of civilization, too.

Wherever people go, they always seem to leave refuse behind them. If this is true, what will happen to these woods? To any place which hasn't already been spoiled?

*Vanessa E. Beach, 11, Jackson, New Jersey  
illustrated by the author*

## KING OF THE RIVER

I COULDN'T BELIEVE my eyes as I, my dad, and a supervisor from Firehole Ranch all rode down the rugged, lonely road that led up into the Montana high country. I glanced about at the huge and endless mountains as I inhaled the clean Rocky Mountain air. There was no noise except for the truck when it hit a pothole and then a bump. The sounds around me just seemed to disappear as I thought about tomorrow and the huge trout I was planning to catch. You know that five-pounder that everybody tells stories about? Well, I was going after him tomorrow and I was bound to catch him.

"Jim!" Dad yelled, as he snapped me out of my daze. Isn't this a neat cabin?" It was very cozy and welcome looking. It featured a nice little fireplace, a couple of twin-sized beds and a bathroom. Basically

it had what you would find in any other house but this one was all wood: a real log cabin!

After we unpacked, we walked up to the main ranch house. When we walked in, a fire was burning and a great aroma was coming from the kitchen. Almost immediately we were greeted by a number of friendly people that ranged from the mayor of Midlands, Texas, to an elderly couple who love to fly fish. Throughout the evening everybody told fishing stories and enjoyed their dinner. Soon it was time to hit the sack.

Dad and I lit the fire and prepared to go to sleep. We were both very excited but also quite tired from the long flight and the change in time zones. As I lay in bed I stared at my trusty old fly rod, leaning against the wall with the light of the diminishing fire reflecting off the steel rod. Soon I was asleep.

The next morning we awoke to a beautiful sunrise and looked out to see bull moose running across an open field. As my dad would say, it was "as pretty as a picture." Eagerly my Dad and I snapped, zippered and buttoned on our fishing clothes. We looked like two true fly fishermen as we charged up the dirt road with our jars banging, flies rattling and our big waders flopping all over the place. We had a quick breakfast at the ranch house and then jumped in a boat and rushed across an immense lake to meet our guide.

Our guide's name was Dan. He was real nice and enthusiastic about his job. He wasn't a fly fishing guide because of the money he earned but because he loved his work and he did it well. He tied his

own flies, constructed his own reels and made his own rods.

Dad, Dan and I went to the Madison River which is one of the best fly fishing rivers in the world. I was so excited about the whole thing that I couldn't wait to get there.

We soon arrived and boarded a McKenzie River Boat. This type of boat only draws five inches of water. Dan put a Rytes Royal fly on my line and it looked like it would definitely attract the eye of some trout. "Hold on," Dan yelled as he shoved the boat off into the swift current of the river. Immediately he was telling us to cast behind a rock or to toss one between the trees. Pow! A fish hit my line and I began to bring it in quickly. I had to be careful not to break the line for it was only a three pound test. I hadn't caught Jaws, but this trout wasn't any sardine either. He was a nice rainbow about ten inches long.

For the remainder of the morning we continued to catch browns and rainbow ranging from eight to fourteen inches and from one to three pounds. We were just about to head in for lunch when I cast right in front of this gigantic rock. I tossed my fly in the air several times to get it good and dry and then lofted it right in the center of the current. The biggest trout I've ever seen hit my fly and took off like a shot out of a cannon. My reel was singing crazily as the large trout kept on swimming upstream with my fly in his mouth. I heard Dan mumble it must be a six-pounder as the great fish lunged through the air, sending water splashing

about and displaying his great rainbow colors. I had used up all of my ordinary line and was halfway into my back-up line when the fish stopped and changed directions and swam toward the boat. In order to keep a tight line between the fish and the boat I had to rapidly bring in the line. The line began to pile up on the hull of the boat for I had to thread it through my fingers instead of reeling it in. When the fish neared the boat Dan thought he was worn out and it was time to try to net him. So he beached the boat and advanced toward the thrashing trout. Then with his last bit of strength the trout took off again down the river. He kept on taking more and more line as Dan ran toward the boat. As I looked down at the line my eyes fixed on a giant knot that had formed somehow while it was lying on the floor of the boat. Before I could do anything the knot slammed against one of the tiny rings on the rod. Every second the fish pulled harder and the line got tighter until we heard the line snap. There was no tension on the rod. The line just went limp. It was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. For a moment, I think I might have even shed a few tears.

Later on at lunch I saw a bald eagle fly above my head. He was graceful, majestic, and free, very much like my giant trout. Maybe the trout wasn't meant to be caught at all. Maybe no one was meant to catch the King of the River.

