

Brilliant Star

A BAHÁ'Í COMPANION FOR YOUNG EXPLORERS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2012



**LIGHTNING & LUNA:
FIRE AND FURY**

Gift of Gratitude

**LAST GLIMPSE OF
'ABDU'L-BAHÁ**

Brilliant Star

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1.800.999.9019
WWW.BRILLIANTSTARMAGAZINE.ORG

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OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

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Historical photos courtesy of National Bahá'í Archives, unless noted.

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Brilliant Star magazine invites all kids to explore the Bahá'í Faith. It is the second most widespread religion in the world, with more than five million Bahá'ís.

The Bahá'í Faith was founded by the Prophet **Bahá'u'lláh** ("Glory of God" in Arabic) in 1863. Bahá'u'lláh taught that all people are part of one human family, and that all religions come from one God. Bahá'ís work to bring peace and unity to the world, and end prejudice and discrimination of all kinds.

Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, **'Abdu'l-Bahá**, interpreted His teachings and led the Bahá'í community after Bahá'u'lláh's passing.

Brilliant Star encourages kids to bring their virtues and talents to light, and use them to make the world a better place. **Brilliant Star** is produced bimonthly by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the U.S.

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Standard U.S. rates: \$18 (One year); \$32 (Two years)
International airmail: \$38 (One year); \$68 (Two years)
Canada and Mexico: \$28 (One year); \$48 (Two years)

SUBMISSIONS

We welcome submissions and ideas from contributors of all ages. For editorial themes or submission guidelines, mail your request with a self-addressed stamped envelope, or e-mail us (above).

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She's been singing around the world since age 12.



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She helped create the first Bahá'í choir in America.



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aMAZEing ADVENTURE

We're all connected in more ways than one.

GIFT OF GRATITUDE

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Express yourself and your many blessings.



DEAR FRIENDS,

If you tried to count your blessings, how high would you get? 100? 1,000?

Thankfulness is encouraged

by many faiths—but did you know that science backs that up? Studies show that being thankful helps your mind and body. Grateful people are also more helpful and generous.

Being thankful leads to feelings of friendship, as you remember people who open your eyes to life's wonders—such as your family, coaches, and teachers.

In this issue of **Brilliant Star**, check out the benefits of being thankful. Make a cool thank-you card for someone special. Take a quiz to find out if you see the world with gratitude. Amaze your friends with a surprising paper trick. And meet Rachael Price, who makes joyful music around the world.

Take a break to list some of your blessings. Spirituality and science agree—you'll add a happy glow to the day for yourself, friends, and family.

With love from **Brilliant Star**



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AND ALSO PRINTED WITH SOY-BASED INKS.

The Lost City

"Thankful, the birds of the spirit seek only to fly in the high heavens and to sing out their songs with wondrous art." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

Deep in the jungles of the Santa Marta Mountains in Colombia is a treasure for archaeologists and bird lovers. It's the *Ciudad Perdida*, or Lost City—the ancient home of the Tayrona people. The site has over 200 stone structures, and it's now part of a large nature reserve, where you can find over 600 bird species.

Though birds are famous for their songs, only about half of the birds in the world are true songbirds—and most singers are male. They sing to mark their

territory and attract mates. Their amazing vocal organ, the *syrinx*, has two breathing passages. The birds can breathe in and out at the same time, and sing continuously—even two different notes at once!

Like many ancient wonders, the Lost City and its creatures are in danger due to problems such as erosion and tourism. Conservation groups and local residents are working together to preserve them—so the historic area won't be lost again.

Blue-gray Tanager

Emerald Toucanet

Golden-breasted Fruiteater

Masked Tityra

Masked Trogon

Moustached Puffbird

Santa Marta Parakeet

Summer Tanager

Yellow-crowned Whitestart

HELP THE EXPLORERS FIND THESE NINE BIRDS IN THE LOST CITY!



A Brief Timeline

The Life of Bahá'u'lláh

The highlighted area marks the time in which this story takes place.

1817 November 12

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh in Tíhrán, Iran

1844

Recognizes the Báb as a new Messenger of God

1852

Imprisonment in the "Black Pit" of Tíhrán

1853–1863

Exile in Baghdád, Iraq. From 1854–1856, He goes into the mountains to pray in solitude.

1863 April 22

Declares Divine Mission as Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith

1863–1868

Exile in Constantinople (Istanbul), then Adrianople (Edirne), Turkey. Begins writing letters to kings and rulers in 1867, urging world unity

1868

Last exile, to prison-city of 'Akká, Israel

1877

Finally free to live in countryside homes of Mazra'ih and then Bahjí, outside 'Akká

1892 May 29

Bahá'u'lláh passes away at Bahjí.

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace World of Dreams

Bahá'u'lláh grew up in Persia (now Iran), where dreams were often considered significant. At about age six, Bahá'u'lláh dreamed He was attacked by huge birds, but they didn't harm Him. Then He was swimming in the sea and was attacked by fish and birds, but was still unhurt.

Bahá'u'lláh's father, Mírzá Buzurg, sent for a wise man to interpret the dream. The man said that the birds and fish were people who would try to hurt Bahá'u'lláh. But they couldn't harm Him, and He would bring an important Cause to humanity.

Mírzá Buzurg also had a dream when

Bahá'u'lláh was a child. In it, Bahá'u'lláh was swimming in an ocean. Many fish were around Him, each holding a strand of His hair—but no hair detached from His head.

A wise man told Mírzá Burzurg that the ocean symbolized the world, and Bahá'u'lláh would have great power in it. People would gather around Him, but He would remain safe.

In time, Bahá'u'lláh was surrounded by devoted followers and also by people who wished Him harm. But no one could stop His message of peace. Today, more than five million Bahá'ís continue to put His vision into action.

Dive in and find these words from the story.
Search forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally.



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



RILEY'S RAINFOREST

"Send down... from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing..." —Bahá'u'lláh

Gratitude Is Great!

What things make you feel most thankful? Do you focus on them often? Scientists find that practicing gratitude can make a big difference in kids' lives.

In one study, kids ages 10 to 14 were asked about their lives and feelings, and then four years later they were asked again. Over that time, the kids who were the most grateful grew happier and more hopeful. They also felt more meaning in their lives. Any negative feelings and symptoms of depression decreased. They were also less likely to use alcohol or drugs or have behavior problems.

Another study found that grateful teens got better grades and had stronger connections to their communities. In contrast, kids more focused on material things were more envious and less satisfied with life.

So if gratitude has so many benefits, why aren't people



thankful all the time? It could be that gratitude isn't always a natural habit. Experts say that our brains tend to focus on negative events more easily than on positive ones. It can also be difficult to feel grateful when we're surrounded by stores and media that tempt us to want bigger and better things.

We can choose to be thankful, but it takes effort. Pay close attention to your thoughts. Try to think positively when you catch yourself complaining—even inside your own head. Think of all the good things in your life, large and small. You may find you have more to be thankful for than you thought!

Canopy of Questions

What do you want to know about staying healthy and happy? Health can involve your body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Send your questions to brilliant@usbnc.org. Responses are given by a health professional.

“What do you do when you are the only Bahá'í in your school and you don't fit in well?”

—August, age 12

Dear August,

It can be hard to feel different. It may help to think about the meaning of being a Bahá'í. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "To be a Bahá'í simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it..." As long as there are kids who want to be kind, forgiving, and compassionate, a Bahá'í kid is not alone.

Like a treasure hunter, look for the good qualities in each person, such as courage or truthfulness. Let them know you like those qualities. You can do this with a smile, a look, or a compliment. Join those who wish to be helpful, loving, and generous.

When you lovingly approach those who seem different from you, you'll feel a stronger sense of belonging. There is so much goodness around us to discover. Remember your classmates in your prayers. If you feel comfortable, you can share your faith by telling them about Bahá'í holy days or inviting them to events.

Try to help everyone who crosses your path go away with a happy heart.

*Wishing you joy,
Keyvan Geula
Licensed Family Therapist*



Explore & Soar: Bummer or Blessing?

Try these tips for using your positive powers.

- When you have a negative thought, imagine popping it like a bubble. Replace it with a positive thought.
- Think about someone you love.

- Watch your words. "Problems" are less scary if they're "challenges" or "opportunities."
- Think about a difficulty you overcame. What strengths did you use?

Seeing Sunshine

B z-z-z-z-z. The alarm goes off, and you open your eyes to a new day. If you're having friends over, you might see a bright, sunny day ahead. But what if you have a big test or chores to tackle?

If your day looks cloudy with a chance of frustration, change your outlook by putting on your glasses of gratitude. When you focus on the good in your life, difficulty is easier to handle.

Set aside a time each day to think about the



blessings you enjoy. Maybe your dad fixes your favorite breakfast. Or you hang out with friends after school.

Keeping a gratitude journal can make you happier. Saying thank you to a friend, parent, or teacher can also help. Ask your family to join in by sharing good things about the day.

When your alarm buzzes tomorrow, reach for your gratitude glasses and welcome a day filled with light.

Are you looking at the world through glasses of gratitude? Take this quiz to find out.

- 1 I keep a list of things that I am thankful for.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 2 I share my time, energy, and belongings with others.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1



- 3 I say prayers to thank God for the blessings in my life, such as my family, health, and food.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 4 Instead of complaining when something goes wrong, I find solutions, and I think about what's going right.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 5 I write thank-you notes or e-mails when I receive gifts or experience acts of kindness.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 6 I remember that challenges can be blessings in disguise.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 7 I put my gratitude into action by volunteering to help those in need or by making gifts for others.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 8 I show appreciation for nature by recycling, saving energy, or other actions that help the environment.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1



- 9 I focus on enjoying the present moment and the people around me. I use my senses to focus on fun details, such as laughter with friends and family.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1



- 10 I say please and thank you—even for small things.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 11 I record happy times with photo albums, scrapbooks, or journals.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 12 I help my family or school teachers with tasks to show my appreciation.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

My Score

36–28 points: Your glasses of gratitude are clear and bright. You're focusing on the positive things in life—way to go!

