

# THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER

VOL XI NO 1 NOVEMBER 30, '92

"Hail to thee, blithe spirit!" -- Skelley,  
"To a Skylark."

My Composition  
Grandmas are allowed  
To be proud.  
Grandmas need to hide  
Their pride.  
Coast to coast,  
Grandmas boast.



# OUR GRANDCHILD WAS CITIZEN OF THE MONTH AT AGNES RISLEY SCHOOL



PHOTOS AREN'T REPRODUCING WELL IN ENNL, SO HERE'S A COMPRI-  
MISE THAT MAY WORK. Reno: Cress is sitting before the school mascot which is bigger than  
she is! Grandma flew out on impulse: on Tuesday Cress said, "I wish you could come,  
Grandma", and on Thursday I was in the air. (It helped to have a couple of airplane coupons  
so I could fly standby and not go broke.) It was a gala affair: a whole school assembly,  
soda & doughnuts for the honorees & guests -- there were citizens from each grade, and for  
special things: Cress was awarded here by the music teacher, Grandma Elaine and Grand-  
pa Art Broteu came, too. I spent the rest of the day sitting in on Cress's class, a mixed  
4-5-6, taught by a warm & exceedingly competent woman, Ms. Baren. Then Gillian, Joe,  
Cress & I drove 2 hours to Shurz, which is in an Indian reservation, where Aunt Ingrid, Uncle  
Ash, Jon & Willie live. We ate home-made burritos piled high, admired Ash's stone work, finished  
the evening in a hot tub under the stars, that Ash had made. What a sumptuous time! Then  
back to Reno the next day, and dinner that night at Broteus, again with Ingrid & Kobas.  
Sunday we went to the Unitarian Church, then drove to Tahoe & walked on the beach with Skip.  
I was back Monday in time to teach my class. It was a first class holiday. Hurray for Cress!

THE WAY TO START A SCHOOL YEAR  
by Cressida Broten, 10

The way to start a school year  
Is go supply shopping for  
glue  
pencil  
crayons  
books  
and binders.

Go register and say Yeah!  
Get a haircut and go home.  
Pick up the phone and call  
all your friends.  
Go someplace faraway but be back  
in time for school.

When you wake up in  
the morning on that first day of  
school  
Put on some ordinary clothes.  
Go out in the kitchen and  
Pour some milk into a bowl.  
Add some Cheer-i-O's  
or cornflakes.  
Munch-um,  
Gobble-um,  
Chew-um down and swallow hard.  
Make a lunch you might enjoy.  
Brush your teeth.  
Brush your hair.  
Grab your lunch and  
off you .....  
G O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O .....

(I found this poem in Cress's classroom, hanging on a cord from the ceiling at about eye level, amongst other hanging poems by her classmates on the same subject. I copied hers down. When I told Gillian I was going to publish it, she said, "She had to change her original." When she told me the reason, I exclaimed, "I know the very spot!" and I was right. To me, her least felicitous line is, 'Go register and say yeah!' Turns out, Cressie first wrote, 'Go register and pay.' Gillian, reading it, said, "But you don't have to pay to go to public school!" "What?" cried Cress, astonished. "You don't? This is free?" She's grown up with Gillian going to school, registering and paying every semester! So she changed it, yet felt the need of the same sound, I think, on account of 'faraway' a few lines down. 'Yeah'---i.e. 'yay'.)



### THUMBS UP FOR CRESS!

Cress deserves some other congratulations. A habit she's not been able to break got medical treatment. A little wire "cage" in her mouth prevented her thumb from going in. She's had the cage out for over two months now, & the doctor says he'll take the anchors for it (ou her teeth) off in December. She won't need it anymore! She reports she feels no urge to put her thumb in her mouth, nor does she find it there.

