

War

It's not just about winning

By Lauren Brown
Will C. Wood High

War is caused by people in disagreement and when America is not content, We usually fight over unimportant things But lost lives of loved ones is all that it brings.

The sound of gunshots echoed in the night, But they wouldn't give up without a fight. A brave young soldier lying wounded in the dust Helping him in the battlefield was a must.

Hopeful children wish for their dad to come home, While their saddened mother waits quietly alone. Meanwhile, their father, thousands of miles away, wishes the same As he fights for his life, for this isn't a game

At last it was finally the day, The day that he would return home, he heard his general say. Reunited with his family, everything felt so right It was all worth it, by the end of the fight

It's not about winning, but about life Is the story the proud soldier told to his young children and wife The world is full of problems, but also bursting with pride, Which isn't just victory, but having your loved ones by your side.

The author was a junior when this entry was submitted in February 2007.

Whales in their places

By Yoanna Arenas
Notre Dame School

In the deep ocean You will see whales, sharks, and waves In their own places.

The author was a second-grader at Notre Dame School in Vacaville when this was submitted in February 2007.

PROUD TO BE A SCOUT

Girls thrive through opportunities

By Kelsey Daugherty
Notre Dame School

Girl Scouts have been found in many interesting places, all the way from Maine to California. Girl Scouts do many fun and exciting activities.

Over the five years that I have been a Girl Scout I have participated in activities that I probably wouldn't have ever thought of doing on my own. I have had a sleepover on the U.S.S. Hornet, went to the Titanic exhibition in San Francisco, and solved a mystery in the American girl mystery summer camp. I have also tried gymnastics and have gone hiking and camping. These experiences are fun and educational and I have made a lot of new friends from different schools and areas through my participation.

Girl Scouts not only have fun, they love to help out! Our Girl Scout law tells us to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, coura-

geous and strong, and responsible for what we say and do. Our Girl Scout law also tells us to respect ourselves and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and to be a sister to every Girl Scout. Our promise says "On my honor I will try: to serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law." These rules are very important to me because that is the true spirit of a Girl Scout. We donate to various charities and give food to homeless shelters and people in need. One way we do this is by hosting canned food drives. Girl Scouts also sponsor trash pickups to help the environment and animals that live in the wild.

One thing Girl Scouts are definitely known for are Girl Scout cookies! Every January, Girl Scouts spread happiness everywhere by selling all the great tasting cookies that everyone around the country loves. Girls sell their cookies by going door-

to-door, taping posters up, and sticking signs up in parent's offices, that is how we sell so many items! (This year our Girl Scout troop is selling cookies to give them to the American troops in Iraq). The troops in Iraq love Girl Scout cookies! Remember, if you purchase cookies, that all the profits from Girl Scout cookies go toward the different Girl Scout councils, and all Girl Scout troops.

Girl Scouts use the money to create more camps and opportunities for Girl Scouts, and also use the money to make the world a better place!

The best thing about Girl Scouting is that everyone can join, no matter who you are or where you live. I am glad that everyone can experience girl scouting because it is so much fun!

The author was a sixth-grader when this was submitted to the Solano County Reading Association competition in February 2007



Tragedy brought community together

Support was inspiring

By Hunter Mercado-Hood
Notre Dame School

On July 29, 2006, the Cowan family was in a car accident in Arizona. There were two fatalities and two survivors. Chad Cowan, 12, and Ashley Cowan, 15, did not survive the tragic accident. The survivors were the parents of the children, Scott and Lori Cowan. Because of this tragic event, the community of Vacaville and surrounding cities rallied together and assisted in providing aid to the grieving family.

I was a little surprised that the community was so giving of itself. The community put themselves in the family's shoes; it adopted the Cowan family's pain and suffering as if it was their own. The community was determined to assist the family in paying for the children's transportation home and funeral cost to lay them to rest.

The community came up with different game plans, organizing several different fundraisers. There was a car wash, a music concert, car shows, and a charity baseball game.

The local news came out to the car wash and put the word out that the city of Vacaville and surrounding cities were attempting to aid the family in their time of need.

Local merchants donated prizes for the charity game at the Thunderbird Stadium. The owners of the Thunderbird Stadium not only hosted the game, but also gave part of the proceeds from the snack bar. The local sports leagues gave monetary pledges of support to the family. T-shirts and bracelets were made in memory of the children.

Local Realtors were also very generous in pledging part of their commissions of their monthly sales. There were so many silent supporters who have gone unnamed who gave generous monetary pledges.

Chad Cowan was a friend of mine. We played baseball together. I was so amazed by the overwhelming support for my friend and his family. His family is one of the most giving, caring, and compassionate families I know. They have so much faith in God. And I know for a fact they would have done the same for any family in need. I am proud to be a part of a community that was so supportive to such a deserving family in their tragic time of sorrow.

The author was a sixth-grader when this was submitted to the 2007 Solano County Reading Association competition.

Everyday

By Christina George
Will C. Wood High School

The lack of agreement among nations led us to this place. I run this over and over in my mind everyday And I wonder why countries act this way.