27–19 points: Feeling grateful is becoming natural to you. Keep polishing those glasses to sharpen your view.

18–12 points: Put on a pair of gratitude glasses and take a look around. To brighten your outlook, try some tips from the quiz.



Terrific Teachers

"It is education that spreads great sciences and arts . . . that makes manifest new discoveries and institutions." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

Do you love learning about animals, outer space, or world cultures? Do you get excited about learning to play a musical instrument or speak a new language? If so, you can thank one of your teachers.

Teachers encourage our curiosity and open our minds to new ideas with fun projects and activities. And they inspire us to achieve our goals—even when

we're not sure we can. Our favorite teachers at school, home, or in our faith communities can influence us for the rest of our lives. They help us develop our gifts and talents to use now and in the future.

Let your teachers know how much you appreciate them and how they've helped you. Create a brilliant thank-you card for a teacher who lights up your life!

You'll Need

Twelve 1 1/2" (3.8 cm) paper squares
8 1/2" x 5 1/2" (21.6 x 14 cm) sheet of card stock • ruler • pencil
markers • 1/2" (1.3 cm) round sequin (optional) • 4 3/8" x 5 3/4" (11.1 x 14.6 cm) envelope (optional)



Make a Superstar Thank-You Card

- 1 Fold all paper squares.



- 2 Fold bottom tip 3/4" (1.9 cm) across. Repeat for all papers.



- 3 Fit one folded paper evenly under flap of another folded paper.



- 4 Keeping flap upper corners in place, fan out top paper so 2/3 of inner flap shows. Place glue between larger portions of papers.



- 5 Repeat steps 3 and 4 for all papers. For final papers, push overlapping triangle tops behind first paper.



- 6 Fold card stock. Glue star to cover and add sequin.



- 7 Write "Thank You!" on cover and add your message inside.



BE GRAPE-FUL

"Eat ye, O people, of the good things which God hath allowed you . . . and be of them that are truly thankful." —Bahá'u'lláh

Most "fast food" isn't good for you. But there's a type of fast food—the fastest you can get—that's healthy and delicious: fruit! Pick. Wash. Eat. So fast and easy!

If you live in California, you might grab some grapes for a snack. In China, have lychees at lunch. Try star fruit in Sri Lanka. A dazzling variety of nutritious fruit grows all over our amazing planet, in diverse tastes, colors, and shapes.

Fruits are not only delicious, they're full of healthy vitamins, fiber, and other nutrients. They're colored by different natural chemicals, so it's extra powerful to eat many colors. The next time you're at the farmer's market, look for red, green, yellow, orange, and even blue and purple fruit! Try to eat a rainbow every week.

No matter where you pack your lunch, when life gets busy and you need a lift—fast—try saying thanks for the fruit!

Check out these delicious clues. Match each fruit to a country where it's popular.

1 POMEGRANATE

I GROW ON TREES IN PERSIAN LAND. MY HEALTHY SEEDS ARE IN DEMAND.

2 PERSIMMON

MY HOME IS MADE OF ISLANDS SURROUNDED BY THE SEA. I'M LOVED FROM NAGASAKI TO THE SLOPES OF MT. FUJI.

3 BANANA

AT THE TROPICAL EQUATOR, I GROW IN YUMMY BUNCHES. I'M JUST SO SWEET AND HANDY FOR EASY SNACKS OR LUNCHES.

LIKE THE BIRD THAT SHARES MY NAME, IT'S TRUE I CANNOT FLY. BUT RIGHT BENEATH MY FUZZY PEEL'S A TEMPTING TASTE TO TRY.

4 KIWI FRUIT

5 MANGO

I GROW IN MANILA IN THE PACIFIC. I'M JUICY AND YUMMY AND JUST PLAIN TERRIFIC!

6 BLUEBERRIES

NEAR CANADA WE'RE WILD AND SWEET. PICK US FOR PICNICS—SUCH A TREAT!

7 APPLE

I'M CALLED LA POMME IN A PARIS CAFÉ. I'M THE PERFECT CHOICE ANY TIME OF THE DAY.

8 HORNED MELON

DON'T LET MY SPIKES FILL YOU WITH FRIGHT! IN AFRICA, I'M A DELIGHT.

A

France

C

New Zealand

Japan

E

Namibia

G

United States

Ecuador

The Philippines

B

D

F

H



MUSIC CAFÉ

“Music, sung or played, is spiritual food for soul and heart.” —Bahá’í Writings

MY GRANDPARENTS
STARTED THE MUSIC CAFÉ
45 YEARS AGO!

THEY BEGAN WITH A WEEKLY *HOOTENANNY* WITH
FRIENDS IN THEIR BARN. IT GREW AND GREW INTO A
BUSY CAFÉ IN OUR TOWN. I’M LEARNING A LOT FROM
THEM. THIS WEEK, I SANG THIS SONG TO SAY...

THANK YOU By Yosi Levin

A Chorus

Too-dah, too-dah, too-dah, too-dah Too-dah, too-dah, too-dah, too-dah

A Verse 1

Thank you for be-ing my friend Thank you. I know you un-der-

stand When I need some-one to play with Lend a help-ing hand You’re that some-one I

can de-pend on Thank you for be-ing my friend Too-dah, too-dah,

too-dah, too-dah Too-dah, too-dah, too-dah, too-dah too-dah, too-dah I’m thank-ful

that you’re my bro-ther I’m e-ven thank-ful for my ver-y stick-y lit-tle

sis-ter For my mom and dad, aunts and un-cles too Grand-pa-rents, cou-sins.

Woo-hoo! I said thank you for be-ing my fam’ly

A Chorus

A Verse 2

A Verse 3

3. Well I’m thankful for everything
All the birds in the trees and the flowers in the spring
For the friends and families we have right here
Fill our hearts and souls with warmth and cheer
For all our blessings both great and small

I’m thankful for everyone and all
So, thank you for everything
Chorus
Too-dah, too-dah, too-dah, too-dah
Too-dah, too-dah, too-dah, too-dah (10 times)



"Material science and learning, as well as the knowledge of God . . . will show forth such wonders that the beholders will be amazed." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

HERE'S A COOL TRICK.

FIT YOUR WHOLE BODY THROUGH THIS CARD!



A World of Marvels

Stop and study your surroundings. What do you see, smell, hear, taste, or feel? From the beat of your favorite song, to the sight of your best friend, to the taste of your favorite food, life's blessings surround us.

If your day seems dull, try looking at everyday things in new ways. Artists, mathematicians, and scientists do this to solve challenges or make new discoveries. When you look at the world with fresh eyes, even

ordinary school supplies may suddenly amaze you.

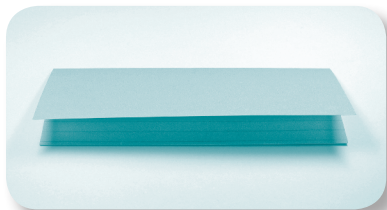
What if your pencil could write or draw by itself? Or what if your backpack was really a jetpack? That may sound impossible, but great inventions start with imaginative ideas.

The stuff on your desk can have surprising possibilities. Do you think you could take a standard 4" x 6" index card and fit your whole body through it? No? Well, check out this mathematical marvel below.

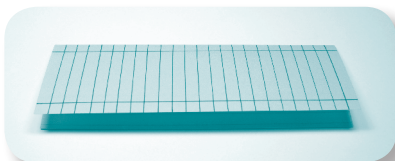
Amazing Expanding Card

You'll Need: 4" x 6" (10.2 x 15.2 cm) index card • scissors • ruler • pencil

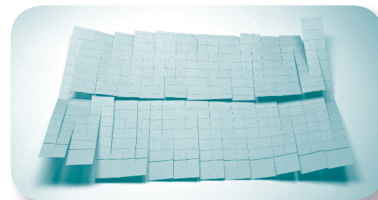
- 1 Fold card so long edges touch.



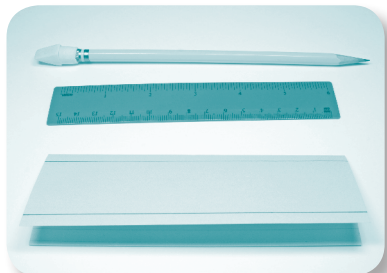
- 3 Parallel to short edges, draw 23 lines spaced 1/4" (.6 cm) apart.



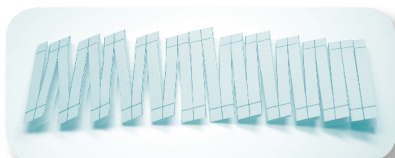
- 5 Open card. Cut along fold, leaving end strips intact.



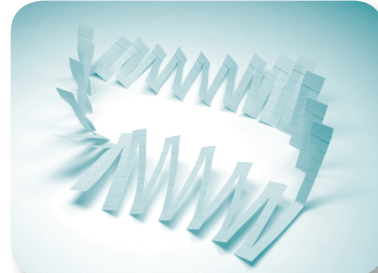
- 2 Draw a line 1/4" (.6 cm) from each long edge.



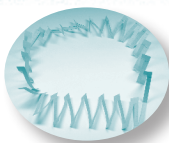
- 4 From fold, cut along first short line and stop at long line. From open end, cut second short line and stop at long line. Repeat until all short lines are cut.



- 6 Stretch out card and see if you can fit your body through the opening!



How It Works



This trick comes from a kind of math called **topology**. It explores how we can change an object's shape without changing its area. You didn't add to or remove any part of the card. You simply altered its layout from a rectangle to a loop, making it fit around your body.



Sea of Blessings



"Divine bestowals are like the sea, and we are the fishes of that sea." –'Abdu'l-Bahá

You check your gear, get the signal from your diving buddy, and take a leap—*splash!* You jump into a whole new world—the amazing ecosystem of a coral reef. An incredible diversity of life encircles you. Colorful fish, coral, turtles, and other creatures fill you with wonder.