### CRESS SPENDS MONTH AT POND

Lake Iroquois Summer's long gone, but Grandma is still feeling the glow. We actually had 6 weeks -- Cress came first to Beloit to see Great Grandpa & Elle, swim at the Shopiere dam, & feed the cows & cuddle the Kittens at McCabe's farm on the State Line Rd. Then to Springfield and a mad social whirl -- Knight's Action park & ball games

with Eriu & Katie Grimes, meals with Eggers, Robertsons, Parkses, Hatchers, writing <sup>journal</sup> in Vermont using Stephanie's house as a motel. (Muff never put a paw inside!) And then -- the Lake! Cress & her Siamese twin Colleen Pratt lived in the water. In between were card games galore, boating, going w/ Colleen to her swim meets, reading, reading aloud (*The Bluebird* & *The Jack Tales*), puzzles; the penguin one & bird one -- communal meals at the picnic tables with Pratts & the lakeside -- also meals with Grandma Joan Hughes & G'ma Betty Wright & families. A climb up to the Pothole, where Grandma (after warning the girls) was the one to slip and drop Cress's valuable camera into the mountain stream! I told last issue abt Bonnie Morris coming, & the Hinesburg 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Cress & Colleen got lots of loot from the floats. We went to Ben & Jerry's ice cream factory & gorged. The nights were cold, we had fires, slept together in lounge wear with Muffie in between -- a terrific birthday party with a 5 ft sub sandwich. Pam Pratt made the cake & provided all the purple decor! Balloons, Swan favors -- All the lakeside came & brought Cress great presents. The Hughes-Wright-Pratt clan, Betsy Moore Weaver, Don & Caitlin McGuire -- the party included a **TREASURE HUNT** ala the old days, that Cress, Colleen & Grandma prepared. It was hard, & Uncle Jack CHEATED. ALAN PRATT ATE A CLUE! Game below: Milfoil Monster (Grandma) can capture any fingers & toes not on the rubber mat, (TASTY MORSELS!) Picture tonight: Eriu Pratt taught Cress to cross-stitch; Grandma knew she was learning, but the cross-stitch message was a surprise!



I treasure it, Cress! I hated to see Cress go -- and HOPE she'll be back next summer. (So does Colleen!)





EMPTY NEST STARTS ELEVENTH YEAR

Springfield, IL At the 11th hour of the 11th month, the ENNL Ed, who seems to get less and less done in 24 hours these days, is trying (but won't manage) to cram all-the-news-that's-fit-to-print into the first issue of the new season. (ENNL runs on the academic calendar, since it started when Ellie left for school eleven years ago.) Thank you, those of you who've been kind enough to wonder what's happened to ENNL, and to indicate you've missed it! I won't be able to tell everything, of course, and three areas at least deserve their own issues; maybe I'll make separate ones for them.

About me: This year I have two SSU students living here: Matt's in Med Tech and Sean, Communications, and they are ham radio buddies from years back. They have crawled all over the high roof of 816 and erected huge antennae, strung wires to the tops of my tallest trees, taken over a room in the basement (their stuff flowing over my stuff like lava) and set up what amounts to a studio with globes, manuals, all sorts of equipment that blinks, computer screens filled with unintelligible marks, etc., and even as I type this, I hear Sean below me (and can picture him hunched before his screens, earphones on, concentration intense, voice staccato) talking to some distant spot: he's engaged in a 24 hour contest, with every state in the Union and Canadian provinces, the winner amasses the most points. Just think of hundreds--thousands?--of ham radio addicts spending this weekend holed up with cokes and chips and hamburgers, making contact with each other, talking a moment to get down the data ("Your number--I need your number!"), then parting to haste on to their next partner. A great dance, a great orgiastic frenzy of the airwaves. Other days we've talked to Iceland, Mozambique, Mauritania. Sean got a postcard from his contact there, asking him to find him a beginner's manual for Hawaiian guitar. The other night Matt (who was in last year's Fantasy class, one of the best students I've had, so I've known him, his quality and interests and fun) took our blood and is getting it analyzed. Just one of the activities at 816. Oh, and Sean plays African drums. So life is interesting here, when I have time to enjoy it, and my classes are good: "Writing Stories", and "Women and the Mystery Novel." The University is still threatened with major changes, I didn't get a sabbatical (it would have been my third) so don't know when I'll come up for air; early retirement is still being debated in the legislature and is as far away as ever; I need the money and do love the teaching, so I'll hang in here awhile longer. I just wish there were more time for my writing, which never comes first. If I don't get another issue out before the holidays (will this even be out?) have happy ones. Were I able to control paper input/outgo and remember who I've written to and what I said, you'd get a personal letter, you really really would.

