

HONORING OUR RIVER:

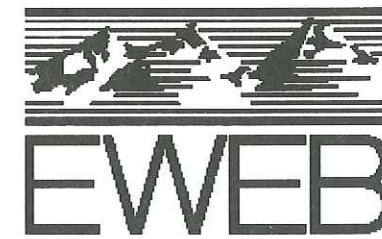
2002

A STUDENT
ANTHOLOGY
COLLECTED FROM
THROUGHOUT THE
WILLAMETTE RIVER
WATERSHED

Sponsored by Eugene Water & Electric Board, Portland General Electric, The Willamette Restoration Initiative, Wildwood/Mahonia and SOLV.

Honoring Our River 2002: A Student Anthology

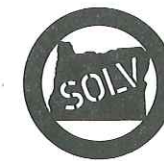
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Working to preserve
this treasure called Oregon

**WILDWOOD
MAHONIA**



Honoring Our River: A Student Anthology began as an effort to stimulate an awareness of an important but fragile resource, the Willamette River. Our goal has been to foster basin-wide participation from students of all ages and disciplines. This project is designed to nurture respect and appreciation for the river system that connects all basin dwellers and provide a showcase for creative student writing that honors our river.

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the Willamette Watershed educators and writers who donated their time and expertise to the anthology through their participation as editors, guest writers and/or judges.

Rick Bastasch
John Daniel
Carol Dillin
John Femal
Francy Heffernan
Steve Jones
Craig Lesley
Kathleen Dean Moore
Nora Mylet
James H. Nicholson III
Erin Peters

A special thank you to all the schools that participated in the creation of *Honoring Our River 2002* by submitting student entries to our contest. Your contribution was crucial to building this wonderful collection of literary works from throughout the Willamette River Basin. Please refer to the inside of the back cover for a full listing of participating schools.

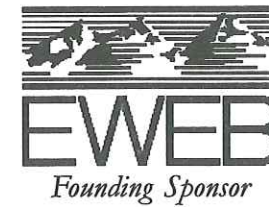
In addition, we would like to thank **John Miller & Bridget Welborn** from Wildwood/Mahonia for producing the anthology and guiding the process. Our thanks also to **Julie Schaum** from EWEB for the beautiful cover design and **Ron Cooper** for the use of his amazing photographs.

The Willamette River Watershed is home to two-thirds of all Oregonians. The health of this precious natural resource is in great need of protection. Students, as well as other basin citizens, need to see themselves as part of a basin-wide community, sharing both the costs and the benefits of a healthy river system.

For more information on how to protect our watershed call the Oregon Watershed Help Line:
(toll free): 888-854-8377

For more information on the Honoring Our River project contact
Bridget Welborn at 503-585-8789 or email: bridgetma@aol.com

A Word from Our Sponsors



The Eugene Water & Electric Board appreciates the value of the Willamette Watershed and the vital role it plays in the vitality and health of the citizens to whom we provide water and electricity. The waters of the Willamette have been the cornerstone of our success over the last 90 years and we believe they must be preserved and enhanced to insure the success of our community in the future. There is no better way to illuminate the importance of this vision than to hear our students speak their hearts with words of hope for a healthy and vibrant river for generations to come.

Randy Berggren, General Manager
Eugene Water & Electric Board



Portland General Electric

Portland General Electric is committed to working collaboratively with those we serve to build a sustainable Oregon. As a part of that commitment, we are pleased to sponsor the Honoring Our Rivers Anthology. The work of these young authors speaks to the importance of rivers and watersheds in creating healthy, vibrant, sustainable communities. We thank them for sharing these wonderful messages that touch our hearts, as well as our minds. Their willingness to share their passion and thoughts, and the excellent work they have created, are valued gifts to our community.

Carol Dillin, Director of Corporate
Communications & Community Affairs
Portland General Electric



The Wildwood/Mahonia group of companies is proud to be part of this wonderful publication. Our activities in agriculture, watershed restoration and urban development are guided by the principles of quality, sustainability and community involvement. The work of Willamette Valley students and the entries from China show a remarkable common concern for their rivers and the acknowledgment that they have a shared environment and a shared future.

John D. Miller, President
Wildwood/Mahonia



Once again, in what is becoming a Willamette tradition, Honoring Our River yields abundant proof of the depth of feeling we harbor for our river. "HOR" brings us encouraging news on at least two fronts. First, the children of our Willamette watershed—and from watersheds far away—care deeply for river places. That means if we apply ourselves and become the stewards we hope to be, the land and waters we pass on will be in very good hands. Second, art and thought are alive and well in young minds. The Willamette Restoration Initiative is very privileged to have helped frame this youthful stream of words for your viewing pleasure.

Rick Bastasch, Executive Director
Willamette Restoration Initiative



Working to preserve
this treasure called Oregon

SOLV, a 33 year old statewide nonprofit founded by Governor Tom McCall, builds community through volunteer action. It is committed to involving members of the Oregon community in learning about and improving watershed health. Honoring Our River is a wonderful way for students to share their thoughts and experiences about the Willamette Watershed. Through their poems and essays, the rest of us can be inspired to preserve this treasure called Oregon.

Jack McGowan, Executive Director
SOLV

Table of Contents

Prologue

Acknowledgments

A Word from Our Sponsors

Student Works, Part 1

Homage to Our River, Claire Alano	5
The Willamette, Kevin Bays	5
River of Ours, Sean Keddy	6
My River of Hope, Rebecca Larrabee	6
Memories of Peace, Makenzie Kleutsch	6
Trees, William Heint-Hagerty	7
Evergreen Forest, Chrissy Erguiza	7
Trees, Maria Sandoval	7
Fishing on a River, Jameson Warner	8
Water, Elliot Goodrich	8
Memories, Patrick Mulligan	8
River Symphony, Derek Peterson	9
I Hear the River Singing, Justin Zacek	9
Willamette, Brittany Penaflo	10
Song of the River, Scott Buche	10
River Princess, Aimee Duey	11
Queen River, Amber Barnett	11
My Favorite Day on the River, Dan Johnson	12

A River Has Many Voices

If I am a Drop, Guo Yujie	13
Chang Jiang River: Our LIFE, QinMu	14
Until I Saw the Sea, Gaopeng	14
River's Noise, Alla Mikityuk	15

Student Works, Part II

Crystal Ball, Sarah Koski	16
The Willamette River, Emily Stock	16
The River, Jennifer Smith	16
I Know, Connor Webber	17
Drawing, Tom Ahn	17
Untitled, Sarah Shintaku	18
A Dream for the Future, Sarah Shintaku	18
Wild Geese on the Willamette, Sarah E. Linn	19
Heron Moon, Alexandra Cosima Lewis	20
Drawn to the River, Sarah Koski	20
The Hawk, Sean McKeen	21
The Willamette at Night, A. Pickett	22
Sleepy River, David Standiford	22
The Rivers, Leonid Garbaruk	23
Mother River, Scott Johnson	24
The Willamette River and its Children, Hannah Kaplan	24
Running Riverside, Savannah Westover	25
Pulsing Vein, Scott Bettencourt	25
Breathless, Jennifer Haley	25

Invited Oregon Writers

The Spirit of Rivers & excerpts from <i>Oregon Rivers</i> , John Daniel	27
Excerpt from <i>Winterkill</i> , Craig Lesley	29
How to Love a River, Kathleen Dean Moore	32
Willamette Truths & Consequences, Rick Bastasch	33

Student Works, Part III

Flooding, Charles Scott	34
What a River Is, Zach Wahl	34
The River's Treasures, Josie Chaffee	34
Fish Creek, Lilly Irons	35
I am the River, William Taylor	35
I am, Sujung Lim	36
If I were a River, Kyle Fisher	36
The Place We Call Home, Tabby Koller	37
Honoring Our River, Rebekka Zuendorf	38
River of Sorrow, Geoffrey Wallace	39
The River Gives Us, Emma Young & Amber Newman	39
I Have a Dream, Nicholas Baurer	39
Untitled, Maleah Hammons	40
Dear River, Adrienne Teebken-Watts	41
Willamette River: Before and Now, Lindsey Tucker	41
River's Quilt, Mary Beth Phillips	42
Come, Audrey Rioux-Killoran	42
When I Go to the River, Aaron McLeod	42

Ripples & Eddies	43
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Index

Participating Schools

Student works, part I



Homage to Our River

A tranquil river crystal clear,
Gently flows both far and near.
Through the valley rushing free,
A taste of Oregon for all to see.

The endless banks of the river wide,
Food and shelter they do provide,
Plants and animals cease to share,
The pure cleansing water and cool rushing air.

Children play in the water as boats pass by,
Magnificent birds soar overhead in the sky,
Fishermen patiently wait for a bite,
The salmon are ready to put up a fight.

Our river's importance will never subside,
As civilization greatens and creatures abide,
Preservation of the river incessantly thrives,
To keep the spirit of Oregon alive.

