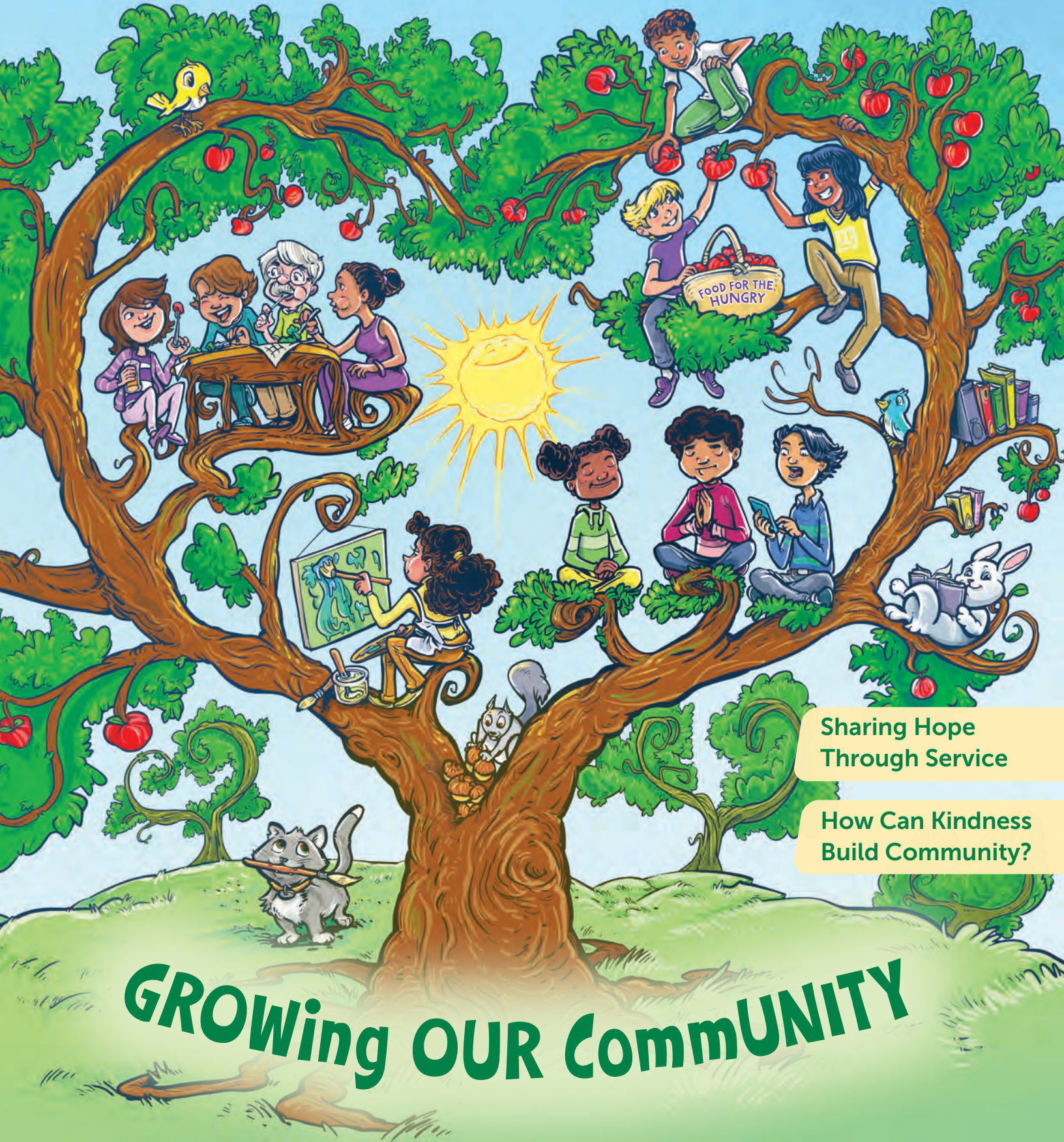


Brilliant Star

LET YOUR SPIRIT SHINE

BRILLIANTSTARMAGAZINE.ORG

VOL. 54 NO. 3



Sharing Hope
Through Service

How Can Kindness
Build Community?

GROWING OUR COMMUNITY

Brilliant Star

BAHÁ'Í NATIONAL CENTER

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Brilliant Star empowers kids to explore their roles as world citizens. Inspired by the principles of peace and unity in the Bahá'í Faith, we encourage readers to use their virtues to make the world a better place.

The Bahá'í Faith is the second most widespread religion in the world with over five million Bahá'ís. It 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 all religions come from one God. Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, interpreted His teachings and led the Bahá'í community after Bahá'u'lláh's passing.

Today, Bahá'ís work to bring love and justice to the world, and end prejudice and discrimination of all kinds.

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Strong in Spirit

How do you work out your *spiritual* muscles?

DEAR FRIENDS,

A community can be like a big, fruitful tree. In its branches, family and friends gather to work, play, and pray together. Kindness and respect are the water and sunshine that help the tree grow strong.

Just as a tree gives us shade, oxygen, and nourishment, strong communities help a city thrive. As more trees take root and grow, the world changes. In time, those trees become a happy haven — a peaceful forest for all.

In this issue, explore how you can plant community-building seeds. Create a basketball game to play with friends. Find out how to use technology wisely.

Get tips for connecting with new people. Meet Ruhiyeh Thabet, who helps newcomers to her country learn new skills. And discover how Muji Vader and her family use basketball to uplift others.

Every community faces challenges, but like a tree's deep roots in a storm, strong friendships keep it steady. When you invite neighbors for a game night or volunteer to help others, you're tending to your community tree. Where will you start today?



LOVE, BRILLIANT STAR ✨



Do You Connect with Your Community?

By Nasim Mansuri • Art by Foad Ghorbani

What do you do when someone new moves to your neighborhood? You might feel shy about saying hi for the first time or asking them to hang out. But being brave enough to speak up helps build a strong community.

Sometimes, people can be in the same place for a long time without getting to know each other. Maybe we mostly send texts or chat in video games. We might not ask for help from others, even if we really need it.

Building community is about taking small steps to include more people in your life. You might invite a new classmate to eat lunch with you. Or you could ask friends to help you plan a clean-up day on your street. Community helps us learn from others, increase unity, and solve problems.

Connecting with others can often boost happiness. When you help build your community, you make life better for yourself and everyone around you!

Are you building community with friends and neighbors? Circle your answers and add up your score.

Try this quiz online! Scan the code to go to *Brilliant Star*'s website.



1. I make friends with people of different cultures, ages, and religions.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
2. I ask people questions to get to know them at a deeper level.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
3. When someone new moves to my area, I help them feel welcome.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
4. I try to discover what I have in common with people I meet.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
5. I help keep my neighborhood looking clean and beautiful.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
6. I do volunteer work or service projects with my family or friends.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
7. My friends and I do art together—like music, drawing, or acting.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
8. When I see a problem in my community, I bring it up with someone I trust.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1



9. When I say I'll do a task, I follow through and get it done.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
10. If a family member or friend is having a tough time, I ask how I can help.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
11. When I haven't heard from a friend in a while, I reach out to ask how they are.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1
12. I help plan fun events for my family, school, or community.
Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1



My Score

36-28 POINTS You and your friends are building a warm community. Keep reaching out to others with joy and kindness.

27-20 POINTS You're starting to help your community take shape. Keep it up! What can you do next?

19-12 POINTS You're on the right track! Think about who you could get to know better, and try some tips from the quiz.

Tasty Teamwork

“True consultation is spiritual conference in the attitude and atmosphere of love.” –Abdu’l-Bahá

It’s time to build a sweet gingerbread house with your friends. Everyone gathers around to share ideas. Ezra dreams of a castle, Sam wants a treehouse, and Layla votes for a game room and arcade.

Like creative baking, having good consultation takes patience and care. You start with love and listen to everyone’s ideas. You share your thoughts but don’t insist that *your* way is

best. If things get heated, you stay as cool as a winter’s day.

After lots of talk and laughter, you decide on an epic idea: a neighborhood with buildings of different shapes and sizes. Together, you bake, cut, and decorate. Some pieces are lopsided, but that’s okay. You have fun learning from your mistakes. With consultation and teamwork, everyone mixes their talents, ideas, and virtues to bake up *delicious* results!

CONE OF COURTESY

HUMBLE HEART

LISTENING LICORICE

SPRINKLES OF SERVICE

COMPASSIONATE CANDY STICK

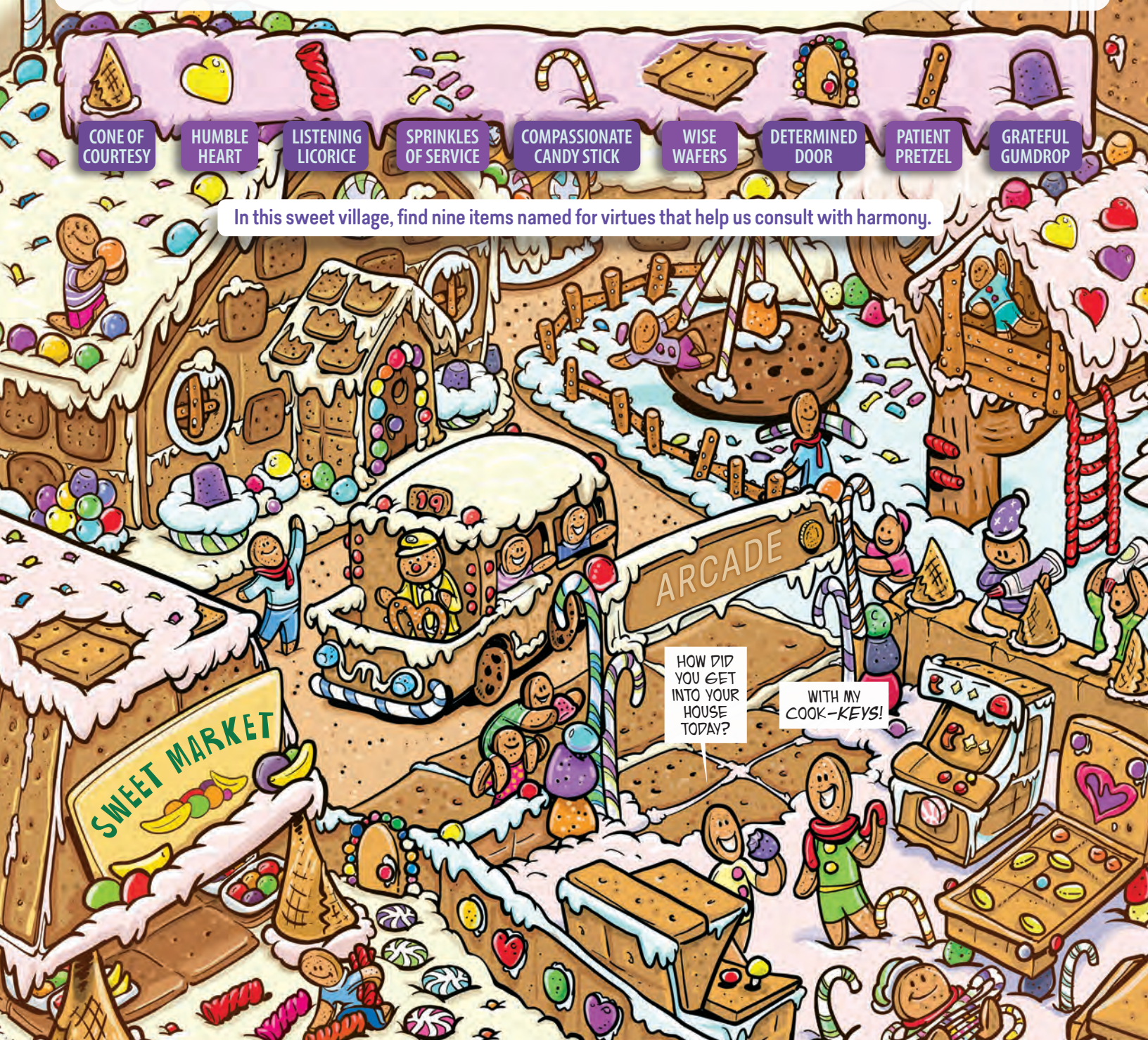
WISE WAFERS

DETERMINED DOOR

PATIENT PRETZEL

GRATEFUL GUMDROP

In this sweet village, find nine items named for virtues that help us consult with harmony.



Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace Tablet of the World

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

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

1863–1868

Exile in Constantinople
(Istanbul), then Adrianople
(Edirne), Türkiye. 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.

“Let your vision be world-embracing,
rather than confined to your
own self.”

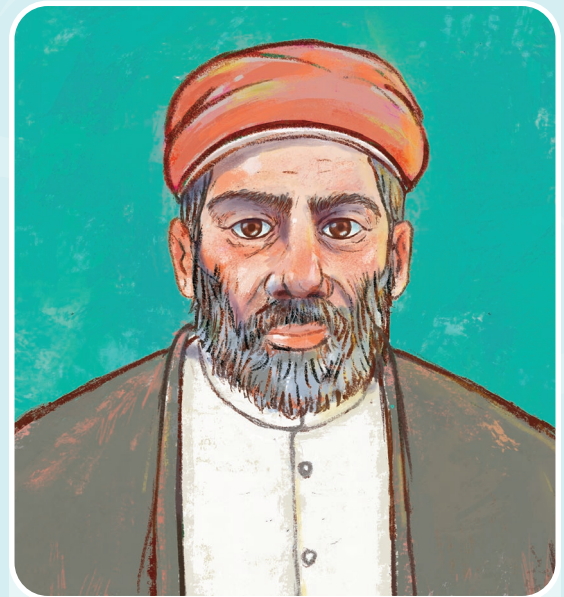
With words such as these,
Bahá'u'lláh shared His vision for a
peaceful world in thousands of letters,
tablets, and books. One of these was the
Tablet of the World, written in honor of
a Bahá'í called Núru'd-Dín.

Núru'd-Dín was born in 1842 into the
family of the Báb, the Messenger of God
who prepared the world for Bahá'u'lláh.
The Báb's wife, Khadíjih Bagum, was
Núru'd-Dín's aunt. She taught Núru'd-Dín
about the Báb when he was 13, and he
became a Bábí. Later, when Bahá'u'lláh
announced that He was the Messenger
of God promised by the Báb, Núru'd-Dín
joined His followers.

As an adult, Núru'd-Dín visited
Bahá'u'lláh for nine months with his
family in what is now Israel. In a journal,
Núru'd-Dín's 15-year-old son recorded, “It
is impossible to describe the sweetness
of life and the joy of our souls in those
days.”*

During this 1891 visit, Bahá'u'lláh
revealed the Tablet of the World. In it,
He says His teachings will cause “the
advancement of the world and the
exaltation of its peoples.” He brought this
message of peace for the entire world,
not just for one group or country.

Throughout history, religious
disunity has led to war and conflict.
But Bahá'u'lláh urges us to gather with
“the followers of all religions in a spirit
of friendliness and fellowship.” He tells
us to love the whole world, not just
people from our own country. He urges
us to uplift others through good deeds,
a strong character, kind words, and



Due to prejudice, Núru'd-Dín risked arrest for his
faith. Still, he gathered with friends for prayer,
feeling “immersed” in “warm love and spirituality.”

courtesy, “the prince of virtues.”

If people *everywhere* followed
Bahá'u'lláh's guidance in this tablet, the
world would change in extraordinary
ways. War and violence would end.
People would respect each other and live
as one human family. It would truly be
what Bahá'u'lláh calls “the reconstruction
of the world.”

Bahá'u'lláh shared how to organize
this new society. He encouraged
promoting the Lesser Peace, a global
agreement to end war. Imagine what an
amazing leap forward that would be!

He also emphasized the need for
education. He said we should all learn a
common language. And He encouraged
us to pay special attention to agriculture,
our source of food.

The Universal House of Justice, the
international governing body of the Bahá'í

“The brightness of the fire of your love will no doubt fuse and unify the contending peoples and kindreds of the earth . . .” —Bahá’u’lláh

Faith, shared Bahá’u’lláh’s plan for world harmony. In 1985, a message called *The Promise of World Peace* was addressed to all people and presented to leaders around the globe.

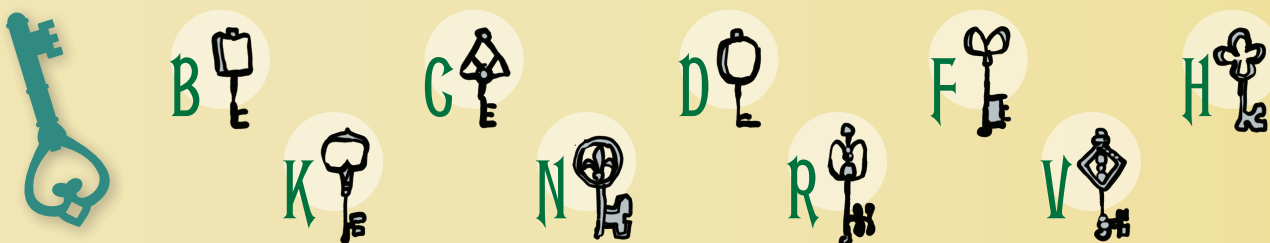
Today, the Universal House of Justice and millions of Bahá’ís worldwide continue to promote peace. Bahá’ís create service projects and welcome everyone to gatherings large and small. In countless homes, neighborhoods, and cities, people are gradually taking steps to establish the “complete and enduring unity” of the whole human race.



In October 2025, about 500 youth from Eastern Europe met in Bucharest, Romania, to explore building a more peaceful society.

Decode the letters to complete a quote from the Tablet of the World.

“Toug ea a e e y o e o t e e ses
 w i t e Pe o t e Most ig at
 e eale , t e oo s o lo e a u ity a e
 ee u lo e a lu g ope . . .” —Bahá’u’lláh



Win with Teamwork! Make a Basketball Game

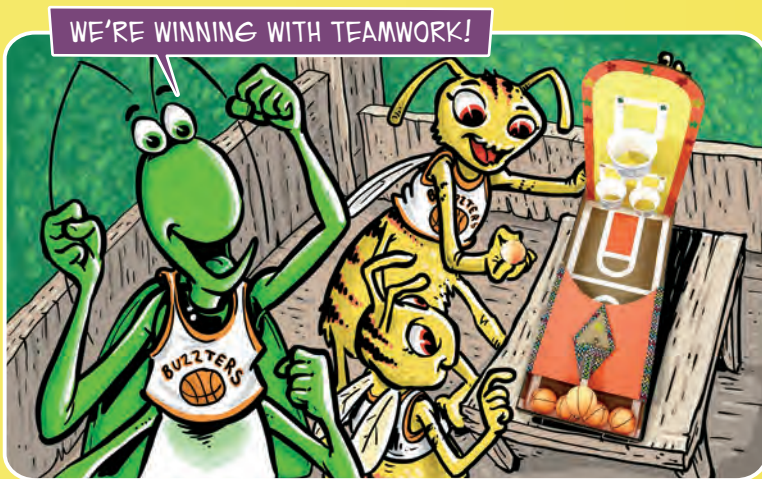
“There is pure joy in engaging other souls in meaningful and uplifting conversations . . .” – Bahá’í Writings

My bee friend Hummy invited me to join her basketball team, the Buzzters! I was so excited! But at my first game, Queenie Bee bossed everyone around and called all the shots. She even said fireflies can’t shoot hoops! My buzz for the game fizzled.

Then Hummy called a time-out. She asked us to only use words that can lift each other up. What a great idea!

Positive words helped us play with kindness. Queenie even passed me the ball, and I scored!

I made this game to boost our teamwork and keep friendly words flying. We take turns, and when someone makes a basket, the next player shares a virtue they see in them, like patience or respect. Try it with your friends, and shoot hoops with happiness!



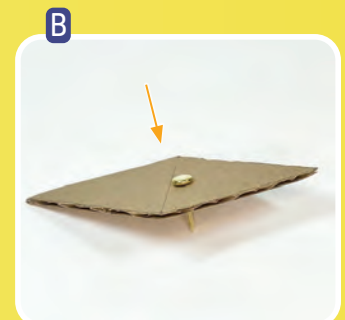
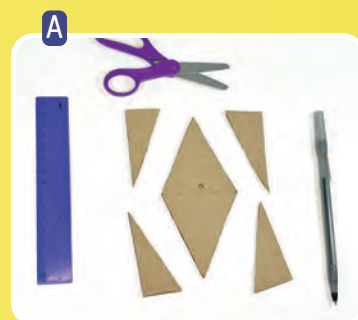
You'll Need

- Cardboard, one each: 7" x 8" (18 x 20 cm)*, 18" x 7" (46 x 18 cm), 14" x 6³/₄" (36 x 17 cm), 2¹/₂" x 5¹/₂" (6.5 x 14 cm)
- Cardboard, two each: 2" x 18" (5 x 46 cm), 2" x 7" (5 x 18 cm)
- tacky glue
- poster board
- ruler
- ballpoint pen
- scissors
- duct tape
- paper fastener
- 1/2" (1 cm) round bead
- two standard craft sticks: 4¹/₂" (11 cm)
- rubber band
- 1¹/₄" (3 cm) round bottle cap
- paper cups: three standard sized, two smaller
- permanent markers
- paper
- stickers
- 1¹/₂" (4 cm) plastic balls

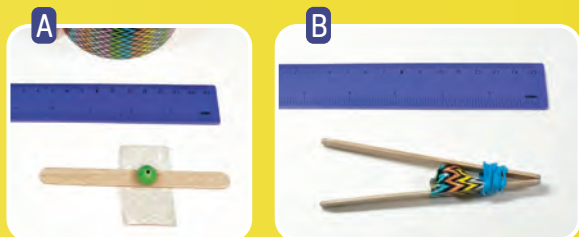
- 1 (A) For court, glue bottom and side edges of cardboard strips evenly around 18" x 7" (46 x 18 cm) cardboard. (B) Cut poster board into 1" (2.5 cm) strips. Draw line lengthwise at center of each strip and fold along line. Glue to cardboard seams to reinforce bonds. Trim court's edges if needed.



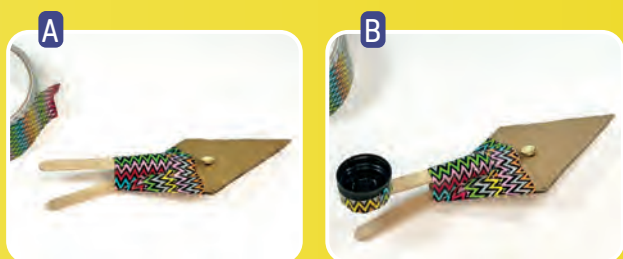
- 2 (A) Cut off corners of 2¹/₂" x 5¹/₂" (6.5 x 14 cm) cardboard to make diamond shape. Use pen to create hole centered 3" (7.6 cm) from a long point. (B) Thread end of paper fastener through hole (don't fasten).



- 3 (A) Firmly tape a bead $1\frac{3}{4}$ " (4 cm) from tip of craft stick. (B) For controller, place craft stick on top of taped bead. Wind rubber band tight 1" (2.5 cm) from ends of sticks so bead and sticks align.



- 4 (A) Center controller along longest point of diamond shape, so end almost touches fastener. Tape controller in place. (B) Tape bottle cap to top end of stick.



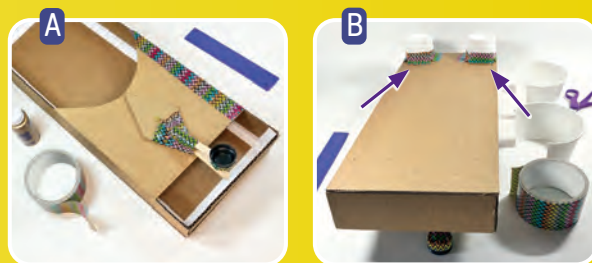
- 5 For tabletop, use 7" x 8" (18 x 20 cm) cardboard. Cut a curve $2\frac{1}{2}$ " (6 cm) deep in short edge. With pen, make hole centered 3" (7.6 cm) from uncut edge.



- 6 Poke paper fastener through hole. Flip tabletop over, secure fastener, and tape prongs in place.



- 7 (A) Glue edges of tabletop to court, so uncut edge is $2\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 cm) from court's front. Reinforce seams with tape. (B) To create a slope, cut off tops of two larger paper cups so they're $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (4 cm) tall. Tape to bottom back corners of court.



- 8 (A) For backboard, round off top corners of 14" x $6\frac{3}{4}$ " (36 x 17 cm) cardboard. Glue uncut side to inner back wall of court. (B) Cut off bottom of one larger and two smaller cups for baskets.



- 9 Decorate balls, baskets, and court with markers, stickers, duct tape, or paper cutouts. Keep diamond movable. Secure baskets to backboard with rolls of tape.

To play: Place ball in cap, move controller to aim, pull cap down, and release! When you make a basket, you get a point, or the next player names one of your virtues.



Make more fun crafts with Nur!

Sharing Hope Through Hoops



Muji Vader likes to *do* things. Whether she's coaching kids in Uganda or Jamaica, or scoring points for her school's basketball team in Massachusetts, Muji believes in taking action—and she does it with passion.

After living in an orphanage in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), she and her brother, Joey, were adopted by the Vader family in 2016. Muji was eight years old and Joey was seven. They embraced the Bahá'í Faith and began doing service projects with friends. In 2022, Muji joined a local basketball team and loved it. The next year, she and Joey started a service organization called “The Assist”—a basketball term for passing the ball to help a teammate score.* They travel in the U.S. and internationally to set up basketball hoops, donate sports equipment, and teach basketball skills to other kids.

Now a senior at Minuteman Vocational High School, Muji studies culinary arts and excels in basketball, winning many awards. After graduation, she'll spend a year in Switzerland polishing her basketball skills at Ball Academy before going to college.

Q: What was it like when you first came to the U.S.?

A: It was exciting, but it was kind of a blur because I was a little overwhelmed . . . When we got to the airport [in Boston], all of my [new] family members were there . . . It was a lot, but now that I'm thinking back, it was really, really, really great.

Q: When and where did you start playing basketball?

A: My best friend in fifth grade, she was big into basketball . . . Her dad was a coach, and he said, “You'd be good at basketball.” I [thought], “Let me just try this out.” I've liked it ever since . . . Around age 13, I started [playing on] a rec team.



While coaching at a camp in Jamaica, Muji demonstrated the proper form for a free throw.

Q: What do you love most about basketball?

A: There's a lot to love about basketball . . . I did track before, and track is an individual sport. It might be easier in that you . . . can rely on yourself. But I really love the team aspect of basketball, of working together for one combined goal.

Q: What advice would you give a kid who wants to join a team, but they're unsure of themselves?

A: Have confidence, go for it, try your best, even if you're not good at the specific point [when] you want to try out. Coaches are always looking for people who are vocal, who cheer on other people, people who are uplifting the team. Just try your best, be aggressive, and really be vocal.



In 2024, Muji and her family visited Uganda, where Muji and Joey worked with the national team to host a basketball clinic for 150 kids.

Q: What are some qualities of a good teammate?

A: Patience, leadership, being able to communicate well . . . You have to be ready to [play] with people who are . . . just starting or [have] been playing the sport for so long. You have to be patient and mentor them if they need it. You have to be able to read the type of people that you're playing against. Patience for me is a huge, huge thing that I look for in teammates and I try to [give] to my teammates.

Q: You and your brother do service projects together. How did that start?

A: We were spending a lot of time dedicated to basketball . . . We didn't really have time to focus on our faith . . . I was talking to my mom and my brother, and we were like, "How can we take basketball, which [we] spend so much time doing, and incorporate some Bahá'í virtues into that?" So that's how The Assist started.

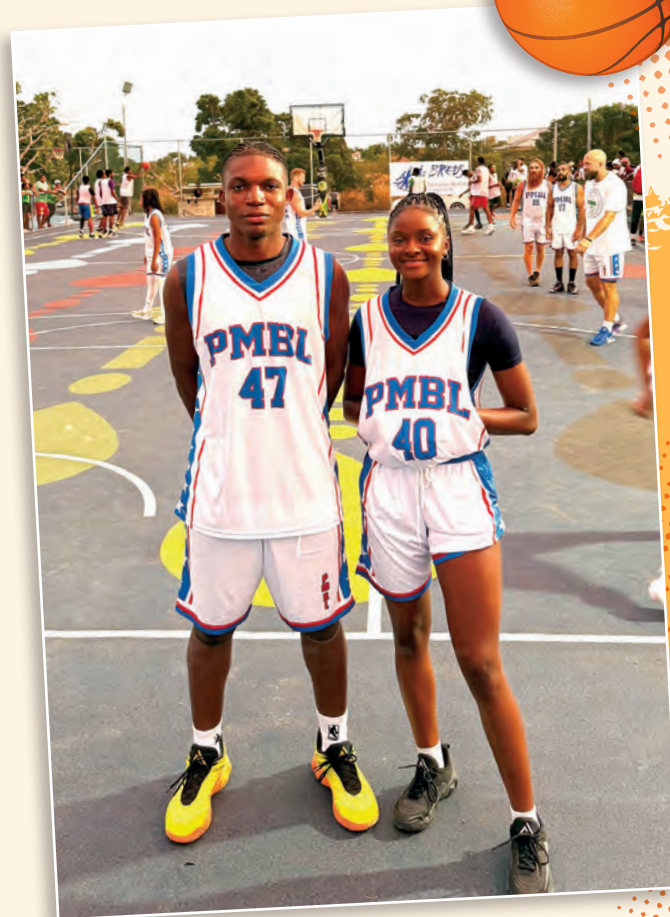
Q: What spiritual qualities do you think you've gained or strengthened through your service?

A: Gratitude is definitely the big one, because I started off in an orphanage . . . If I hadn't been adopted or introduced to the Bahá'í Faith, I wouldn't be where I am right now. So, I'm very thankful to God and the people around me and my faith, because I live by my faith. That's what defines me.

How to Start Your Own Service Project

Service "doesn't have to be massive," says Muji. "Little service also counts. In the eyes of God, service is service." Try some of her tips:

- ☆ Start small, like helping your family with chores at home
- ☆ Help neighbors bring in groceries, rake leaves, or shovel snow
- ☆ Find out what other service is needed
- ☆ Use your interests and talents
- ☆ Ask a parent or other trusted adult to help
- ☆ Invite others to join you
- ☆ Work together to make a plan
- ☆ Let your team's passion shine!



In August 2025, Muji and her brother, Joey, went to Jamaica to coach hundreds of kids at a week-long basketball camp.

RILEY'S RAINFOREST



WHEN MY FEATHERS GET RUFFLED, I IMAGINE SOARING OVER THE CALM, OPEN SEA.

“Send down...from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing...”

—Bahá’u’lláh

EXPLORE & SOAR: FLY ABOVE CONFLICT

When you disagree with a friend, try these steps in order to work out any situation with love.

- ☆ First, stay calm. Breathe in through your nose, and let it out slowly.
- ☆ Picture a peaceful place, like a river, lake, or ocean.
- ☆ Think about the problem through your friend’s eyes.
- ☆ Kindly share your thoughts or the change you hope to see. Tell them why.



- ☆ Listen with respect while they share how they feel.
- ☆ Talk about how you can work together to solve the problem.
- ☆ Hug or high-five to agree on the plan!

YOUR HAPPY PLACE

By Teresa Langness

Do you ever imagine traveling to a warmer, happier place? When I feel worried, I fly there in my mind. I did that last week in science class. We wrote about migratory birds from Oceania. I worked with Shona, Kirk, and our new friend, Bobolink. I told Bob his report on the Eastern curlew was awesome.

“I didn’t write that,” Bob laughed. “I just used AI!”

That really ruffled my feathers! Taking words from Artificial Intelligence is like having someone else do your work *for* you. It’s not fair, *and* you don’t learn anything. I felt like squawking, “That’s cheating, Bob!”

Instead, I closed my eyes and went to my happy place, soaring over a blue sea. Finally, I said, “Bob, honesty is

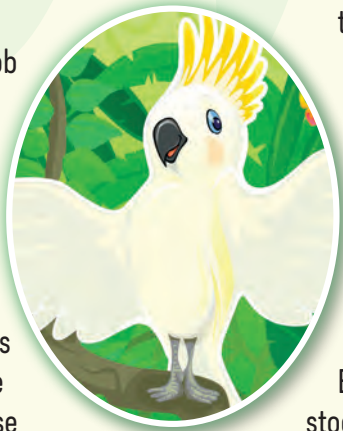
important to Shona, Kirk, and me—and to you, I think. You don’t need to use AI.”

Bob blushed. He said, “I guess you’re right. I just wanted our group to be good.”

The next morning, our teacher, Ms. McCaw, said, “Sadly, Group 1 is busy redoing their work. I discovered they used AI to write their bird reports.” She said to us, “Group 2, you’re up.”

Shona and I did our part. Then we looked at Bob. I was so nervous! Bob stood up and said, “I admit I used AI at first. But then I wrote a new report on my own.”

What a relief! Bob gave his new report on the scarlet honeyeater. Our group did great. After school, we had mango smoothies to celebrate!



CURIOSITY CANOPY



Having a fight with a friend can be super upsetting. Once we feel calm again, it’s a lot easier to think more clearly. That helps us find ways to speak with kindness and compassion. My advice? Remember to take a break before starting a tricky conversation!



Explore and Protect the Earth and Its Creatures

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

OUR CONNECTIONS



Coal, oil, and gas are "fossil fuels" made from buried remains of plants and animals. Burning them causes pollution and makes Earth hotter. This changing climate leads to storms, floods, and droughts, harming people, animals, and the planet. **Green energy** from wind, water, and the Sun is safer. One-third of world electricity is from these renewable sources. If you see wind turbines or solar panels, green energy is at work!

EARTH-SAVING TIP

Caps On
Plastic bottle caps are a common source of ocean pollution. Before recycling, empty out plastic bottles and put the caps back on.



WOW, REALLY?

The Congo River, in Central Africa, is the deepest river in the world at over 720 ft (220 m)!

PROTECTING OUR PLANET

Dr. Praveen Kumar, a scientist in Massachusetts, U.S., studies how climate change affects health and well-being. He finds that educating women about green energy can help. He says, "Women's empowerment is key to changing behavior . . . for climate adaptation . . ."



WHERE IN THE WORLD?



Welcoming people of all faiths, this Bahá'í House of Worship opened in 2023. It's located in Africa's second largest nation, which is home to over 200 ethnic groups. *Unscramble the letters to find its name:*

DCRATEMOIC RLICEPUB FO HET CNGOO



AMAZING ANIMALS



Earth's largest land animals can be 13 feet (4 m) tall and weigh 7 tons (6,400 kg)! They flap their huge ears to cool off. They can live 70 years, and the oldest female leads the family group. *Fill in the blanks to find their name:*

FRIC N LPH NTS

Maya's MYSTERIES

"If we ponder each created thing, we shall witness a myriad consummate wisdoms..." —Bahá'u'lláh



REFUGE IN NATURE

My friend Zoe was bummed when friends from her swim team went camping and didn't invite her. I gave her a big hug. It hurts to be excluded. Being in nature always cheers us up, so we had our own camping adventure. We pitched a tent in my backyard for a

sleepover. With sleeping bags, pillows, and snacks, we created a peaceful refuge under a tree. Then we went on a nature hike and made this fun scavenger hunt bingo game. A doe walked across our path! It was so fun, and Zoe felt better. Nature and true friends are the *best* combination!

NATURE BINGO: Walk with family or friends and look for items or creatures expressing virtues. Write, draw, or photograph your discoveries. Fill in five boxes going across, down, or diagonally.

<p>ALERT Creature being observant</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>CONSULT Creatures communicating</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>ENERGY Moving quickly</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>IMAGINATION Unusual pattern</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>ORIGINAL Something that surprises you</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>BALANCE Things that are equal or even</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>COOPERATE Creatures working together</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>GROWTH Something very tall</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>LEADERSHIP Creature leading another</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>PERSISTENT Thriving in a hard spot</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>BEAUTY Something floral</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>COURAGE Creature in a high spot</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>DISCOVERY (draw here)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>LISTENING A remarkable sound</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>SERVICE Creature holding food</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>CALMNESS Smooth surface</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>CURIOS Creature digging or exploring</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>HOPE Something in the sky</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>MINDFUL A secluded area</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>STRENGTH Something large and sturdy</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>CHEERFUL Bright colors</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>DEPENDABLE Leaning on each other</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>HUMBLE Nestled under something larger</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>ORDERLY Several items in a neat row</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>UNITY Growing together</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Media Mindful

By Teresa Langness

How do you spend your time? Do you zip through social media, play lots of video games, or spend hours texting friends? It's fun to connect online, but it's easy to lose track of time! How do you balance the digital world with your real one?

You can turn off the device and turn up the action. Challenge yourself with tech-free time every day. Ride your bike. Take a hike. Bake cookies or make some art. Dive into a new book.

Meet friends for a board game or for soccer in the park.

How much screen time is too much? Some say that more than a couple of hours a day is too much. Talk with your family about the right amount for you. Lots of kids say they feel happier when they take a break from screens.

Start a media mindfulness trend with your friends. Make your daily life the most interesting story of all!

Help Tycho learn from his twin, Todd. Match each negative thought on the left with the mindful idea that can replace it.

- 1 NO FAIR! ALL MY FRIENDS HAVE THE LATEST SMARTPHONES.
 - 2 I DON'T HAVE TIME TO HELP MOM. I'M TEXTING GABE.
 - 3 GO TO THE ZOO? I'D RATHER JUST WATCH FUNNY ANIMAL VIDEOS.
 - 4 ARGH, MY EYES HURT AGAIN. THAT'S SO MESSED UP.
 - 5 I DON'T NEED TO STUDY, I'M GOING TO BE AN ONLINE INFLUENCER!
 - 6 I'M TOO TIRED TO DO HOMEWORK.
 - 7 CHORES CAN WAIT—EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THAT NEW VIDEO.
 - 8 IF YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT MY DAY, JUST READ MY POSTS.
 - 9 UGH, IF I GO TO THE BASKETBALL COURT, I'LL HAVE TO TALK TO KIDS IN PERSON!
- A TAKING MY LITTLE SISTER TO THE ZOO WILL MAKE HER SO HAPPY.
 - B AFTER DOING DISHES, I'LL WATCH THAT NEW VIDEO.
 - C I MADE GREAT FRIENDS ON THE COURT TODAY.
 - D TEXTING CAN WAIT. MOM NEEDS HELP WITH THOSE HEAVY BAGS.
 - E I'M GLAD DAD GAVE ME HIS OLD PHONE FOR EMERGENCIES.
 - F IT'S FUN TO TALK WITH MY FAMILY ABOUT THE DAY.
 - G I SET A TIMER TO GIVE MY EYES A BREAK.
 - H I'LL DO MATH WHILE I HAVE ENERGY, BEFORE I GO ONLINE.
 - I SOMEDAY, I WANT TO BE A FILMMAKER, SO I LEARN ALL I CAN.





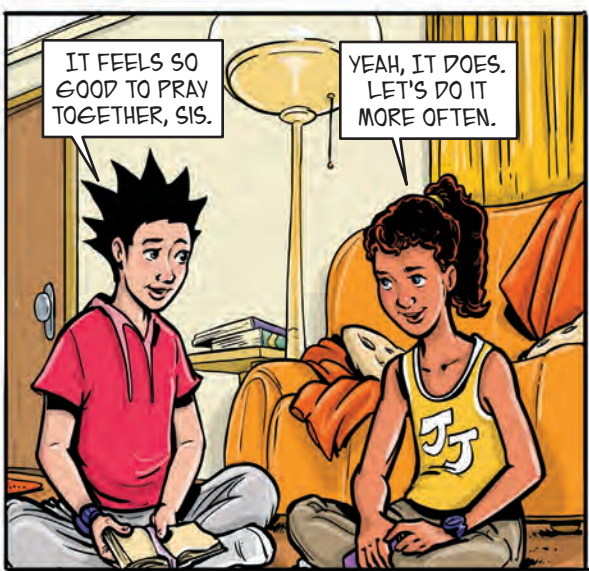
BAXTER AND BRIDGET

LIGHTNING & LUNA

POWER OF CONNECTION

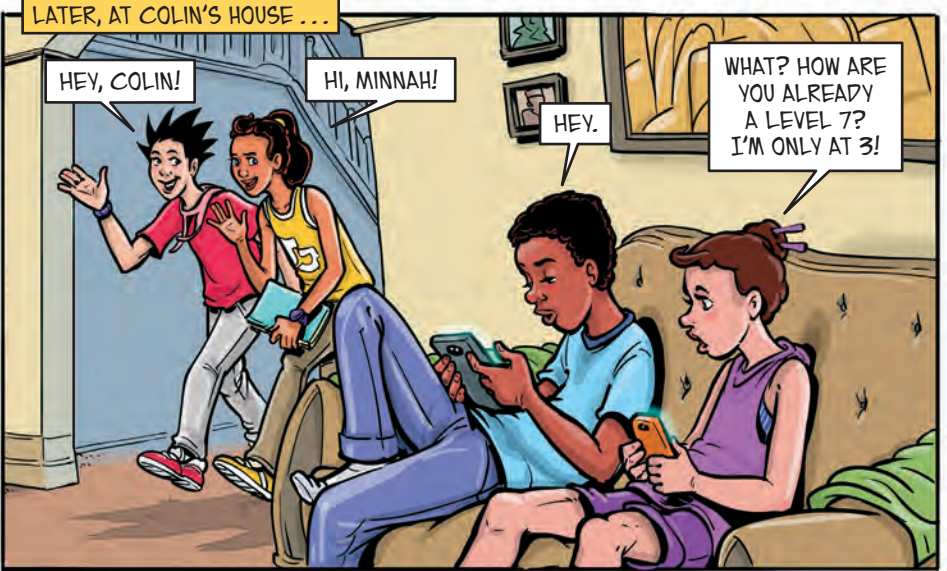
BY JULIET MONIREH BOGAN • ART BY C. AARON KREADER

#102



IT FEELS SO GOOD TO PRAY TOGETHER, SIS.

YEAH, IT DOES. LET'S DO IT MORE OFTEN.



LATER, AT COLIN'S HOUSE ...

HEY, COLIN!

HI, MINNAH!

HEY.

WHAT? HOW ARE YOU ALREADY A LEVEL 7? I'M ONLY AT 3!



YOU GUYS WANNA HELP ME BRAINSTORM MY NEXT PAINTING?

I'M MAKING MORE CONTENT THAN YOU, MINNAH.



WHAT ARE YOU GUYS EVEN DOING?



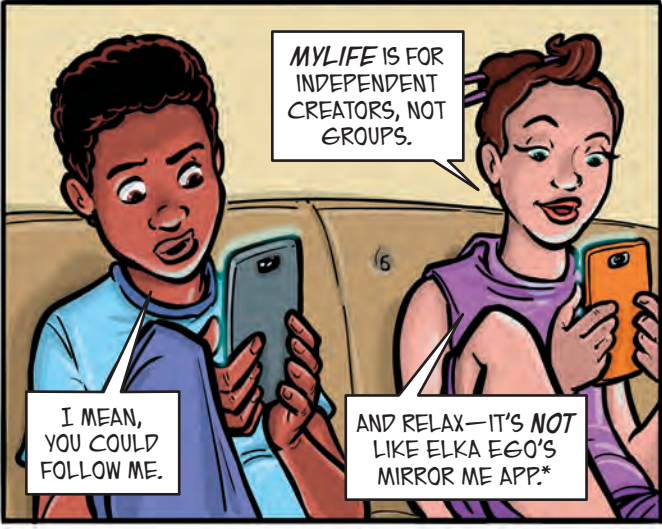
IT'S A NEW APP WHERE YOU GET REWARDS FOR POSTING CONTENT.

IT'S CALLED MYLIFE.

I'M POSTING CHOREOGRAPHY.



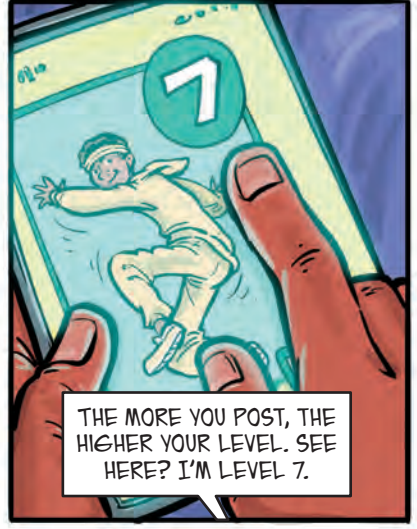
COOL! I'D LOVE TO LEARN IT!



MYLIFE IS FOR INDEPENDENT CREATORS, NOT GROUPS.

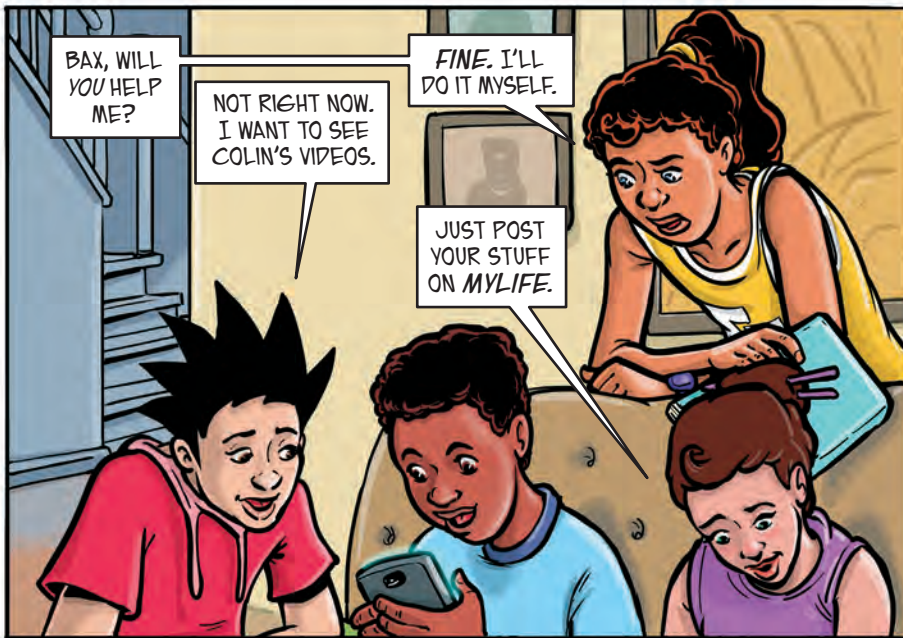
I MEAN, YOU COULD FOLLOW ME.

AND RELAX—IT'S NOT LIKE ELKA EGO'S MIRROR ME APP.*



THE MORE YOU POST, THE HIGHER YOUR LEVEL. SEE HERE? I'M LEVEL 7.

*Episodes 68-74: brilliantstarmagazine.org/articles/lightning-luna-elka



BAX, WILL YOU HELP ME?

NOT RIGHT NOW. I WANT TO SEE COLIN'S VIDEOS.

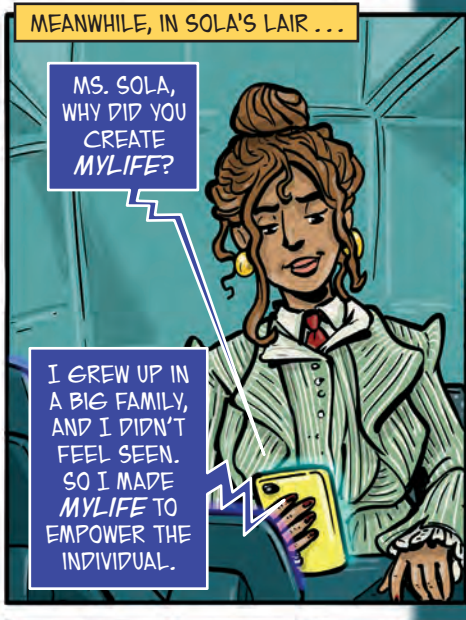
FINE. I'LL DO IT MYSELF.

JUST POST YOUR STUFF ON MYLIFE.



IT'S HQ!

I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO HANG WITH OUR FRIENDS LATER.



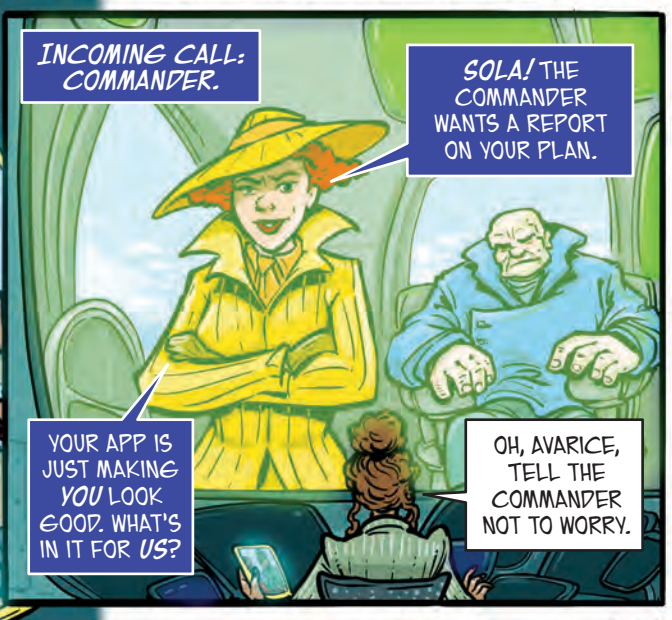
MEANWHILE, IN SOLA'S LAIR...

MS. SOLA, WHY DID YOU CREATE MYLIFE?

I GREW UP IN A BIG FAMILY, AND I DIDN'T FEEL SEEN. SO I MADE MYLIFE TO EMPOWER THE INDIVIDUAL.



SOME PEOPLE HAVE TALENTS AND DESERVE TO BE REWARDED!



INCOMING CALL: COMMANDER.

SOLA! THE COMMANDER WANTS A REPORT ON YOUR PLAN.

YOUR APP IS JUST MAKING YOU LOOK GOOD. WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?

OH, AVARICE, TELL THE COMMANDER NOT TO WORRY.



THE APP MAKES PEOPLE FOCUS ON THEMSELVES MORE, SO THEY CARE LESS ABOUT OTHERS.

AS THEY LEVEL UP, MY VIRUS CUTS OFF CONNECTIONS TO ANY OTHER APPS.



ALL COOPERATION WILL STOP. BUSINESSES AND GOVERNMENTS WILL COLLAPSE.

THEN I— UH— WE TAKE CONTROL.

AND WE WILL RULE!



SCAN FOR ALL EPISODES OF LIGHTNING & LUNA

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?

Baran A.

Age: 12

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

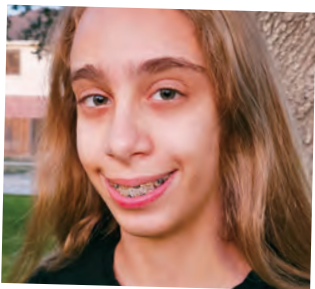
I want to be: **Fashion designer**

This career interests me because: **[I want to] create cute and affordable outfits for kids.**

Virtues I admire most: **Honesty, loyalty**

Hobbies or sports: **Playing piano and violin, volleyball, running**

Favorite animals: **Tiger, dogs**



Favorite Bahá'í activities: **Children's class, Feast**

I like to help people by: **Showing kindness**

My heroes or role models: **My mom and dad**

If I could fix a world problem, I'd choose:

To stop war and make peace everywhere . . . We need to be friends.

In a future with peace and unity, I see: **Freedom and joy**

Activities that created joy and unity: **Feast and fundraising. Also, having picnics with friends and dancing.**

If I could create a haven, it would be: **A place without fear, full of joy and dance and creativity**

Khaliq W.

Age: 13

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

I want to be: **Photographer, athlete**

This career interests me because: **I love being outside and being active.**

Virtue I admire most: **Gratitude**

Favorite Bahá'í activities: **Feast*, junior youth group**

My hero or role model: **My cousin, Elias. I really admire his strong sense of gratitude and selflessness.**

In a future with peace and unity, I see: **A world where everyone has their needs met and no one is unhappy . . . no one is left out.**



What I love about my neighborhood: **I have lots of friends close by, and my school is also very close.**

It's important to be friends with different kids because: **You can see the world differently and get to know other backgrounds.**

If I could create a haven: **It would have snacks and play areas for younger kids. It would also have a learning area where kids could learn different subjects, and it would be free . . .**



Isabelle T.

Age: 11

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

I want to be: **Ethologist [scientist who studies animal behavior]**

This career interests me because: **I love animals and I want to study them like Jane Goodall [did].**

Hobbies or sports: **Acrobatics, aerial silks, tennis, clarinet**

Favorite Bahá'í activity: **Junior youth group**

My heroes or role models: **'Abdu'l-Bahá and my mom**

I like to help people by: **Helping my friends understand math, helping my mom cook or do laundry, helping host devotional gatherings****

What I love about my neighborhood: **Everybody is so kind and sweet to everyone.**

In a future with peace and unity, I see: **Everyone being treated fairly and nobody is unkind or dishonest.**

An activity that created joy and unity: **We have a Saturday night devotional with crafts, food, and music where all youth and junior youth can have fun and feel welcome.**

Alayna K.

Age: 10

I live in: Curaçao

I want to be: Actor

This career interests me because:

It's like I'm in another fun world.

Virtues I admire most:

Joyfulness, kindness, friendliness

Hobbies or sports:

Dancing, playing electric guitar

Favorite Bahá'í activity:

Junior youth group

My hero or role model:

'Abdu'l-Bahá

What I love about my neighborhood:

Our community keeps growing and there are [people of] all ages.

If I could fix a world problem, I'd choose:

No more war in the world, because then there will be less problems and more helping each other. Also, no more single-use plastic, because it's polluting the land and the ocean, and many sea creatures die.

If I could create a haven, it would be:

A cozy tent with pillows and blankets, snacks and drinks, and a place where you can socialize and make new friends



"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

Tendo J.

Age: 10

I live in:

British Columbia, Canada

I want to be: Soccer player

This career interests me because:

I love soccer, and it makes me happy when I play it.

Favorite Baha'í activities:

I like to sing prayers and do service projects.

Favorite animals:

I like my dog, Aurora, and my sister's hamster, Remi.

My heroes or role models:

My mom and dad

Virtue I admire most: **Truthfulness**

If I could fix a world problem, I'd choose:

I would solve world hunger, because I feel bad for people who don't have enough food.

I like to help people by: **Holding a door open or doing service projects**

In a future with peace and unity, I see:

Everybody loving and helping each other

An activity that created joy and unity:

We made kindness jars in my children's class . . . We put in candy and kind notes and gave them to our neighbors.

If I could create a haven, it would be:

Where everybody can come in at any time and play games and be kind to each other



Penny L.

Age: 10

I live in: Arizona, U.S.

I want to be:

Internal medicine doctor

This career interests me because:

My aunt is an internal medicine doctor.

Virtues I admire most:

Peacefulness and truthfulness

Hobbies or sports:

Drawing, taekwondo, swimming, math, science experiments

Favorite Bahá'í activities:

Praying, children's classes, service projects

Favorite animals:

Capybara, goldendoodle

I like to help people by:

Being kind and respectful . . .

My hero or role model:

Mrs. Michel, my fifth-grade homeroom and social studies teacher

An activity that created joy and unity:

My children's class and my sister's junior youth group are doing a bake sale to raise money for those in need. This way, we can use the money to buy them clothing and food during the . . . holiday season.



How to be a Radiant Star

1. If you're aged 7-14, scan the QR code with a smart phone's camera. Or go to brilliantstarmagazine.org and from the top menu, choose "Discover." Click "Become a Radiant Star or Trailblazer." Or email us at brilliant@usbnc.org. Include your name, age, birthdate, mailing address, and phone number.



2. When it's your turn to shine, we'll ask for 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).

3. We'll send you questions and a form for you and your parents to sign. Answer the questions and send them to us with the signed form, and you'll be in our next issue!

Emanuel Ryan T.

Age: 8

I live in: **North Dakota, U.S.**

I want to be: **Engineer**

This career interests me because:
I enjoy building things.

Virtue I admire most:
Creativity

Favorite Bahá'í activity:
Children's class

Place I'd love to visit:
Rome, Italy

What I love about my neighborhood:
There are no bullies in my school.

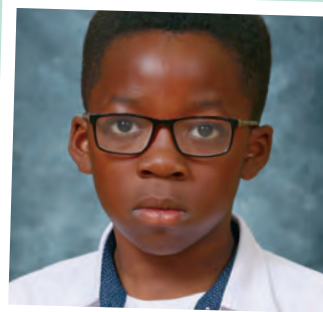
If I could fix a world problem, I'd choose:
World hunger, because people starve when they can't afford food

My hero or role model: **My dad**

In a future with peace and unity, I see:
A hospital or place where everybody is healthy

It's important to be friends with different kids because:
You can learn different things about them.

If I could create a haven, it would be:
A park with water slides, trampolines, seesaws, and a pool



Juliet Lua B.

Age: 10

I live in: **North Carolina, U.S.**

I want to be: **Singer**

This career interests me because:
I love singing. It makes me feel happy and joyful.

Favorite animals:
Panda, and I love my pet cat, Ophelia Mocha.

Places I'd love to visit:
Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Australia, and Sudan

My heroes or role models:
My mom and dad

What I love about my neighborhood:
Everybody is welcoming in our neighborhood, which makes people who just moved in feel at home!



Virtue I admire most: **Honesty**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Children's class, Feast, and Bahá'í celebrations

If I could fix a world problem, I'd choose:
To stop racism, because Bahá'u'lláh says that people are like flowers in a garden

It's important to be friends with different kids because:
No matter what skin color, accent, or eye shape you have, everybody counts. And nobody should feel excluded.

Razia C.

Age: 9

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

I want to be:
Singer and a nanny

This career interests me because:
[Singing is] fun . . . I want my songs to encourage others to sing. And I love taking care of babies.

Hobbies or sports:
Cheerleading, gymnastics, basketball, and Scouts



Virtue I admire most:
Justice

Favorite Bahá'í activity:
Children's class

Favorite animals:
Capybara, kittens, puppies, koala

I like to help people by:
Caring for them and standing up for them

My hero or role model:
My friend Ruby. She is always kind to me and other people. She is generous, responsible, and safe at school . . .

If I could fix a world problem, I'd choose:
Bullying, because no one wants to feel sad

An activity that created joy and unity:
Learning in Spanish Club with people

Noble J.

Age: 8

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

I want to be: **Paleontologist**

This career interests me because:
I love dinosaurs.

Virtue I admire most:
Truthfulness

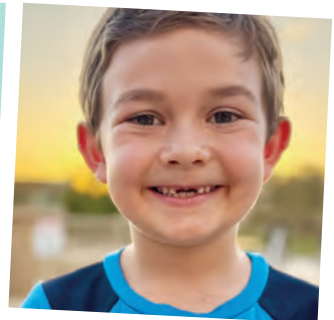
Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Children's class, Feast

My hero or role model:
Martin Luther King Jr., because he worked to stop racism

A favorite food: **Lasagna**

It's important to be friends with different kids because:
Diversity and being together are good things.

If I could fix a world problem, I'd choose:
I would stop war, because I don't want people to fight.



Favorite animals:
Dogs, cats, and horses

In a future with peace and unity, I see:
Everyone sharing and not fighting

If I could create a haven, it would be:
Very comfy, with lots of doors so every kid could come inside, and it would have an indestructible force field so no intruders could come in. Inside, there would be indestructible windows, and a study room with lots of different types of books.

HAVENS OF HARMONY

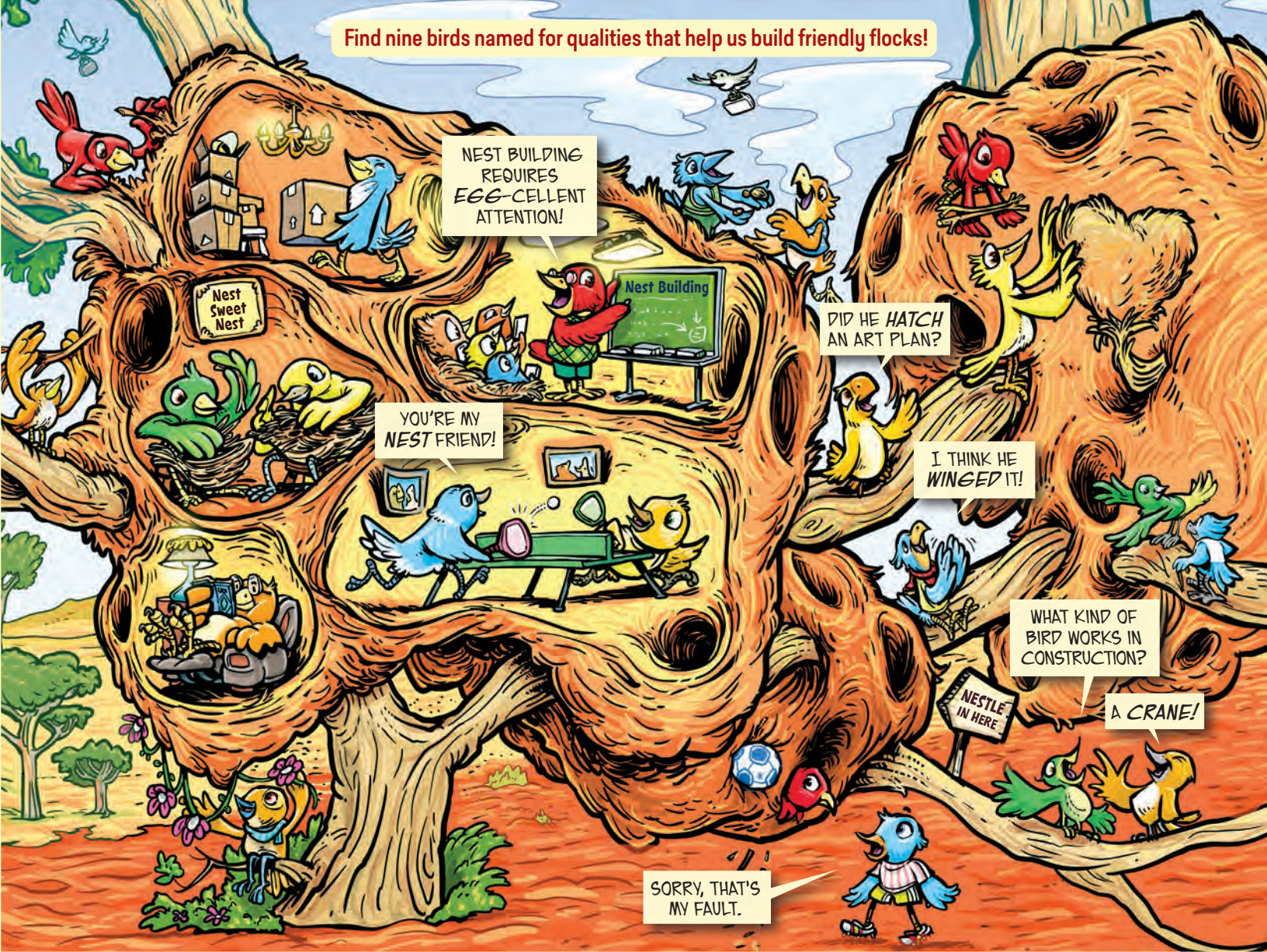


Can you picture a nest filled with 400 birds? In southern Africa, sociable weavers build *huge* homes up to 20 feet (6 m) long! On the outside, the nest looks like a giant haystack made of dried grass and twigs. Inside are dozens of cozy chambers lined with soft plants, fur, and feathers to nestle into. These shelters can last in the harsh desert for up to 100 years! Sociable weavers also share their nest with other species.

They all help each other look out for danger and find food. Like these incredible birds, we can build unity in our own flocks. If your sibling starts to squabble, take a deep breath and try to make peace. If you see a kid who looks lonely, invite them to hang out. Find things you have in common. When we work together with patience, we can weave havens of harmony!



Find nine birds named for qualities that help us build friendly flocks!





ASK A SPACE SCIENTIST

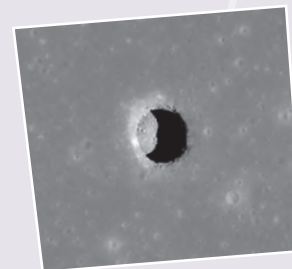
Curious kids asked questions, and we sent them to a space scientist. Send your questions to brilliant@usbnc.org (with your name and age).

Is it true we can build lunar research bases on the Moon in cooled lava tubes? If so, how would you build one? – Kaya, age 12

Hi, Kaya,
The temperatures on the Moon have swings of 540° F (300° C). The Moon has no atmosphere or magnetic field to shield astronauts from harmful radiation, such as cosmic rays. Astronauts need protection from this harsh environment. If scientists discover caves or lava tubes they can enter from the surface, the tubes could house a lunar base. Then astronauts wouldn't need to bring heavy shielding from Earth.

We haven't discovered these underground shelters for certain, but there is one place, **Mare Tranquillitatis** (Sea of Tranquility), that radar images suggest has a large underground cave. With the walls of a lava tube providing protection from the lunar environment, a Moon base could be built inside it using inflatable habitats. These habitats have strong fabric walls that inflate like a football. When inflated, they're big enough for astronauts to live and work in. But when they're launched from Earth, they fold up and fit on the launch vehicle.

– Dr. Steve Scotti, *Brilliant Star's* STEAMS Education Advisor and a Distinguished Research Associate at NASA Langley Research Center



Lunar pits like this one may lead to caves below the Moon's surface that could shelter future astronauts.



Inflatable habitats, like these studied in Nevada in 2011, could one day house astronauts below the Moon's surface.

COSMIC QUIZ

Deoxyribonucleic acid is found in every cell of plants and animals on Earth. It carries instructions about how to grow the organism. We abbreviate it as:

- A) D&D
- B) DNA
- C) DIY
- D) DVD



Two strands of deoxyribonucleic acid twist around each other in a shape called a double helix.

ON THE WEB



Scan the QR code with a smartphone for our interview

with Christina Koch and details about the Artemis II spacecraft.



✧ A Path to Kindness ✧

There can be so much drama at school! The insults, the criticizing, the outright *bullying*. I get so mad, I'm tempted to jump in—but that won't help. So I made a pact with my friends to say good things to *at least* five people every day. It didn't work magic overnight, but slowly, the happy vibes started spreading.

Kindness might seem like a small thing, but when we spread unity and hope, we help build a new society. Little by little, as more people bring out their spiritual qualities, the world *will* change. I think of good deeds as stepping stones. We're creating a path to a new way of life for our human family.

READ THIS QUOTE, THEN CHECK OUT THE HIGHLIGHTED WORDS BELOW.

If a small number of people gather lovingly together, with absolute **purity** and **sanctity**, with their hearts free of the world, experiencing the emotions of the **Kingdom** and the powerful magnetic forces of the Divine, and being at one in their happy fellowship, that gathering will exert its influence over all the earth. The nature of that band of people, the words they speak, the deeds they do, will **unleash** the **bestowals** of Heaven, and provide a **foretaste** of eternal **bliss**.
—'Abdu'l-Bahá

DRAW A LINE FROM EACH WORD TO ITS DEFINITION.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Purity | A. Set in motion forcefully, set free |
| 2. Sanctity | B. The world of God, heaven |
| 3. Kingdom | C. Gifts, honors |
| 4. Unleash | D. A sample of something to come |
| 5. Bestowals | E. Holiness, sacredness |
| 6. Foretaste | F. Happiness, complete joy |
| 7. Bliss | G. Innocence, moral goodness, sincerity |

What does it mean for your heart to be “free of the world”? _____

What deeds could you do to help others? _____

THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Ruhiyeh Thabet



Growing up in Oman, Ruhiyeh Thabet loved stories of Bahá'í heroes. Decades later, these stories gave her strength and courage when she was imprisoned for her faith.

Born in 1978 to a Persian family, Ruhiyeh excelled in school. She went to college in Jordan and studied English. She then taught in the United Arab Emirates and met Nadim Al-Sakkaf, a fellow Bahá'í. They married and moved to Yemen, his homeland, where they had two sons. Ruhiyeh taught English while earning a master's degree in Educational Leadership.

In 2011, Ruhiyeh launched a group to empower youth and women. After a civil war began in Yemen, persecution of Bahá'ís led to the arrest of Ruhiyeh and her husband in 2016. They were imprisoned and their home was ransacked. After a month, Ruhiyeh was released but forced to end her work and Bahá'í activities. She and her sons fled to Malaysia, and months later, her husband joined them.

They moved to Luxembourg in 2018, and Ruhiyeh co-founded a group that helps immigrants learn French and find jobs. Today, she enjoys freedom in a diverse, welcoming community.

Q: What's one of your favorite childhood memories?

A: Sitting with my twin sister as our mother read [to] us . . . I was five or six when she first read about Táhirih, who defended the equality of men and women and gave her life . . . I felt her courage and sense of justice in my heart so strongly.

Q: What was the most challenging experience for you as a kid?

A: We had an Islamic religion teacher [who] knew we were Bahá'ís and made negative comments about our faith . . . One day, she made a very negative comment and some of my classmates stood up to her and said, "That's not fair." Their courage really touched us . . .



At about age 5, Ruhiyeh (left) and her twin sister, Roya, loved listening to their mother read stories about Bahá'í heroes—especially courageous women.

Q: What experience set you on the path to your current career?

A: [When I was a teen], my friends would talk about how their siblings failed in school, and mainly it was English [that] was difficult . . . They were very afraid that their parents will punish them. I felt in my heart that I could help them . . . A local organization offered a hall where my sister and I could offer classes for English . . . We had over 100 children in the class every summer . . . We [created] games to teach them the subject . . . We felt so joyful, especially when they passed the exam . . . That [motivated] me to stay in the field of education . . .

Questions and
Answers with an
Inspirational Bahá'í



Above: Ruhiyeh and her husband, Nadim (center), with sons Sam (far left) and Youssef (far right).

Left: In her office at Excellence for Integration and Development (EFID), Ruhiyeh interviews a young woman to determine what training and support can help her settle and find work in Luxembourg.

Q: In 2016, you were imprisoned because you're a Bahá'í. What was that like?

A: It was a very, very frightening experience . . . It was very cold [in the prison] . . . We got terrible food that would always make us sick . . . [Guards would] bang on the door at 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. and call you for [questioning] . . . No one in the family even knew where we were . . . I was so worried about our children . . . I prayed so hard in prison that God would bring them comfort, peace, and calm . . . [Later] we tried to explain, when they went to school and it was all over the news, it's nothing to be ashamed of. It's something to be proud of. We were not in prison because we did something wrong, but because we refused to stop believing in love, unity, peace, and justice . . . This experience . . . made them more resilient and courageous to be champions of justice and service . . .

Q: What is Excellence For Integration and Development (EFID)?

A: When we left Yemen and we started our new life in Luxembourg, I often thought about all the people in the world who, like us, had to leave their homes because of racism, war, or deprivation of their basic human rights . . . We didn't see them as refugees, but [we saw] them as friends and people with so much talent and potential . . . [We] equip them with skills and knowledge to . . . contribute to their new society . . . Being a refugee is not who you are. It's not your true identity . . . They come with a desire and hope to make a better future . . . So our job is to empower them [to] improve life for themselves and their children.

Q: This issue of *Brilliant Star* is about creating a new society based on justice and unity. What can kids do to help?

A: Join a junior youth group and invite their friends . . . Read the needs of their community. Fixing, planting, gardening, cleaning up the neighborhood, preparing meals for people in need, consulting to solve a problem . . . Service [can be] visiting neighbors to pray together, play music, read inspirational stories . . . Doing things together binds people, rather than just talking about it.

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

A: Remind yourself that you are a noble soul created by God to know Him . . . and help make the world kinder . . . The world can be very noisy . . . Find that little space of quiet in your heart every day to pray and ask yourself, what kind of a person does God want me to become? How can I fulfill my full potential?

JOURNEY OF SERVICE

Imagine you're getting ready for a road trip. You pack your suitcase, grab some snacks, and make a playlist to keep everyone pumped. Then you hit the road.

In a similar way, a service project takes planning. It helps to work with a team. You can also consult with **institutions**—groups that help your community.

One institution is the Local Spiritual Assembly (or LSA). It's a group of nine Bahá'ís who are elected to guide

the community. They focus on everyone in the city, not only the Bahá'ís. They may have ideas and resources for your project, whether you're cleaning a park or planning a picnic. They can also lend a hand if you run into problems.

Like a road trip, service can be a fun way to meet new people and make great memories. With teamwork, you can map a project full of adventure and joy!

At each stop on the road, write your ideas for planning a service project.

Valley of Vision

Who would you like to work with?
Who can you talk with to share ideas?

Set a goal. How can you help bring peace and happiness to your community?

How can you use your skills and interests to be helpful? Make a to-do list and a timeline.

Reach out to family and friends and create a diverse team.

Teamwork Trail

What prayers or guidance inspire you?

Peak of Prayer

Read letters from the Universal House of Justice and National Spiritual Assembly. Choose a quote or virtues to focus on.

Name of your project:

When you hope to complete it:

Celebrate small and big victories for your team! Reflect on your learning. What would you change next time?

What are challenges you might face?
How would you handle them?

Talking about possible problems ahead of time helps you keep your cool if things get tough.

What tools or support will you need?
Where can you get them?

Borrow things or ask for donations from friends or businesses.

Service Summit

Hills of Hope

Tower of Tools

SHINING LAMP

A Bahá'í who served humanity with radiance

Ellsworth Blackwell (1902–1978)

By Gail Radley



One summer day in August 1937, about 400 people were expected to tour the Bahá'í House of Worship in Illinois, U.S. Ellsworth Blackwell and other volunteer guides were asked to come, and Ellsworth showed up.

But when he arrived at the temple, he was stopped from guiding. Later, he was told that White guests might be offended by having Black guides. It must have been upsetting to be asked to help and then to be turned away.

Ellsworth was born in Mississippi in 1902. He studied at University of Iowa, then worked for a Chicago newspaper. After living in both the North and South, he knew that racial prejudice was a big problem in the U.S. One day, a coworker invited him to a Bahá'í meeting. Ellsworth wasn't interested in religion, but the Bahá'í Faith seemed different. The Bahá'í teachings promise a world where everyone is respected and treated fairly. He hoped to bring this vision to life and became a Bahá'í in 1934.

Speaking Up for Justice

Ellsworth knew only allowing White guides at the temple was wrong. He wrote to Shoghi Effendi, who was the Faith's leader at the time. Ellsworth asked if Bahá'í beliefs should change due to others' prejudice. He wrote, "When are we to begin to live the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh?"

Shoghi Effendi knew many White Bahá'ís didn't yet understand race unity. He said this would change and that Black Bahá'ís should "arise and serve and teach, confident of the future . . ."

Ellsworth also wrote to the Local Spiritual

Assembly that led the Chicago Bahá'ís. There was no written rule against Black guides, they said. Soon after, Ellsworth was elected as the first Black member of the Assembly. He helped bring Black guides to the temple and later served on the National Spiritual Assembly for four years.

International Service

In 1940, Ellsworth made a bold decision. He left his job and moved to Haiti with his wife, Ruth, to teach the Faith. Ellsworth didn't speak French, the local language, which made it hard to find work. So he loaded his car with charcoal (for cooking) and drove around selling it to earn a little money.

Haiti had no Bahá'ís when the Blackwells arrived. People soon flocked to Ellsworth. Ruth said they were "spellbound" when he spoke with help from a translator. After one meeting, about 100 people followed him out, asking to become Bahá'ís. They wanted to help build a better world, too. Shoghi Effendi called the Blackwells' work "praiseworthy" and "unforgettable." In 1974, Ellsworth reported that Haiti had 3,000 Bahá'ís!

The Blackwells moved to Africa in 1975. They went to Madagascar and then to what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In 1978, Ellsworth fell ill and passed away. A shining monument marks his grave in the DRC.

