

# The Homeschool Herald

The Newsletter Created By and For Homeschoolers

The place to share your creative creations!

Spring/Summer 2011

## Fun with Friends While Growing Our Brains



We have had another terrific year here at Homeschool Excursions. We have met so many new and wonderful friends....we look forward to

pool of amazing instructors to lead courses that are not available anywhere else. New friends....unique activities....that sounds like a recipe for FUN!

We will have a full schedule this Summer! So check out our Calendar of Events for some of our upcoming adventures....we look forward to seeing you soon!

Its families like yours that make Homeschool Excursions so special. Join us for a day of fun and friends while trying new things and growing your brain.

seeing you all again soon!

So what is Homeschool Excursions? Well, we're a program sponsored by Educational Excursions, a non-profit organization that focuses on offering unique, hands-on educational programs. In these photos, you can see some of our kids heat-treating bamboo to be used as the gutter on the Green Building Adventure, learning how to carve bowls, and making puppets after attending a show at the Center for Puppetry Arts. We've had a blast during the 2010-2011 school year, with much more to come!

And what makes Homeschool Excursions different from other groups? Our families live throughout Metro Atlanta and North Georgia, so we are actively growing the homeschool community and homeschool network. Also, we have an extensive



**I look forward to seeing you and your family soon!!**

~Vered Kleinberger  
Director, Educational Excursions



## Upcoming Homeschool Excursions Adventures

We hope to see you at some of our upcoming adventures!

Visionary Garden Project  
Green Building Adventure  
Theatre Shows  
Nature Hikes  
Crafts  
Sustainable Living Skills  
And Much More!!

We are currently building our Summer Calendar of Events.... check our website soon for new programs.

Please share your ideas and suggestions for future activities. Thanks!

## Fantastic Flower Word

By Ashton Thomas

A B N F L Q P B G Z S O I A M I I P  
S S R C H R Y S A N T H E M U M R T  
T K A A P H L I R A G S L A D I I S  
E L X L I L A C D S N U F R Q R S T  
R H M L F R E E E Q O N P A N S Y Y  
S Q C K I R Q W N I A F O N S O N B  
Q E A S G A R C I P S L W T G Q A C  
A F R E E S I A A X U O E H E P O B  
C D N L L P S L P Y O W B U R L E S  
D A A G L A D L A K B E H S A E Q X  
M I T H M I G A F G E R A N I U M C  
K S I A R S G L A D I O L U S P Q H  
X Y O U A N L I P O T S K O L M S I  
Y A N Q C F S L F U F E L B O Z W B  
P O N L Y O X Y T Q Y S M C X Y S X

Look for these words hidden in the letters above:

Aster	Calla Lilly	Roses	Carnation
Sunflower	Lilac	Geranium	Gladiolus
Pansy	Iris	Daisy	
Chrysanthemum	Amaranthus	Freesia	

## Magic Balloons

Blow up a balloon with gasses from yeast!

Materials you will need:

- 1 packet of dried yeast
- Teaspoon
- Warm water
- Sugar
- Clear plastic bottle
- 1 or more balloons
- Large bowl (optional)



Steps:

1. Pour the packet of dried yeast into the clear plastic bottle.
2. Add some warm water to the bottle so that the bottle is about 1/4 filled.
3. Add a teaspoon of sugar to the bottle and swirl

the bottle around.

4. Place the balloon over the mouth of the bottle so that it's fully covered and there are no leaks.
5. Place the bottle with the balloon on it on a warm windowsill or place it into a large bowl of warm water.

Note: Sugar, along with vinegar, produces the best conditions for yeast to ferment.

Some Information About Yeast:

There are about 1500 species of yeast, which are a growth form of eukaryotic microorganisms classified in the kingdom Fungi. The species of yeast, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (also known as *S minor*), has been used for thousands of years for baking (such as in breads) and fermenting of alcohol (such as beer). Modern uses of yeast species have been used for generating electricity in microbial fuel cells and producing ethanol, a biofuel.

<http://www.sciencefairadventure.com/ProjectDetail.aspx?ProjectID=140>

## Sudoku

	8	5						
		9	2	8				6
1				3			4	
8	7	2				6	1	5
				5				
4	5	6				3	7	9
	1			4				7
2				6	7	5		
						2	9	

The numbers 1-9 must be in every column, row, & box

## So... You Think You Know Everything?

- Antarctica is the only continent without reptiles or snakes.
- In the Caribbean there are oysters that can climb trees.
- Proportional to their weight, men are stronger than horses.
- Heinz Catsup leaving the bottle travels at 25 miles per year.
- A mole can dig a tunnel 300 feet long in just one night.
- A hummingbird weighs less than a penny.