Winner



Sonja Yde as she performed as winner of the Sixth Grade Division of the Concerto Auditions.

West Bend, WI. The news on Sonja's win on the piano preceded their running her picture in the paper by months, but suddenly they did it! The Empty Nest, of course, prints news, pix, etc. at any ol' time. Good going, Sonja!

NEARLY LOSES PINKY

Madison, WI Well, the tip of it, anyway. Jo Schmidt, intent on slicing bread with a very sharp knife, curled her little finger around the end of the loaf too far and took off most of her little fingertip -- on her left!! hand, for you string instrumentalists. The doctors saved it with 6 bitty stitches and it's now well and usable, (i.e., she's playing) but the feeling's still v. strange.

MAJOR HEADLINE NEXT ISSUE:

Beloit. What nobody else has been able to do; over a span of many years, "Eccatalk anybody into anything" Stephanie McPhillips has done: Got Grandpa to paint Chez Nous! From Grapes-of-Whitt it's now House Beautiful, and black & white photos will be in the next ENNL, Selah.

ADDITION: Tom Schmidt wrote the 3rd road guide for Jer + Wendy's publishing venture, Free Wheeling Guides. Israel, leg work, selling, AND WRITING the Glacier + Waterton Lake guide. I didn't give Tom proper credit in the Kestrel issue.



TEN OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS IN THE WORLD ARE AT BELOIT by Marion K. Stocking

*In VOL X NO 5 (one of the three July '92 issues) we printed the first of Marion Stocking's ten, the crinoids. Three weeks ago I had the pleasure of taking ENNL readers Jan, Katie and Erin Grimes, around the Beloit campus, and the crinoids were the start of our tour. And they ARE breathtakingly beautiful, and more meaningful since we all knew their story. Thank you, Marion! Katie is considering going to Beloit, and I was proud of the campus, and impressed, myself! What a place of riches for the spirit and the mind, and what a privilege to have gone to school there--or to go. (I took the Grimeses to see the Tiffany Bridge, too, one of the ten most beautiful sights in the Beloit area, or anywhere, which list I am working on for ENNL readers. Erin Grimes, by the way, is one of the few kids who responded to the Culture Vulture's offer of Money for Memorizing, reciting triumphantly for me "The Walrus and the Carpenter.") We go on now with Marion's next item, which we also visited.*

Another of the college's debts to Robert Solem is the world-class display of petrified wood, on the wall inside the south entrance of Chamberlin. Just stand in front of these polished variegated slabs from the Chinle formation in Arizona, and let your imagination flow back about 240 million years to the Triassic period, and soak up the richness and complexity of the colors of the polished jasper, a form of agate, which replaced the fibers of the fallen Triassic trees. Sitting at my typewriter in Maine I could travel back in my memory and think of the colors: jasper, agate, anthracite, smoky ice, cinnebar, carnation, carnelian, crimson, ocher, gold, rose, ruby, russet, umber --most of these words of course chemically inappropriate, but expressing the richness of color and the complexity of design I remembered in these slabs of ancient wood, transformed, as if by some physical poetry, into a polished order--a marriage of the organic and the mineral that has lasted through the hundreds of millions of years to enchant the human brain with its extraordinary beauty.