This spectacular scene thrives in the mysterious ocean. But if you don't dive in, you could float by without ever experiencing it.

Likewise, God's blessings surround us. Our families, friends, homes, and schools offer much to be thankful for. We have the ability to explore life's mysteries. But when we're busy or stressed, it's easy to overlook the bounties we enjoy.

With a grateful attitude, you can swim in a joyful sea—and your positive outlook will make waves with everyone around you.

These divers are exploring the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. Find the tools and creatures that help us appreciate life's blessings.



**2 Contented
Cameras**



**4 Devoted
Dolphins**



**Loving
Light**



**9 Mindful
Masks**



**5 Sincere
Snorkels**



**7 Tranquil
Tanks**



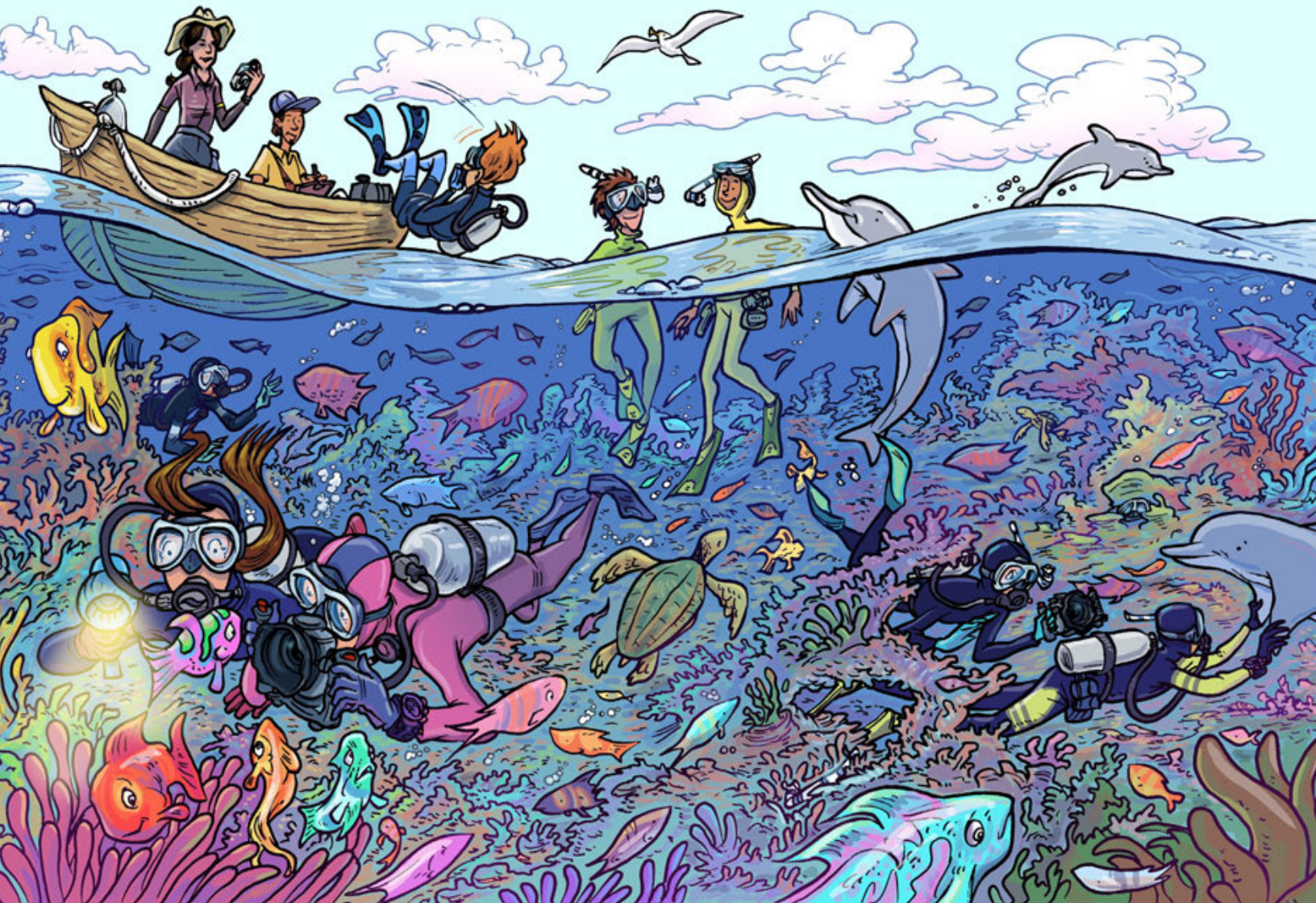
**2 Trusting
Turtles**



**2 Watches
of Wonder**



**Wise Weight
Belt**



EXPLORE AND PROTECT THE EARTH AND ITS CREATURES

"All the members of this endless universe are linked one to another." —Bahá'í Writings

WE
ARE
ONE

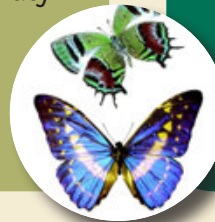
EARTH-SAVING TIP

Give a gift that grows.

Potted plants, flowers, and shrubs make earth-friendly gifts to cheer the heart. They even give back by producing the vital oxygen we all need!

WOW, REALLY?

It's a buggy world! An estimated **10 quintillion** insects inhabit Earth—that's 10 with 18 more zeros!



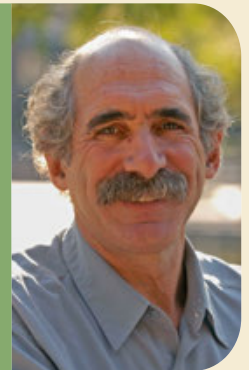
OUR CONNECTIONS

What do we depend on to live, and it's all around us? Air! We need air to survive, yet we often take it for granted. Air pollution can

harm your sense of smell. It can also lead to health problems such as asthma attacks and lung cancer. Pollutants in the air fall back to Earth, where they may hurt water, soil, plants, and animals. When we save energy, we can help reduce pollution. For all life on Earth, clean air makes good scents!

PROTECTING OUR PLANET

Dr. Michael Oppenheimer, a top climate change scientist, is part of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007. On 2012's Hurricane Sandy, he says, "Global warming will . . . probably cause such storms to become more intense until we reduce the emissions of the greenhouse gases . . ."



WHERE IN THE WORLD?



Thousands of Buddhist temples and monuments were built in what was once the ancient city of Bagan, mostly in the 1000s–1200s C.E. Over 2,200 stone structures still fascinate scholars and tourists. *Unscramble the letters to find the location:*

M N A R A M Y

AMAZING ANIMALS



These are some of the world's largest monkeys. Many live on the African savannas in troops that can have over 100 members. Babies cling to their moms' bellies, then later ride on their backs. *Fill in the blanks to find their name:*

A B O S

RADIANT STARS

Getting to know kids who shine

Connect with kids around the world!
How are they like you? How are they different? Each of us has a unique story to tell. What's yours?

Yohanna G.

Age: **10**

I live in: **China**

I want to be:

An actress or a zookeeper

Something I like about me that makes me unique:

I can speak English, German, and Chinese.

Hobbies or sports:

Playing the violin and piano

Favorite Bahá'í activities:

Children's classes, because we can draw, sing, [and] play games.



Place I'd love to visit:

Africa

I like to help people by:

Translat[ing] for people

Three blessings I'm grateful for:

I get to know about the Bahá'í Faith, because it makes me happy to be a Bahá'í. I am also grateful about my family who adopted me, and the best grandpa I can ask for.

My perfect day would be:

[To] be on pilgrimage in Haifa [Israel] with my Bahá'í friend Naseem Koen, [whom] I met in Hong Kong

A teacher who made a big difference in my life:

My kindergarten teacher, Mr. Taylor... He was always kind to me, and he always said good things.

Lua S.

Age: **11**

I live in: **Georgia, U.S.**

I want to be:

Ballerina, fashion designer, vet, and artist

Best quality or virtue:

I make friends with all sorts of people.

Hobbies or sports:

Ballet, karate, swimming

Favorite Bahá'í activities:

Children's class

Favorite animal or pet:

A hamster... but I've always wanted a cat or a dog.

Three blessings I'm grateful for:

My friends and relatives, because they help me and are always full of good ideas. I'm also very happy I have enough to live on and also have enough to give away.

My perfect day would be:

Doing things with animals and friends, doing ballet, eating at my favorite restaurant, going to the beach, and meditating

A teacher who made a big difference in my life:

My current teacher in fifth grade has helped me learn in a fun way and is very encouraging, gives me good tips, and states his directions and expectations clearly.



Simon G.

Age: **10**

I live in: **Texas, U.S.**

I want to be: **Bone doctor (orthopedic surgeon)**

Best quality or virtue:

Creativity

Something I like about me that makes me unique:

I am a peacemaker.

Favorite Bahá'í activities:

Singing Bahá'í songs

Place I'd love to visit:

My grandparents' house in Wisconsin

I like to help people by:

Helping my little sisters with their schoolwork

Three blessings I'm grateful for:

My mom because she teaches me how to act, she helps me in school, and she makes me food... my dad because he provides me with what I need... [and] my brothers and sisters because they play with me.

A surprising act of kindness:

I made a birthday banner for my mom.

My perfect day would be:

Doing archery with my family

A teacher who made a big difference in my life:

My first Bahá'í teacher, Kathy Wurzer. She taught me about being a Bahá'í and made me feel special.



Taraz T.

Age: **11**

I live in: **Illinois, U.S.**

I want to be:
Musician, doctor, or professional sport player

Best quality or virtue:
Cleanliness, caring

Something I like about me that makes me unique:
I am both-handed. (Left hand is writing hand and right hand is strong hand.)

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Conferences, Saturday school, junior youth [group]

Hobbies or sports:
Basketball, karate, music

Places I'd love to visit:
Japan, Egypt, New York

A surprising act of kindness:
When I switched schools, people were very welcoming to me and made me feel comfortable ...