*Jim Lewis, 12,  
St. Paul's School, Brooklandville, Maryland*

## THE FIRE

THE PILE OF logs and paper lay lifeless in the fireplace. I lit a match and wondered how this could produce my mind's picture of a roaring, blazing fire. I pulled back the chain curtain and tossed the flickering match in. Soon flames shot up from the paper leaving an inky black trail wherever they wandered. The smaller pieces of wood began to glow, and gradually tongues of fire enveloped them. I could no longer distinguish between paper and wood, for the dancing fire blurred everything. Slowly the flames soared higher and higher as a red veil crept over the logs. Now the fire was a mountain range with jagged red peaks rising and falling. Twisted ghostly shapes could be seen weaving in and out among the flames. Little by little I lost interest in the shapes and walked away.

I returned later to find the fire blackened, trying to find life in the few remaining embers. These gradually faded out, too, leaving me with only memories of the fire.

*Campe Goodman, 12, Norfolk Academy, Norfolk, Virginia*

## EVEN AFTER FOUR YEARS

AS I STEPPED off the plane the damp Scottish air filled my lungs. I was bursting with happiness that I could hardly contain within myself. I wanted to leap and dance and scream, and let the whole world know how much I loved my native country and how much I had missed it. Immediately, I began searching for Sheila, and a little of my happiness was replaced by worry. It had been four years since I had seen my best friend, and people *did* change. Would she be as I remembered her? The picture that filled my mind made me smile.

I saw a short, thin girl with greeny-gray eyes, a color that reminded me of the ocean on a stormy night. However, the eyes themselves were not stormy, they were gentle and eager. Her hair, a medium brown, was parted down the middle with a silver barrette on either side. It was always straight and shiny. She was not most people's idea of beautiful, but she was pretty in her own way. If the radiant smile that was always on her face had not been there, she would have looked rather like a timid mouse. As it was, she looked more like a friendly puppy. Teachers always said she brought sunshine into the classroom, and it was true. Everywhere she sent she brought color and life. Oh, and Sheila *never* stopped talking in that sweet, pleasant voice of hers. Gossiping had become a regular pastime for us. Best of all she had a

wonderful imagination, like me, and together we thought up exciting new games that kept us occupied for hours.

Would she be the same, though? The question kept nagging me. Finally, I spotted her. She was a little taller but otherwise looked the same.

"*Lucy*," she threw her arms around me, "come on, there's so much to talk about, but first you *must* hear what happened to Paul Taggart . . ."

She got right down to business, filling me in on every detail. As always, she was at ease, and it was as if we had never been apart. I needn't have worried, I thought, she was the same old Sheila — friendly, funny, and smiling her radiant smile.

*Lucy Mair, 13, Pleasantville, New York*

## THE GREAT ADVENTURE

AS I DARED to climb higher on the limbs of that seemingly never-ending tree, I sensed that something was drastically wrong. I had never ventured past that one certain branch, but I had made a pact with myself to take a chance just this one time.

The main reason that I was doing this was because my wild, crazy friend, Stephanie, had

double dared me to go higher than she had just a few days ago. I knew that she was a tad lighter than I, and, to tell you the truth, I was scared to death!

Just as I placed my foot on the next branch, it happened. I was flying through the air at who knows what speed. I felt as if I had died and was going to heaven.

But as I hit the extremely rigid ground, I realized that I had been traveling downward. I was in severe shock.

Nothing.

When I awoke, I found myself lying on a hard board in a speeding, screaming ambulance on my way to the hospital.

"Dad," I said with a moan. "Where's Stephanie? She's going to be mad at herself."

"Aimee! You're conscious!"

"Yeah, I guess so." Then I lay back with much pain and slept restlessly.

When we got to the emergency room at the hospital, I realized that my dad had not answered my question. I didn't really care at the time, for many fuzzy paramedics, technicians, and doctors were standing above me making me nervous. (Maybe it was only one doctor, one technician, and one paramedic. Perhaps my mind just multiplied them by a million.) I managed to stand up painfully in front of a humongous machine.

I was all in one piece.

"You're a very lucky young lady," said my dad in his unusually husky voice.

"I know," was my reply. "I know."

*Aimee Johansen, 12, Heritage School, Peoria, Arizona*

## BOOK REVIEWS

*P.J.* by Andrea Balis and Robert Reiser; Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, 1984; \$10.95.

I enjoyed *P.J.* because in parts Jessica, the main character, is like me. One example of this is when she made a beautiful rya rug in art class. It took her almost all year to do. She wanted to get a good grade. But just because she was the only one to get an A-plus, Ben, Kenny, and Gary started calling her P.J. which is short for "Perfect Jessica." I, too, have been teased for getting a good grade. Also, in another part Jessica is like me. When she went to a museum with her class, Ben began making his trouble. When the class got to the dinosaurs, Jessica dared Ben to climb a bone statue of a Tyrannosaurus rex. Ben double dared her. She did it. She only did it so she wouldn't be called P.J. again. Of course she got in a lot of trouble. In that part she is like me because I am sensitive to my feelings. So is Jessica. She climbed the bone statue so she would not have her feelings hurt anymore. Sometimes I do

dangerous things to stop my feelings from getting hurt.

