

2nd Year Pieces

2006-2007

France

by William Weston

To Aix-en-Provence, north of Marseille by about twenty miles, I went to improve upon my French vocabulary. Last summer I went to Aix without any parents; instead, I traveled with just six other Americans from the Bay Area. At the camp there were 294 French, Spanish, Italian, and American kids all staying in dorms. The dorms were only two stories tall, and had about ten to fifteen rooms in each of them. There were three dorms; two were for boys and one large one was for all the girls. After the day's French lessons, everyone went back to their dorms, to play futsal and video games, and to hang out with friends.

The French camp taught me how to rely on my instincts and common sense, because I needed such skills when roaming the streets of Aix and other places within the area. In the camp, I wasn't just hanging around the English kids, but also with French, Spanish, and Italian boys and girls. I made good friends both boys and girls from at least every nation. I still write back and forth with most people that I became good friends with; most of them want to go to the same camp next year, and so do I. When being with them, I had to talk to them in French. Usually they were better at speaking English than I was talking in French. I really had a good time there, as everyone that I met did. I can't wait for the next year to come.

King Kamehameha Reef

by Jacqueline Batchelor

A whole school of assorted tiny, shimmering, rainbow-colored fish surrounds the reef, zooming every-which-way. Unique tropical fish scurry alongside me while I flip my feet to keep up. My snorkel begins to flood with sour salt water, so I rise to the surface. My head faces the rocky shore that is filled with strangers ready to dive into the sparkling, aqua ocean depths and begin the adventure of snorkeling. Nothing can beat the aquatic life of Kona, Hawaii.

When I vacationed in Hawaii, my favorite activity was snorkeling. My family and I found a great snorkeling location on the seaside, covered partially with white, silky

First Day of School

by Garret Spenst

In the summer, I am shuttled back and forth from my house to day camps. But lately, the winds have blown colder, the trees are changing, and today is my first day of kindergarten. I know this because I woke up early and my mom had pulled out my best clothes. I took a shower and ate Coco-Puffs while watching early morning cartoons but we left before the show finished. With my new school items, we pile into the car and set off for school. My knees are knocking.

After about fifteen minutes of driving, we arrive at the school. Swarms of kids about my age are being kicked out of cars and are close to bawling. My wonder controlling me, I walk nervously toward the entrance where several teachers shoo kids into the building. We travel like cows toward a feedlot into our classrooms. As I sit down, I notice that half the kids in my class have tear marks along their faces showing that they had reluctantly left the arms of their parents.

Our teacher finally enters the room and starts by introducing herself; I don't pay attention. We start the day by playing the name game. After getting in a circle, we go around saying how old we are and our names. Afterwards, we play with blocks. I create my version of a skyscraper but it falls over halfway through. A few hours into the school day, we go to lunch, where I try and eat mystery-meat with month-old veggies. After eating, we go outside to play. My friends and I play tag and scream. I outrun everyone thanks to my long legs. A rapid thirty minutes later, we have to go back inside.

Once back in class, we still have a lot of energy to burn. We finally settle down to do some finger paintings. I try to paint a dog, but when I am done, the teacher says, "Nice horse." I feel so bad that I throw paint all over my dog. Now, my painting looks so cool. Everyone begins throwing paint at their canvases: what a colorful mess! Finally, at three o'clock, the bell rings and we run outside to find our parents waiting for us. I cannot wait until tomorrow.

sand and volcanic rock. We visited this amazing spot a couple of times during our vacation. One time a turtle had swum up to the rocky shore and was stuck in a little tide pool. Though I was sad, I was not allowed to touch the creature, so I just sat and watched the sea animal move back and forth, up and down in the salty water. I was so happy when the textured green turtle crawled out of its tight trap.

Watching sea creatures such as eels, turtles and tropical fish is different from anything else I've seen in the world. Looking at ocean creations from a transparent mask is unique and enjoyable for everyone that is ready for an exciting adventure into the depths of the sea. All it takes is a snorkel and flippers to jump into the world of amazing aquatic creatures and plant life.

The Perfect Play by Cassie Drake

I'm down. My legs bend as I squat; my heels lift slightly off the ground. I am tense with anticipation as my team awaits the whistle's blow. Just like that -- we are off, rotating swiftly into position like a single organism, anticipating where the ball will land.

I settle into my position as I hear the ball swish over the net and smack loudly against the forearms of a back-row player. She skillfully completes a direct pass to the setter, whose fingers barely touch the ball, sending it into a perfect arc. I back up to the ten-foot line and prepare for my approach. As the ball reaches its peak, I set first my left foot, then my right, then left again. Swinging my arms back to gain momentum, I then lift them into position, jump, and *SMACK!*

My hand makes contact with the ball at just the right moment, rocketing it over the net and into the floor of the other team's court. Yes! The perfect kill. A roar fills my ears and joy nearly bursts out of me. My first successful spike -- only moments away from game point.

Volleyball by Carley Charles

Backing clear to the serving line, trembling, for this was game point, I line both of my feet up, and take two giant steps back. As I wait for the referee to confirm time to serve, I step into my routine. Dropping the ball from waist level, I wind my arm and smack the ball down to the floor with all of my strength; as the ball shoots back into the air, I catch it. I do this every time while I wait for the referee to signal me to serve, to prepare my arm.

I look up at the ref, and he gives me a strict nod, signaling me to send the ball over. My feet planted, right back, left forward, I hold to ball between both of my hands straight out from my body. Tossing it straight up in the air, I wait for it to fall to the precise height, then step, step, WHAM! I put every ounce of strength I possess into the serve, following through and turning my hips.

I watch the ball soar beautifully over the net into the opposing team's back row. I scurry back to my position, waiting for the other team to send it back over, anticipating where the ball might land. Turning my attention to the players on the other side of the net, I watch as they struggle to get the ball into the air. Then I hear the firm sound of the ball hitting the ground. Our point. GAME OVER!