"We're going to build a world without war," Ellsworth once said in a talk. Everywhere he and Ruth went, they helped to create that world. They knew it would take a lot of time and effort. But Ellsworth didn't get discouraged. He was confident in the future. "No one can stop it," he declared.

STRONG IN SPIRIT

By Nasim Mansuri • Art by C. Aaron Kreader

What do you do to build your physical strength? Play on a sports team? Go on long hikes? Head to the gym?

As with physical muscles, you can build your spiritual muscles. Stretch your friendliness by saying hi to someone new. Jump into new skills like cooking a family dinner.

But working out can be tiring! You *might* think about giving up. Make your best effort, and take time to rest, pray,

and meditate. Ask friends and family to cheer you on.

At the gym, exercising one muscle can strengthen others. It's the same with spiritual qualities. If you're friendly to new people, you could boost your confidence and listening skills. As you try new tasks at home, you might decide to explore a new sport too.

The whole world is your spiritual gym! What muscles do you want to build first?

Fill in the blanks to complete tips on how to build your spiritual muscles!

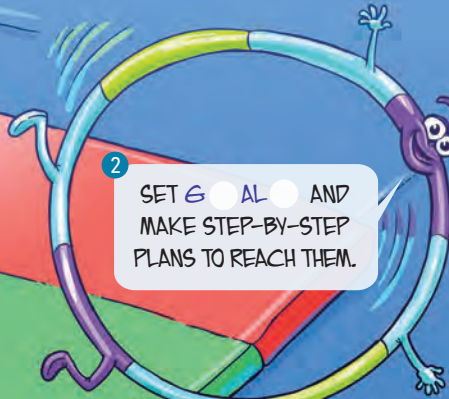
1 BE C **○** R I O **○** S ABOUT THE WORLD AROUND YOU AND ASK QUESTIONS.

C **○** n f i **○** n t **○** Cone



2 SET **○** A L **○** AND MAKE STEP-BY-STEP PLANS TO REACH THEM.

H **○** p **○** f u l **○** Hula Hoop



3 E N **○** O U **○** A **○** E YOUR FRIENDS WHEN THEY FACE A CHALLENGE.

K **○** o o d **○** Kettlebell



4 MAKE YOUR BEST EFF **○** R **○**, AND TRY TO LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES.

Ex **○** e l l e **○** t **○** Exercise Step



5 STAY C **○** L M WHEN THINGS DON'T GO AS PLANNED.

Fl **○** x i b l **○** Foam Roller



6 C **○** L **○** B R A T **○** EVEN SMALL STEPS TOWARD SUCCESS.

J **○** y f **○** l **○** Jump Rope



7 TAKE TIME TO M **○** D I T **○** T ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING.

M **○** n d **○** u l **○** Mat



8 TRY NEW THINGS! YOU MAY DISCOVER A NEW **○** K **○** L L.

M **○** t i v **○** e d **○** Medicine Ball



9 THINK OF EVERY CHALLENGE AS A CHANCE TO GET **○** B **○** T T **○** R AT SOMETHING.

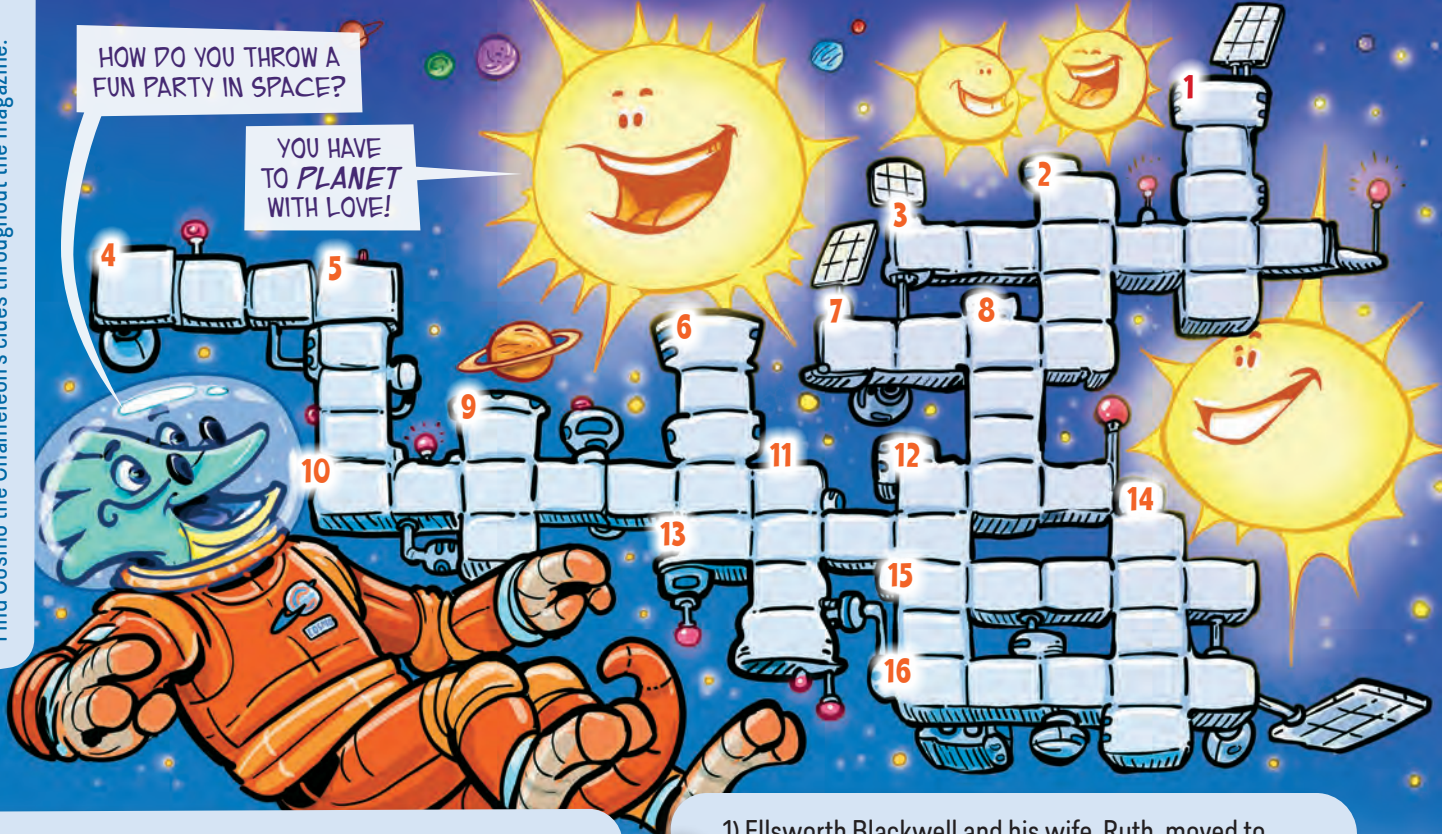
W **○** s e **○** Weights



Find Cosmo the Chameleon's clues throughout the magazine.

HOW DO YOU THROW A FUN PARTY IN SPACE?

YOU HAVE TO *PLANET* WITH LOVE!



ACROSS

- 3) In tough times, stop, take a deep _____, and think of good things. (p. 29)
- 4) Baran and Noble both like these animals. (pp. 16, 18)
- 7) When we feel _____, we can think more clearly. (p. 10)
- 10) As a kid, Ruhiyeh Thabet loved to hear _____ about Bahá'í heroes. (p. 22)
- 12) When we spread unity and hope, we help build a _____ society. (p. 21)
- 13) A Local Spiritual Assembly is a group of _____ Bahá'ís who are elected to guide the community. (p. 24)
- 15) In consultation, you _____ your thoughts but don't insist that *your* way is best. (p. 3)
- 16) If you see wind turbines or _____ panels, green energy is at work! (p. 11)

DOWN

- 1) Ellsworth Blackwell and his wife, Ruth, moved to this country in 1940. (p. 26)
- 2) Muji Vader loves the _____ aspect of basketball. (p. 8)
- 5) Building community is about taking small _____ to include more people in your life. (p. 2)
- 6) _____ energy is safer for people and the Earth. (p. 11)
- 8) In consultation, you start with _____ and listen to everyone's ideas. (p. 3)
- 9) With teamwork, you can map a service project full of adventure and _____! (p. 24)
- 11) Razia and Juliet both love to _____. (p. 18)
- 12) Sociable weavers build _____ that can be 20 feet (6 m) long and hold 400 birds! (p. 19)
- 14) Lots of kids say they feel happier when they take a _____ from screens. (p. 13)

FROM OUR MAILBOX



I like reading the Lightning and Luna comics. I also liked learning more about the story of Zaynab* and how she sacrificed for her friends and family. [Themes I'd choose are] learning how to love, peaceful preparation, arising with radiance, and forging friendships with forgiveness.

— Zaynab C., age 7, Bermuda

ANSWERS

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

Page 3: Cone at CR, Heart at TR, Licorice at BL, Sprinkles at TR, Candy Stick at BR, Wafers at CL, Door at BL, Pretzel at TC, Gumdrops at CL

Page 5: "Through each and every one of the verses which the Pen of the Most High hath revealed, the doors of love and unity have been unlocked and flung open..."

Page 11: Democratic Republic of the Congo, African Elephants

Page 13: A) 3, B) 7, C) 9, D) 2, E) 1, F) 8, G) 4, H) 6, I) 5

Page 19: Cob at TR, Calla at BL, Geo at TC, Hosi at BR, Jax at BR, Kep at TR, Oric at CL, Pomma at TC, Riva at CR

Page 20: B) DNA

Page 21: 1) G, 2) E, 3) B, 4) A, 5) C, 6) D, 7) F

Page 27: 1) Confident Cone, curious; 2) Hopeful Hula Hoop, goals; 3) Kind Kettlebell, Encourage; 4) Excellent Exercise Step, effort; 5) Flexible Foam Roller, calm; 6) Joyful Jump Rope, Celebrate; 7) Mindful Mat, meditate; 8) Motivated Medicine Ball, skill; 9) Wise Weights, better



Build a Refuge

A-MAZE-ING
ADVENTURE

Picture yourself in a magical treehouse, nestled in a cozy corner by a glowing fireplace. Outside, it's stormy, and the winds are howling. But your treehouse is a refuge where you feel safe and happy.

Life is full of surprises, and that can worry us. But we can create a refuge with our thoughts and actions. In tough times, stop, take a deep breath, and think of good things—your family and friends, favorite memories, or the beauty of nature.

You can spread joy by inviting others into your refuge, too. Smiling at a neighbor, helping a friend study, or sharing a treat with a classmate makes them feel cared for. Your kindness may inspire them to create their own happy place and invite others inside.

When we all show compassion and love, our magical treehouses can become a global village. Start building yours to help create a more peaceful future!



In this magical treehouse, help the kids find their way to the treetop party!



START

"Each one of you has been given the opportunity of becoming a tree yielding abundant fruits . . . The verdure and foliage of spiritual growth are appearing in great abundance in the gardens of human hearts . . . Strive to attain a station of absolute love one toward another." —'Abdu'l-Bahá



Brilliant Star

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