*Claire Alano
11th Grade*

The Willamette

A house of heron
A nutria's keep
The Willamette River
Is of what I speak
Of its swift current
Filled with kayakers pride
Leads in the end
To the ocean's tide
In the Willamette
Its ripples and waves
Reflect the light
In a stretched sunny haze
The lullaby
The river sings
Is so beautiful
Your mind grows wings
It's topped off with silence
Of unnatural sound
Just the chirp of a bird
Or a deer's many bounds

*Kevin Bays
7th Grade*

River of Ours

The river flows
The wind blows
They co-exist in harmony

The chilly river nips my toes
She's a part of nature's family

She's there in the rain, the heat and the hail
She's a very fun place especially to sail

It's a very great place
The river it is

A place to love, to keep and to give

*Sean Keddy
7th Grade*

My River of Hope

I sit on a smooth gray stone, dangling my feet in the cool waters of my river. Little fish play happily at my feet. The water is humming her soft song to me as I gaze at the bright green forest. A small current of warm clear water sweeps up to my knees. I take a long deep breath as I look at the crystal white water softly sweeping the green, flower-filled banks of my river. A breeze of warm cool air brushes against me. I feel calm sitting in the shade of the weeping willow trees and birds singing near me. I visit my river often but never do I see her without her rushing pure waters of hope. For a long time I sit by my river thinking of many things, but what I like most is that she is never hopeless in life, still strong, still flowing before me.

-The Willamette River

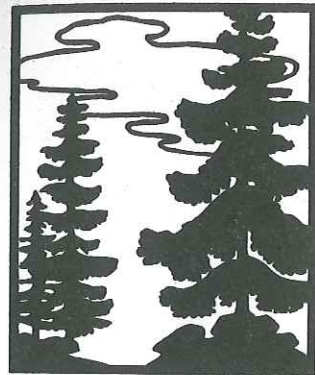
*Rebecca Larrabee
4th Grade*



Memories of Peace

Walk down the pathway
Towards the center of all life
Rushing body of magic
Forever flowing to the sea
Carrying with it
Memories.
Memories of wonder
Memories of enchantment
Memories of peace.
Watch the heron fly forth
Scrumptious dinner in its beak
Watch the fish leap
To the sky
Hear the fireflies buzzing
Their light dancing in the air
Yes.
This is certainly where
Memories of peace
Are born.

*Makenzie Kleutsch
8th Grade*



Evergreen Forest

Evergreen forest all around
 Bugs, critters on the ground
 Birds singing soaring by
 Birds who fly strongly in the sky
 Rivers so peaceful, peaceful and strong
 Animals and habitats where they belong
 Leaves so bright red, orange, yellow
 Evergreen forest so quiet and mellow

Chrissy Erguiza
 6th Grade

Trees

Trees are like clouds,
 they make images
 first I see a tree, then I see a triangle
 wait, now I see a hanglider. So remember when
 you look at a clump of trees. Look at it carefully,
 you may just be lucky enough to see anything
 you want, if you use your brain.

William Heinl-Hagerty
 4th Grade

Trees

Trees...Beauty
 Colorful shapes moving in the wind
 Raindrops dancing gracefully
 Birds singing happily on a branch

Trees...Things
 Elegant furniture
 Beautiful carvings
 Paper for writing thoughts from the heart

Trees...Life
 Food for our bodies
 Medicinal wonders
 Exchanging breaths for life

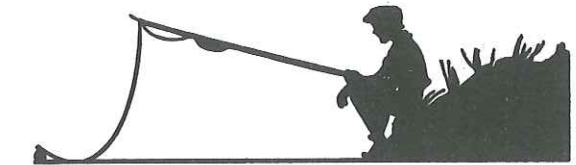
Maria Sandoval
 7th Grade

F ascinating
 I nspiring in spring
 S ilver salmon
 H ushing hissing haven
 I ntriguing
 N octurnal
 G oing gone

O utstanding
 N ever stopping
 A ware of salmon

R ushing
 I nteresting
 V ast
 E ver going
 R iver

Jameson Warner
 4th Grade



Water

W ho is that I hear?
 A dding food to the earth with wisdom for you.
 T aking and giving back. Water.
 E ntering magic to the earth.
 R enewing life with a sweet, cool taste.

Elliot Goodrich
 3rd Grade

Memories

My fondest memories of my Grandfather are when we fished together. We didn't worry about anything; all our worries were washed away with the current. We fished all over Oregon, on the Deschutes, the McKenzie and the Willamette. My favorite fishing was in Central Oregon on a lake called Craine Prairie. We camped nearby and had a great time even though we only caught two fish. But now our rivers are being threatened by pollution. I have great memories with my grandfather and I want other people to also have these sort of memories, so protect our rivers please.

Patrick Mulligan
 11th Grade

River Symphony

The river is a symphony
Playing on a stage of sand, rock and pebbles.
The steady beat of the drummer pounds at the bottom of the waterfalls.
Chimes play in a small creek,
Tinkle, tinkle.
A flute plays in the rapids with the saxophones and trumpet.
Sometimes so soft you can barely hear it,
But when they play together,
It is a spectacular melody.
A solo violin joins in,
Sleek and quick glides the salmon bow.
There is no admission needed,
It plays freely,
Not for thousands
But one —
A lonely fisherman.

Derek Peterson
7th Grade



I Hear The River Singing

I hear the river singing,
I hear the tadpoles pinging,
I hear the frogs hopping,
I hear salmon eggs dropping,
I hear salmon swimming,
I hear water bugs skimming,
I hear the water crashing,
I hear the fish dashing,
I hear the river singing,
I hear the sounds ringing.

Justin Zacek
2nd Grade

Willamette

I sat on its bank and listened to the song it sang.
I watched it by night.
It sparkled like an evening gem.
I wondered how it came to be.
It spoke to me.
The cries I heard came from the soft currents.
The soft currents played the river's song.
The wind hit my face.
It was time to leave. . .
My gem. . .
My song. . .
The Willamette.

Brittany Penaflo
4th Grade



Song of the River

As the raindrops vanish from the river's face,
They make a sound that dances above the broken water,
Singing as if Nature herself was upon the rocks and sand,
Of the river's stage.
She sings a song that sways with the unopened lilies,
You peer into the depths of the river's soul,
Tunes of its age-old performances come afloat,
In a beat heard by the descendents of nature.

Scott Buche
7th Grade

River Princess

The river is Cinderella,
With her dazzling dress that sparkles in the sunshine
And glass slippers
Running away from Earth.
Cinderella's diamond necklace shimmers in the shadows of trees
That rise in the sky above her.
In the daytime,
Cinderella dances in her shiny gown.
While sleeping at night,
She sings a lullaby.

Aimee Duey
7th Grade



Queen River

The river is Queen of life.
Her gown of green and blue sparkles like glitter in the sunlight.
The river's ladies-in-waiting and servants hold her silky gown,
As she splashes a greeting on the banks of her people.
The queen is like a music box playing the river's opera.
Her majesty's creatures lay upon her gown like rhinestones.
As the river reaches her final destination, her people greet her
With a curtsy and a bow,
Their life,
Their queen.

Amber Barnett
7th Grade

My favorite day on the river

It was Mel's birthday today, August 27. Today he was 14. I was here with him at the river near his house. He wanted me to go swimming and I agreed, but I didn't know we would come here, to this river. I thought we would be going to the pool in town, but I didn't complain. It was his birthday, and he was my friend, I wanted him to be happy and I think he was.

We sat up on a small cliff, rather a ledge that overlooked the rushing river and we were about to go down the dirt trail and get into the water, when Mel proposed another idea.

"Hey, why don't we jump in?"

"From here?" I said.

"Yeah, why not?" Mel said.

"It's a twenty foot drop, at least" I answered.

Mel put his hand to his chin in a thoughtful position. Maybe he was going to change his mind. I certainly did not want to jump, maybe I was scared, but so what?

"I still think we should jump."

I let out a grunt. I really didn't want to jump. It was a risk, I knew there were rocks below, what if I didn't jump far enough from the ledge and missed the water? I'd at least break a limb.

I saw Mel looking down over the cliff. He had a big grin on his face. He took ten paces backward, ran up and jumped off, pulling his knees to his chest in the air, he was attempting a cannonball. I watched in amazement, you have to be brave to do something like that.

A giant splash came up and splattered against the rocks not more than two feet below where I was standing, at least it seemed that close. Mel was crazy, but I saw that he was having fun. After he had popped back up to the surface, he started splashing around and he gestured for me to jump in. I smiled back and mimicked what he had done. I took ten paces back and then jumped in. The river was gentle, so I didn't have to worry.

Dan Johnson
10th Grade

A River has Many Voices

Featured below are the winning entries submitted from Yichang, China. The students were asked to write about their river, the Yangtze (Chang Jiang). One of our sponsors, Wildwood/Mahonia, has developed close ties to the Yichang community while working on watershed restoration projects on the Yangtze River. There is a remarkable commonality between the Chinese and Oregon entries. These students share a common future that will be greatly determined by the quality of their common environment.

If I am a Drop

If I am a drop

I must be born in the mountain
Drop from the greenest leaf
To the beautiful lily

If I am a drop

I must grow in a stream
Fall over the stones on my way
Say "Hi" to the rocks

If I am a drop

I must be very happy
I am bright when the sun and moon shine
I am dark when trees give shade

If I am a drop

I must be very sad
I become black from the pollution
And the rubbish flows above me

If I am a drop, however

I must help the living
To clean them and to feed them
And to give all my power

If I am a drop

I must keep on going
Until one day I see the ocean
To know how small I am

Guo Yujie
No. 1 Middle School

如果我是雨滴

如果我是雨滴
我一定诞生于山间
从最青翠的叶尖
滑向美丽的百合

如果我是雨滴
我一定生长于小溪
在碎石间自由的嬉戏
向石块问候细语

如果我是雨滴
我会常常欣喜
随日月星辰闪烁
随树阴变幻暗淡

如果我是雨滴
我也会常常悲泣
当污染让我穿上黑衣
当石块压辙我的身体

但是, 如果我是雨滴
我一定会帮助生命
净化, 滋养
奉献我所有的力气

如果我是雨滴
我会继续继续
知道有一天看见大海
才知道我是如此渺小

郭玉洁
第一中学

Chang Jiang River Our LIFE

I stand near the long river and see it runs off.
I think it's too great.
You see the bridge on it.
Many ships on the long river — they go very quickly.
The high dam on the river—it's very splendid.
I love you, our mother river
Because you have educated us.
I love you, our mother river
Because you have given us life
We could thank you forever.
Look at the bridge, ship and dam
We have made you beautiful and flourishing.
Because you stand for our great motherland.