The authors know how kids react in the fourth and fifth grade. Andrea Balis and Robert Reiser are both very good writers. They wrote such a good book; I couldn't stop reading it!

*Patty Bailor, 9, Westerville, Ohio*

*Wish You Were Here* by Hilma Wolitzer; Farrar, Straus, Giroux: New York, 1984; \$10.95.

I liked the main character, Bernie Segal, in the book *Wish You Were Here*. The characters in this story seem real. They actually catch each other's colds and share fears and secrets. A part of me grew up with Bernie while reading this book. I liked the character Mary Ellen. She is Bernie's first girlfriend and she has a troublesome kid brother, Steven, but doesn't lose her cool. She seems so easy to get along with and understanding when Bernie is having trouble with algebra, going through shyness and overcoming the grief of his father's sudden, untimely death.

Bernie's whole life is changing around him and the best part of the book is what Bernie has to do to reach his goal and how it changes him. He is forced to do things he doesn't like. I shared with him his inner thoughts as he dealt with an imper-

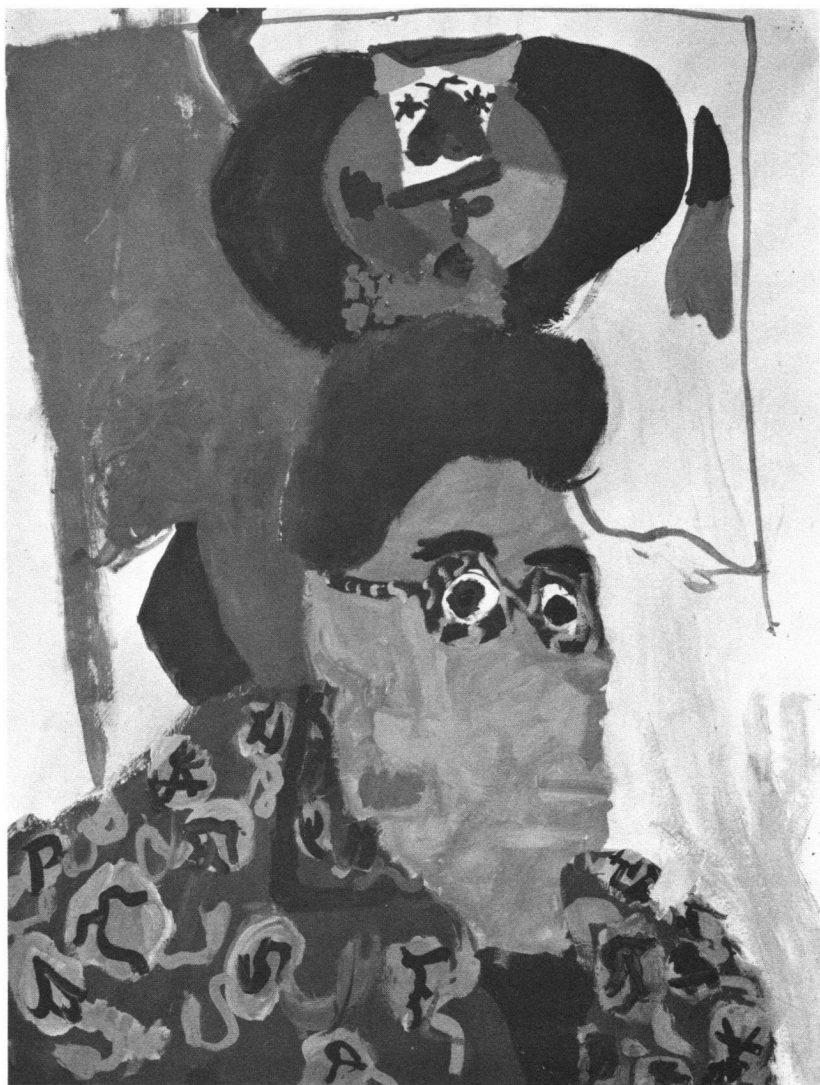
sonal travel agent, the mystery of algebra, and misleading advertising gimmicks.

I, too, have asthma, so I wanted to know how Bernie's asthma felt to him. His mother is so worried about Bernie's asthma that she keeps him from doing hard work for good pay. Bernie is happy that he didn't get an allergic reaction — "no sneezing and my eyes weren't watering" — when playing with Cupcake, a black poodle. I have seen that reaction when my friends are allergic to my cat. Bernie is even told by his doctor that he is getting better, but he never says what having asthma really feels like. Asthma makes each breath hurt. Inhaling isn't bad, but exhaling is hard. Bernie never mentions anything about that.

Like Bernie's kid sister Grace, I wanted to see what Bernie kept in his treasure box. I made one like it in third grade for sharing time. I still have it and like to look at what's inside.