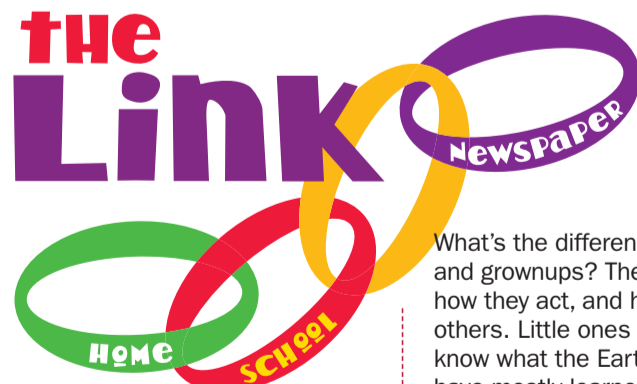
The smoke in the air fogs my vision
The noise so loud
It's hard to hear myself think.
The trenches so deep with mud and rats all over the ground,
And dead bodies piled high because there is no place for them to rest.
These images I see make me wonder
Why do I sit here in misery?

My family and friends all at home
Waiting everyday for my return,
Hoping they won't receive a telegram instead.
They wonder what I'm up to and the rest as well.
They hope everything is going as planned and I am safe.

They greet me when I come home
With tears in their eyes and mine;
Glad to hold each other again and see each others faces after such a long time apart.
I'm proud to say, "Yes, I fought in the war."
And relieved to be home at the same time.
Mixed feelings have run through my mind everyday since I returned.

I wonder everyday,
Why was I there for so long?
Why did I lose so many friends when I was right there helping them along?
I've learned
And not learned
Through the days I was there and the days I've been home
That we must go because we need to win.
But I don't understand why I went there with so many and returned home with so few.
These questions run through my mind
Everyday.

The author was a junior in high school when this poem was submitted in February 2007.



BY MARILYNN ANDERSON

Today we feature kid conversations and friendly summer happenings. Kids are hanging out and having fun in ice-cream places, parks, and playgrounds. Go for a walk and you will find them with their parents, enjoying the cool evenings. Summer lasts for a fast forever and then it's time to shop for going back to school. Would you like to be included in a Link column? Contact me at rdand@netscape.com and come in!

Here's what they're talking about

What's the difference between little kids and grownups? They're different in size, how they act, and how they respond to others. Little ones are just getting to know what the Earth is like. Grownups have mostly learned what's happening by their own experiences.

Connor Cole, Grade 7, Willis Jepson

Big people might not run as fast as smaller people. I raced one of my friends who is much littler than I am and I got smoked. A shorter person would have a hard time slam-dunking and lift something really heavy, so there are stories both ways.

Dominic Vincent, Grade 8, Jepson

Shorter people can duck better and go under taller people's legs. It happens in basketball. I saw it on television and it was really funny. I think players do it on purpose to get a laugh.

Daniel Crist, Grade 3, Alamo

I like pink and purple best. See my pink shirt? There's this fish on it that

sparkles. Pink is a good color for a fish. Pink and purple go together.

Madison Burton, Age 3

I built a house out of a huge piece of cardboard that was going to be thrown away. Yes, I found the cardboard and used it for a project. The house turned out fine and my sister, Bekah, and my mom and dad played in it with me. It was fun to do that for family night.

Brendan Lowe, Grade 4, Orchard

Good friends like to play. My friend is Tyler and I see him at church. He shares toys with me. When I'm BIGGER and BIGGER, I will go to preschool. It will happen after summer.

Suzanne Crist, age 3

The prettiest thing at my house is my pink Mickey Mouse necklace that came from Disneyland. I keep my necklace in my special box so it will be safe.

Kelly Rae Crist, Grade 1, Alamo

If I could be an animal, I would be a

brown horse. I could take people for rides and I would do whatever the people wanted. Yes, I would go fast or slow, and the people on my back would always be safe.

Bekah Lowe, Grade 2, Orchard

I caught six trout at Donner Lake and my dad caught four. Bait? I was using a lure. It's fun to be outdoors up in Tahoe. It's really a good place to hang out in the summer.

Luke Labarga, Grade 3, Orchard

I could build a birdhouse out of wood and find some birds to put in it. They would be green and yellow. I have two pet birds. We bought one bird and someone gave us the other one. The girl bird has long feathers on her tail and the boy is fat.

Angel Montano, Grade 2, Markham

I would like to make a book. I'd put paper inside a cover and staple it together. Then I could write in it and draw pictures, too. I could build a game,

too. I just learned how to play Guess Who and I won the game the first time I played. It's really fun! My favorite books? I like Where's Waldo and all those other finding books.

Robert Moya, Grade 2, Alamo

I'd like to try to build a Lego Eiffel Tower and then put Tom and Jerry racing past it. Then I'd make the Eiffel Tower flip and become the Eiffel Pretzel. I saw all this on a cartoon, so that's how I got the idea. The best thing I've built is a Lego battlefield with druids and troopers fighting.

Andrew Krieger, Grade 2, Foxboro

I joined an Online Poetry society called All Poetry.com where you can have a free account and post poems and stories. There are contests and classes and it's a great place to hang out. You meet poets from all over the world. It's fun.

C. D., Buckingham High