I like to help people by:
Talking to them ...

Three blessings I'm grateful for:
Having wonderful and caring parents ... living in a safe, clean, and friendly neighborhood; having lots of friends who stand up for me ...

A teacher who made a big difference in my life:
My fifth grade ... teacher, who was a strict, hard-grading, and challenging teacher, [and] gave me a huge leap in social studies



"God has crowned you with honor and in your hearts has He set a radiant star; verily the light thereof shall brighten the whole world!" — 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Noor H.

Age: **10**

I live in: **Arizona, U.S.**

I want to be:
A doctor or photographer

Best quality or virtue:
Honesty and kindness

Something I like about me that makes me unique:
I love to draw different, imaginary faces.

Hobbies or sports:
Drawing, cooking, martial arts, taking pictures

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Children's classes and service projects

Place I'd love to visit:
I want to travel around the whole world!

Three blessings I'm grateful for:
To have parents, because I can't imagine life without them; to



go to a great school, because I want to be a smart, successful student in life; and to be a Bahá'í.

A surprising act of kindness:
My grandma and her sister surprised my mom and [me] with tickets to Germany to meet my great-grandmother from Iran and other family

A teacher who made a big difference in my life:
Mrs. Green ... because she was a kind-hearted and helpful person. She always taught with excitement and was loving to everyone.

Leonard M.

Age: **8**

I live in: **Germany**

I want to be:
Inventor

Best quality or virtue:
Diligence and discipline

Something I like about me that makes me unique:
I learn new things so fast.

Hobbies or sports:
Fencing, piano, reading

A surprising act of kindness:
My friend once gave me two very rare Star Wars cards, just like that.

What I appreciate most about my family:
We are a big family ... I have two sisters and one brother, but we also have family in Spain, Wales, England, the Arab Emirates, the USA ...

My perfect day would be:
I could sleep in, we'd go swimming, and then camp in the mountains at night.

A teacher who made a big difference in my life:
My P.E. teacher, Mr. Bohrmann, because he is very funny and makes jokes, but at the same time he knows how to keep the loud students under control. Everybody is respectful of him. I like how he does that.



How to be a Radiant Star:

1. If you're age 7–14, write us at brilliant@usbnc.org or Brilliant Star, 1233 Central Street, Evanston, IL 60201. Include your name, age, birth date, mailing and e-mail addresses, and phone number. Mention "Radiant Star" in the e-mail subject line or in your message.
2. When it's your turn to shine, we'll send you questions and a form for you and your parents to sign.
3. Answer the questions and send them to us with the signed form, along with at least two good-quality, close-up photographs of your smiling face. Photos should be in sharp focus and show your eyes clearly. Please don't send color copies, low-resolution digital images, or copyright-protected images (like school portraits).



OUTSIDE FURY'S LAIR, CANNONS AIM AT LUNA ...

I MUST DISABLE THAT SATELLITE!

LUNA!

THE CANNONS!
I NEED MY
ELECTRICITY!

HAVE TO ...
SAVE LUNA ...
ZAP CANNONS!

ZZZZRT!

LIGHTNING!

ARE YOU
OK?

NO HEARTBEAT!

MY RESCUE TOOL IS FRIED
FROM FURY'S WEAPON!*

O GOD,
HELP!

MEANWHILE, INSIDE ...

SUPERBOY BLEW UP
THREE CANNONS!

HE WILL PAY!
GET HIM!

THE SATELLITE IS
DAMAGED, BUT
NOT DESTROYED.

STABILIZE THE
SATELLITE! AIM
FOR CITY #1!



GO QUIETLY. HELP LIGHTNING AND LUNA.

BUT ...

GO! I'LL STOP FURY. DESTROY THIS LAIR IF YOU CAN.



THERE THEY ARE!

LEAVE THEM.

WHY? FURY TOLD US —
DO AS I SAY!



LUNA! WHAT'S WRONG WITH LIGHTNING?

I CAN'T FEEL HIS HEARTBEAT!

HOW CAN I HELP?

GO TO THE CANNON!



PULSAR, CAN YOU HEAR ME?

I'M FIRING IN 60 SECONDS. GET OUT OF THERE!



THE OTHER UPLIFTER IS SHOOTING DOWN THE PALACE!

IT'LL COLLAPSE! RUN!



I DON'T NEED THEM. I DON'T NEED YOU. I'LL FIRE THE SATELLITE MYSELF!

I WON'T LET YOU.

YOU'RE BLIND. WHAT CAN YOU DO?

FURY, I HAVE MANY POWERS. REMEMBER?



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?



MY EQUIPMENT!

YOU THINK YOUR ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSES CAN STOP ME?



COME ON, WAVE POWER. LET'S DO THIS. I HAVE TO SAVE MY BROTHER!

WHERE WILL FURY'S DESTRUCTION END?

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S GREAT VOYAGE: LAST GLIMPSE



For nearly eight months, 'Abdu'l-Bahá journeyed across North America, sharing the Bahá'í teachings of peace and unity. He met with thousands of people, sometimes giving four talks a day. He often traveled simply, got little rest, and gave generously to the poor.

Now the time had come to say good-bye. He spent his last weeks in New York City, and people eagerly gathered to see him.

On November 23, 1912, a banquet was held at the Great Northern Hotel. Over 300 guests met in a beautifully decorated ballroom, the tables adorned with flowers,

sweets, and sparkling crystal glasses. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá appeared, everyone rose and called out, "Alláh-u-Abhá!" ("God the All-Glorious!").

'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to the group about the oneness of humanity and other Bahá'í teachings. He also walked among the guests and perfumed each person with attar of rose. A Bahá'í named Mahmúd-i-Zarqání wrote, "It was a banquet for a king and a source of awakening to every person of insight."

Sadly, however, the owner of the hotel refused to allow African Americans to attend, in spite of



'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke at a banquet in New York City in 1912. He said, "This meeting ... serves the oneness of the world of humanity and promotes international peace."

the Bahá'ís' efforts to change his mind. Because of strong prejudice between blacks and whites, the owner said that if African Americans were seen entering his hotel, his business would be ruined.

The next day, a special gathering was held at a private home, and white Bahá'ís served their black friends.

'Abdu'l-Bahá praised them, saying, "Behold what an influence and effect the words of Bahá'u'lláh have had upon the hearts, that hating and shunning have been forgotten and that prejudices have been obliterated to such an extent that you arose to serve one another with great sincerity."

That afternoon, a group of children visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He showered them with kindness, giving them

candy and flowers and perfuming them with attar of rose. He said, "I hope that you will be educated as you ought to be and that each of you will become the pride of your family ... Truly, the hearts of the children are very pure."

Many Bahá'ís longed to give gifts to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He accepted the gifts, then returned them and asked that they be sold and the money used to help build the Bahá'í House of Worship that now stands near Chicago, Illinois.

On December 5, 1912, friends crowded onto the S.S. Celtic for their last glimpse of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Mahmúd wrote, "The sobs and lamentations of both the young and the old could be heard from afar."

'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to them with love and compassion. He encouraged them to see the human race as one family, end prejudice of all kinds, and care for those in need. He said, "The earth is one native land, one home; and all mankind are the children of one Father ... It is the wish of our heavenly Father that every heart should rejoice and be filled with happiness, that we should live together in felicity and joy ... Manifest gratitude and thankfulness to God, and the best way to thank God is to love one another."





Stuart & Gabriella: Rivers Rock

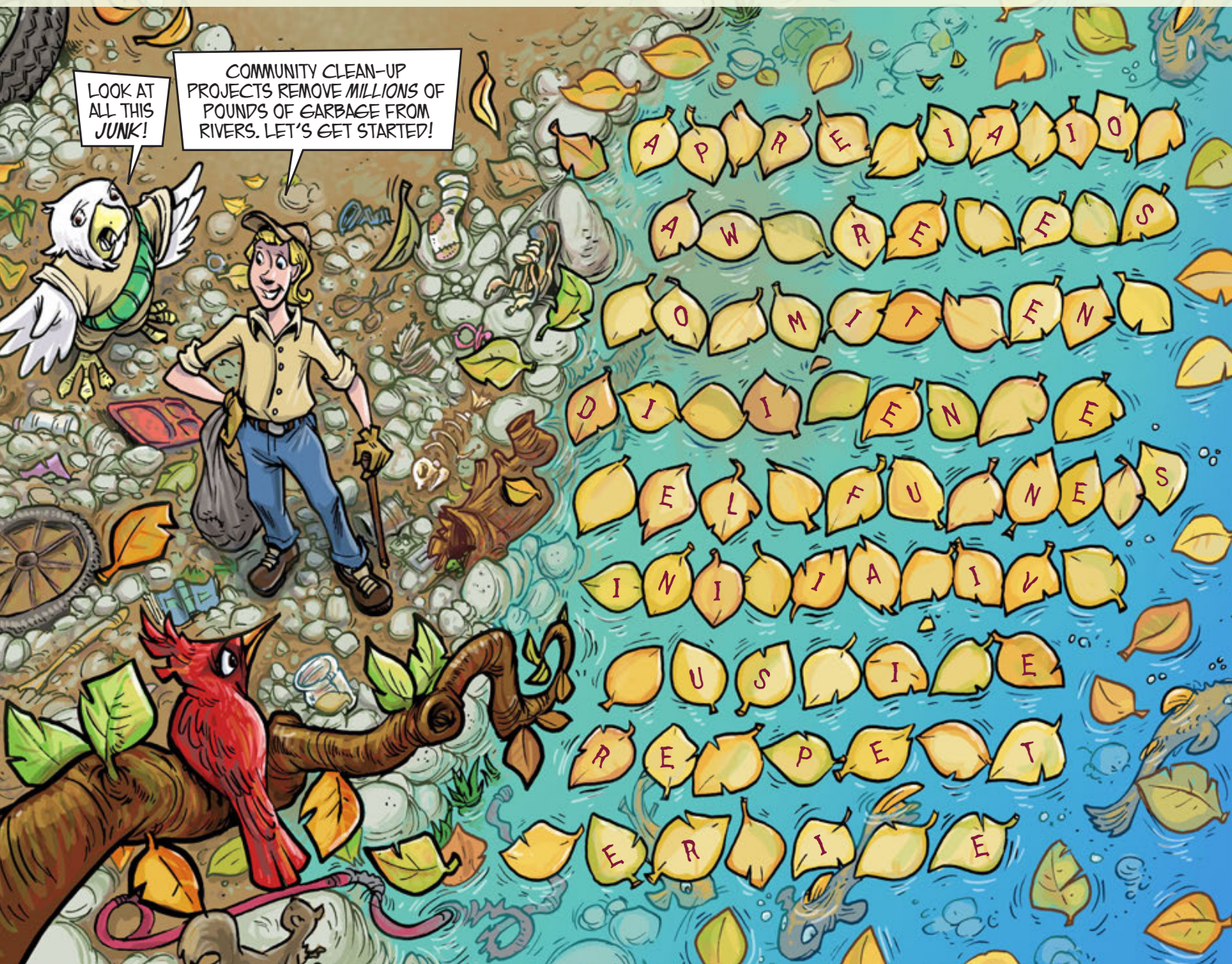
Rivers are amazing places full of life and activities. What's your favorite? Boating and swimming? Hiking? But rivers aren't just for fun. They've been called the blood vessels of the planet. They move life-giving water across the land to the oceans.