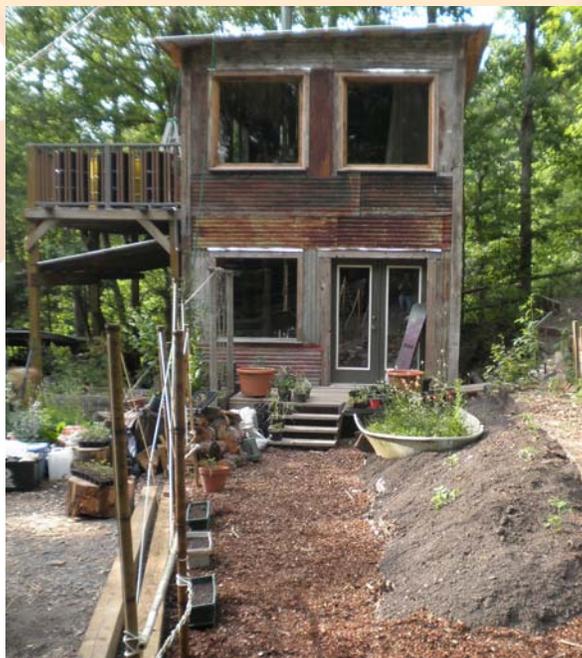
<http://funny2.com/facts.htm>

## What's New with Phase I of the Green Building Adventure?

If you haven't checked out the latest photos of the Green Building Adventure on the Educational Excursions website ([www.eduexcursions.org](http://www.eduexcursions.org)), I highly recommend that you do so. What a project! Definitely a building adventure....

The Green Building is mostly complete. All major projects have been started....now it's just a matter of finishing everything up. Educational Excursions relocated their office into the new building, and it's been terrific! There is so much storage space and the view is amazing.

But it wouldn't have been possible without the help of more than 40 people... Truly a



community project! When folks come by for a visit and are impressed with some of the unique features, I always have to explain that the brilliant ideas came from visitors. When I needed a solution for a problem, I would present the dilemma to visitors or helpers and they came up with suggestions beyond my wildest imagination. From the bottles between the rafters to the storage doors that roll on used roller blades....much thanks to everyone who helped out.

There is still much to be done! As a friend once said....'that's why they call it a building, not a built.' Yes....the building continues.

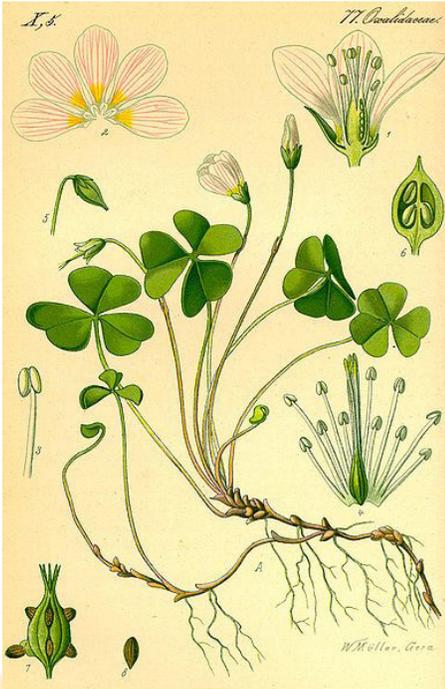
If you want to help, visit our Calendar of Events for workshop dates, or contact us and we'll let you know what we're up to and you can just come lend a hand.

Come lend a hand! See you at the Green Building Adventure!

# Weeds?

## What Weeds?

Compiled By Vered Kleinberger



This plant is wonderful and extremely prolific.... it's one of my favorites. I wrote about in the May 2006 issue of the *Homeschool Herald* and I try to avoid repeating plants, but I have begun to realize

that it is still undervalued and unappreciated. So this issue of the *Herald* will once again focus on Common Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*).

Wood-sorrel grows everywhere, and it's very likely that it's in your front yard. (You've probably noticed the little yellow flowers blooming this time of year.) Most people consider it a weed, that is, until they try it. It's delicious! Especially if you like sour or lemony flavors.

In addition to tasting great, it also has many beneficial health qualities. These include:

- The fresh leaves make an excellent sour addition to salads.
- To make a refreshing drink, steep the leaves for 10 minutes in hot water, chill, and add sugar or honey.
- It's very rich in vitamin C.
- Leaves can be chewed for nausea, mouth sores, and sore throats.

- Fresh leaves were poulticed on cancers, old sores, and ulcers.
- Leaf tea is used for fevers, urinary infections, and scurvy.
- Warning: Large doses may cause oxalate poisoning. Excessive consumption over a long period of time may inhibit the absorption of calcium by the body.

There is an abundance of information available about the uses of Wood-sorrel. The Peterson Field Guides are always a terrific source, particularly *Edible Wild Plants* and *Eastern/Central Medicinal Plants*.

Please research all plants before using them, and NEVER pick and eat anything without first consulting an herbalist or a qualified plant guide. Always be aware of whether the area you are gathering from may have been sprayed with chemicals.

Think twice before pulling that weed! You may be throwing away something delicious and nutritious! *Please consult your physician before making any medical or dietary decisions.*

### Index of images and information:

Peterson Field Guides

[http://www.etsu.edu/biology/friendsofnature/Species/Wildflowers/southern\\_yellow\\_wood\\_sorrel.htm](http://www.etsu.edu/biology/friendsofnature/Species/Wildflowers/southern_yellow_wood_sorrel.htm)

[http://www.magdalin.com/herbal/reframe.htm?http://www.magdalin.com/herbal/plants\\_pages/s/sorrel\\_wd.htm](http://www.magdalin.com/herbal/reframe.htm?http://www.magdalin.com/herbal/plants_pages/s/sorrel_wd.htm)

[www.magdalin.com/herbal/plants\\_pages/s/sorrel\\_wd.htm](http://www.magdalin.com/herbal/plants_pages/s/sorrel_wd.htm)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Oxalis\\_acetosella\\_1885\\_crop.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Oxalis_acetosella_1885_crop.jpg)



## The Little Red Wagon

By Ashlyn Farrell, age 13

The little red wagon I had as a boy  
Now sits all alone in the rain  
This once magical and beloved toy  
Now sits still and never complains

I sometimes long for those good old days  
When I could nearly fly  
I would go up on the big hill a ways  
Then I would give speed a try

I like to think on those long ago times  
When I could be anything on earth  
I could be a sailor or a racecar driver!  
Oh, what those memories are worth.