I really enjoyed reading this book. I like books that have chapter headings and not just numbers or Roman numerals. This author not only had chapter titles but good ones too! I would finish one chapter and start wondering what the next one would be about. I recommend this book to everyone.

*Joey Malas, 11, Elk Grove Village, Illinois*



*Samantha Wilson, 9, Santa Cruz, California*



*Amme Perry, 9, Scotts Valley, California*

## THE LIBRARY

WHEN YOU WALK into a library, you feel a certain silence. But the colorful books surrounding you against the wall seem to welcome you. The rough-feeling, flat brownish rug seems less inviting. The cards in the card catalog make strange noises as the people flip through them and the rolling roar as the drawer shuts sounds even stranger. As people put down a heavy book you hear a thump! And as I see the different colored edges of the books as they are lined up, it looks like a rainbow. The tick of the librarian's typewriter seems to follow a certain pattern. And the beep from the machine as you check out a book seems to fit right in. The copy machine makes a loud churning sound every time a dime is put in. Every time a page is turned when someone reads, it sounds like someone is crumbling paper. You know you're in a library when you hear the squeaking as someone turns the paperback book rack. When the warm sun falls into the flower pots, you can almost see them grow and see their leaves slowly moving closer to the window. As the library door shuts, the quietness seems to wear off. I step into a whole new world that is much noisier.

*Tracy Fitzgerald, 12, School #5, Oceanside, New York*

## ATTENTION ARTISTS!

*Stone Soup* is looking for illustrators ages 13 and under. All artists are invited to send us two samples of your work, accompanied by a letter stating your name, age, address, phone number, and the type of subject matter you'd like to illustrate. If you are selected, we will mail you a story that will appear in a future issue, along with instructions for your illustrations. We will pay \$10 for each illustration we decide to publish.

In this issue, look at "What Will Happen to These Woods?" (page 6) and "The Camping Trip" (page 34) for two examples of beautifully illustrated stories. Your samples may be any size or medium. We particularly like pictures that depict a complete scene and fill the page with detail.

Address your submissions to Ms. Gerry Mandel, *Stone Soup*, P.O. Box 83, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. Let us hear from you soon!

*The Editors*

## ABOUT ME AND MY FAMILY

**W**HEN I WAS born, my mother was thirty-two year old. My mother say that I was a pretty baby. Then my father give me a name. My name is Lien. Then I grow up to one month old.

Then my father took me to visit my cousin. When I was one month old I still sleep with my mother, until I grow up to five months old. Then my mother let me sleep with my elder sister. My elder sister is only thirteen year old. Then I grow up to seven month.

Then my mother started to give me baby food. Sometime I didn't like baby food. But we didn't have baby food like in America. My mother cook potatoes, when the potatoes is soft she bring it down and peel it then my mother mash it out.

Then I grow up to nine month. Then my mother and my father started to teaches me how to walk. And a couple week I started to play with toys. I had a lot of toys to play with and I like it. Then I grow up to ten month. When my mother open mouth she saw one teeth come in. She so excited.

Then I grow up to one year old. When I was one year old I know how to walk by myself. And I have another teeth came in. My first word was Ba Ba and Ma Ma. The word Ba Ba is easy for me to said it but the word Ma Ma is a little hard for me to said it.

Then I grow up to two years old. When I was two year I have a lot of teeths. Then I started to eat like

my mother or my sister.

Then I grow up to three year old. When I was three year old I started to play with my friends. They were very funny. And I am look funny too. I have a lot the problems. The problem is when I fell down. Then my father spank me, and my mother did the same way like my father.

When I was five year old, my father take me to the first grade. When my father take me to the class, I was so shy, and my face look very red. Then the next day I have a lot the friends. In my country at school we did have lunch in cafeteria. They have a little time for us to go outside and buy something to eat, but the people did sells thing in the store. They put the table outside and put things on it. They sell soups, cookies, fruits and something to drink too.

Every day my father give me thirty cents for my lunch because it's not very expensive. It's very cheap. We came home very early from seven-thirty A.M. to twelve o'clock noon. When I got home I can eat lunch again. Then I go to sleep at afternoon. When I woke up, it only about one o'clock or two o'clock. Sometime my father or my mother give me ten cents to go out at the store and buy some fruit to eat.

My house is near the well, when we need water we have to get it from the well. Sometime we have to wait, because the well is no more water. And sometime there is very loud rain. We went out and get water from the rain to drink or take a shower in the rain.

Whenever we saw the sky is black, we know the rain will coming, so we have to ready everything.

When I was seven year old, I told my mother that, "Can I wear earring?"

Then my mother said, "No, because you still a little girl.

When I was seven year old, I always want to go some place with my mother. I love to go to the market, because there have a lot of foods I like. My favorite food was egg roll. In my house we have a TV but not color TV.

One day at night, there is a thief come in to my house, and we were asleep. My brother was heard something, but he scared to go out to the kitchen. Then the thief come to my living room and stole a TV. There was about three or four thief come to my house. When they was take the TV to the car, and my father heard the sound, so my father follow those thief. But it so unlucky, the thief had a knife, so the thief cut a little line on my father's forehead. So now my father still had a little thing on his forehead.