Along with providing food, transportation, and electricity, rivers are a source of fresh water. It's estimated that we each need 5-13 gallons (20-50 L) of clean water

every day for drinking, cooking, and washing. Sadly, over one billion people in the world don't have enough. Part of the problem is that water is often wasted or polluted.

If you live near a river or stream, you and your friends can show your gratitude for these natural wonders by lending a hand. By helping to clean up pollution, you could strengthen fresh water sources for miles—maybe even hundreds of miles!

**What strengths can you use to take care of our amazing rivers?
Fill in the blank leaves to discover some ideas.**



Giving Thanks

Time to open presents! You tear off the ribbon, rip open the paper, and find . . . more socks with goofy patterns. What do you do?

It can be hard to hide your disappointment if you receive a gift you're not excited about. What can help is deciding to be grateful *before* you open a gift. No matter what's inside, someone put time and effort into it. If you make up your mind to thank the giver for being thoughtful, your thanks will be sincere.

Then, show thankfulness with a handwritten note. Whether the gift-giver attended your party or sent a present, a thank-you note conveys kindness and respect. Even if you'd been hoping for new art supplies, you could tell Grandma that her socks will keep you warm on winter hikes.

When you let people know you appreciate them—and their generosity—you give the gift of gratitude. That's the best kind of gift—and it never goes out of style.

Help Sophie and Stella find 10 pairs of birthday presents with wrapping that matches.



PETS ON PARADE

“Show forth the utmost loving-kindness to every living creature.” —‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Can we *pleeease* take this puppy home?" It can be hard to resist the sweet face of an animal that needs a family. From golden retrievers to goldfish, a pet brings fun to our lives. Studies show that pets can help us relieve stress, feel happier, and even make new friends. They're also great to play with, watch, and talk to.

But taking care of a pet is a big commitment. Animals rely on you for food, water, shelter, exercise, and

health care. Those things take time and effort—every day. Supplies and trips to the vet also cost money. It's important to make sure you and your family are fully prepared to provide a pet with a safe and loving home.

So before you let those puppy-dog eyes work their magic on you, think carefully about being a pet owner. Are you ready for it? If so, welcoming a pet into your family can be the cat's meow.

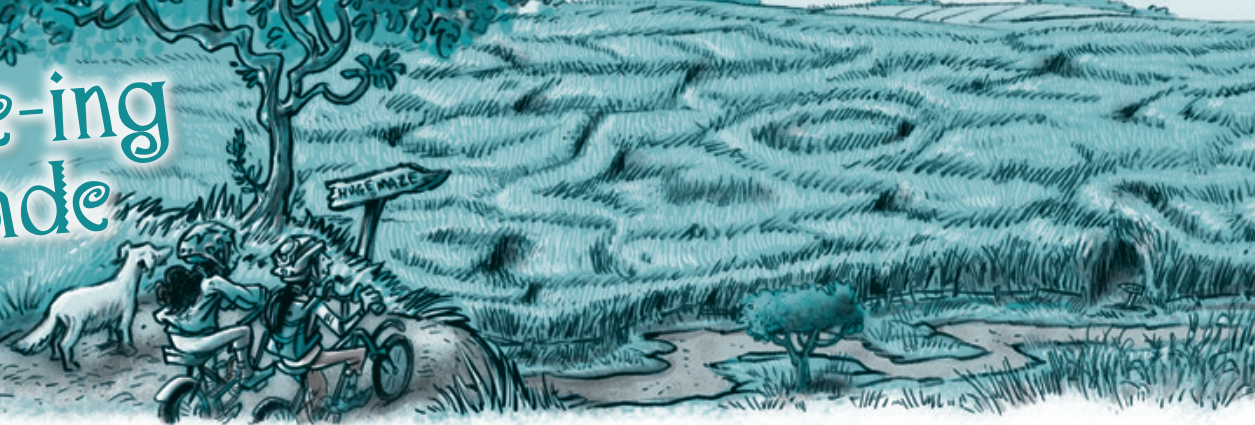
Find the words to complete these tips about being a wise pet owner.

1. Think about what kind of animal will fit with your family and your _____
Make sure no one has an allergy.
2. Figure out if your home has the proper _____ for an animal to live, sleep, and play.
3. List _____ you'll need for feeding, grooming, and housing your pet. Add up the costs.
4. Who will care for your pet when you're on _____?
Ask friends, family, or other caregivers if they can help.
5. Consult with your family about how to _____ pet care responsibilities.
6. Look for a pet from an animal rescue program or _____
7. Talk to animal owners to get a good idea of what to _____



A-maize-ing Escapade

By Donna Price



Jenna and I pedaled down the long dirt road to our farms. We passed the signs advertising the HUGE CORN MAZE—AS BIG AS 35 FOOTBALL FIELDS! The maze stretched behind the farmhouses.

"I wish we had rocket club instead of Ag Club after school," I said.

"I know. How are we going to get to Mars if we can't even get off of the farm?"

"It's so much work," I grumbled. "And we never get to sleep in. I'm tired of feeding pigs and chickens before school."

"And mucking horse stalls. Ugh!" Jenna said. She slowed down at her house.

"We're supposed to go to my house," I reminded her.

"Just let me get Rover." We rode around back to let out Jenna's golden retriever, Mars Rover.

"Hey, let's ride through the maze to your house," Jenna suggested.

"I don't have my map and compass. Can you get yours?" "Huh? Who needs those?"

"I'm not allowed in the maze without them," I said, hoping she wouldn't think that was stupid. "I would so get in trouble if my parents found out."

"How would they find out? Besides, when have we ever gotten lost around here?"

"We haven't—yet. But I sure wouldn't want to," I said.

"You wanna be an astronaut, right? Be brave. Come on! It'll be fun."

"Well . . . I guess it would be okay, as long as we're out of the maze by dark."

"Yes!" She jumped on her bike, calling, "Rover!"

Rover took off toward a maze entrance. We raced through the maze behind him, jockeying to be the first

at corners, slapping the cornstalks on the turns. It was a blast! Then Jenna said, "Hold up. I'm out of breath." She whistled for Rover, who came back, panting happily.

I looked around, suddenly concerned. I'd lost track somehow. "Umm, Jenna . . . where to now?"

"Next right—I think." She laughed, sounding carefree.

"Oh, don't even joke!" I didn't remember the last few twists and turns.

"I was following Rover," said Jenna.

"He doesn't get lost . . . uh, usually."

We rode on slowly, but the route now seemed unfamiliar. "We didn't pass the red scarecrow," I realized. "We must have taken a wrong turn."

"Okay, maybe we're a little lost,"

Jenna admitted. I felt a knot in my stomach. I leaned down and peered through the stalks, but they were planted in thick, ragged rows so you couldn't see far.

"The sun will help!" Jenna suggested. But the sun had sunk below the level of the corn.

"The sky seems a little brighter over there," I said. "And the sun sets behind the field. So we should go the other way."

We took a few more turns, Rover padding beside us, but I was losing hope. It got too dark to ride our bikes. "We're supposed to stay in one place if we're lost," I said.

"But no one knows we're lost!" Jenna objected.

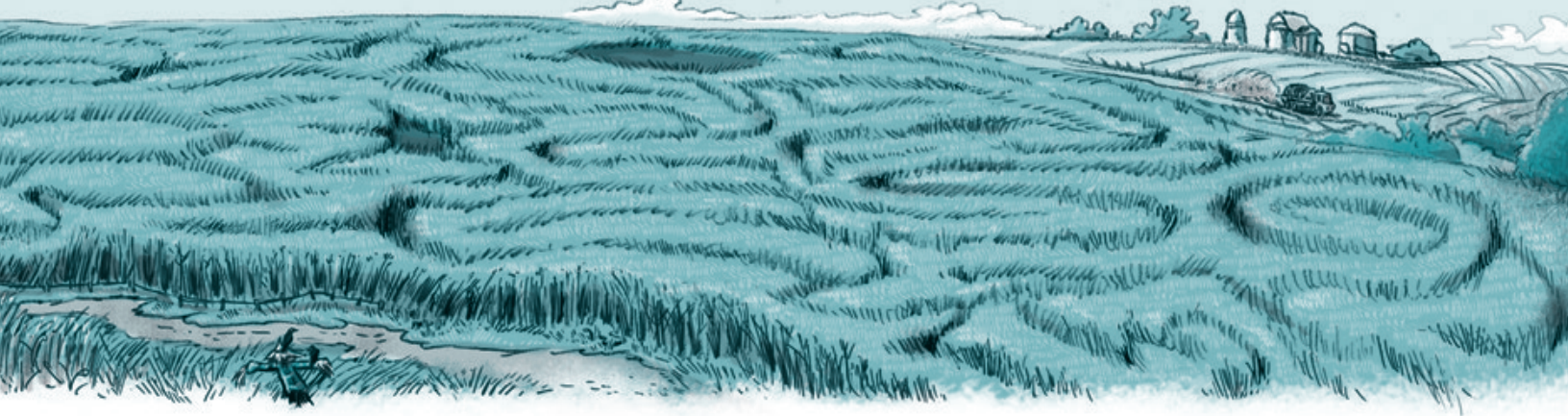
"They'll figure it out soon." We sat down in a circular clearing with a giant pumpkin in the middle. I wondered which of the 35 pumpkins it was.