Well, as I grew older, my wagon grew smaller  
And I traded it for other things  
Where once stood a fearless racecar driver  
Now a church wedding bell rings

That little red wagon sat in the attic  
For many, many a year  
Then suddenly my young son became a fanatic  
Of the shiny, red toy with black wheels

The little red wagon I had as a boy  
Sits with a friend in the rain  
Now my little boy has this bright, shiny toy  
Now it flies and never complains

### "That's not my job"

**This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody couldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have.**

- Author Unknown

## Summer

By Amanda Gall  
14 years old, Alameda, CA

Smiles everywhere, ice cream shops,  
Camping, sleepovers, and soda-pop,  
Surfing, vacations, swimming, and friends,  
The fun's not over 'til summer ends!

Waking up at 11, staying up 'til 1,  
Going to the beach, tanning in the sun,  
Taking some chances, heat waves galore,  
The 4th of July, wading in the shore...

Your best friend's deck, your favorite flip-flops,  
At least twenty barbecues, shopping for cute tops,  
Marshmallow roasting over the embers—  
These things create a summer to remember.



Love Painting by Liliana Steele

## Love

By Sarah Hopson  
15 years old, Fayetteville, NC

Love can seem quite a cruel tool to some hearts  
A serrated sword that pierces through a soul  
Penetrating your thoughts with no control  
Finding faults and tearing them into parts  
Watching emotion bombs swiftly ignite,  
Tossing out winks 'til you find you're inside  
Forcing you captive until you feel tied,  
Carrying you to heights that give you a fright  
But also to dreams you didn't know were there,  
This glorious ride can leave you breathless  
And with feelings that you cannot address,  
The "cruel tool" proves a lovely joy affair:  
It binds you to one who picks up the parts  
Yes, love seems quite a kind art to some hearts.

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## Summer

By Amanda Gall  
14 years old, Alameda, CA

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These things create a summer to remember.

**Education is learning what  
you didn't even know  
you didn't know.**

- Daniel J. Boorstin

## Spring, The Best Time of Year

By Hannah Graff

The bees sing in their own special tone,  
and the flowers spring up, every one known.

The animals come out, one by one.  
They relax in the sweet, almost summer, sun.

Feel the nice breeze as it blows your hair.  
Oh, the weather, the weather, it seems so fair.

Spring, Spring you are coming near.  
Spring, Spring, the best time of year.

Soon the kids will have no more school.  
and will come out and play in the swimming pool.

They will laugh and they will play  
into the later part of the day.

Look at the kids jumping rope and playing with  
chalk.

Spring remains the best time to take a walk.

Spring, Spring you are coming near.  
Spring, Spring the best time of year.

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## 4 Hiaku's

By Abby Paumen

Slight bird sings a tune  
Bunny rabbit hops about  
Flowers welcome spring

Winter winds howling  
Crackle, snap, pop goes the fire  
As I snuggle close

Fans cooling me down  
Lemonade quenching my thirst  
Oh so relaxing

Ice cream and snow cones  
Hot days and refreshing pools  
Signal summers start

# Rescuer to the Rescue

By James  
15 years old

During the last year, I worked through the lifeguard classes provided by the Lifesaving Society. I passed the bronze cross level at our local pool the week before we went on a trip. This certification would allow the city of Ottawa to hire me as a barely qualified lifeguard, when I turn sixteen. Little did I imagine that the knowledge I had gained during the training would undergo testing. My family went to Nanaimo to visit relatives in the summer. There, I interceded and averted a catastrophe.

On Vancouver Island, everyone takes advantage of the sun when it appears. As a family outing with our grandparents and other assorted relatives, we drove to nearby Englishman River for a swim. In one section of the river, piles of rocks narrowed the water to a deep, fast zone, which, while entertaining on an inner tube, made it nigh on impossible to swim. A wall of rock, edging the fast zone, kept people from climbing out easily. The rock face became quite high fifty feet further down the river, culminating into a three meter high ledge. I enjoyed leaping off of this protrusion into the frigid water. It was as I prepared myself to jump off the ledge that my mom suddenly rushed over to me shouting, "Quick James, get over here, someone is drowning!"

I carefully bolted over the rock to where she led me. Two ladies were thrashing around in the fast water. Jumping into the water, I grabbed the one nearest to me. As I was much taller than her, my feet could touch the bottom with my head above the water. I held her up in one hand while I reassessed the situation. Unexpectedly, one of their companions jumped into the speeding river, planning to save the other woman. This plan, unfortunately, had a huge flaw; he could

not swim either. Being the same height as the ladies, he started to struggle in the current as well. Stepping forwards, I snagged him with my left hand. Now, I had one person in each hand as I moved down the river, away from the current. I had grabbed two victims, but the second lady was still in the water. Suddenly, the man broke away from me and somehow reached the slippery rock wall! Miraculously, people on the rock managed to pull him out of the water to safety.