Oh I forget to tell you that when my family move to that house, my father didn't know anything, he digging the hole outside and he saw a skeleton and we was so scared. But my father said that nothing will be wrong. So we live there.

My house live by a big old house.

One day it was about four o'clock morning. My aunt go out to the kitchen to cook some rices. My aunt was look up at the roof of the old house. And you know what she saw? She saw a lady stand on

the roof. Her finger is very long and her hair was long to her foot. And she very ugly. So my aunt scream up and run back to my room. In the morning my aunt tell us and people said that was ghost.

There is another day at night, when my father was going outside to get cool and my father saw a big light come from a tree near the kitchen. My father was not scared. My father take a rock up and throw to that light, and then the light disappear. Then my father went back to sleep. So in my country there is a lot of things happen.

One day my brother went to his friend's house, because my brother friend family is decided to go to America.

In the morning, when I and my family woke up, we heard someone said that my brother was go on that boat too. Then my father started to cry and he destroy a lot of thing. He throw his clothes out and he throw the glass. So every day my father cried and cried even I and my sister. And my family hope that nothing will be wrong with my brother. Then about one month pass. My brother send a letter home. He say he O.K. and we were so happy.

*Lien Ly, Hosford Middle School, Portland, Oregon*

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## MY EXPERIENCE IN ARIZONA

ALL FALL MY mother was working on a book about my great grandfather Ed. The book was a collection of stories about his life. The stories were written by him and all his children and grandchildren. We knew he was dying so my mother did it as fast as she could.

My mother finished all her work by Christmas and took the book of stories to the Home Office where she was getting it printed. They took three weeks in January to finish it because they made lots of mistakes. My mother was very worried about it because she knew Great-Grandpa was dying so she had to get to him fast.

My mother said I could go with her to Arizona. The day before we were supposed to be on our plane the printing machine broke down and the book almost didn't get finished. Mamma told them, "*It has to be done today.*"

They said at the Home Office if we paid more we could use their other machine. It was done just in time.

On the plane my mother read me an Agatha Christie book and we ate a croissant. When we got to Phoenix my great-aunt June and uncle Bailey came to pick us up at the airport. They drove us to Apache Junction where they live next to Grandpa Ed and his wife Noreen.

When we got there we went right over to see Grandpa. He was sitting at the dining table but he

hadn't eaten much of his dinner. He was very happy to see us. We showed him the photographs and the cartoons in his book and we gave him a box of his favorite peanut brittle. He told us some stories.

Grandpa Ed seemed very old and sleepy but he was also cheerful and he teased me about sitting in his chair. He said, "That's my chair and the cat's chair and you can't sit in it." But I knew he was kidding. He loved the book but he was too tired to keep his eyes open. He said he would get up at five o'clock in the morning to read it. He went to bed taking his oxygen tank with him.

We went back to June and Uncle Bailey's and went to bed. At five o'clock the next morning our Uncle Bailey knocked on the door. He said, "I don't want to scare you, but the ambulance is here. Grandpa fell out of bed and his eyes rolled back into his head. There are three paramedics and the sheriff over there now working on him."

My mother got dressed and went over there right away but they wouldn't let me go. I didn't feel bad about that because I knew there were a lot of people over there. But I felt bad because I knew my mom was very sad.

When she got there she held Grandpa's hand and he winked at her. "I guess your visit was just too much for me!" Then he went in the ambulance to the hospital.

The next day I shopped in the hospital gift shop and Mamma said goodbye to her Grandpa. She loved him more than anybody in the world.

We had to fly back home. Mamma tried to fly back one more time but Grandpa died the day she was going to leave.

Mamma and I had a little memorial service by ourselves. She was so sad. But we had one small miracle happen. A red gladiolus, Grandpa's favorite flower, bloomed in the middle of winter when he died. It blooms there now.

*Arya Campbell, 8,  
Sonoma Country Day School, Santa Rosa, California*

## THIRD OUT OF THE FOURTH INNING

I was playing  
for the first time  
at first base —  
so scared,  
my glove almost fell off,  
smelling  
the fresh nachoes  
thinking about going swimming  
after the game.

Coaches  
yelling at players,  
players  
cheering on their teammates,  
parents  
applauding the team.

Two outs,  
Man on second and third,  
Tough batter  
concentrating on pitcher  
pitching the ball.  
“Whack!”

I dove  
for the ground ball,  
looked in my glove  
and found the ball.  
I stood up  
and ran  
as fast as I could,  
touched the bag,  
heard the umpire yell,  
“You’re out!”  
then excitedly  
jumped into the air —  
arms and legs  
straight out —  
and yelled,  
“Yah Hoo!!”