QinMu
No. 1 Middle School

直到我看见了海

直到我看见了海
我才知道
风
竟然可以这样
吹皱一池春水

直到我看见了海
我才知道
太阳
竟然可以这样
揉碎一汪蔚蓝

以前的我呀
竟然不知道
海也可以呼吸
随着潮落潮起

高鹏
第七中学

长江, 我们的生命

我站在江边, 看着它流向远方
它是如此的伟大,
看大桥从它身上横跨。
无数船只—它们迅速驶过
高高的大坝—它是如此辉煌
我爱你, 我们的母亲河
因为你养育了我们。
我爱你, 我们的母亲河
因为你给予了我们生命。
我们将永远感谢你
看那桥, 那船, 还有那大坝
我们会让你美丽, 繁华
因为你象征我们伟大的祖国

秦牧
第一中学



Until I Saw the Sea

Until I saw the sea
I did not know
that its wind
could wrinkle water so

Until I saw the sea
I never knew
the sun
could splinter a whole sea of blue

Nor did I know before
the sea breathes in and out
upon a shore

Gaopeng
No. 7 Middle School

A River has Many Voices cont.

Featured below is a poem written by a 4th grader at Woodstock Elementary School who recently moved to Portland, Oregon from the Ukraine. Alla writes about her river in the Ukraine called Dnister.

River's Noise

Rivers are different and they also have different names. I'm going to tell you about a River, called "Dnister." That river has a strange name. I will tell you about this name, and why people called it so.

A long time ago ancient people counted days making special mark on the sand next to the river and each little mark meant a day. In one day the river had high water and cleaned up all the marks on the sand. That's why the river is called "Dnister" (days cleaned up - Ukrainian).

It is the reason why people called that river "Dnister", and that's why, I think so, people made a calendar on the other place, like in books.

The River is in Ukraine, and still makes noise now!

Alla Mikityuk
4th Grade

Звуки реки

Все реки разные и у них также разные имена. Я расскажу вам о реке «Днестер». У этой реки странное имя. Я расскажу вам об этом имени, и почему люди так называют эту реку.

Давным давно, древние люди считали дни оставляя на песке знаки, и каждый знак обозначал день. Как то раз, был прилив, и река смыла все значки с песка. Поэтому люди называют реку – Днестер (стерты дни – на Украинском).

Это и есть причина, по которой люди называют реку Днестер, и поэтому люди начали делать календари в других местах, как в книгах например.

Река до сих пор бежит и находится на Украине.

Student works, part II



Crystal Ball

The gentle shore hides
In a winter masquerade
Of swollen water

Sarah Koski
12th Grade

The Willamette River

The Willamette runs wild, clear and blue,
With fish and plants, and Blue Heron too,
It winds and turns, and moves and bends,
It seems like the Willamette has no end.

Emily Stock
7th Grade

The River

Deep in the forest
Away from it all,
Flows a clear river
And a small waterfall.

The plants and the trees
All thrive on the water
That lives in the soil
Near the home of the otter.

At the edge of the river
The animals stand near,
Hoping to glimpse
All that may appear.

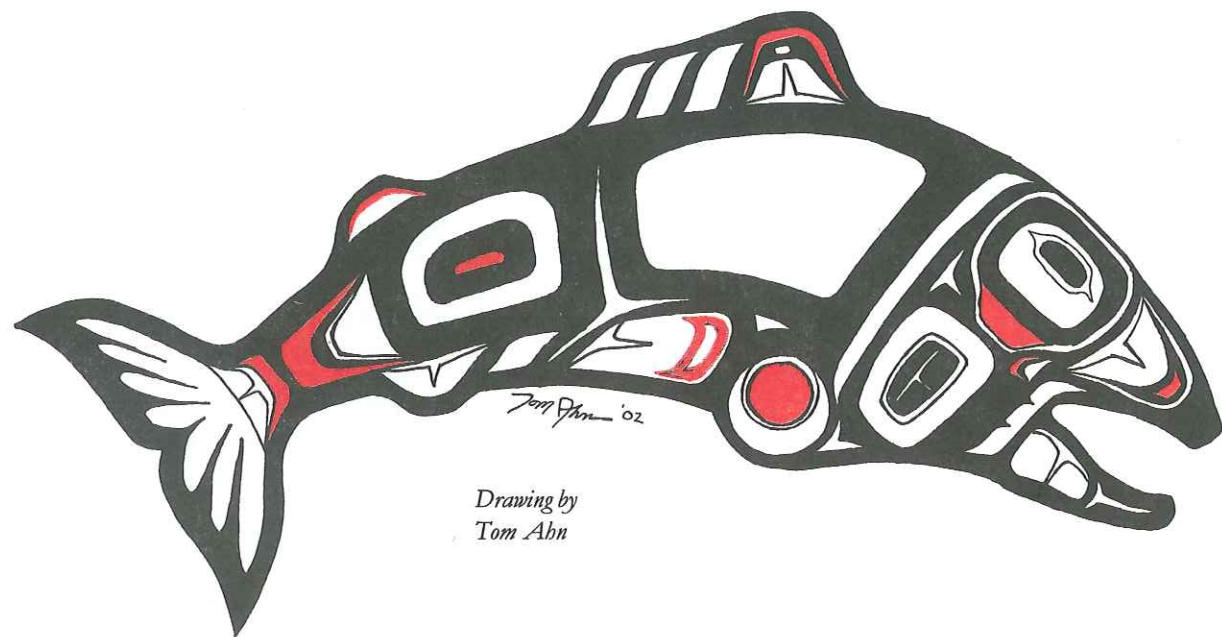
The whispering wind
Begins to whip 'round
As the life of the river
Makes not a sound

The river lays calm,
Tranquil and still,
But one little boy
Sits on a hill.

With his face towards the wind
And his heart in the sky,
He know why he is there,
To help the river survive.

For he knows it is his duty
And the animals too,
To keep the river flowing
Forever in its hue.

Jennifer Smith
10th Grade



Drawing by
Tom Ahn

I KNOW

I know that long ago, an Indian boy walked on the banks of the Willamette River. He thought that it was the most beautiful river he had ever seen.

*Connor Webber
Kindergarten*



Willamette River

The power of the valley

Contaminated

*Sarah Shintaku
11th Grade*

A Dream for the Future

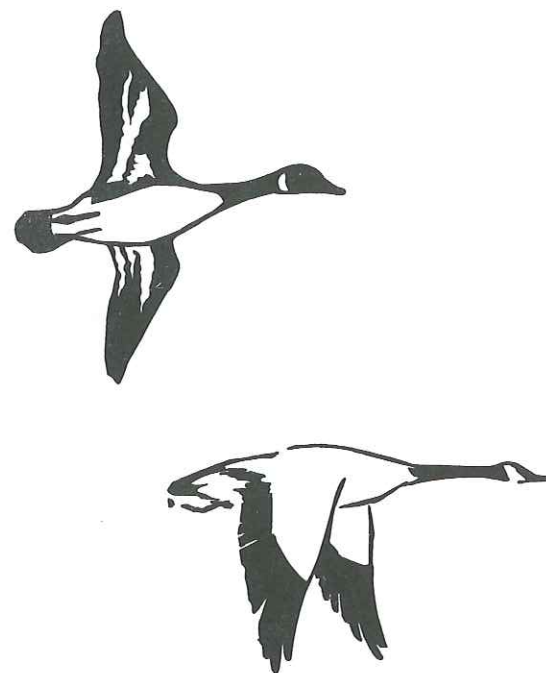
“This river used to be home to my ancestors, the Calapooia. I remember my great-grandfather telling stories of wild river fishing when he was a child. He and his father walked down to the rushing water to catch their dinner from the abundant amounts of fish. He described the surroundings as wide-open prairies and green woodlands. Today, as I walk along the same banks as my grandfather had described to me, I see an industry’s dumping ground and large cities covering the scenery. I don’t have any stories for my grandchildren. What will save the river? What can I do to help?”