"Look at the bright side," Jenna said. "Maybe we'll get cell phones after this."

"Or maybe we'll get grounded for a year."

Suddenly, there was a rustling nearby. I jumped. Rover sniffed the air. "Think that was a snake?" Jenna asked.





"Or a really big rat," I answered nervously.

"Relax," Jenna said. "Rover will get it."

We looked at Rover, and he whined.

"I *really* don't want to spend the night out here," I whispered.

We heard another rumbling noise. "That time, it was just my stomach," I said. "I feel like I haven't eaten in days."

Jenna opened her backpack, and the three of us shared the last of her water. She rummaged around and found some crushed crackers and melted gummy candy. As it got colder, we huddled together with Rover on our laps. My jacket couldn't keep us all warm. I thought about my parents and how warm and cozy Jenna and I would be if we had gone home instead.

"Abby, I'm sorry I got you into this," Jenna said.

"We both decided to come out here."

"But I pushed you. Not my best idea."

"Yeah," I said. I looked up at the night sky. "Still, the stars are beautiful. Check out the Milky Way."

"My cousin in Chicago has never seen the Milky Way," she said.

"Seriously?"

"Too much city light. And in New York, they can barely even see the stars," Jenna added.

"You know, we have it pretty good," I admitted.

"I know. The fresh air, working with the family, living near you." She laughed, "Even if it's a farm, and not a space station."

"Yeah, but my parents said they'll help me go to college to become an astronaut." I gazed up into space, looking for Mars. "We shouldn't complain so much," I decided.

"Yeah, my family's pretty cool, too," Jenna said.

"Look!" I pointed. "That bright star. I can see it from

our front porch at night."

"So if we follow the star . . ."

"It's like the prayer," I realized. "O God, guide me!"

"Yes! The brilliant star!"

Jenna jumped up and switched on her bicycle light. Excited now, we used the system of always choosing the path in the star's direction. When we had to backtrack, we threw broken cornstalks down across the dead-end paths. Slowly, we worked our way toward the star.

The path became more familiar. "Hey," I said, excited, "I know the way from here!"

We pushed our bikes, running faster than ever to the exit, with Rover trailing behind us.

"I hear a horn!" Jenna said.

After a few more minutes, we heard wonderful voices.

"Mom?" we both called out. "Dad?"

"Jenna? Abby?" We could see

headlights now. We raced toward

the entrance, Rover taking the lead.

The lights from the trucks and the sheriff's car were blinding. But then our parents were hugging us while Rover barked with crazy happiness.

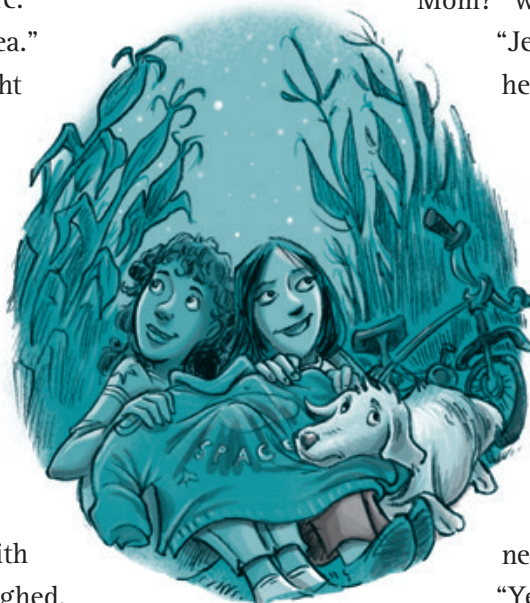
"Are you okay? What happened?" my mom gasped.

"We were going through the maze from Jenna's house. We didn't think we needed a map, but we did. I'm so sorry!"

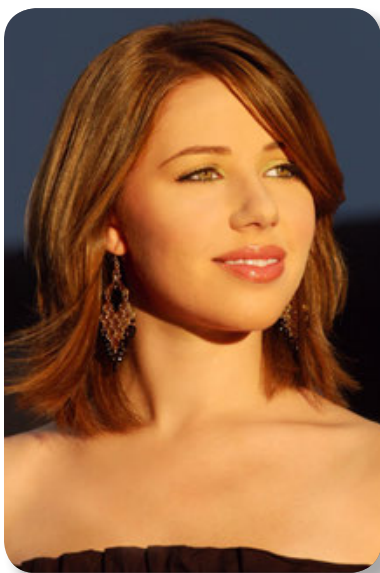
"Yeah, I'm sorry too," Jenna added.

"We're glad you're safe," my dad said. His face was stern, yet kind. "But we're going to have a long talk about this."

Thankful—for seeing my family, for having friends, for the stars—I found myself just saying, "Okay. And thank you. I really mean it—thank you for everything."



Rachael Price



Imagine touring Europe with an international choir, singing solos in France and Spain—all at age 12! Rachael Price did just that—with the Voices of Bahá, a Bahá'í choir directed by her dad, Tom Price. Today, she's a much-acclaimed singer who tours widely.

Rachael grew up in Tennessee, U.S. She recorded her first CD in high school. She worked as a jazz vocalist while attending the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. Rachael and three classmates also started the soulful pop-rock band, Lake Street Dive. Rachael has performed around the world and made several CDs. She says, "My goal is to be playing shows . . . and to make records as long as I can." She lives in New York City, where she likes to do yoga, dance, and go out to hear live music.

Q: What's your favorite childhood memory?

A: Dancing around the kitchen with my sisters or singing in my house with my dad and my sisters.

Q: How did you decide you wanted to be a singer?

A: I've been singing since I was really little . . . I decided that I was not going to go to a college that offered anything but music classes . . . It's all I did. The possibility of it was always a very encouraged thing in my house . . . I just decided . . . this is what I want to do, so this is what I should study, all the way.

Q: You performed with the Voices of Bahá and toured internationally as a kid. What impact did those experiences have on you?

A: I definitely got a taste for life on the road . . . because of those trips, I've always loved that and wanted that to be my life . . . I also definitely developed a taste for the rest of the world and all the different types of people . . . What kinds of things people respond to musically I think was a huge impact on how I think about music and how I perform . . . It doesn't matter if you're in Tennessee singing Gospel or in Hungary doing Gospel . . . The spiritual basis of it and the depth of it comes across no matter what, in any language.

Q: How did you decide to focus on jazz music?

A: I started listening to Ella Fitzgerald [at about five] . . . I don't think a lot of people my age were listening to it . . . there was something about that . . . I liked.



Above: At age 12, Rachael traveled to Spain and France with the mostly adult choir, Voices of Bahá. **Below:** The cover for Rachael's first CD

Q: What inspired you to record the CD *Dedicated to You* in high school?

A: I think about making albums as like a snapshot, taking a photo of where you are at that moment in time. So I wasn't the most accomplished jazz singer at 17, but . . . I wanted to take a photo of what I sounded like then.



Q: What was most challenging about navigating the music business at 17?

A: I just think being who you are, figuring out what it is that you like, the type of show that *you* want to put on, the way you want to present yourself, versus all the ways people are saying works better, makes more money . . . is more popular. That's the hardest part, especially when you're young . . . Choosing . . . what it is that actually works for you.

Q: What do you like best about performing?

A: I like *everything* about performing . . . I like the feeling before I get onstage. I love being onstage. I love being in front of people. I'm way more comfortable on a stage than talking to them in a group of people . . . I just love opening up my mouth and communicating with a melody more than anything else.

Q: What's been your favorite musical experience so far?

A: There's definitely a certain type of audience that's extremely special, and they're sort of rare and hard to find . . . I've performed in Panama and Brazil, and I don't think I've experienced a more excited audience . . . They're so focused on what you're giving them that it's like you give them a quarter, and they're throwing twenties back at you . . . That's how it feels. You give them one note, and they give you all of their love back. They're just so appreciative.

Q: How does the Bahá'í Faith influence your work?

A: We believe that music is praise, and that is service, and service is prayer, and so that's how I think about it . . . I think music is an extremely spiritual art form. I do it for praise and gratitude. That's what the Faith has taught me about music.

Q: What's your advice for kids who want to pursue a career in music?

A: The age-old "Practice!" is very helpful. You have to do it a lot and in a lot of different ways, and you have to try a lot of different things. I would say, try anything.



Top: Lake Street Dive tours around the U.S. Left to right are Rachael, Mike Calabrese (drums), Mike Olson (trumpet, guitar), and Bridget Kearney (bass). **Bottom:** Rachael performed in Oregon, U.S., in 2012.

Q: What do you say when someone asks, What is the Bahá'í Faith?

A: [It depends] on who I'm speaking to, but how I always think about it is the Faith is really *cool* . . . What is *not* awesome about it? . . . When people ask me, I just think how cool it is . . . and I want to tell them about it.

Q: If you had one wish for *Brilliant Star* readers, what would it be?

A: I wish that they do everything that they want to do and they do it in the way they want to do it.