*Brian Scott, 11, Hale School, Mesa, Arizona*

## THE CAMPING TRIP

**M**Y PARENTS, WHO always like to travel, my brother, who was then seven (my favorite playmate), and I, five, who took my easy, no-trouble life for granted, were going camping. No one knew that the fantastic, easy life was to be threatened.

In the car, my brother and I argued about anything that would keep us busy. The car sounded like this:

"I did not!"

"Did too!"

"Did not!"

My mom turned to my dad. "Did you see that gas station back there?"

"Yes." My dad was very puzzled.

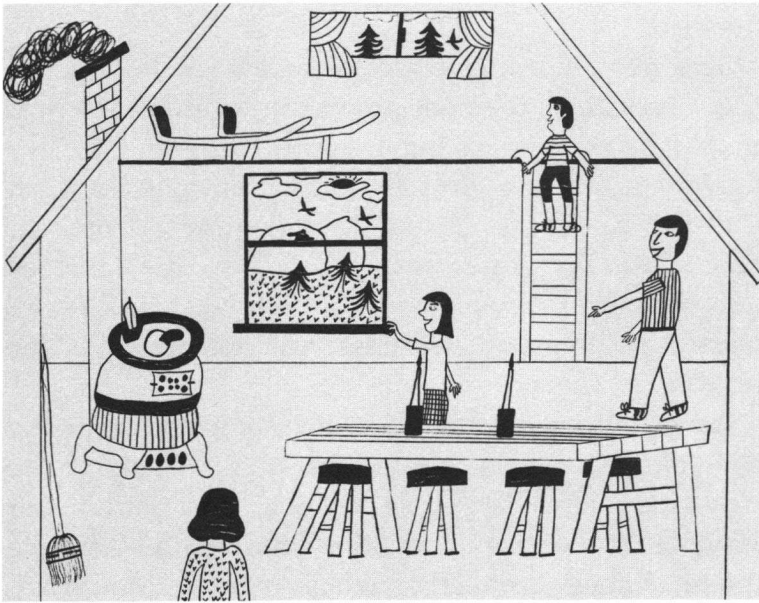
"I think we should drop two small kids back there. The gas station manager seemed very nice. I'm sure he wouldn't mind taking them."

Chris and I shot back and glued ourselves to the old blue seats of our van. Our mouths couldn't be opened if they were pried. This was one trip we weren't going to miss. When we came to the turn-off we were sorry: the road was so dusty and rocky we had to drive as slow as a snail. Soon the bumpy ride came to an end.

As soon as I saw the bold high mountains and smelled the strong pine scent I fell in love with camping.

The cabin was over a century old but still holding

up. Inside on the first floor was a wood stove and a sizable wooden picnic table with benches. On the second floor, that you got up to by a ladder, there was a loft where for some reason there were a bunch of lounging chairs. I asked my never-serious dad about this.



"I don't know, maybe they got tired of standing," was what I got for an answer.

I trudged out of the cabin and for the first time really looked around; high in the trees were birds carried away with their chattering. There were many bullet shells lying around because of the illegal sport hunting. The scenery was, well, to say the least, magnificent. The mountains with tall trees in the distance looked as perfect as an oil painting

on canvas. I caught my breath. Yes, definitely I was going to like it here.

That night we sat along the fire pit and roasted marshmallows, or, rather, torched them, as Chris and I called our way of cooking. We were very proud that soft, gushy, white marshmallows could become gooey, black, crusty-on-the-outside marshmallows.

The next morning I awoke and tried to squeeze the disgusting oatmeal down my throat. It was definitely not one of my favorite dishes.

We started the day by taking a hike to Cars Creek. It was about half a mile away from the cabin. Finally, after what seemed like fourteen years, or even fifteen now that I think about it, we started to do some effortless walking downhill and arrived at the creek.

As my mom got the tuna fish sandwiches ready she told us a story about the land. "Back in the oldy-goldy days if people used to stay and never leave a stretch of land, the land would become theirs. That's exactly what your great-great-grandma did, and it passed through the years and now it's your grandma's and her sister's. Someday it will be yours."

My eyes opened wide at the thought of owning this beautiful land. My mom noticed this look. "You wouldn't want Grandma to die, would you?"

"Oh, no, Mommy, no! Grandma live long time, yes?"

"Yes," she answered with a smile. Under her breath I heard her mutter a desperate, "Yes."

My dad had a unique idea. Using the tinfoil, he made tin boats and sailed them off down the creek for an unknown adventure. After that we stripped to our underwear and waded in the creek. It was like sitting in a freezer that had the temperature dial turned as low as it could go. My whole body turned red and my nose and cheeks turned a soft pink.



It was around three o'clock when we started back. It had been a great, full day for a kid my age. As I was walking back up the mountain on the path, I thought back on the day. Up, up, UP! That was the only direction to go. We could look down and see the creek where we were.

I tripped over a branch. Suddenly I felt myself

going down the mountain. I looked up and my tall parents were getting smaller and smaller by the



second. I looked down. Uh oh, I didn't like the look of down. Ohhh, those sharper, gray rocks at the

bottom of the mountain were sure going to hurt. Rushing over the rocks was Cars Creek, making foam from all that rushing. I looked back at the rocks. They seemed to be saying, "Dare me!" Time was passing quickly, soon I would hit those rude rocks. How are you going to get out of this one, Dawn? You can't just give a sweet smile and expect to stop rolling down.

Suddenly my leg caught something sharp. Re-joice! It was a bush. I came to an immediate stop. I smiled at the bush. It seemed to smile back and say, "Don't thank me—it was nothing." I looked up and saw my parents coming down the hill to rescue me. You don't have to rescue me, I thought, the bush already has done that. I stood up feebly. My parents seemed so relieved they could burst out with sympathy and they did. I almost thought of yelling, "I'm O.K.!" But before I did I thought how lucky I was to have nice parents like I did. So I walked up the hill with my parents, listening to their sympathy. Well, I thought, not even this could ruin my wonderful camping trip, and it didn't.

*Dawn Graber, 11, Martinez, California*  
*illustrated by Justine Minnis, 11, Santa Cruz, California*

## A CHEMICAL EXPLOSION

**M**Y BROTHER RYAN is thirteen. He is four years older than I am. He bought a chemistry set at Toys R Us because he likes science. Sometimes he showed me experiments and said not to tell Mom or Dad but I thought nothing of it. My mom always told Ryan, "Be careful, Ryan. I don't want the house to blow up." Then one day . . .

"I'm going to work in the lab," said my brother eagerly after dinner.

"O.K.," replied my mom, who was washing dishes. I went back in my room and played with my Lego.

The next thing I knew, the smoke alarm was buzzing as loud as ever. I thought it was because it needed a new battery. I went to get my dad. He was watching a football game. I went to get my brother to tell him to get a chair so my dad could put in a new battery. I opened the garage door. The garage was full of gray smoke. It looked like Mount St. Helen's erupting. Ryan stepped out from the smoke.

My mom exclaimed, "Ryan, your face is burned!"

My brother felt his face and went screaming into the bathroom. My dad was mad at Ryan for using dangerous chemicals. He was talking to Ryan but I didn't know what he was saying. It was in too high a tone. He was talking like an opera singer. My brother was putting cold water on his face to cool it down. I was worried, shocked, and I was clicking

the teeth on my comb. I must have been staring at myself in the mirror for five minutes when Ryan shouted, "Throw my chemistry set away. I never want to see it again. Take me to the hospital." That's the last I heard of him. He and my dad flew out the door and the car screeched out of the driveway.

The next day I went to see what the hospital did to Ryan. It looked as if our garbage disposal chewed his face up. There were red scabs and white cream all over it. He told me the cream was there to cool his face and heal it from the burn. It looked terrible but it worked. Ryan said to my dad, "Why did you throw away my chemistry set?!"

My dad replied, "Because you told me to."

"But I could have sold it."

"That's life," said my mom, coming into the act. Ryan promised never to make an experiment with matches again. I was very relieved.

After about a month my brother's face improved from Frankenstein to average. Now it looks like nothing ever happened to it.

Now Ryan collects model train things as a hobby. I have to admit that model railroading is a lot safer than chemistry. I hope nothing like this ever happens again because it got me scared stiff.

*Marc Schoenfeld, 9,  
Walnut Heights School, Walnut Creek, California*

## GRANDMA!!

**S**HE WAS IN a darkened room with tubes going every which way. Her eyes were open, yet she wasn't looking at anything. "What are you doing here? What about Susan's recital?" she said, surprising us. (Later we found out that she didn't know we were even there.) Could this be the Grandma whose face is always rosy with happiness and eyes are dancing? Could this be she with her face paler than pale and eyes with no spark left? Is this you, Grandma, could it be you? I couldn't think about the thoughts her face showed. Oh, Grandma, don't die!

The weeks blurred past. My cousins were at Grandma's, too. We all needed to be close to her. We needed to be comforted. We needed each other. We walked around like Zombies with smiles. Outside we were calm and happy, but inside we were frightened. We knew that she had cancer and could die. We knew that chemotherapy could help her, but she might not survive it.

I found myself doing things without knowing I was doing them. I felt like a rock had fallen in my stomach and was bouncing around. For some reason, I felt like I had a lot of guilt weighing me down. I guess my thoughts always drifted to Grandma. Sometimes during the night I'd think of the lady who made the most delicious cookies in the world. Could she be dying this minute? I didn't know what was happening to her. My mother

explained things, but not everything.

One lucky day Grandma came home from the hospital. All the worrying and sadness were swept away — for now. Next step — chemotherapy.