*Sarah Shintaku
11th Grade*

Wild Geese on the Willamette

fold-feathered, jewel-eyed,
great-necked and postured,
using your wide feet as paddles or rudders
coasting, floating,
exchanging playful nips,
what wisdom is unknown to you,
o geese?
what calm assuredness?
what knowledge
is not as elemental
as a small pebble
or river fish
or reed in water
mystery upon mystery revealed in ripples
the reflection of sunlight
on water, on feathers, on mud banks
whether in the current
or nesting
on shore with your brethren
whether sounding your hoarse, vulgar cry
crooking your neck, beating the air
with your wings
the orange ribbon
around your clear, hard eyes
relates
the secrets of sunset
in green tufts of a riverbank
the seedlings, the quick minnows
the mudflat
the breeze

*Sarah E. Linn
College*



Heron Moon

Two blue rivers flowing to one
Bringing down banks
Past black roots

We float

Deeper than sky
Waters fall
White renewal of the Haida
Reborn over the reflection of a crescent moon
Pine dust and bark
Build the way: the guiding passage
These waters sing

Under this moon

I walk on water
With the Herons: the watchers
Waiting for blue
Flowing

Sweeter,
Stronger veins
Have never
Been so beautiful

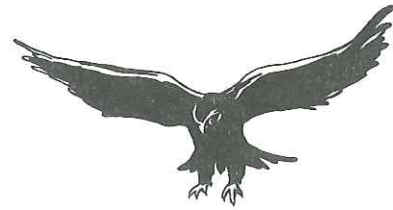
*Alexandra Cosima Lewis
10th Grade*

Drawn to the River

Show me how to
Walk upon your shore,
Without falling
Into your depths.
Placid blue water,
I crave oxygen
So that I may
Swim through your veins.
To become
A part of your undercurrent.
Let me grasp your
Ephemeral shadows,
Like a heron upon
Wild salmon.
Feather upon scale.

*Sarah Koski
12th Grade*





The Hawk

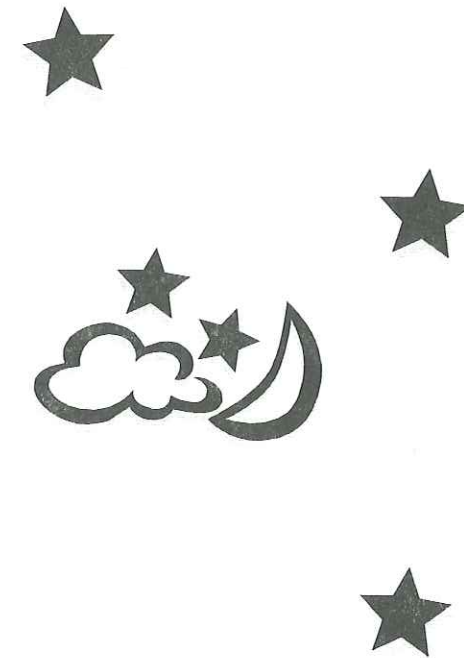
The water shines so blue
Life for animals that act so differently than those in the zoo
Trees so tall
It takes the leaves ten years to fall
I see a nest
It looks like the tree has a temporary guest
I hear something squawk
Is that a hawk?!
It lands on a branch of the tree
Looking straight at me
I give it a smile
But the hawk just stares at me awhile
Then suddenly
Acting like it'd been stung by a bee
The hawk took flight
Out of sight
I stood there
Gazing at the branch that now seemed so bare
...about to go, I take out my keys
Then hear on the breeze
A final farewell
From the hawk that I knew so well

*Sean McKeen
11th Grade*

The Willamette at Night

Late at night the
Star's brightness shines
vibrantly onto the
sparkling water of the
Willamette River. When no
one is around
Fish will jump
toads will leap
Mosquitoes will buzz around,
Irritating the fish and toads.
Then from up above, a shooting
star stretches across the
sky as far as 10 miles.
All the wildlife stops for a
moment to gaze up and
stare at the radiant sight.
The moon is just a sliver that
appears to be God's fingernail
floating in the sky,
up above.
Then we breathe,
then we pray,
and fall into a deep soothing sleep.

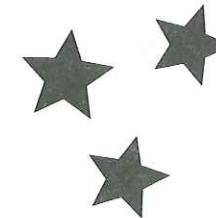
*A. Pickett
12th Grade*



Sleepy River

Resting in the summer breeze,
Remembering the floods of long ago,
She feels the current tickling her toes,
A melancholy sense fills the air,
She sits and watches,
A boy playing by her banks,
Remembering when she herself was,
A small stream,
So innocent,
Wanting to become a raging river,
But now all she wants to be,
Is a child again ...

*David Standiford
7th Grade*



The Rivers

Victor Poleznuk, a 26-year-old Ukrainian from Lutsk, Victor wanted to have a splendid adventure. His dream was to travel via canoe down the Willamette River in Oregon, U.S.A by himself during July of 2000. Victor had the money and the necessary passport to enter the United States. He had been a successful river guide-explorer of many European Rivers. A visiting American professor of history from Eugene, Oregon, had told Victor that Oregon's Willamette River had many interesting things to offer for a river enthusiast. Victor thought about the professor's suggestion to explore the Willamette River.

One day in January 2000, Victor decided to do it. He could go on vacation in July of 2000. And he did. Now he was afloat on the Willamette. He had put in on the river exactly where Oregon's McKenzie River flows into the Willamette River, flowing South to North. Victor's favorite river in the Ukraine flows North to South. As Victor floated down the Willamette, he kept thinking about his Dnipr River. How interesting it was to compare, contrast the Rivers. Which was older? Which was the cleaner? Was the Dnipr more important to the Ukrainian people than was the Willamette to the Oregonians?

The Willamette River banks had beautiful trees, flowers and Victor saw many deer, river otter, foxes, coyotes, skunks, and a strange looking rat called nutria. Now and then Victor stopped an eagle, some cormorants diving for fish- and several large blue herons. He could see salmon, trout, bass, and all kinds of frogs, salamanders living among the water.

The Willamette River had an Oregon smell to it - a blend of forest, farms and green plants, grasses and poplar trees. It was delightful!

Victor began to, in his reverie, think about how good life can be. He had the perfect job - showing people rivers, a strong memory of the Dnipr came into mind. The Dnipr River was his river. Its history, the big town it passed with its name sounding beautifully; Dnipropetrovsk.

However, the River Dnipr and Willamette flowed in different directions. Did this mean the two regions could never meet? A famous British poet (Kipling) said, "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet!" Victor thought is this true for the North and South? Could he, a Ukrainian, ever be really at home in America?

Days on the river passed. Victor discovered a part of America all by himself. When his plane lifted off for home, he could see the bright, sparkling ribbon of the Willamette River beneath his plane's wings. He knew he would see the Willamette again. He Must!

Leonid Garbaruk
12th Grade

Mother River

The river is like a mother.
It gives birth to the salmon.
That is why the salmon chose the river for its mother.
She gives so much to the salmon.
She provides food, water, oxygen, home
And protection for the salmon.
The river greets the salmon happily on their way home.
When they get home they can give back the life
They borrowed from their mother
Thanking her for the life she gave them.

Scott Johnson
7th Grade

The Willamette River and its Children

The water lies calm and still. A motorboat skims across the water like an osprey flies a few inches from the water's surface and rises triumphantly up to his nest, an ample fish dangling from his talons. A sailboat drifts lazily along the wake of the motorboat far ahead. Gulls dive and swoop, calling out raucously to one another, like two men quarreling continuously in indignation.

The river is almost iridescent; the glittering surface splashed with silver from the paintbrush of the gifted painter whose canvas is the world.

The grass on the riverbank is lush and thriving. Each blade of grass stretching up into the light and smiling in the warm rays of the sun, feet pressing down into the soft moist earth imprinting its soul into the river and the surrounding lands, as a mother, both human and animal, dedicates herself to her child.

Mighty, yet gentle, wrathful, yet caressing, indestructible, yet fragile, she watches over us, mother of the Willamette Valley.

Hannah Kaplan
4th Grade

Running Riverside

My feet pound below me,
a constant rhythm in motion.
 muscles aching.
 heart pounding.
 river flowing.
side by side we run,
flowing into infinity,
pushing each other to go on.
 peaceful tranquility
 exhaustion.
the water draws me near,
becomes a necessity.
 morning dew.
 crisp air.
 sunrise blaring.
me and the river,
running side by side.

Savannah Westover
11th Grade

Breathless

The river calls,
But few will listen
to his dying gasps,
as he trips and stumbles over
the same pebbles
he used to jump with,
laughing.

And fewer still
Understand him,
comprehend his danger
and who will help, wondering:
What if
the river breathes
his final words?

Jennifer Haley
11th Grade

Pulsing Vein

The river is a vein,
Steady flowing with oxygen,
Winding, wide and skinny,
Pulsing forward,
Moving it to the heart,
The ocean.
Then going to the artery,
Sometimes it will get clogged up,
That can be bad,
It brings life and oxygen,
It never stops.

Scott Bettencourt
7th Grade

Invited Oregon Writers

The Oregon writers featured in this section of the anthology were invited to contribute to our publication because of their passion for education and our river. They are people deeply connected to the river through their writing and storytelling.



John Daniel lives in the watershed of the upper Long Tom in the Coast Range foothills west of Eugene. Two of his books, *The Trail Home* (nature essays) and *Looking After* (memoir), have won the Oregon Book Award for Literary Nonfiction from Literary Arts. His next book, *Winter Creek: One Writer's Natural History*, will be published in July by Milkweed Editions. Daniel is at work on a book about a sojourn of four and a half months in complete solitude in a remote Rogue River cabin. The following are excerpts from *Oregon Rivers* by Larry N. Olson and John Daniel (Westcliffe Publishers, 1997).

THE SPIRIT OF RIVERS

Anything in nature reflects the viewer, but of all the natural forms, rivers give back the fullest reflection of the human. They are lives in motion, bound up like ours in time and consequence, steadily being born and steadily dying. They stir in their sleep, they laugh and mourn, and—like us at our best—they are true to themselves under all conditions, changeful and changeless, free and constrained, a resurgent presence of past and future made one. To seek a river's source is to seek our own, to turn and turn and always return—to snow and mountains, to sea and sky, and always to water, always to the soul's deep springs, always to the flowing ungraspable image that forever runs free of all names and knowing, singing the story of its own being, bearing forth from distant passages its mortal and infinite nature.