Solem enriched the college with the gift of these slabs, some of which I understand have no rivals in any collection. After the balletic loops and swirls of the ancient crinoids, the petrified wood comes as a blare of polished trumpets and tubas. I am listing only the spectacular polished agate slabs in my "ten best," but Hank Woodard has told me enough about other wonders in the Beloit fossil wood collection that I think for a poet or an essayist there would be a whole book there full of words like Devonian, and buckboard, and Dodge City, and railhead, and carbonaceous, and Carnotite, and giant dinosaur, and the famous Jackpile member of the Morrison Formation.

Of crinoids and sunsets

The crinoids in Chamberlin Hall...the Chinese robes in Wright Art Museum...the Mimbres pots in Logan Museum...the sunsets from campus--they shared the spotlight with workshops, a presidential address, awards, a career fair, an election and other activity that made up the 1992 Alumni Conference on March 27-28.

How did "they" fit in with the rest of the program? They happen to be just four of the favorites of Marion Stocking, emerita professor of English, who contends that "Ten of the most beautiful things in the world are in Beloit." That was the subject of a lecture she delivered to an SRO audience to open Saturday's business portion of the two-day event held in Jeffris-Wood Campus Center, Pearsons Hall.

More than 175 alumni and guests participated in the various sessions. The 153 alumni who registered represented 58 classes in eight decades and came from 13 states and the District of Columbia. George Bacon, '23, of Beloit and '25ers Pat Dawson of Janesville and Ronald Dougan of Beloit were the "senior" members among the seven Beloiters from the '20s in attendance.

Stocking, who also presented an all-College lecture titled "Now it can be told: the secret history of the Beloit Poetry Journal," and College Trustee



Edwin Bruning were honored at the conference's annual recognition dinner. Both became honorary members of the Alumni Association, receiving their certificates from Elaine Barnes Pr. hett, '66, association president. Each was praised and "lightly roasted," by two speakers. the salute to Stocking came from John Rosenwald, English professor, and Roxie Alexander, also an emerita professor of English and honorary alumna.

Stocking's Saturday presentation was followed by a campus mini-tour that included seven of the "ten most beautiful things."

\*\*\* Speaking of beautiful things: Who knows



where Mom's exquisite PARIS DRESS is? The long black satine one with all the heavenly beadwork. Last I knew it was folded in tissue paper in a drawer in Pat & Jack's old room. Ideas?