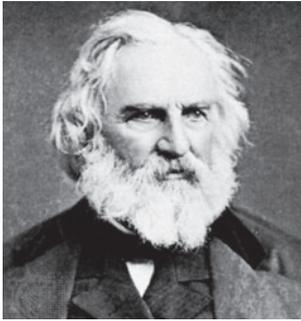
Eventually, I worked my way over to the beach on the other side of the river with the terrified lady. She was babbling about her "slipper" and wanting to have it back. Looking down the river I saw her shoe floating by the rocks. Leaving her with a bystander on the beach, I swam down to her shoe and returned it to her. When her companions arrived with her towel, I left and strode back across the bridge, my heart pounding. Apparently, another bystander had pulled out the other drowning lady, and she joined her friend safely on the bank. When I returned to my family, everyone congratulated me for my good rescue.



On the way home, thinking over the rescue, I noticed many flaws in what I had done. My first error occurred when I left the victim to retrieve her shoe. When I returned to her, I did not stay to treat for shock, an action that should occur in every rescue. If I had performed a rescue like that in a lifeguard exam, I would have failed immediately. The classes had prepared me for the rescue, but adrenaline erased my mind of the correct procedure when the time came for the real test. Despite these failings, I succeeded in rescuing the drowning duo from Englishman River, and what could have been a devastating day at the beach ended in joy. I will soon be completing the final level of my lifeguard training, and I know that this experience will make me understand the realities of how important this instruction is.

# Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: The First Professional American Poet

By Amanda Gall  
14 years old, Alameda, CA



Who do most people consider the first professional American poet? Who wrote the poem “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere”? Who completed the group of the Fireside Poets? The answer to all:

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, of course! From the United States, making him an American, Henry usually wrote lyric poems, expressing musicality and usually speaking of myths. People everywhere love and know his poetry even if they do not know who wrote it. Born on February 27, 1807, and despite the fact that many famous people have criticized him, Longfellow grew up to become one of the most famous poets of his time (“Henry Wadsworth Longfellow,” Wikipedia).

Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine into the family of Stephen Longfellow, a lawyer, and Zilpah Wadsworth Longfellow, the daughter of a general (“HWL (1807-1882),” Kirjasto) (“HWL,” Wikipedia). He had blue eyes and fair hair. As the second child out of seven, Henry started school at the age of three with his older brother Stephen. At six, his father enrolled him and Stephen in private school. Henry’s first teacher enforced the rules, so they soon moved to a private school. By age six, he already knew Latin, and could read, spell, and multiply (“Henry W Longfellow”). Even as a child, Henry wanted to become a poet; he loved to write tales and poems (“HWL,” The Literature Network).

After the Longfellow’s house roof burnt in 1814, Mr. Longfellow added a third floor to the home. Since the family separated during construction, Henry and his mother stayed at his grandfather’s house. Amidst this all,

Henry developed a foot infection, and doctors thought that they might need to amputate it. He dropped out of school and after a month, his foot had healed and he did not have to have it removed. When Henry returned to school and other activities, he learned Latin and Greek, and started doing Algebra—at age 8. His parents hired a tutor to teach French to him, too. Mrs. Longfellow encouraged her kids to play music, so Henry learned the piano and flute, loving music for the rest of his life (“Henry W Longfellow”). Longfellow’s mother supported his love for reading and learning, and initiated him with Robinson Crusoe and Don Quixote. At 13, he wrote his first poem—a patriotic and historic four stanza, “The Battle of Lovell’s Pond”—and had it printed in the Portland Gazette on November 17, 1820. Longfellow began classes at Bowdoin college at 14, graduating in 1825 (“HWL,” Wikipedia) (“Henry W Longfellow”). With excellent skills in learning foreign languages, the Bowdoin trustees—his father part of the group—said Henry impressed his teachers. He readied himself more to study in Europe before taking over his duties. When he started his new job, he had to write textbooks, because the freshness of the study of languages (“HWL,” Encyclopedia of World Biography).

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow returned from Europe in 1829, marrying Mary Storer Potter two years later. In 1834, he accepted a professorship at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He started two years later, after touring in Europe and Scandinavia. While he traveled, Mary died of a miscarriage (“HWL,” Wikipedia). He wrote “Footsteps of Angels” in memory of her. In 1839, Henry published his prose romance, Hyperion, and first poetry book, Voices of the Night. In Hyperion, he told of his courtship with Frances Appleton, a woman he met in Europe after Mary died. He married her in 1843, noting once after attending a ball without her, “The lights seemed dimmer, the music sadder, the flowers fewer, and the women less fair” (“HWL,” Wikipedia) (“HWL,” Encyclopedia

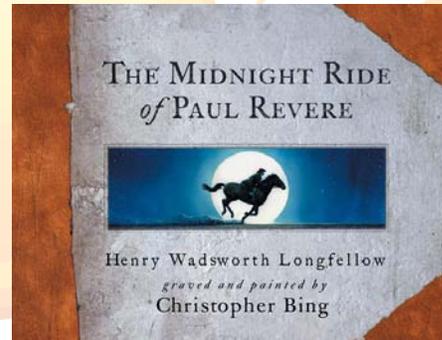
Continued to page 9

of World Biography). Frances's father, a generous and rich executive, gave them Craigie House as a wedding gift; it gained popularity, mostly by Henry's fans, for its beauty. "HWL," Encyclopedia of World Biography). After resigning from work in 1854, he published a new poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*, his best-known narrative poem, becoming famous for it immediately ("HWL (1807-1882)," Kirjasto).

On July 9, 1861, Frances put locks of her kids' hair into an envelope and sealed it with a candle and hot wax while Henry napped. Suddenly her dress caught on fire, and Henry, awake now, rushed to her room and threw a rug over her. Unfortunately, it did not cover enough, so he tried suffocating the flames with his body, but they had already burned her badly. She died the next morning around 10am. Henry had burned himself so badly while trying to save her that he could not make it to her funeral. Due to his scars, he needed to stop shaving, wearing the beard that has become his trademark. He constantly worried about going mad and murmured about not wanting someone to send him to an asylum, saying that he was "inwardly bleeding to death". He wrote the sonnet "The Cross of Snow" in 1879, eighteen years later. Towards the end of the poem, he wrote: "Such is the cross I wear upon my breast, These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes, And seasons, changeless since the day she died" ("HWL," Wikipedia). Longfellow kept himself busy by writing *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, published in 1863, in which several different speakers sit around a fireplace and tell tales. Some other stories came onto the scene in 1872 and 1873. Henry also enjoyed translating poetry, doing so in eighteen different languages, and his translation of an epic poem by the writer Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), gained him a reputation. ("HWL," Encyclopedia of World Biography). To help with perfecting his translation of *Divine Comedy*, Longfellow invited some friends over to his house on

Wednesdays for weekly meetings starting in 1864. They called it "The Dante Club". The full three-book translation was published in 1867, except Henry kept revising it, and it went through four printings in one year. By the year 1868, his annual income had come close to \$48,000, amounting to approximately \$750,000 now, in this year of 2010 (Wikipedia). Towards the end of his poetry and writing career, he worked on another task, *The Christus: A Mystery*, a trilogy that dealt with Christianity (Kirjasto). He finished it in 1872 ("HWL," Encyclopedia of World Biography).

Henry and his wife Frances had six children together: Charles Appleton, Ernest Wadsworth, Fanny, who only lived a year, Alice Mary, Edith, and Anne Allegra. His poetry books "Evangeline" and "The Song of Hiawatha" dominate his most famous works, along with his poems "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere", "The Village



Blacksmith", and "The Belfry of Buges". During his senior year of college, Longfellow wrote this in a letter to his father: "I will

not disguise it in the least... the fact is, I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in literature, my whole soul burns most ardently after it, and every earthly thought centers in it... I am almost confident in believing, that if I can ever rise in the world it must be by the exercise of my talents in the wide field of literature" ("HWL," Wikipedia).

Longfellow died at home on March 24, 1882, at the age of 75, possibly due to peritonitis, which Wikipedia defines as "an inflammation of the peritoneum, the serous membrane which lines part of the abdominal cavity and viscera." Buried at the Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, he was honored in the Poet's Corner of Westminster

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Abbey in London England, making him first US citizen to have done so. A marble bust of Longfellow stands there next to monuments of other famous authors and poets like Charles Dickens and Rudyard Kipling. Children loved Henry so much that when some men in Cambridge cut down the “spreading chestnut tree” spoken of in his poem “The Village Blacksmith”, the children there had it converted into a chair, which they gave him. (“HWL,” The Literature Network).

The most famous poet of his time, people also regard Longfellow as the most talented poet the US has produced. People of all ages admire him so much that in the US, his 70th birthday in 1877 took on the form of a national holiday, with parades, merry-making, and reading of his poetry. Not only did he have fame in America, but also in Europe; some say that over 10,000 copies of *The Courtship of Miles Standish* sold in London, England in one day (“HWL,” Wikipedia). While many of us see Longfellow as old-fashioned, deep down sits a strong love for the beautiful poetry of this gifted and smart man. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the first professional American poet, will, no doubt, live inside our hearts, igniting a fire there for years to come.

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## King Arthur

(regarding the novel by Howard Pyle)

By Amanda Gall  
14 years old, Alameda, CA



Arthur as one of the Nine Worthies, tapestry, c. 1385

In the classic novel, *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights*, Howard Pyle writes of the great qualities of noble and astute leaders, giving credit mostly to the main character, King Arthur. The King demonstrates admirable qualities that one could make examples of in any

situation. He must make difficult decisions, fight in life-threatening battles, and communicate with his enemies all while remaining calm and fair. Because of these valuable traits, King Arthur has swiftly transformed—from an inexperienced young boy with just enough strength to pull a sword from an anvil to a man, with the adequate knowledge and sufficient strength to rule even a nation. With unquestionable fame and some fast reflexes, this man hardly falls short of excellence. King Arthur not only does what he considers the appropriate action in certain situations, but he also has the necessary patience to govern his people and the ability to forgive.

Firstly, King Arthur has a good grasp of the difference between right and wrong. On pages 187 and 188, a damsel on Sir Domas’ ship presented Arthur with the decision of either fighting a battle he did not care for in order to free himself, or living on the ship until the day he died. He decided to fight the battle, because even though he might run Sir Ontzlake out of his only remaining castle, sitting in a cell for his entire life would let his people down. That decision proved King Arthur’s discernment: he would

Continued to page 11

rather upset one man than disappoint hundreds of people. Furthermore, after Sir Domas tricked him into fighting his own friend, King Arthur switched these brothers' situations by taking away all Sir Domas' castles but one, and by giving the innocent Sir Ontzlake what he had deserved all along—the castles his brother had taken from him. (198) The knightly character King Arthur exhibits proves that he deserves his royalty and that he can differentiate good and evil.