When we cross the Willamette on one of the bridges in Portland or Salem or Corvallis, we don't see it as a mythic being. We don't toss handfuls of grass as a sacrifice, as do the Masai of East Africa when they cross their rivers. Looking down on the workaday river with its tugs and barges and dry docks, its riprapped banks, we aren't likely to think of it as sacred or alive, a gesture from another world. We aren't moved to perform baptisms in it. We of the modern world have sought other kinds of value in our rivers. We have subdued them and turned them into channels of commerce. We have diverted them to water our fields, loaded them with sewage, torn up their beds and banks for gold and gravel, blockaded them to control their floods and extract their energy, stripped and muddied their basins for timber and pasture, poisoned them with industrial wastes, and reduced their abounding runs of wild anadromous fish to fractional remnants.

We have treated rivers as convenient perpetual motion machines, mere volumes of dutiful water at our disposal, yet even our tightly harnessed industrial rivers still beckon us. Whatever we have done to them, a mystery still flows before us. We walk and rest beside them, gazing, listening. When the docile waters rise, we flock to see the wildness in them, the wrack and foam, the intent sweeping power. Despite the damage floods do, it reassures us in our depths to know, with Wordsworth, that "The river glideth at his own sweet will." All of us have touched and been touched by flowing water. Our ancestors have eaten and loved and raised children by rivers for as long as we have been human, and longer. We have known the music of living water for the entire evolutionary saga of our coming of age on Earth. "It seems to flow through my very bones," wrote Thoreau of a brook he knew. "What is it I hear but the pure waterfalls within me, in the

circulation of my blood, the streams that fall into my heart?"

Spiritually we understand rivers far less well than the ancients did, but even in the rational light of our science, the creative and destructive nature of running water remains wonderful enough. We know that it began its work as soon as rains first fell and traveled the face of the young volcanic planet, and if not for continual tectonic uplift, it would long ago have erased the continents into a global sea. Through that tireless attrition, that primordial youthful energy, water carves out runnels, clefts, ravines, hollows, valleys, chasms, canyons—the intricate inworn branching of watersheds, the aging face of the land, the very places we know as home. And in that webwork of water, in and around and gathered together by its flexuous body, a labyrinthine ecology connects our human lives to the least and greatest of the lives around us, an ecology we are only beginning to fathom and are unlikely ever to understand in its wholeness.

And of course we are connected historically to rivers. They led us into the continent and eventually across it. They showed the way into the Oregon Country for Lewis and Clark, for trappers and missionaries, for the pioneers of the Oregon Trail. Columbia, McKenzie, Illinois, John Day, Sprague, Smith, Deschutes, Powder, Malheur, Rogue—you can hear the history in the names, you can glimpse the stories we have spun around Oregon's rivers. But listen to more: Klamath, Imnaha, Sycan, Umpqua, Elk, Salmon, Snake, Wenaha, Wallowa, Clackamas, Nestucca, Chewaucan. There are other and older histories here, interwoven with the flowing of rivers for thousands of years before Europeans set foot on American land. And there are hints in those names of a truth beyond history or human culture, hints of a primeval vitality, hints of original voices sounding in the land before any human being was alive to listen.

Craig Lesley is a lifelong resident of the Pacific Northwest. He has received the PNBA Award for both *Winterkill* and for his third novel, *The Sky Fisherman* (Picador). He is also the author of *River Song* (Picador), *Talking Leaves: Contemporary Native American Short Stories* (Bantam), *Dreamers and Desperadoes: Contemporary Short Fiction of the American West* (Dell) and most recently *Storm Riders* (Picador). He lives in Portland, Oregon, with his wife and two daughters. The following is an excerpt from *Winterkill* (Picador USA 1997).

Danny and Jack stopped in Enterprise to fill the thermos with hot coffee and gas up the pickup. While the waitress filled the dented thermos, Danny and Jack sat on counter stools eating big pieces of apple pie a la mode. They were the only Indians in the place, but no one seemed to notice. The elk hunters, tired-faced men in plaid shirts and dark wool pants, bent over platefuls of steaks and potatoes. Their camp beards and haggard appearances made them seem old.

"You sure our stuff is all right in the pickup?" Jack asked.

"It's fine," Danny said. "No one will bother it out there."

"I wouldn't want to lose my new rifle," Jack said. "My door doesn't even lock."

"Everyone around here already has a rifle. Now finish that pie. We don't want Jones shooting all the elk before we even get to camp."

"We should have started sooner," Jack said. "I was ready way ahead of you. How come you got to be so slow?"

"Practice," Danny said out the corner of his mouth. "When you get to be my age, you won't be half as perfect as you are now. Anyway, you forgot half the gear, so it's a good thing I double-checked."

"That going to do it for you fellows?" the waitress asked as she put the dented thermos on the counter. She tapped it with her pencil. "Thermos looks like it came out with Lewis and Clark."

"It's an old one, all right," Danny said. He liked the waitress and another time he might have tried to pick her up, but now he just left her a dollar. "See you next trip," he said as they left.

After driving the seven miles to Joseph, Danny passed through the center of town without taking the turnoff to the Imnaha River and their elk camp above Indian Crossing.

"Hey! Didn't you miss the turn?" Jack asked. "That sign said Imnaha. Want me to drive? Are you sleepy or what?"

"Just hang on to your pants. There's something I want to show you." Danny passed the last lights of Joseph and went over a little rise.

Wallowa Lake stretched before them, its waters black and silver in the moonlight. A low fog bank hovered over the south shore, partially obscuring the timbered shoreline. To the west, the densely wooded foothills seemed to rise out of the lake, and behind them, snow-covered Chief Joseph Mountain towered against the background of black sky. Even with the moonlight softening the definitions of its ridges and canyons, the mountain peaked as sharply as a dragon's back.

A slight knoll rose to their right and sloped to the lake's southern shore. At the top of the rise, a stone monument, twice the height of a man, rose from the rustling grasses. Tall sentinel spruces surrounded the monument.

"Let's take a look from up there," Danny said.

A swinging gate placed between two posts held a sign:

GRAVE OF OLD CHIEF JOSEPH
MAINTAINED BY WALLOWA COUNTY JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB

When they reached the top of the knoll and stood next to the monument, they had an even better view of the lake. A light breeze silvered the little ripples.

"It's incredible," Jack said.

"Nez Perce country," Danny said. "At least it used to be."

Jack tried to read the words on the monument by moonlight. "Old Joseph is buried here, huh?"

"It's a grave," Danny said. "There are probably some bones. A lot of Nez Perce and Walla Walla are buried on this knoll and by the water."

"This place gives me a strange feeling," Jack said.

Danny smiled. He felt it too, just as he had when Red Shirt brought him to the Wallowas for the first time. "It's the Nez Perce in you coming out."

"There must be dozens of stories about this place."

"Probably hundreds," Danny said. "The explorers and anthropologists came here and collected as many as they could, and the Indians didn't want to disappoint anybody so they just kept making them up."

"That's pretty good," Jack said. "Back at Timbler, some of the kids used to talk about their tribal legends. A lot of them sounded the same, but no one really knows if they're true or not anymore."

"It's hard to tell," Danny said. "Red Shirt told me this story the only time we stood together at Wallowa Lake." Danny half-closed his eyes, gazing at the moonlight dancing on the water and trying to remember the words and tone his father had used to tell the story. Then he began.

"One winter, a large herd of elk, thirty-five or perhaps forty, tried to cross the frozen lake during Elkmooon. Somewhere near the black cliff face, the ice was thin and the herd broke through. No one saw them flailing their hooves and cutting their legs on the shards of ice, but one by one they sank, their hot breath extinguished by the black water. Two days later an old Nez Perce hunter, one of the Dreamers following their trail, came upon the spot where they had fallen through. New ice had formed by then, so their tracks disappeared in the middle of the lake.

"Many stories about that lost elk herd were told around Dreamer campfires in the Wallowas. Some said they had gone into the world below the water. Others said they were ghost elk that had disappeared during Elkmooon. Sometimes, looking over the frozen lake in winter, the hunters thought they saw the elk herd crossing the lake. Their hides were white as ermine, and their eyes glittered like diamonds. The breath from their nostrils came so thick it formed a low fog.

"The old men who first told the stories eventually died, but versions of the story were well known around the lake for many, many years.

"Then one summer a rich doctor from one of the cities lost his motor overboard near the black cliff face, and he offered any diver one hundred dollars to find the motor and pull it out. A young diver searching the area found the water to be deep and cold, but with the aid of an underwater light, he located the motor. When he came up, he told a strange account of seeing the skeletons of elk down there. But everyone around the lodge laughed at him because the elk bones would have

been buried by silt or washed apart many years before. Still, he insisted, claiming these skeletons were of the largest elk he had ever seen, standing maybe seven feet tall at the shoulder. The men laughed harder, and some suggested he was crazy, for no elk is that tall.

"A businessman from Portland heard of his discovery and offered him twenty dollars for every elk tooth he could bring up. He planned to have them made into watch fobs, tie tacks, and the like, then sell them as curiosities at the lodge.

"One of the old Nez Perce guides tried to stop the young man from diving after the elk teeth, but he got the help of a friend, and the two took turns diving off the cliff face. All morning, the first diver was perplexed because he could not find the skeletons, for he had marked the place well when he went down after the doctor's motor. They moved the boat out farther into the lake that afternoon, and he dived again. When he didn't come back up in twenty minutes, his friend went after him.

"At the coroner's inquest, the second diver said the water was much deeper than he would have expected, and extremely cold. He went through two thermoplanes before he found the lake bottom. There, the diver claimed, he saw the most unusual sight he could ever imagine—the bare-boned skeletons of the entire herd of elk. The bones were not weathered but gleamed white in the light from his underwater torch. The legs moved slightly in the deep current of the lake.

"He found his friend at one of the larger skeletons. His weight belt had somehow fouled in the antlers of the elk, and in trying to twist free, he had pulled loose his air hose and drowned. The diver was puzzled as to how his friend's belt fouled, for this elk's antlers were tilted at a different angle from the others, and its head was lifted, perhaps from his friend's struggles. He cut the body free and began swimming to the surface. But when he switched off the underwater torch, he swore he saw the elk bones still gleaming in the black water, and a light-red flowing where their eyes should be.

"As the men on the dock helped unload the body, they found two elk teeth in the sack the dead man clutched. Those who saw the teeth claim they were exceptionally large and white and seemed to glow—even in the afternoon sun. But by the time of the inquest, the molars had disappeared. Some think they were stolen and worked into cufflinks, but others believe the old Nez Perce guide rowed them out by the cliff face and threw them into the deep water to appease the ghost elk.

"In any case, several other divers tried for the next few weeks to find the skeletons again, but no one could. The coroner ruled death by accidental drowning, and the stories about the ghost elk go on. Those who believe there actually were some elk molars think they must have come from an elk that drowned the winter before in a similar spot. Sometimes at night, though, if someone is brave enough to try fishing near that black cliff face, they say they can see something glowing way down in the depths of the black water. But others just think it's the reflection of the moon dancing on the waves."

When Danny finished the story, he looked across the lake at the hovering fog bank. On the far shore, the lights of cabins glowed like campfires, and he imagined the old Dreamers telling their stories. He wondered how Red Shirt had felt telling the story to him.

"I've never heard a story like that one," Jack said.

"Neither had I, until Red Shirt told me."

"Do you think it really happened?"

"That's the way Red Shirt told it."

Kathleen Dean Moore is the Chair of the Philosophy Department at Oregon State University and the author of two books of essays, *Riverwalking* and *Holdfast*. Kathleen has donated her time and talent to *Honoring Our River* since the beginning. The following is an excerpt from the *Oregonian*, September, 19, 1999, G2.

HOW TO LOVE A RIVER

... Love brings with it a set of moral obligations—the obligation to care for the object of love, to honor and respect it, to treat it well. So the worst thing a person can do to a river is transform it into something impossible to love.

When engineers straighten the Willamette—blocking the oxbows, draining the marshes, mining the gravel bars, making the river run straight and narrow and lethal between steep banks—they take away the shallow places where children can wade after crayfish or stalk fish, slow as a heron. When agribusiness owners spray pesticides on fields that drain to the river or mill owners dump effluent, mysteriously stinking, they make the river into something to fear. When people in the cities allow human waste to flow into the river, they make it into something to abhor.

We need to learn again how to love the river. Go to the headwaters of the Willamette, up by Emigrant Butte high in the central Cascades, where springs stir the sand in aquamarine lakes, up where the river is born, as perfect as a newborn child. Go to the high tributary rivers, places of bright water and bright fish in fir-darkened forests. Go to the braided backwater, where osprey dive and red-tailed hawks will answer a whistle made from a blade of grass. With your shoulders in warm sun and your feet in cold water, sit on rocks whitewashed by herons. Let the children chase the shadows of minnows.

Then go to your home water, the river in your neighborhood, and learn again a simple truth: The river at your feet, the river in the mountains, the river in the valley, the moistness in your mind, the blood in our heart—it is all one river. The Willamette doesn't end where it joins the Columbia River, or where the Columbia meets the sea, or where the seas rise in fog banks and curl back toward the land, tucked by westerlies into the valleys and turning to silver drops on hemlock branches. For that matter, the Willamette doesn't begin at Emigrant Butte.

Like all rivers, the Willamette creates and re-creates itself every moment, pulling water from storms and filtering it through mountain meadows, a continuous process of healing, and an act of forgiveness. With rivers, as with everything else in life, where there is love, there is always a second chance.

Rick Bastasch worked twelve years with the Oregon Water Resources Department and is currently the Executive Director of The Willamette Restoration Initiative. Rick is the author of *Waters of Oregon: A Source Book on Oregon's Water and Water Management*. A lifelong Oregonian, he now lives near Salem with his family.

Willamette Truths and Consequences

The Willamette is a consequent river. By that, geologists mean it did not carve its valley, but—like the rest of us—found it. The Coast Range and Cascades rose up in a tectonic wrinkling over 20 million years ago from a warm sea, dried themselves over millennia, and slanted rain down their slopes, forming the Willamette. So the Willamette is first a song of the land.

And to paraphrase the words of an old song, thirty million years is a whole lot of rollin' along. And this River both knows somethin' and says plenty. The Willamette has tumbled, ambled and glided past frame after frame of nearly unimaginable Disneyan realities.

First, imagine Eugene as a clearing in a tropical forest, steam rising to the cacophony of Willamette birds we've never met. This scene lasts a few million years, as lava flows and volcanoes glow. Next, envision Salem as Death Valley, with the bony Cascades disgorging huge alluvial fans, filling the Valley with gravel. Fast-forward another few million years, and paleo-Woodburn is a tawny savanna with saber-toothed tigers and four-ton sloths. Picture a young mastodon mother, trumpeting for her calf some spring evening, with a popsicle sunset melting into the sweep of a Willamette River bend—the last evening before the first of 40 great floods. The flood that broke loose from an Idaho ice-dam, rushed down the Columbia, up the Willamette, smacked against the hills, and rocked itself still as a massive Willamette lake stretching from present-day Eugene to Portland. A lake whose bottom rippled in an icy black, hundreds of feet below turquoise-hollowed icebergs spinning slowly in the sun.

Today, it's mere thousands of years after the floods, and people have never stopped coming. For most of that time, it was people of deer skin and digging sticks. People who fired the prairies to keep game fat and meadows blue with camas. Later, just yesterday really, different people came, and a lot of them. People of denim and 'dozers who changed the landscape utterly—as much as any flood or lava flow, and just as fast.

Above Salem, the Willamette had too many braided channels to float sternwheelers. The people plugged sloughs and side channels, creating one big river-course. The dry prairies grew only grass. The people plowed them under to grow wheat. The wet prairies grew mosquitoes, so the people drained them. The River flooded. The people built dams. Their cities prospered and grew. The people milled lumber, shipped grains, canned beans, made ships, built roads, raised glass towers and brick schools.

Whatever they ate and whatever they drank and whatever they didn't use from what they made found its way to the River. And salmon runs dwindled. Meadowlarks disappeared. Fish suffocated in a bacterial brew. The amazing alchemy that created a modern economy at the same time turned many treasures to lead. And not in a million years; not ten thousand; not one thousand; but in just one hundred—the blink of a divine eye.

Student works, part III



Flooding

Flooding
The river's hand,
Clawing anything in its path,
Logs struggle in its thrashing,
Holding the rocks with a powerful hand,
Clutching the fish with its mighty fingers,
The river floods.

Charles Scott
7th Grade

What a River Is

A river is home where creatures live
Beavers building dams
Crawdads skittering under rocks
Salmon splashing to the ocean
A river is a very important place
We drink from its source
We eat of its fish
That is what a river is

Zach Wahl
4th Grade

The River's Treasures

The river is a treasure chest.
Holding many treasures.
Algae glimmers, like sparkling
Green emeralds.
The salmon glow with a rainbow
Spread across their back,
Shimmering through the night.
Like a glistening highway,
The river provides a
Passage from one place to another,
With many treasures waiting to be explored.
It's up to you to take care
Of the river's treasures.

Josie Chaffee
7th Grade

Fish Creek

I am the water I splash and scatter
I keep salmon eggs nice and protected

I am a salmon egg way down deep
I hope and pray I won't get crushed

I am the air blowing against the river
I try not to blow quite so hard
For I'll wish the salmon ashore
Only when they fall dead
Do I blow them to their grave

I am a Caddis Fly
Bumbling above the water
I flicker so fast
To keep away the gaping mouths of the Chinook

I am the rain
Dancing at a slant
Filling the thirsty river
As it winds from here to there

I am the rocks
In my bed I cradle the future
Left behind by the dying salmon
They come home to leave their eggs with me

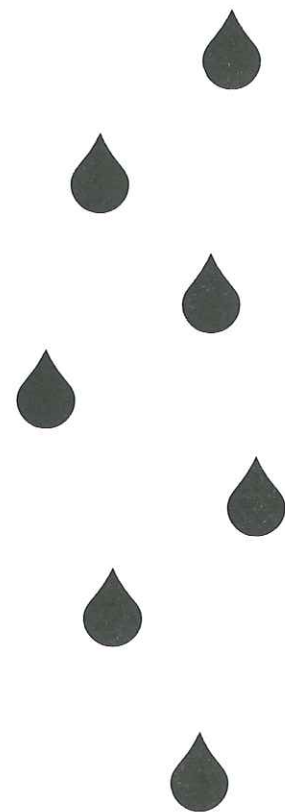
I am the sun, hot and constant
Look how the scales of the salmon shimmer
When I kiss them with my rays

I am the bald eagle
I ride the wind to the river's edge
To stab my lunch
From the salmon bed

I am the mud that lines the bank
I hold the fish
And take it as my blood
To feed the flowers

I am a river

Lilly Irons
5th Grade



I am the River

I am the river

I flow over your feet

I cascade down waterfalls

I am the river

I energize you with electricity

I provide you with fish

I am the river

William Taylor
4th Grade

I am

Nourishment for life,
A safe haven for animals,
I am Nature's sister.