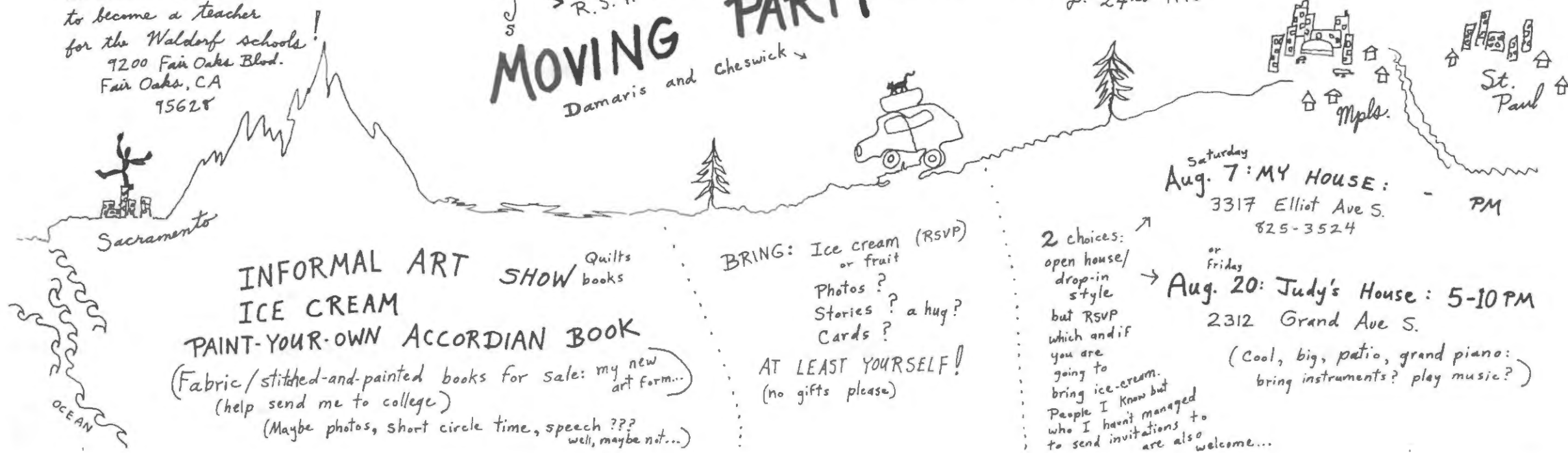
Can't on p.5



For 2 years at  
Rudolf Steiner College  
to become a teacher  
for the Waldorf schools!  
9200 Fair Oaks Blvd.  
Fair Oaks, CA  
95628

W N  
S  
R.S.V.P. 825-3524  
**MOVING PARTY**  
Damaris and Cheswick

I leave Aug. 24th 1993

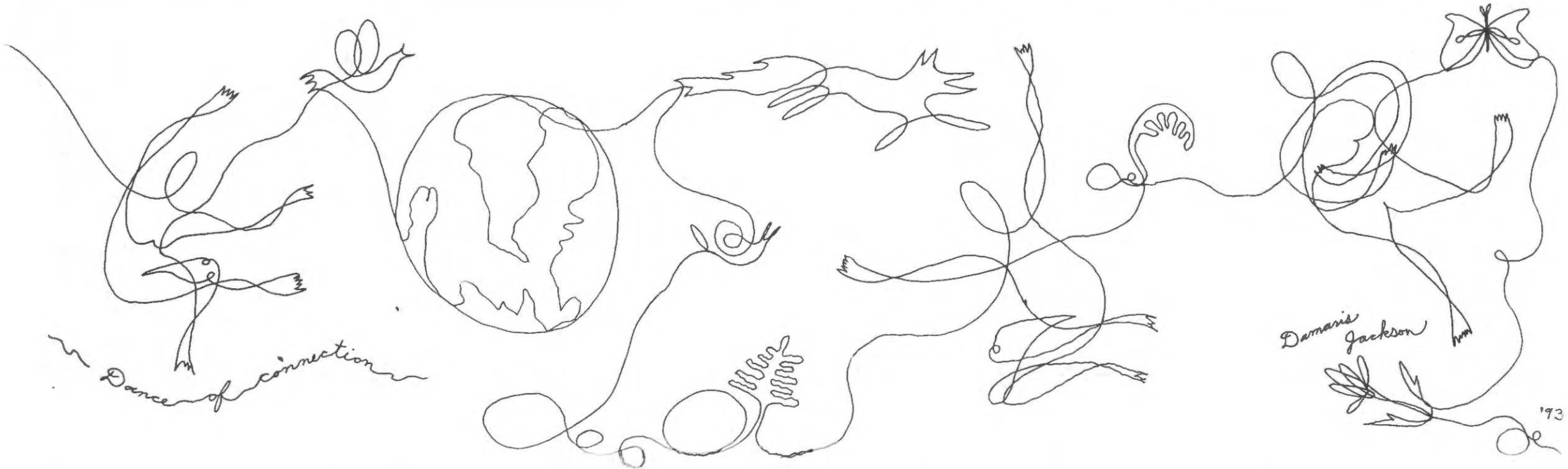


**INFORMAL ART SHOW** Quilts books  
**ICE CREAM**  
**PAINT-YOUR-OWN ACCORDIAN BOOK**  
(Fabric/stitched-and-painted books for sale: my new art form...  
(help send me to college)  
(Maybe photos, short circle time, speech ??? well, maybe not...)