Additionally, King Arthur exhibits patience, an important and indispensable quality when it comes to leadership. When the knight of the castle taunted King Arthur with his sword, he politely asked him to stop. Although the knight acted rude and continued to taunt him, “King Arthur said no more, but bore that torment with a very steadfast spirit.” (299) This character trait would certainly help the king to not anger easily, and to treat his people with the respect that they treat him with. Consequently, people in villages everywhere knew his name, because he not only possessed strength and comprehension, but any ordinary person could relate to him. His serenity sets him apart from the other rulers in the best way possible.

Finally, while anyone should exercise mercy, someone of knightly character should especially include forgiveness in his admired qualities. In all its



This is a 19th century painting by Frank Dicksee. Although untitled, this picture has become the traditional depiction of King Arthur.

stipulation, the ability to forgive would come in handy when a servant or knight made a mistake to King Arthur's dismay. He seems especially merciful when Queen Morgana le Fay dishonors him by stealing the sheath of Excalibur. Vivien, the queen's trainee, switches sides and wants to retaliate against Morgana; after everything she did to damage him, King Arthur says, “I forgive her all of this, and I shall forgive her again and again and yet again if she sin against me”. (201) Evidently, even though he did not make the best decision in forgiving her, he knows holding a grudge against her would only complicate things more, and with that understanding, things turned out for the better. Additionally, even though his brother, Sir Kay, lied about pulling the sword from the anvil, the author states, “he made Sir Kay his Seneschal”. (26) Arthur felt he must forgive him anyway, because he knew how much royalty meant to Sir Kay. The king not only loved those in his family, but he also forgave them instantly, and only a real man could do that.

In conclusion, King Arthur's behaviors make him the brilliant man in *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights*. He clearly can handle dodgy situations because he always does the right thing. Also, through the king's tolerance, he has accomplished much and still has a promising future ahead. Lastly, he forgives even his enemies, a rare prospect among most rulers. The attributes he displayed throughout Howard Pyle's book prove that when the kingdom received the relatable and kind Arthur as their king, the people within grew to love and respect him. Among many other venerable qualities, King Arthur exposes his knowing of correct decisions, patience, and the ability to forgive and forget. Obviously these qualities played an important role in his leadership, because he became the most powerful man of the land.

#### Resource

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# A Spring Surprise

By Marisa Salazar

Wrinkled yet supple fingers danced across yellowing organ keys, sending a lively melody to roam about the otherwise gloomy night air. These long, thin fingers seemed to match the blithe figure of the old woman who, though gray hair crowned her head and creases crowded her once lovely face, energetically coaxed the aging organ to send forth a raspy tune to harmonize with her fine voice. Because of the many years of practice from singing in the village's church choir as lead soprano, Candace's voice flowed effortlessly over the low and high notes, except for a few very high parts, which she strained to reach. Still, the tune produced did not suffer much from the occasional sharps and flats, and corresponded very well with the background noise of cricket chirps.

A loud, confident knock brought a swift end to the song and a flutter to Candace's heart as she recognized the pattern of taps. What's he doin' out on this here night? It ain't the day for choir practice, nor a holiday or nothin'. Did he jest come t' see me? Candace's cheeks flushed as she hurried to open the door and found, as expected, William Emmons, the leader of most of the village's music groups, standing with a wonderful bouquet of delicate roses and lilacs in his strong hands. However, she gasped as she saw everyone from the church choir standing behind him, laden with more flowers and serving dishes.

"Surprise!" they all yelled in unison and rushed into the house to place the food on the table, hang decorations, and arrange vases full of flowers around her house. Only William still stood outside, facing a very shocked Candace. His handsome, old face held traces of remorse and sorrow, combined with joy at seeing her. Though this seemed a strange expression for one about to join a party, her curiosity did not help calm the rapid beating of her heart, or the heat rising in her cheeks.

"These are for you, my dear," he said in a

hushed tone as he handed Candace the roses, the words not meant for any but her to hear.

"Thank you," she whispered breathlessly, attempting to control her feeling and simultaneously make sense of his countenance. "You c'n come in an' join the others if you've a mind to." Her second attempt at talking came out stronger, though she was still absolutely befuddled by the sudden turn her evening had taken. Why're they throwin' a party for me? Ain't nothin' special I know of goin' on today—is there? Candace puzzled while she slowly closed the door on the darkness, and turned to examine the people placing all sorts of food on the table, including an elegant vanilla cake with creamy frosting. My birthday ain't for four months and ain't no one ever throwed me a surprise party for my birthday anyhow . . . I know! Forty years ago to the day I joined the church choir and the choir came to thank me. Sparkling stars filled Candace's coal-black eyes and a wide smile lit up her face. Satisfied with her conclusion, Candace began to thoroughly enjoy the festivities.

After everyone enjoyed the many different appetizers and the cake Candace cut into generous helpings, Jenny Carr, the church organist, sat down to Candace's parlor organ and began playing. The songs varied from heart-wrenching ballads to solemn church hymns, and everyone sang and clapped along. Especially vibrant was Candace's voice, full of vigor and vitality, matching the gaiety in her eyes. Bursting with music and harmony, the little cottage lent a joyful air to the night, and those that passed by stopped and listened with a cheerful grin. Jenny flipped the song book to Candace's favorite song, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul." Catching a glance at the title, William cleared his throat for silence, stopping Jenny from beginning the piece.

"Why don't you sing this song alone, Candace? After all, this party is in your honor." All the other choir members echoed William's request emphatically and, flattered, Candace took her place at the center of the room by the organ.