She was drastically sick. She vomited a lot and couldn't sleep. But, slowly she gained her strength, just in time to lose her hair but not her sense of humor. She laughed when Marc called her "Grandma Baldy," and she called the wig we had gotten her "Zsa Zsa." But, as soon as she realized she didn't have much hair left, she refused to brush it! So when she stood in the wind all her hair flew off in steady white streams.

Grandma's house was filled with laughter and joy. She got better every day, and we even got used to the chemotherapy sessions. She didn't, but we did!

That summer I guess I grew up. Living close to death, I became closer to those I love and we all enjoyed being with each other.

Grandma's face is rosy. Her eyes sparkle and dance more than ever! We're a family again.

*Susan Tookey, 10, Arlington Heights, Illinois*

# SCENES FROM A NATIVITY PLAY



*Csilla Sapi, 13, Budapest, Hungary*



*Kinga Olah, 14, Budapest, Hungary*

## THE C.A.F. ARCHIVE

The Children's Art Foundation maintains one of the nation's major archives of children's writing and art. Our collection includes tens of thousands of drawings by American children, thousands of works of prose and poetry by children from all parts of the United States over the last ten years, and a substantial collection of international children's art. We use *Stone Soup*, in part, as a vehicle for making available selected material from our archive to children and educators who are unable to visit our facility in Santa Cruz, California. We urge you to pay close attention to the pictures from our international art collection reproduced on the cover of *Stone Soup* and on the facing page. Eight pictures from our collection are reproduced on postcards, as described on page 47. All of these pictures evidence a level of skill at depicting scenes from children's lives that is seldom found in American children's art. A study of the pictures we print, as well as of folk art and works by the masters of Western art, will provide you with the basis for developing a richly rewarding art curriculum. The Children's Art Foundation headquarters is located in Santa Cruz, California, one and a half hours from San Francisco. We encourage you to make an appointment to visit our facility whenever you are in the area.

## "STONE SOUP IN THE CLASSROOM"

William Rubel, Co-Editor of *Stone Soup* and Co-Director of the Children's Art Foundation, has written an activity guide for teachers who subscribe to *Stone Soup*. The sixteen-page booklet outlines more than a dozen projects designed to enhance classroom reading, writing, and art programs in conjunction with *Stone Soup*. It describes the

educational theories on which *Stone Soup* is based and suggests ways of applying those theories in the classroom. To order a copy of "*Stone Soup* in the Classroom" see page 48.

## MAKE THE MORNING

James Anatole Lindbloom has been telling and writing poems and stories since he was three years old. Many of his pieces have appeared in the pages of *Stone Soup*, where they have been enthusiastically received by its readers. A collection of James' works is available in a paperback book called *Make the Morning*. The 32-page book is beautifully illustrated by the author (see page 48).

## CRIPPLED DETECTIVES

Volume 7 Number 2 of *Stone Soup* was a special issue devoted entirely to an adventure story written by Lee Tandy Schwartzman when she was seven years old. *Crippled Detectives, or The War of the Red Romer* is the story of four sisters and a brother on a quest to save the world from the villainous Red Romer. We are offering this story, illustrated by the author, in book form (see page 48).

## LITTLE BOOKS

Little Books is the name of a series of paperback books published by the Children's Art Foundation. Little Books are each three by four inches, and sixteen pages long. They are written and illustrated by children ages five to twelve.

There are six books available in the Little Book Series. The books are: *The Great Wild Egg Hunt*, *The Bee That Could Never Be Killed*, *Frankenstein Locks Himself Out*,

*Little Dog*, *Amy Goes to the Moon*, and *The Beautiful Puppy*. *Little Dog* is a facsimile of a little book written in 1934, when its author was six years old, and it was the inspiration for the series (see page 48).

## POSTCARDS

The Children's Art Foundation has made a set of eight full-color postcards reproducing some of the finest work from our international art collection. The cards are each four by six inches, and they are beautifully printed on a quality card paper. Reproduced below in black and white, the pictures are from (1) Cyprus, (2) Malawi, (3) Hungary, (4) Egypt, (5) Switzerland, (6) Luxembourg, (7) Sri Lanka, (8) Cyprus. If ordering the cards individually, please refer to them by number (see page 48).



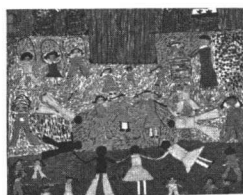
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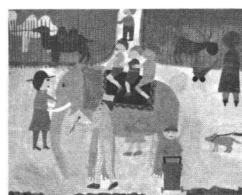
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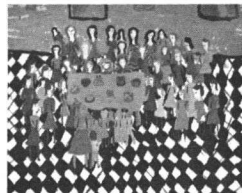
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Your membership in the Children's Art Foundation supports our publication activities, as well as a major collection of children's writing and art, an innovative art school, and research activities. Paintings, drawings, and prints from our international art collection are published in each issue of *Stone Soup*, as are examples of work from our art program. Take special note of this artwork and use it as a model to enrich the quality of work produced by your students.

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