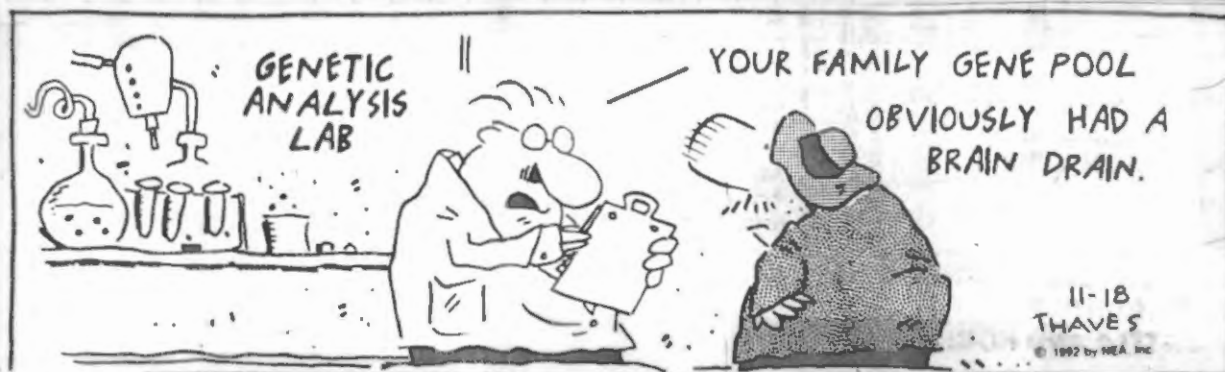
**BRING:** Ice cream (RSVP)  
or fruit  
Photos?  
Stories? a hug?  
Cards?  
**AT LEAST YOURSELF!**  
(no gifts please)

2 choices: →  
open house/  
drop-in  
style  
but RSVP  
which and if  
you are  
going to  
bring ice-cream.  
People I know but  
who I haven't managed  
to send invitations to  
are also welcome...

Saturday  
**Aug. 7: MY HOUSE:**  
3317 Elliot Ave S. PM  
825-3524  
or  
Friday  
**Aug. 20: Judy's House: 5-10 PM**  
2312 Grand Ave S.  
(Cool, big, patio, grand piano:  
bring instruments? play music?)



Damaris  
Jackson  
1993



**VALUED BOOKS OF J.J.'S: DO YOU HAVE?**

Hard covers; Tove Jansson's THE SUMMER BOOK; Fay Weldon's HEARTS & MINDS OF MEN; paperb, A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

**NEWS BYTES**

Reno Grandma's going to get another bumper sticker: MY GRANDCHILD NAME THE HONOR ROLL. A local putt-putt golf course gives a free game for every "A," Cress will get EIGHT free games!  
Reno This fall Megan & Michael Ryan and baby Mark flew in a 2-seater plane over to Gillian, Joe & Cress's, and spent a day or two. Good time by all!  
Jackson Hole, WY The next weekend or so, with Michael again at the throttle, the three flew over to Wyoming (from Santa Cruz) and visited Jeremy Schmidt & Wendy Baylor and baby Kestrel. Since Megan & Jeremy are first cousins, this makes Kestrel & Mark 2nd cousins, and they are only a few months apart in age. Some of these cousins had never met, but I've heard from both sides they had a great time.

Hinsdale, IL. Mardi Sweet Left, old friend of many of us, and ENNL reader, has died. She was a splendid person & super pianist. We grieve.  
New York City Old, old friend (from U. of Mich days, & with us in England) has died after a long bout with cancer. She was Damaris's godmother and childless herself, has looked on Demei as a daughter, & treated her as daughter & beloved friend. She's been an English teacher at CCNY all her professional life. She was a caring & bit people of the world.  
Arundel, England Author Rosemary Sutcliff, who entertained our England classes, has died: she has been a cripple since age 2, & her remarkable, prize winning books are both physical & spiritual testimonies to her greatness. I'll run an obit in next ENNL.