From the time He was born in Tíhrán, Persia (now Iran), in 1817, Mírzá Husayn-'Alí was unique. "This child never cries," said His mother. "He is so unlike other babies . . ." In childhood, all were impressed with His wisdom, kindness, and nobility. His father said, "He is as a flame of fire." When He grew up, Mírzá Husayn-'Alí announced that He was a Messenger of God sent to unite the world in peace. He became known as Bahá'u'lláh ("Glory of God" in Arabic). His teachings continue to inspire Bahá'ís around the globe, who celebrate His birth on November 12 each year.

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Every 19 days, Bahá'í Feast is held on or near the first day of the Bahá'í month.

4

BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF QUDRAT (POWER)

Daylight Saving Time ends (U.S., Canada)*

National American Indian Heritage Month (U.S.)
The U.S. is home to 566 tribes.



5



National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo)
Write on! Join over 50,000 kids and youth.

1



Day of the Dead (Mexico, Nov. 1–2)
Families honor departed loved ones.

2

3

My Goal for the Month:

6

Election Day (U.S.)

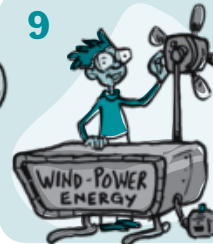
7

True or False? Though a hippo can weigh 3.5 tons (3,200 kg), it can still outrun a human!



8

9



10

World Science Day for Peace and Development (UNESCO)
How do you protect Earth's resources?

11

Veterans Day (U.S.)

Diwali (Hinduism, Nov. 11–15)

12

BIRTH OF BAHÁ'Ú'LLÁH

13



Did you know? A study found that people who sing in choirs are happier.

14

15

Al-Hijra (Muslim New Year)

16

International Day for Tolerance (UN)
Speak up for human rights.

17



18

How many ways can you say thank you?

GRACIAS!

19

SHUKRIYA!



20

Universal Children's Day (UN)
All kids have the right to health, education, and safety.

21



22

Thanksgiving (U.S.)
Count your blessings with family and friends.

23

BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF QAWL (SPEECH)

24

25

MERCI!

XIÈ XIÈ!

SHUKRAN!

26

DAY OF THE COVENANT

A day to celebrate 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh

27



28

ASCENSION OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

Bahá'ís observe his passing with prayers at 1:00 a.m.

29

FERVENT MEANS . . .

30

Gosmo's Word Challenge

- a) An Arctic animal with a shaggy coat
- b) To create a bubbly juice
- c) Showing a passionate intensity of feeling



Family gatherings are a fun time for games, yummy food, laughter, and traditions. But conflicts can still pop up. If you find yourself struggling with a sibling or clashing with a cousin, spend a few minutes alone to cool off. Take deep breaths. Then listen calmly to what the other person has to say, and ask him or her to listen to you. Look for a fair compromise. Maybe you can share the last piece of pie or take turns choosing a game to play. Remember what you appreciate about your family—and enjoy making great new memories.



Sunday

Monday

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Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Every 19 days, Bahá'í Feast is held on or near the first day of the Bahá'í month.



My Goal for the Month:



2

National Handwashing Awareness Week (U.S., Dec. 2–8)
Washing your hands prevents illness.

3



4

5

International Volunteer Day (UN)
How can you use your talents to help others?

6

From Cosmo's Bookshelf

Cool Thank-You Notes, by U.R. Welcome
Kindness Connections, by Bea Afriend
HOMEMADE GIFTS, BY SIR PRIZE
Thanks in Any Language, by Merci Beaucoup

7

8

Bodhi Day (Buddhism)
Honors Buddha's enlightenment*

9

Hanukkah Begins (Judaism, Dec. 9–16)
Festival of lights celebrates an ancient miracle.

10

Human Rights Day (UN)
Freedom of religion is an essential human right.

11

International Mountain Day (UN)
True or False? Mount Everest is the highest point on Earth.

12
BAHÁ'Í
MONTH OF
MASÁ'IL
(QUESTIONS)

13

Did you know?
Earth's smallest frog is just .3 inches (7.7 mm) long!

14



15

16

Las Posadas (Mexico, Dec. 16–24)
People re-enact the journey of Jesus's parents to His birthplace.

17



18

INVALUABLE
MEANS...

Cosmo's Word Challenge

- a) Marine creature with a hinged shell
- b) Extremely useful; priceless
- c) Unable to be seen; hidden

19

20



21

Winter Solstice
Winter begins in the Northern Hemisphere.

22



23



24

Christmas Eve

25

Christmas Day Celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ

26

Kwanzaa (Dec. 26–Jan. 1)
African celebration of family, community, and culture

27

HOW CAN YOU SEE IN A SNOWSTORM?



28

I HAVE TERRIFIC ICE-SIGHT!



29

31
BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF
SHARAF
(HONOR)

*8—Some Buddhists celebrate this event on a different date.
ANSWERS: Elephant—True; 11—True; 18—b

SHINING LAMP

A Bahá'í who served humanity with radiance

Louise Waite (1867–1939):

Song Bird of the New Kingdom By Gail Radley



"**S**hall I take the name 'Bahá'í' off of the book . . . ?" Louise Waite asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Bahá'í leader, during his 1912 visit to North America. The book was the songbook she had written. Some Bahá'ís thought the new name and other words she'd used might seem too strange. Louise wanted to teach people the new religion—not frighten them.

Don't change it, 'Abdu'l-Bahá told her. He explained that her songs would help the Bahá'ís understand that they were part of a wonderful new religion. It was the "Great Day of God, long looked for," as one of her songs says. By then, Louise had been a Bahá'í for about 11 years. She had already visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in what is now Israel, selling her precious piano to make the trip. Born in 1867 in Wisconsin, Louise was living in Chicago when she learned of the Faith. She became a Bahá'í in 1901.

Spiritual Food

Though she had never studied music, she devoted herself to creating music and poetry to praise God. She sang as she composed, and others wrote the notes. Sometimes she signed her work with the name 'Abdu'l-Bahá had given her—"Shahnáz," translated for her as "Melody."

When she began to send her Bahá'í verses to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he replied that his "heart was attracted" and that he prayed for her to write even "more beautiful compositions" so that she might "be the first to praise" Bahá'u'lláh and speak "His Name among the women . . ." 'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged Louise in her work. Over the years, he sent her 41 messages!

"O thou Shahnáz," 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote, "play and sing out the holy words of God with wondrous tones . . . that the listener may be freed from chains of care and sorrow, and his soul may leap for joy . . ." He also told her, "Music, sung or played, is spiritual food for soul and heart."



Louise Waite at the Bahá'í Temple in the U.S. when it was under construction in Illinois. Her music is still sung there today.

Joyful Service

Although thankfulness and joy shine through Louise's work, her life wasn't without sorrow. Her first husband passed away, and her only child, Violet, died young. But as Louise wrote, "The Bahá'í Message is essentially a Message of Joy." She wanted to share that joy through her music. Louise wrote articles and poems for magazines and newspapers, too.

Louise also cofounded North America's first Bahá'í choir, the Vahid Choral Society. In those days, many Bahá'í meetings included singing of her "Benediction." It is still sung today. Peace societies adopted other songs she had written, and one was used in the Chicago schools. Some were translated for the Bahá'ís in Persia (now Iran), at 'Abdu'l-Bahá's request. In time, they were sung all over the world.

Louise found an ideal partner in her second husband, Edgar Waite. Realizing his wife's gifts, he took over many daily chores, freeing her to create. In 1915, they moved to California, where Louise continued to write, compose, and serve the Faith.

Shahnáz Louise Waite passed from this world in 1939, leaving behind much creative work. She was, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "the song bird of the New Kingdom."

_____ 's Gratitude Board

THE SULTAN'S FRUIT

Adapted from a story told by 'Abdu'l-Bahá



Top five people or things I'm most thankful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Most fun I've ever had was when:

My favorite book or characters:

I appreciate my talents in:

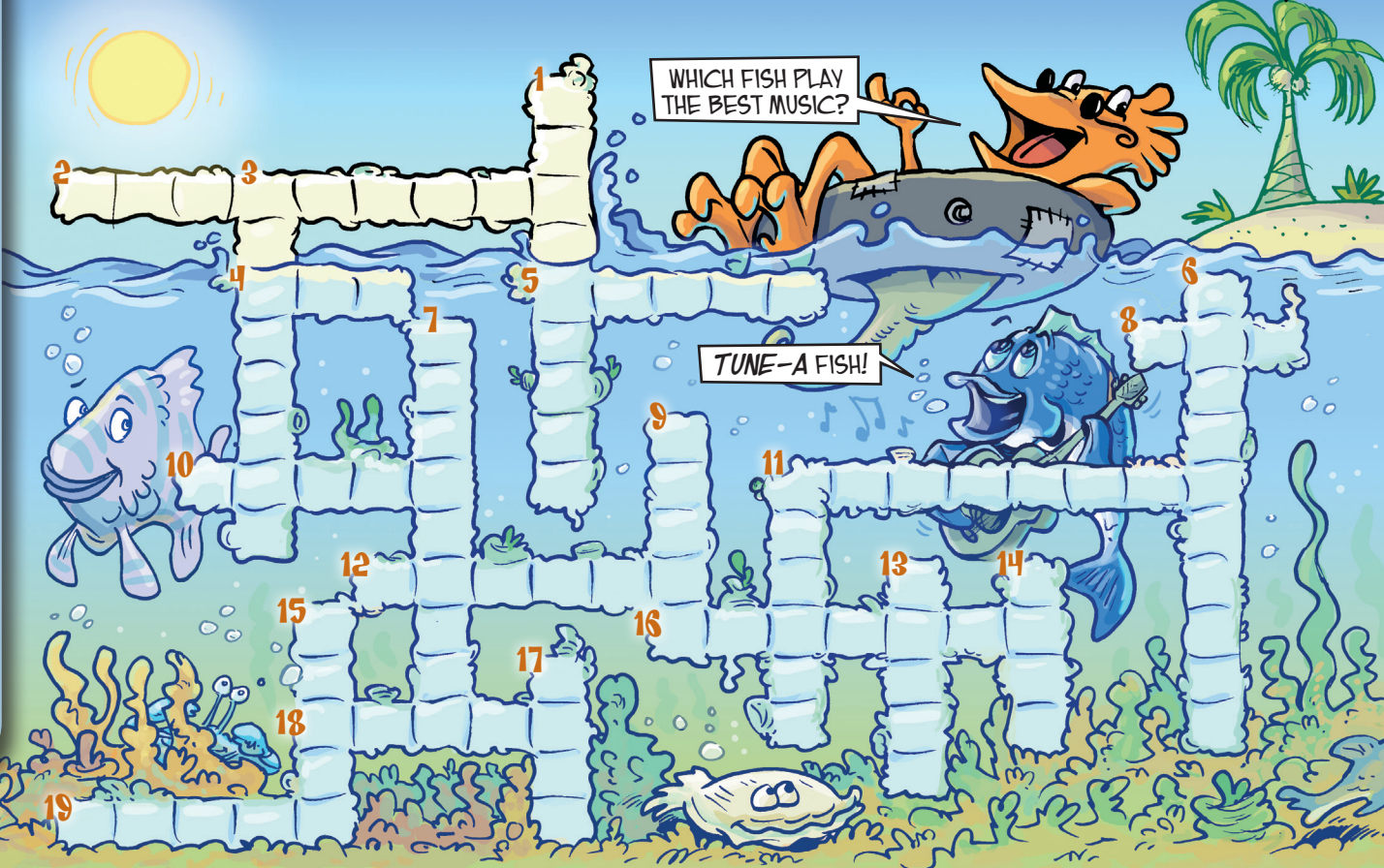
I'm thankful that every day, I can:

Picture of something I'm thankful for:

Favorite prayer or quote:

I show my appreciation for others by:





DOWN

1. Set aside a time each day to think about the _____ you enjoy. (p. 5)
3. They help us develop our gifts and talents. (p. 6)
6. The Treble Chef's grandparents started their Music Café with a musical gathering called a _____. (p. 8)
7. Location of the Great Barrier Reef (p. 10)
9. Over one billion people don't have enough clean _____. (p. 17)
11. He has the power to control electromagnetic pulses. (p. 15)
13. A thankful _____ helps us use powerful tools with kindness, moderation, and respect. (p. 29)
14. Jenna and Abby followed this to get home. (p. 21)
15. This animal can weigh 3.5 tons (3,200 kg), but it can still outrun a human. (p. 24)
17. Rachael says the Bahá'í Faith is really _____. (p. 23)

ACROSS

2. Scientists find that practicing _____ can make a big difference in kids' lives. (p. 4)
4. We depend on this to live, and it's all around us. (p. 11)
5. Birds are known for their _____. (p. 2)
8. Louise wanted to share _____ through her music. (p. 26)
10. Healthy and delicious "fast" food (p. 7)
11. Rachael has this advice for kids who want a career in music. (p. 23)
12. Lua and Taraz both like to do _____. (pp. 12-13)
16. A thank-you note conveys kindness and _____. (p. 18)
18. Yohanna and Leonard both play this. (pp. 12-13)
19. Delicious fruit grown in the Philippines (p. 7)

FROM OUR MAILBOX



It makes me feel amazing to know that there are Bahá'ís like me in other places all over the world. I am the only Bahá'í at my school, so **Brilliant Star** makes me feel better.

—Anya A., age 14, California, U.S.

ANSWERS

KEY: T=Top, C=Center, B=Bottom, L=Left, R=Right

Page 2: Blue-gray Tanager at BC, Emerald Toucanet at BR, Golden-breasted Fruiteater at CR, Masked Tityra at CR, Masked Trogon at C, Moustached Puffbird at TL, Santa Marta Parakeet at TC, Summer Tanager at BL, Yellow-crowned Whitestart at CL

Page 7: A) 7, B) 4, C) 2, D) 1, E) 8, F) 6, G) 3, H) 5

Page 10: Cameras at BR, BL; Dolphins at TC, TR, BR, CL; Light at BL; Masks – 3 at TC, 1 at CR, 2 at BR, 2 at BL, 1 at CL; Snorkels – 2 at TC, 2 at BR, 1 at BC; Tanks – 1 at TL, 1 at TC, 2 at BR, 2 at BL, 1 at CL; Turtles at CR, BC; Watches at BR, BL; Belt at BR

Page 11: Myanmar, Baboons

Page 17: Appreciation, awareness, commitment, diligence, helpfulness, initiative, justice, respect, service

Page 18: Wrap with blue balloons at TR, C; monkeys at CR, BL; green triangles at CR, BC; blue and white squares at BR, C; yellow bricks at BR, C; pink with green spirals at BR, C; blue with stars at BL, C; purple with orange dots at BL, CR; blue rockets at CL, C; green plaid both at C

Page 19: 1) schedules, 2) space, 3) supplies, 4) vacation, 5) share, 6) shelter, 7) expect

Virtual Visits

"Reflect upon the miracles of accomplishment . . . East and West can communicate instantly . . . Day by day discoveries are increasing." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

Whether your cousins live 100 or 10,000 miles away, connecting with them is easy, due to modern technology. About 150 years ago, you might have written a letter and sent it by Pony Express, then waited weeks for a reply. Today, you can instantly see and hear your far-off cousins on a video chat.

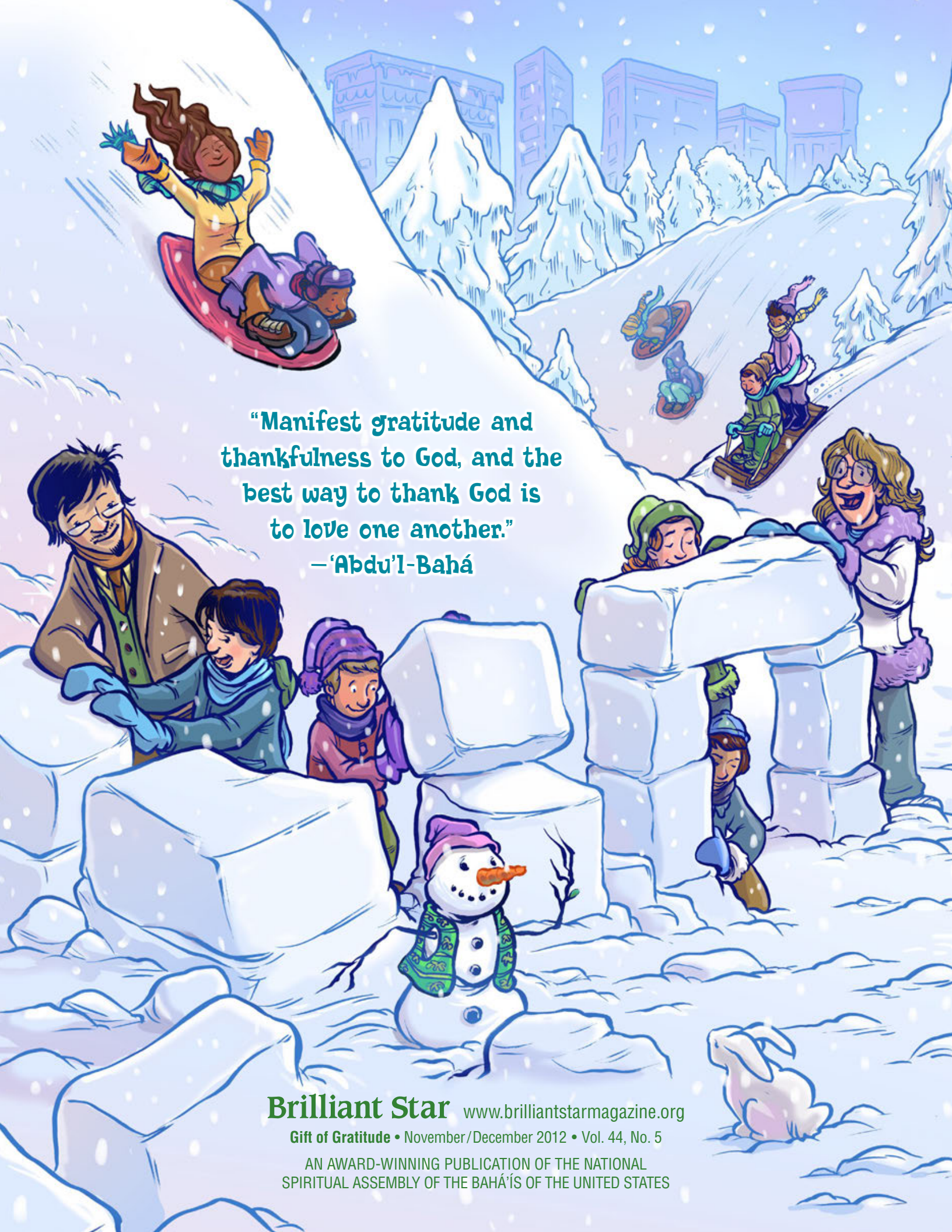
If you want to learn about the Eiffel Tower or the Great Wall, you can do it with the click of your mouse. You can even keep your entire music collection in your pocket.

We live at an amazing time in the history of our planet. Technology links people around the world in new ways, with lightning speed. It's awesome to be able to share ideas and quickly keep in touch with distant family and friends.

When you're uploading your latest photos, sending an e-mail, or exploring new tunes, take a nanosecond to add technology to your gratitude list. A thankful heart helps us use these powerful tools with kindness, moderation, and respect.

**Eli and his family are enjoying a video chat with cousins.
Find the path of their Internet connection from North America to Asia.**





**“Manifest gratitude and
thankfulness to God, and the
best way to thank God is
to love one another.”
— ‘Abdu’l-Bahá**

Brilliant Star www.brilliantstarmagazine.org

Gift of Gratitude • November/December 2012 • Vol. 44, No. 5

AN AWARD-WINNING PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL
SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES