

LITERACY VENTURES IN TUCSON

~ A magazine by and about LVT Students ~

STORIES, etc.

Farewell by Tina MacLean and her mother, Isabell Tafe

When my mom was in a nursing home, she sang a poem saying goodbye to my sister, Mary. It made me cry. My mom said, "I love you" and goodbye to me before she died. The nurse helped me and wrote it for us and put it on a CD disc.

I love you, Mom.



God, he's got you angel.
He's got a little child.
He's got little angels.
He's got a little child.
He will thank you and keep you.
God will keep you.
He has little angels for you and for me.
He will protect and guide you.
He'll protect and love you.
He's got little angels for you and may He love you.
God will watch over you.
He'll let you know He is there and He has little angels watching over you.
Many little angels of love.

GOOD NEWS!

The computer lab and tutoring center were back up and running very soon after a monsoon storm ripped the roof off the LVT building! Want more good news? LVT is still 50 years strong, even without a party. We don't need balloons or cake to celebrate our learning.



TIPS, NOTES and IDEAS....

I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.

~ Christopher Reeve, the actor who played Superman and later became paralyzed in an accident

(To persevere is to keep working toward a goal, even when it is hard or takes a long time.)



Literacy Ventures needs your best stuff!

Find out how to submit your best stuff at <http://www.lovetoread.org/lvt-community/students/literacy-ventures>.



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Happy Birthday, LVT!

The first of Tucson's several small literacy groups started in 1961. The founders included Mrs. Ophelia Romero; Mrs. Betty J. Frey, a teacher at Amphitheater Junior High School, and Miss Mary Nagore of Hughes Aircraft.



The first class in the new volunteer program (1962)

Financial support came largely from Tucson church people and the volunteers who donated up to one dollar a week to publish a newsletter and purchase teaching material. A workshop to train volunteers was held in December 1961 at the University of Arizona. By 1962 the group called themselves Tucson Adult Literacy Volunteers and met in private homes, churches, libraries, neighborhood centers and schools, wherever they could find a place. There was no paid staff.

~~ Adapted from http://www.lovetoread.org/who_we_are/lvt-history

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Trying to Get Home

by Steven Horstmann

The blue orb blew up, sending Venus past Earth, Mars, and the asteroids into Jupiter's orbit.

Two days after nearly dying, we went back to work. Venus has more and better metals than anything on Earth. They came from an open pit mine.

When we were working, odd ships came. We thought they were our own but they were not. The ships began to open fire on us. We all took cover. When I looked up, a building was falling in my path. I had to run and jump to not get smashed. I barely made it when the building fell and dust and debris went everywhere and Rob and Rick were also getting shot at.

When the ships finally stopped firing, everything except us was destroyed but the ships were still there. We started to climb a nearby hill. We could see what was going on – one ship was sending robots to the surface.

Rob said: "Hey guys, looks like they are taking our metals."

As I looked up, I was saying: "Nice ship!"

Rick said: "Maybe they will let us borrow one of their ships so we can get off this rock."

Rob went closer to see what was going on. He could see the robots digging for the metals and they were digging fast. We had no time to lose when he came back.

Rick said: "Wait guys, one of the ships is coming here."

"Heads up, guys," I exclaimed, "looks like we've been spotted."

Rob said: "Remember we need one of the ships to get off this planet. All of the rest are expendable."

Then we charged into battle. When I looked up, the four ships started to fire on us so we had to get out of the way of the ray guns.

Rob used a jet pack and jumped up 500 feet onto the first ship and said – "I hope this is the bridge." It was, so Rob attacked all of the crewmen and destroyed the control panel. The ship went down and blew up but Rob got off O.K.

It was my turn. Using a jet pack, I jumped onto the second ship, and then I jumped into the sky. The ship fired on me when I was up 600 feet. A torpedo from the ship took me into space. Then I jumped off it. I was going fast and faster toward the ship. I was going so fast I looked like the Sun. I had my swords pointed at the ship. Then I started to tear through the ship because I was so hot. After I went through the ship, I landed on the ground of Venus.

It was Rick's turn. He ran toward the third ship and the robots. The ship was still firing on him. He jumped into the open pit mine. He jumped out before the robots could do anything. As the ship was still firing at Rick, he jumped from one end towards the other end of the pit. He did this four times. Rick used the ship's weapons as they fired at him to collapse the mine on top of the robots in it. The ship stopped firing at Rick. He picked up a missile and fired two times, blowing up the ship.

Then Rob, Rick, and I ran at the fourth ship but before the ship could take off, all of us jumped on. We cut a hole in the ship's hull, and then we had to take out the crewmen. Rick pushed some buttons to fool the computer that there was a meltdown. The alarm sounded and all the crewmen left the ship. When they did and landed on Venus, they all looked up and saw the ship leave Venus and go to Earth.

THE END

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My trip by Carlos Zepeda

In the middle of March 2011, I went to Mexico traveling by bus for a 24 hour one way trip. It was time big enough to think about my beginnings and memories. The reason for this journey was to get a very important paper that made me the legal owner of a tiny fraction of land. That portion of earth was one seventh part of a whole parcel that belonged to my father Adolfo. A long time ago my father got his one third part of that whole land that belonged to his father Reyes.

My grandparents Reyes (1897-1973) and Candelaria (1900-1989) were the land owners after the second land repartition in 1937 when Lazaro Cardenas was president of Mexico from 1934 to 1940. With the local support of the two agrarian parties, *Los Toltecas* and *Los Agraristas*, the land was finally distributed after the Emiliano Zapata revolution from 1911 to 1917. My grandfather worked hard on this "parcela" to supply his family of five members with the most elemental provisions like a many different local varieties of corn, squash, garbanzo and pinto beans. These harvests were often poor and were obtained in a time where there was not the use of advanced technology, irrigation, pesticides or artificial fertilization. He farmed the land with only hoes and wooden tools.

I remember when my grandfather "Papa Rey", would sit in his old chair, telling me slowly his recollections and interesting stories of his life in the times of the *Los Cristeros*, the local revolutionaries. They arose in 1926 when Plutarco Elias Calles was president of the Mexican United States. President Elias Calles put in practice one of the provisions of the Mexican constitution, enforcing the act of separation of church from the government affairs. The people who were against of these requirements started a popular rebellion called *Cristeada*. At that time my great grandparents were living on a small farm located close to the river named *Rio El Moral*. The farm belonged to the hacienda *Los Sitios* which was located in an isolate area.

Difficult circumstances at that time led my great grandfather Arnulfo to meet with all six of his daughters and their boyfriends. He made a decision to allow them to get married so each husband could protect his wife. He felt this was the only way to protect them from the risk and abuses of the revolution. So my great grandparents, Arnulfo and Maria gave consent for their lovely daughter Candelaria to be engaged with her handsome boyfriend Reyes. The same thing happened to the Candelaria's five sisters, Chona, Josefa, Lola, Rosa, and Tomasa. This is the story of how my grandparents Reyes and Candelaria were engaged and married.

Some time later they moved on to live in a nearby town named Tepehuaje and started their own history doing many things to survive. My grandpa did a variety of activities like itinerant merchandiser a kind of little business buying and selling goods. He was a salesman known as an *arriero*. *Arrieros* moved their goods by hauling them on three or

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more donkeys from town to town. For her part my grandma was able to manage their economic situation despite the many deficiencies there were in those days. She helped with their needs, milked their cows and used the milk to make homemade cheese, cottage cheese and other milk products. She also made spicy foods like sausage and other products from pigs that she raised in her backyard along with chickens and turkeys. She had her own business, selling products she had leftover as well as buying and reselling other pantry indispensables like corn, sugar, coffee, lard, bread, firewood, matches and petroleum.

My father Adolfo loved to be the inheritor of this land. He grew up and worked hard in the same way as his father, researching ways to get better harvests. Frequently he rented a pair of oxen in order to till more land and do it faster than only using hand tools, it turned out not to be good because it was too expensive. At the end of harvest the oxen renters wanted almost half of the harvest. My father constantly dreamt of acquiring at least his own couple of mules for making his job plowing and sowing the land easier. Finally he obtained a money credit from the government bank to use to make the dream of owning the mules come true. He was always looking for other alternatives to increase productivity by planting better and different seeds.

We worked as a whole family together, every one in his own space; we were my father Adolfo, my mother Dolores, my four older siblings Jose, Gerardo, Juan, my sister Ana, then me, Carlos, and lastly, my little brother Candelario. The men and boys worked about thirteen hours a day plus about three hours more round trip to travel to and from the fields. We walked or rode donkeys or horses. It was sun up to sun down. That means everyone kept working as long as there was light to see. It didn't matter if it was dark or raining. Our animals didn't need light to follow the pathway back home.

This was my child's life, dreaming together with my parents and family, usually working according to my physical abilities. I barely attended primary school, which was officially required and free of cost. Next I went on to secondary school studies. It was hard because it was necessary to pay for the monthly charges and I was required to buy books and wear a uniform. After that I made a decision to move from my little town "Tepehuaje" on to other bigger cities. I was continuing working and studying. I witnessed the big changes in the modern technology of humankind, cars, computers, appliances, industries, communications, etc.

Soon everything was different from when I was growing up in the sixties, on the land in Tepehuaje. My grandparents passed away, my parents grew old and died, and my brothers got married. Some now live in Mexico, some in California, maybe some relatives live in different parts of the United States. Everyone built their own dreams and followed their own pathway, but all of them living on in my mind. The world is different, the people diverse and each family is dreaming and living out their own dreams.

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I am far away from my roots, my land, my Mexico. I married with my wife, Maria and we are living in Arizona raising our three children who are citizens of the United States and following the American dream. We are always encouraging supporting and advising our family to be good members of this great nation.

I was an eyewitness to two generations struggling against of all obstacles to survive and keep their land. I represent the third generation who possesses a fraction of that land. The land makes me proud not only for real worth, but also for all the feelings that I have in it. After everything that has happened I have my own solid piece of that land where I was born and raised, burial place of my ancestors and the holder of my memories. I would like to transmit these feelings to my three sons, Carlos, Gus and Cesar, and hope that they appreciate deeply the land and its memories in the same way like I do now in my heart.

~~ Carlos Zepeda is a 1:1 student who has worked with his tutor on everything from English to reading to attaining his Commercial Drivers License. Now he is working on writing his family history for his boys who are entering Pima College, high school and middle school this year.



Stuck In Neutral by Terry Trueman

Book review by Nora and Sergio Cazares

This story is about a boy named Shawn McDaniel. Shawn is a boy who has Cerebral Palsy (C.P.) and Shawn thinks his dad wants to kill him. At first I thought this man was out of his mind. But once we read the entire book we thought ok, he just had some big problem. Yeah his problems are he can't be a father or he doesn't want to be the father of a kid that has this problem. We think that he was not ready for this challenge that God had put in his way. Kids that have this kind of problem are a gift from God to your family. When the father was writing poems and winning awards was the only time he could be there with his son? When push came to shove, he did not want Shawn to suffer. Who was he to say that Shawn was suffering? Did he ask him? It would have been nice if he would have taken a moment to talk to him and see, "was someone in there" in the Shawn's little body. The father was never there to know what was going on with his son. He decided to move when Shawn was 4 yrs. old, because he could not take seeing Shawn hurt when he had his seizures.

He just made the decision on his own that Shawn was suffering. He thought that Shawn was suffering when he would get his seizures. But Shawn loved his seizures where he escaped from his trapped body he was stuck in. He made it seem Shawn wanted to be like that, but I am pretty sure Shawn would have done anything not to be stuck in that body. What we think is that he was the one suffering, because he felt guilt what he did to his family and he didn't know how to handle it. What kind of father is he? That is our question for the author. One of us had a sister with C.P., and

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we all loved her to death. We would not let anybody harm her. Not even our parents would harm her. So it's not clear what this man was thinking about when he wrote this book.

Over all it was a very good book. We love the connection each of us made with the book. It made us a little mad at the father, to tell you the truth we didn't like him at all. He was very mean to his little boy, even if he said that he wanted the best for him. We don't think so; he just wanted the best for himself. That's what mattered to him and that's all. He tried to make it seem like he cared, but we have the feeling he didn't care what so ever.

Good book, good book, it's a good book for others to read so they can know that they are people with C.P. not retarded There is a person in that body. They also have feelings as well as we do. You never know if they know what we are saying and being really rude to them. They are people just like us. "Be nice to every body and you will see that God is beautiful as well. Every thing comes back to you....."

~~Sergio and Nora Cazares are students in almost every class we have at LVT! They are working hard in reading, writing, and math, and are some of the most open and friendly students you will meet here! They recently attended the Reading Alive! group where they read and discussed this book with other students. Everyone loved it and they all highly recommend it for anyone!



*Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune--without the words,
And never stops at all...*

~~ Emily Dickinson

*Congratulations to each of the contributors to this,
the third issue of Literacy VENTURES of Tucson.*

Our goals are, as these authors have written:

- to remember that love persists*
- to let our imaginations fly*
- to know we travel together on journeys older than ourselves,
and*
- to understand that every person has value.*