Spt 4 While Cress was here in June, Lynn & Harris Hatcher took us to see a Globe Theater production of Hamlet at SIU, preceded by an elegant picnic on the sweeping lawn, costumes, jugglers, singers, etc. I'd have preferred Cress's first Shakespeare to be, say, "Midsummer Night's Dream", but we read Lamb's Tales of Shakespeare together, the "Double double" verses, & went over Lady MacB's madness & "Out out, damned spot! I needn't have worried abt Cress being bored. She was on the edge of her bleacher, bright-eyed throughout. But half way through she leaned over to me & said confidentially, "They've added quite a lot, haven't they!"

**TEN MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS... cont'd from p. 4.**

You don't have to be a Goldbarth to respond to the poetry as well as the powerful beauty of these treasures.

I surely appreciated the geological beauties here while I was at Beloit, and I appreciated that they were probably the most magnificent of their kind in the world. But sometimes I had to travel to appreciate some of the college's other treasures. In 1986 I was visiting friends in New York who suggested that we walk down the street to see the exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History, Dark Caves, Bright Visions: Life in Ice Age Europe, that had recently been featured on the cover of Newsweek. In the museum we entered a cavern brilliantly designed to create the impression of Ice Age European life, 12,000 to 35,000 years ago. On the walls above us were reproductions of cave paintings from Altamira and Lascaux and others, as well as a replica of the 15,000-year-old Tuc d'Audobert bison, modelled in clay, familiar to all who have explored the cave under the Logan Museum and discovered our own replica there. The exhibit included a replica of a Ukrainian hut constructed of hairy mammoth bones, as though the occupants had just left for a hunt. There was the earliest wind instrument ever found--a bird-bone flute. And from a replica of that flute, hair-raisingly lovely music played over the sound system. In cases were some of the earliest of human artifacts eloquently speaking of a culture already rich in music, painting sculpture, jewelry, sewed clothing, illumination and religion. It was a magical display, and as we moved through it, making one discovery after another, one of my friends exclaimed: "But this one is from Beloit College!" I rushed to look, and there was a palette of red sandstone for grinding red ocher, with three crayons, from La Madeleine in the Dordogne. A check of the catalogue revealed that of the 232 items in the exhibit, assembled from all over Europe and America, no less than sixty-nine were on loan from the Logan Museum. Logan contributed two of the earliest known sewing needles, about 24,000 years old. There was a limestone lamp; there were necklaces with bear and lion teeth; and there were much older stone, bone and ivory pendants. Magdalenian engravings on limestone slabs included ibex and reindeer, and one astonishing horse engraved with multiple legs so that in uncertain light it looked as though it were running or swimming! The first motion picture, twelve to eighteen thousand years old! Had I walked by these wonders at Beloit for decades, blind to them because ignorant of their meaning? Probably so. Sometimes we need not only education but some distance from a subject to appreciate its value. These beautiful survivors of ice-age Europe are to me some of the most eloquently lovely things I have ever seen, now that I have learned how to look at them.

*Look for the next thrilling installment in a future Empty Nest.*



**Weeding Milfoil at Lake Iroquois**  
by Sue McGuire (NO RELATION)

To the dismay of residents and others who use Lake Iroquois for swimming, fishing, and boating, Eurasian Milfoil has established itself in the lake.

In an effort to eradicate or at least slow its growth, a contingent of volunteer divers and lake residents joined forces on June 27th to "weed" two areas of infestation. Divers pulled the weeds by the roots whenever possible and brought them to the surface. A couple dozen lake residents provided surface support as crew in all sorts of boats to collect the weeds and gather stray pieces with loaned pool skimmers.

About a dozen divers participated, including Hinesburg residents Dr. Roger Giroux and Peter Mead. The Lake Champlain Reef Runners Dive Club volunteered their time as a public service project, and others were recruited through posters at the Waterfront Dive



Divers and crew removing milfoil from Lake Iroquois

Center and Victory Sports. Jonathan at Waterfront donated air and loaned additional dive gear.

Ann Bove, an aquatic biologist from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation chose areas where milfoil had been sighted and showed methods for identification and harvesting the milfoil. The group worked on the south shore and near the fishing access Area.

The various lake associations provided lunch for all at the camp of Maurice and Vi Goodrich.

Unlike the native variety of milfoil, the Eurasian species is extremely invasive, spreads quickly, and has no proven predators. One section of the lake near the island has a concentration of the weed, and boaters are urged to avoid that area. A one-inch section of the stem inadvertently caught by a propeller is all that would be needed to spread the weed to other areas or lakes.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the weeding. Monitoring and additional harvesting will continue throughout the summer.

**McGUIRECLAN NEWS**  
(FROM LATE SUMMER)

- Caitlin's a clerk for the N.Y. Assembly Transportation Committee, organizes meetings, does newsletter, etc. It's an entry level job; she plans to climb a rung or two on the ladder this year. She has a dream of a dog, Zea. As to rowing: she strokes the boat, sets the pace, takes directions from Coxswain. At the National Club Rowing Championship held in Camden NJ her team won a bronze -- rowed in 3 events, made finals in 2. She's in the light-weight Women's Eight, had to knock off 8 lbs. to do it. Crews were from all over the country, even

**WILLISTON ROCK REMEMBERED**

Lake Iroquois. While looking for a document for Eva in Grunkin Hall this summer, I came on this invitation & Xeroxed it for ENNL. A number of readers will recall (with mixed emotions!) the violent games on the Williston Rock, a v. large submerged rock near the West dock which has a "W" carved on it for "Williston": it's where the 3 towns come together: Hinesburg, Richmond & Williston. And will also remember the injuries, near-drownings, monkey & triumphs, etc. I think A. H. S. engineered this reenactment, when we were all adults, (but young in heart) a good many years ago. Or, maybe it was Madeline,

Mexico City, Katie gets up at 5 AM, bikes to the river, rows, bikes home, showers, goes to work, wow! -- Demie Levee's job: State-wide coordinator for the N.Y. State Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. She'll be organizing, lobbying, fund raising, P.R., issues research & dissemination, etc. -- Dou: Stuyvesant High, famous for all those Merit Scholars (did you see the Doonesbury cartoon?) is moving into a new building across town overlooking the Statue of Liberty. Everything in it is state-of-the-art! -- Marcus is still with air lines. (Magan! Sorry, didn't hear.)

**NEWS FLASH!** Dec. 19. I've just learned that Caitlin is sporting a sapphire & diamond engagement ring, and that she and MARTIN REID will be married next October: either the 16th, or the 23rd (which is Eva's birthday) - What HAPPY NEWS! Congrats, you two!

**Hinesburg Pond** Two remarks of Cress's this summer that have stuck in my mind -- her "nice" use of words: telling someone my reaction to her "I love you Grandma" cross stitch, "Grandma cooed over it." And about Muffie Sue: "She's a sky doggie." **Hinesburg Pond again** (or Lake Iroquois, if you haven't tumbled to the fact that they're the same place!) Betsy Irwin, friend, SSU prof, & the glue that held last year's Mystery Trip together, visited at the lake w/ her two meices. Lots of talk, food, puzzles, swimming, games, reading, trip to Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Factory, & Shelburne Farms. *Came again, Betsy!*

Recapture your childhood with King of the Rock And shed inhibitions east of the dock.

We'll gather together at Rock-haven 22 & 23 on the Zwenzieth of August -- R. S. V. P.

1. Switz optional
2. Refreshments + bandages will be served.
3. A fingernail + toenail trim required

Courtsey while you're thinking what to say, It saves time, It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards," the Queen remarked.



WHICH EXACTLY ARE THE HALCYON DAYS OF MY YOUTH? IS SATURDAY ONE?



I BELIEVE THEY'RE AWARDED RETROACTIVELY WHEN YOU'RE GROWN UP.



HALCYONITY IS RELATIVE.