Continued to page 13

“I want to thank you folks, ‘fore I begin, for the party. I wa’n’t expectin’ a party an’ I’m mighty thankful to you for surprisin’ me. Jest tickled really.” Tears welled up in Candace’s eyes, and she motioned to Jenny to begin. Droning organ music played the familiar introduction of her favorite song, helping Candace to control her feelings. By the time she started to sing, she had focused her whole mind on the beautiful hymn. As the notes coursed about the room, pure and sweet, tears graced almost every cheek. When Candace finished with the most incredible, touching solo she had ever sung, the applause nearly deafened her. One thing puzzled her however; every person she looked at wore an expression similar to William’s at the beginning of the evening—a mixture of regret and distress.

William rose from a chair and sauntered to where she stood, interrupting her thoughts. “My dear Miss Whitcomb, would you allow me to have the honor of singing a duet with you?” William asked with a courtly bow and mischievous wink.

“It’d be my pleasure, Mr. Emmons.” Candace curtsied as she replied.

Melodious harmonies of her soprano and his tenor charmed the party, and everyone could decipher the love letters Candace and William sent to each other with each lingering glance. Then, after the sweet final note, several people gave heartfelt speeches commending Candace for her many years of service to the church. Although everyone hated to end the wonderful evening, when the clock chimed ten o’clock the speeches ended and, after everyone helped to tidy up Candace’s house, they left to the comfort of their own homes.

Breathing a sigh of gratitude and relief, Candace turned to clean up one last time before retiring for the night. Upon entering the kitchen, she noticed a large, red-plush photograph album on the little table, with a note addressed to “Miss Candace Whitcomb, from her many friends.” On opening the album, an envelope caught her attention. Curious, she instantly opened it and

skimmed through the contents of the letter. An involuntary gasp escaped her lips and she slowly reread the missive. Feelings of anger, betrayal and pain knifed their way through her heart. “I’ve been dismissed from the choir!”

**A mind once stretched by a  
new idea never regains its  
original dimensions.**

- Anonymous

## Love

By Jacalyn Thompson  
14 years old, Cypress, TX

Where have they gone?  
The ones I loved from stories passed.  
People who fought evil and wrong.  
How did I know it would not last?

The question is not, “How far have we gone?”  
The question is, “How far have we fall’n?”  
Oh, man’s splendor has grown...  
But friend, who is now on that throne?

I’ve met one or two.  
Oh, they were nice.  
They cared and shared,  
But not more than twice.

Now, there is always hope.  
But is there always love?  
Their feelings seem so selfish.  
True love can only come from above.

Is it too crazy?  
Have I gone mad?  
That love so amazing  
Could exist in a world so bad?

There, there, it exists.  
I’m pretty sure of that.  
Only if you would love,  
Then it would be a fact.

# How Hamburgers are Killing the Planet: Not Really but They are Helping

By Robyn  
9th Grade

According to Nathan Pelletier, of Dalhousie University, the demand for meat products will double by the year 2050 (Hamburgers are the Hummers of food in global warming). Livestock farming is one of the biggest producers of greenhouse gas.

According to a study done by the UN, cattle farming alone contributes up to eighteen percent of all greenhouse gases. Nathan Fiala, of the University of California, says this about burgers, "It turns out that producing half a pound of hamburger for someone's lunch—a patty of meat the size of two decks of cards—releases as much greenhouse gas into the atmosphere as driving a 3,000-pound car nearly 10 miles." A large amount of this meat goes to fast food restaurants like McDonalds® or A&W® to be used in their burgers (Nathan Fiala). The three big drains on natural resources and producers of greenhouse gases in the fast food business are cattle, transportation, and packaging.

Surprisingly, the beef industry is responsible for over forty percent of the water used in North America. According to the Water Education Foundation, 9,327.255 litres of water are needed to produce just one pound of beef from ranches in California. Most of this water goes into

growing grain to feed the cattle. However, this is not the only use of water in cattle farming; to survive, cattle need up to 189 litres of water a day. Also, the cattle are not only feed grain; in South America, the rainforest is being cut down to provide grazing lands for the cattle. It could take in excess of fifty-five square feet of rainforest to produce just one burger (Lillie Ogden). Susan Subak, of the University of East Anglia, found that cattle emit between two point five and four point seven ounces of methane for every pound of meat they produce. Also, a cow produces sixteen kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent gases for



every kilogram of meat (Nathan Fiala). The manure and urine from cattle also have a large environmental impact. A cow can produce twenty-five pounds of manure and 150 pounds of urine a day. This waste generally goes to manure lagoons on the farmer's property, where it sits and ferments. However, some times it can spill out causing irreparable damage to surrounding countryside. Due

to these issues, cattle remain one of the big environmental problems that need to be dealt with (Lillie Ogden).

Another environmental issue that needs to be addressed is the transportation of meat and condiments from the farms and factories to the restaurants. A large semi-truck with a full load will take from fifty to fifty-six litres of fuel per hundred kilometres on the highway. In contrast, a large minivan, such as a Honda Odyssey, will achieve a highway rating of around seven litres per hundred kilometres. Also, a semi will produce about seven to fifteen grams of

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particulate matter and nitrous-oxide emissions per kilometre (Nylund and Erkkilä). Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) remains a contributor to green house gas, and semis will produce on average about .0000462 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>/lb for every mile traveled. So, if a semi travels 1,000,000 miles a year bringing supplies to restaurants, it will produce 46.2 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>/lb. However, this number is actually very small. For example, a Chevy pickup towing 2000 pounds emits .000693 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>/lb per mile, fifteen times more than the semi (Carbon Calculator). However, despite this one plus, transporting food could be more efficient if done by other means.