I provide life,
My meaning is vitality.
Chuckling and roaring
Merrily I come.

I am the seasons,
In winter, I am silent, sleeping.
In spring, I reawaken
And return to roaring depths.

In summer, I am a
Giver of life for all.

In autumn, my sister,
Nature, paints the trees
Scarlet and showers me with leaves,
In preparation for the long winter's sleep.
I am ageless. Since the world began,
I have existed.

Now, I may cease life.

If I am banished by the world's
Greatest threat, Man,
Then all of the animals will cease to exist,
Like I will.

Help me!

Protect me!

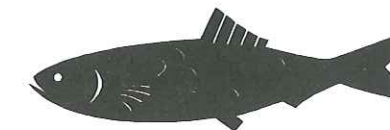
Do you know who I am?

I do, and so do all the
Animals who have lived in me.

Through me they live.

I am the river.

Sujung Lim
6th Grade



If I were a River

If I were a river

I would make it easier on fish
and harder on fisherman
so my fish would be safe

I would let deer, elk and wolves
drink from my crystal clear water
on an early foggy morning

I would let osprey swoop down
and take fish from my ice-cold water
on a late sunny evening
and trickle over log jams

If I were a river

Kyle Fisher
6th Grade

The Place We Call Home

I live in a world where the water runs free.

Where one can truly appreciate nature at its best.

Salem, Oregon - the place I call home, is where you can find me.

Surrounded by luscious fir trees, here in the good old Northwest.

I'm sure when our forefathers planted the first tree,

They never imagined their descendents could create such a fest.

So as the years passed by, it became obvious for all to see,

That even the birds were beginning to lose desire to build their nests.

It's sad to reminisce of what a promising land this used to be,

For it reminds us of how bad we've failed this simple test.

No longer will we live in a world where the water runs free,

Where one can truly appreciate nature at its best.

But all is not lost quite yet, you see,

For there is still hope to preserve the good old Northwest.

Cut down on pollution, recycle and maybe even plant a tree;

If we all chip in and do our part, we can make this land even better than

it was designed to be!

Tabby Koller

11th Grade

Honoring Our River

I am an exchange student from Switzerland and have been here in Triangle Lake, Oregon, 6 months. Because I didn't grow up here, I can see very well, how important the lake and the river are for the people who live here. In the summer, the people almost live at the lake. They have grill parties; birthday parties or they go water-skiing, wake boarding or fishing. In the summer, you can meet almost everybody at the lake. However, in the winter, the lake belongs to the ducks and the fisherman.

The Triangle Lake is so beautiful and calm. Every morning, after I wake up, I look out the window at the lake. Most of the time, there is fog on the lake and the sun shining on it glistens so white and fresh. Sometime, there is fog only on one half of the lake, and on the other half, the sun is shining on the water. From time to time, there is a duck family swimming on the lake and everything is so calm and peaceful. If I get up very early, I can watch the sunrise and then the fog is orange-red.

On the Triangle Lake, there are almost never waves, only if there is a lot of wind. Normally, the water is very calm. The view of the lake is so satisfying and soothing. If I am angry about something, then I look on the lake and it makes me calm. In the summer, I go swimming almost everyday and afterward, I lie in the sun and look out on the lake and dream or watch the water-skiers and the wakeboarders.

The lake is also for a lot of animals a living space. Beside the lake, there are big marshes where all kinds of animals live. On the other side of the lake, there is a river running down the valley and in this river, there are many fishes. Very close to the Triangle Lake, are the rockslides.

By the rockslides, you can meet all kinds of people. The place is so beautiful. The water runs over the flat rocks and around the rocks. Around the river, there are many trees and only a little sunshine can shine through the trees and the leaves. In addition, that little sunshine lets the water sparkle and the leaves seem very green. The big, flat rocks get very warm in the summer from the sun and it is very comfortable to lie on it.

In the winter, the rockslides are a very deserted place and there are seldom any people down there.

Undoubtedly, the water here in Triangle Lake, the lake, the river, or the rockslides, is very important for the people here. It gives a sense of community to the people. The water is a place where they can hang out together and can have fun together.

Rebekka Zuendorf

11th Grade

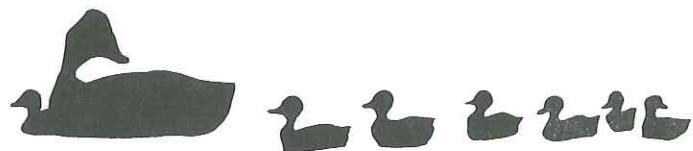
River of Sorrow

Bright deep blue
Streaming forth.
Flowing to many others
Becomes green.

Mild deep green
Causing death and sorrow
No more freshness and cleanness
Becomes brown.

Sick deep brown
Doing no good to all others.
Polluting all others
Becomes empty.
Empty shallow brown
Nothing but dirt.
Once deep blue
Becomes no more.

Geoffrey Wallace
8th Grade



I Have a Dream

I had a dream that the water wasn't polluted.
People throw their garbage in the water and it makes the water look bad.
Some animals, like ducks, eat the garbage in the water.
Don't throw garbage in the water!

Nicholas Baurer
Grade 2

The River Gives Us

The river gives us:
salmon to eat
water to drink
animals to look at
frogs to catch as a pet
electricity so we can see
space for skipping rocks
insects to study
water to swim and boat in
and MUCH MUCH MORE!

Emma Young
3rd. Grade
&
Amber Newman
1st Grade

Dusk and Evening one and the same.
Clean plastic tan car.
River sand in my tennis shoe.
Classic rock on the radio.

Pot holes in the road
Only add to the adventure.
The city will never fix them
Not this far up the corridor.

Glance to my left
Head lolling in the oppressive heat,
Far below screened by the dusky pines
Rushes, rambles, runs the river.

Clear like clean glass,
Ash gray stones beneath,
Minnows dart below and hide in shadow.
All is shadow now.

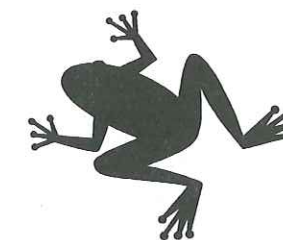
Heavy heat begins to crack and explode.
Raindrops to quench the thirst of the dry road dust.
Sensing freedom,
They come.

In the darkness borne by dusk
They arrive
They cover the road
Crying aloud in their exultation

A mass exodus!
Hopping and leaping
Relishing the rain, until,

splat.

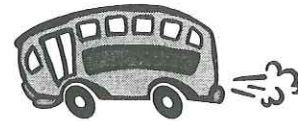
Maleah Hammons
12th Grade



Dear River,

I am a deer. I live by you. I have seen many things that make me mad and frustrated. I am furious because pesticides and chemicals have been rushing into you. But something just happened in March, that makes me glad. These aliens came from a yellow ship and began to plant trees by you. The aliens were from Morningside School Room 3, 2nd grade. I am thankful for the small, learning aliens. Now my baby fawn can run throughout the woods.

Adrienne Teebken-Watts
2nd Grade



Willamette River Before and Now

Once, a long time ago there was a girl named Willa Mette.

“Can I go take a walk?” asked Willa. “Okay” said Willa’s mom.

“Bye” said Willa. “Bye Willa,” said her mom. So she went for a walk. When she was half way through the woods she heard this weird noise that she had never heard before. Willa went closer to the noise. Then she saw what it was, a river! But she had never heard, or seen the river. She decided to name the blue, pretty river, the Willamette River, because of her first name Willa and her last name Mette. Everybody in town loved the name of the river. People from all over the world came to visit the Willamette River. Some people also came for Willa’s autograph!

Now, in our days, people from all over the world don’t really like to come and visit the greenish-brown, dirty Willamette River. All of the people who live in the Willamette Valley should go to the Willamette River and make a difference. Just take some garbage out of the river with a net and you would be helping a lot. You also will be helping the animals that need BLUE water. If you like animals and visiting rivers, here’s your big chance to help out!! Please, help protect the Willamette River. Keep it a good place for animals and people!!

Lindsey Tucker
4th Grade

River’s Quilt

The river is a
Cozy quilt,
That blankets the antique riverbed,
Where alevin close their eyes,
And algae rest after a long day of hard work at the grocery store,
Tadpoles relax from their day of Olympics,
Beavers cuddle up in the lodge ready to awaken to,
Another day of construction,
Underneath the river’s quilt
Modeling wrinkles of an untidy bed,
Warming cheerful spirits.
Crested upon the river,
Resting atop a crowded room.

Mary Beth Phillips
7th Grade



Come

Come, Come,
watch my shimmering surface,
Come, come,
let me carry you,
carry you.
Let me sweep you into a still peace,
a still peace,
that you can share.
If you just take care of me,
of me,
take care of me.
And I shall slowly
Rock you to sleep,
to sleep.
Into that peace.

Audrey Rioux-Killoran
5th Grade

When I Go to the River

When I go to the river I put my feet in the water and fish swim between my toes. I hear the birds chirping. I hear the salmon jumping. The salmon are nibbling on my toes. When I step in the water there are sharp rocks. I can hear a waterfall. The crickets are singing. I hear my mom calling. It’s time to eat.

After I eat I step back into the water. The water is getting colder. The sun is going down. The sky is getting cloudy. It’s time to go. I get out of the water. I get in the car because it is time to go back home. I get in my bed then I fall asleep. I dream of the river and fish.

Aaron McLeod
2nd Grade

Ripples & Eddies

Ripples and Eddies are small snippets of larger entries that contained language that was too exceptional to pass up. ENJOY!



A river is like a really good friendship, my grandpa used to say,
"It's always different, it never stays the same."

Alyssa Archer
7th Grade

The cans of pop float down the stream
The wrappers and napkins
Folded up in origami ships
Sail to see who will get to their destination first

Justin Mitchell
12th Grade

I look at the river and smile
It looks clean at least for a while

Willie Dinsdale
11th Grade

Every river is our river

Delany Plant
Kindergarten
Hayley Serres & Deven McCanna
5th Grade

I like the ducks.
They quack to me.

Belize Herring
Kindergarten

The rain sounds like baby birds hatching out of an egg.

Ginny Wobbe
2nd Grade

The river as old as time
cuts through the earth as a blade to flesh.

Eric Buckner
7th Grade

As the deer graze in the shade,
as the salmon swim around,
the water glistens joyfully,
it's never ending song.

Katie Alderman
8th Grade

Rivers are nice any way, but they are a lot better if they're clean all the way.

Sarah Miller
4th Grade

Save the golden hearts of those who try to prevent
pollution and save the beautiful Willamette.

Aja Neabring
5th Grade

Rushing through the northwest
Like a big shiny blue train
Is the Willamette River.

Brandon Rice
7th Grade

When I die, I will come back as a river.
No one will tell me where to flow:
I'll carve my own banks this time.

Matt Farmer
12th Grade

They were a silver-gray,
Shiny like a brand new quarter

Brittany Elliott
8th Grade

If we started to clean the Willamette up right now and even if it took a long time, I think
the finished product would be well worth it.

Becky Daggett
8th Grade

I'm a salmon and this is my story,
yes, you heard me right, my story.
My name is Jib.

Jonathan Christopherson
4th Grade

As I sit here looking at the water
What a funny thing I see
A little salmon swimming backwards,
Into the sea

Brian Baumann
7th Grade

Life is liquid.
It crashes and bubbles,
swirls, foams
rips through time
before we dare the danger.

Class poem
Oregon City High School
11th & 12th Grade

The water flushes through the narrow banks.
The fish jump at will.

Jacob Vida
7th Grade

Now people litter the water by washing their cars way too much.

Katie Chalmers
4th Grade

My dad says we didn't do too bad,
but I just had fun being on the river with my dad.

Matthew Smith
8th Grade

The river is a mirror,
Showing us what we've
Already seen...

Aerin Wyllie
7th Grade

The rain makes a noise
like the soft "plink"
of a high pitched piano.

Elijah Tocchini
2nd Grade

I've heard people talking about the Willamette River
being polluted, but even if it is, I like it.

Zachary Lane
7th Grade

Royal blue skies fall on the navy colored creek,
red crawdads boiled by bombarding children
attending the perfect picnic.

Kevin Carlile
7th Grade

Two ducks zoom down the creek
Like lightning bolts
Trying to reach their destination.

Fletch Fletcher
7th Grade

...the smell of the fresh air fills my little button nose.
I've never met a fish, who smells good.

Raina Shadbolt
12th Grade

The more days there are, the more litter there is.

Tyler Baarts
4th Grade

You are quiet and gentle flowing,
Like a class when it's time to read.

Josh Love
7th Grade

Looking in the water, you can see the brilliant blue gill,
slick salamanders, slimy seaweed and rough rocks.

Skylar Hartwig
11th Grade

The End

Index

A

Alano, Claire 5
Alderman, Katie 44
Ahn, Tom 17
Archer, Alyssa 43

B

Baarts, Tyler 46
Barnett, Amber 11
Bastasch, Rick 33
Baumann, Brian 45
Baurer, Nicholas 39
Bays, Kevin 5
Bettencourt, Scott 25
Buche, Scott 10
Buckner, Eric 44

C

Carlile, Kevin 46
Chaffee, Josie 34
Chalmers, Katie 45
Christopherson, Jonathan 45
Class Poem, Oregon City High School 45

D

Daggett, Becky 44
Daniel, John 27
Dinsdale, Willie 43
Ducey, Aimee 11

E

Elliott, Brittany 44
Erguiza, Chrissy 7

F

Farmer, Matt 44
Fisher, Kyle 36
Fletcher, Fletch 46

G

Goapeng 14
Garbaruk, Leonid 23
Goodrich, Elliot 8

H

Haley, Jennifer 25
Hammons, Maleah 40
Hartwig, Skylar 46
Heinl-Hagerty, William 7
Herring, Belize 43

I

Irons, Lilly 35

J

Johnson, Dan 12
Johnson, Scott 24

K

Kaplan, Hannah 24
Keddy, Sean 6
Kleutsch, Makenzie 6
Koller, Tabby 37
Koski, Sarah 16, 20

L

Lane, Zachary 45
Larrabee, Rebecca 6
Lesley, Craig 29
Lewis, Alexandra Cosima 20
Lim, Sujung 36
Linn, Sarah E. 19
Love, Josh 46

M

McCanna, Deven, 43
McKeen, Sean 21
McLeod, Aaron 42
Milkityuk, Alla 15
Miller, Sarah 44
Mitchell, Justin 43
Moore, Kathleen Dean 32
Mulligan, Patrick 8

N

Neahring, Aja 44
Newman, Amber 39

P

Penaflo, Brittany 10
Peterson, Derek 9
Phillips, Mary Beth, 42
Pickett, A. 22
Plant, Delany 43

Q

QinMu 14

R

Rice, Brandon 44
Rioux-Killoran, Audrey 42

S

Sandoval, Maria 7
Scott, Charles 34
Serres, Hayley 43
Shadbolt, Raina 46
Shintaku, Sarah 18
Smith, Jennifer 16
Smith, Matthew 45
Standiford, David 22
Stock, Emily 16

T

Taylor, William 35
Teebken-Watts, Adrienne 41
Tocchini, Elijah 45
Tucker, Lindsey 41

V

Vida, Jacob 45

W

Wahl, Zach 34
Wallace, Geoffrey 39
Warner, Jameson 8
Webber, Connor 17
Westover, Savannah 25
Wobbe, Ginny 44
Wyllie, Aerin 45

Y

Young, Emma 39
Yujie, Guo 13

Z

Zacek, Justin 9
Zuendorf, Rebekka 38

Participating Schools

Abiqua School, Salem
Adams Elementary School, Eugene
Applegate Elementary, Eugene
Arbor School of Arts & Sciences, Tualatin
Bilquist Elementary, Milwaukie
Butte Creek, Mount Angel
Chapman Hill, Salem
Clear Lake Elementary, Eugene
Crow High School, Eugene
Dayton Middle School, Dayton
Edgewood Elementary School, Eugene
Edwards Elementary School, Newberg
French Prairie Middle School, Woodburn
Howard Street Charter School, Salem
Inavale Elementary, Corvallis
Jesuit High School, Beaverton
Judson Middle School, Salem
Lebanon Middle School, Lebanon
Lincoln High School, Portland
McKinley Elementary, Salem
Milwaukie High School, Milwaukie
Montessori Discovery Center, Salem
Morningside Elementary School, Salem
Myrtle Crest School, Myrtle Crest
Oregon City High School, Oregon City
Oregon State University, Corvallis
Petersen Elementary School, Scappoose
Rowe Middle School, Milwaukie
Shasta Middle School, Eugene
Sprague High School, Salem
St. Cecilia School, Beaverton
St. John the Baptist, Milwaukie
Triangle Lake School, Blanchly
Westview High School, Beaverton
Woodstock Elementary, Portland

...winding snake, stretching for miles. It also
...keeps fish from drying out. Everything is moving, Ricocheting off
...ping with chores. So hurry, my river, become true. What would I do without this stream
...adful dream about all these fish who'll end up on a dish. The salmon swim free, like feathers flying
...know how hard it is for a salmon to get upstream? It's very hard. Splish splash trickle and kaplog is the
...g river. The river sounds like birds in the woods. Little kids get the joy of running with their little legs and screa
...ch joy that they fall down and laugh until they can laugh no more. The flowing river you run within me. The river
...a rapidly winding snake, stretching for miles. It also calms people. We crown the earth with our structures and trash. I
...keeps fish from drying out. Everything is moving, Ricocheting off the earth. The river is the oceans daughter, helping with
...chores. So hurry, my river, become true. What would I do without this stream? I wonder as I drift into a dreadful dream
...out all these fish who'll end up on a dish. The salmon swim free, like feathers flying in the wind. Do you know how
...is for a salmon to get upstream? It's very hard. Splish splash trickle and kaplog is the sound of a happy river. The
...ounds like birds in the woods. Little kids get the joy of running with their little legs and screaming with such je
...ll down until they can
... The flowing river
... me. The river is
...ake, stretch
... it. Everything is moving, Ricocheting off the earth. The river is the oceans daughter
...come true. What would I do without fish who'll end up
...athers flying in the wind. Do you know how
...ry hard. Splish splash trickle and
...ds get the joy of run
...hey