Finally, the packaging of fast food hamburgers is environmentally unfriendly. Each hamburger meal given to a customer comes with a hamburger, fries, drink, and condiments; every item comes with its own packaging. Each hamburger comes either in a paper wrapper, Styrofoam box, or cardboard box. Out of the three, only the Styrofoam box does not qualify to be thrown in the green bin, but despite this fact, fast food restaurants do not provide green bin receptacles. Generally, French fries come in a cardboard box or an open-ended paper bag. As with the hamburger boxes, these containers are viable to be put in the green bin, and as stated before, the green bins are not available. Drinks are next on the menu; each drink coming with a waxed paper cup, lid, and straw. Cups are green bin viable, but the lid and straws can go in neither the green bin nor the recycling. Finally, the condiments packaging is squished out. Most condiments come in plastic packets, with only ketchup sometimes available in pump dispensers. However even these pumps are not completely friendly. This is because people generally use



paper cups to transport the ketchup from the pump to the table; these cups are then thrown away (McDonalds). Therefore, the packaging business in fast food restaurants needs revision, but one of the main problems is the availability of green bin disposal stations.

If the fast food restaurant and the cow are helping to kill the planet, what is being done to slow the decline? First, scientists are thoroughly looking into the possibility of in vitro meat. This vat grown meat starts with cells taken from an animal, and is treated with nutrients that are then induced to multiply and grow. The first

edible meat produced in this fashion was made by the NSR/Touro Applied BioScience Research Consortium in 2000; their meat of choice was goldfish meat, grown in the shape of fish fillets. Therefore, as Winston Churchill said in the 1930's, "Fifty years hence, we shall escape the absurdity of growing a whole chicken in order to eat the breast or

wing, by growing these parts separately under a suitable medium" (In vitro meat). However, despite the sensibleness of these experiments, test tube meat is still expensive to manufacture. It costs about US \$1,000,000 for just one 250 g piece of beef, so the meat probably will not be on sale for another couple of years (In vitro meat) (Scientists Flesh Out Plans to Grow (and Sell) Test Tube Meat). The second advancement is the use of recycled materials in items such napkins and tray liners. However, the big incentive that should be inserted into all fast food restaurants is the implementation of the green bin program; this alone could save tons of waste. The recycling of materials goes even farther because the oil that restaurants use for cooking fries can be turned into fuel. This fry oil, after being filtered, can be used in a properly converted diesel car or oil heater (Vegetable Oil Fuel). Advancements to

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produce an environmentally friendly fast food restaurant are possible; unfortunately these advancements will take a few years to catch on.

More information on these topics can be found at numerous web pages. To find these facts, enter into the search bar “Environmental impact of a hamburger.” Some of the sites that I would recommend are The Greenhouse Hamburger and Scientists Flesh Out Plans to Grow (and Sell) Test Tube Meat. Wikipedia can also provide information on subjects such as Cattle, In Vitro Meat, and Vegetable Oil Fuel. Other information can also be located at local libraries. However, always remember that not everything stated in books or the internet is true, and if ever in doubt check the information out with another resource.

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## A Poem

By Tyler Balsam

Chitter-chatter whicker snack,  
There is nothing that we lack!  
Whuppity hissity chickity boom,  
You have come to meet your doom!

Run from us you big and tall,  
We are the mice who are very small!  
Hoo-rah boo-rah, we have fun,  
But there are some from whom we run!

Watch now, hurry now, go now, run!  
It is they who now have come!  
Go run, oh run, run ahead,  
The parents who put us in our beds!

---

## Spring Poem

By Jeremy Cerha  
15 years old, New Jersey

Spring time is a coming  
Winter is at hand  
The snow is cold but melting  
Across the solid land

The leaves are coming back to trees  
The animals soon wake up from their sleep  
The air is filled with the humming of bees  
The baby birds hatch with a peep

This is the spring time greet  
The melody is so sweet.

**Children have to be  
educated, but they  
have also to be left to  
educate themselves.**

- Abbe Dimnet, *Art of Thinking*, 1928

# 2010-2011 Homeschool Excursions Survey

Please complete the following questions so we can continue to provide the homeschool community with the programs and services you need. Each survey will be entered to win a free Forest level membership. Thank you for your thoughts and comments!

How many kids do you have? \_\_\_\_\_ How many years have you been homeschooling? \_\_\_\_\_

What county do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_ What city? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you participated in a Homeschool Excursions program? If so, which activities have you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

If you've attended an event, what did you enjoy and what do you think could be improved? \_\_\_\_\_

What programs would you like to see added? \_\_\_\_\_

If you have not attended a program, please explain why? (ie distance, cost, interest, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

What services are lacking in the homeschool community? How do you think Homeschool Excursions can help?

We would appreciate if you can share some information about your family.  
This will help us to know the age groups and interests of the homeschool community. Thank you!

What are the ages of your kids? \_\_\_\_\_ Why did you choose to homeschool? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your kids' interests? (sports, music, talents, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

What days are your 'busy days?' \_\_\_\_\_

What are your 'free days?' \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in programs during the weekend? \_\_\_\_\_ During the Summer? \_\_\_\_\_

Do your kids attend a hybrid school, co-op classes, etc? If so, what? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other questions or comments? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about Homeschool Excursions? \_\_\_\_\_

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**-Ray LeBlond**



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