



The Community
School

Passages Program



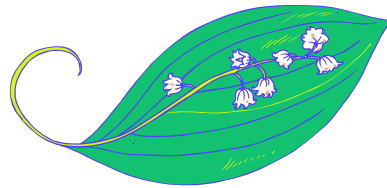
Passages Press

When My Mother

by Santa Havener

When my mother answered the phone
It caught me by surprise
I felt the sense of
Loneliness
Happiness
and love
I ask, "Mom, how have you been?"
"I'm doing just fine."
I can't believe how long it has been
since she was on the other end of the line.
I called many other times
Never was there an answer
Even to say hi.
Mom is in the sunshine state
Miles and miles away
I sit here in this coldass state
Each and every day
If she only knew
How much she was really missed
I guarantee you this
She's be pretty pissed
To ever think she wasn't
People can say whatever they want
No matter what, she is my mother

I'm still going to love her
Sometimes I wish I could let go of my pride
So I could shout out
"I want my mum-ma!"



For Braedon March 29, 2005

by Katie Stimpson

What a sad rainy day
When God took you away,
Probably to a better place.
But baby, we miss your sweet face
and we find we are crying,
Inside just a little dying.
Can't seem to understand
Why we couldn't hold your hand,
Keep you with us for maybe just a little while.
So instead of watching us all cry
Maybe you could make us smile.
We'll always love you
Remember to love us too.

May 2005

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Unwanted Sex

by Jackie Lynn Smith

When I was about three years old, and my sister was only four, my cousin and my uncle took turns abusing us. My mom was gone with my Nana and dad. When they got home there we were without any clothes on. They were wondering why. I have no memory of what happened after that, except my mom did call the police. My uncle had to go to counseling and my cousin went to jail. My uncle is okay to be around now, but my cousin is back in jail for doing it again and beating up his mother. I've never seen him again, thank God.

After this happened we moved to Maine from Tennessee. My mom met someone she thought was pretty high and mighty. She never thought he would do anything to any of her girls, but she was wrong. He abused me more than once. When I was nine years old he told me if I told anybody about it he would hurt my mom and sisters. So, like any scared child, I did not tell anybody for the longest time. It became my "secret." After that he made me stay home with him every time my mom went to the grocery store or to a relative's house. My mom never questioned why. Not once. She trusted him. He always explained, "I need Jackie to help me clean up the house. She needs to clean her room." My mom never once suspected a thing. I think I would have if I had been her. For one thing, he never asked for my sisters to stay home with him and I never had my room cleaned when she got back. He was the only one to put me to bed. Sometimes I would fall asleep on the couch with my mom and he would take me in to bed. I suspect that even while I was asleep with my mom at home he abused me.

I remember the things he would make me do while he was watching pornos; he held me so that I couldn't get away. He made me lay on the bed so he could take advantage of me. I was confused, I didn't know if I should struggle or let him do it to me. I was young and not very strong. I could have screamed, but who would have heard me? My mom was gone to work all day. I was already going through enough crap from what happened before. I had counselors coming to my

school asking me to draw pictures of what happened when I was younger. The stuff that was going on with my mom's boyfriend went on in the meantime because I didn't have the courage to tell anybody. I was afraid if I did that he would hurt my sisters the way he had said he would.

One day when I was older, I got the courage to tell my mom everything. She did not believe me. She threw dishes at me and told me I was trying to ruin her life, that she was going to marry him anyway. She did not believe nor care about what I told her. I was angry and ended up telling someone else about it who took me to see counselors at the Rockland courthouse. The counselors gave me pamphlets and all types of papers that said it was not my fault, and it does not matter if you are pretty or ugly, fat or skinny. The person does not care because he is sick in the head. It took a while for my mom to believe me, right until the day of court. He ended up going in and telling the judge that he did it all and that he enjoyed every bit of it! My mom finally apologized to me then. The reason she started to believe me was because my sister was at the courthouse and made him tell the judge the truth. He ended up coming back to the house that night and wanted me to give him hugs and my mother defended me. She told him to get the hell out of her house. I never saw him again after that. The court told my mom if anything ever happened to me again she would never see me again. I ended up having to go to counseling and all we did there was play games and go out to eat. Never talked about the problems. Not ever!

I got over all that until one day I went to babysit my mom's best friend's kids. Believe it or not, it happened again! My mom's friend's dad had been in trouble and put into jail before because he'd abused his daughter. I did not know that until after he abused me. Again, I never told anyone because I did not want to be taken away from my mom. I needed to tell someone, but I was so scared of being taken away, and he said the same things, that if I told anyone, he would hurt my family. I told him if he did not leave me alone I was telling my mother, which I should not have done, because he ended up hurting my younger sister. She was too scared to tell anyone, too. I finally told my mom what happened when we moved out of town. She got mad because I had

not told her earlier. I had to remind her of what the state told her about sending me away for good. I did not want to leave my mom for anyone else, no matter what.

I've learned a lot over the years about this - how it affects your self-esteem and how you should never think that it is your fault, although it always feels like it is somehow. If it ever happens to you, tell whomever you have to so they can get what they deserve. Abusers need professional help. There are too many people out there that are getting away with touching kids. Also, even though counseling did not help me, it might help someone else. Don't ever be afraid to speak out for yourself. It is a human right! I know that if you keep it a "secret" it can possibly lead to suicide, especially if it continues to happen. Most of all, listen to your kids and what they tell you and never put your interests first. That's all I have to say. It is hard to "tell", it is embarrassing, but it is good to have my story told. Thank you.

My Rat and I

... a journal entry by Sheena Stone

When I was 12 years old, I was still living in Augusta, Maine and I was also still going to church. One time, a day after church, a couple of the church people came knocking at the door. They said they were grabbing people who were members of their church to go practice to be mimes at their church. They said it would be in a couple of days. They also said if we were good enough we could go to New York City to raise money for the church. I said I was interested but I would only come if I could bring my pet rat Pinky. They said I could. They said a car would come pick me up in a couple of days.

The car showed up just as they said, but they said I couldn't take my rat! They said I could bring him next time!

I said, " Forget it then, I'm not going, ever!"

I gave up a one in a chance lifetime, because my pet rat Pinky couldn't come along. Silly me!!!

Planning A Wedding?!?

by Leana Moon

There is a lot to planning a wedding - the dress, the cake, the invitations, and so much more. If you are smart and start to plan it a year before you plan to marry, you might not be stressed out so much, but when you start planning 3 months before you plan to marry, things can get stressful.



First of all I had no clue what to do. I am so lucky to have family to help me out. There is so much to do, and I could not do it all myself. We were also lucky to have a pastor who has given us the most important piece of information. This was a book and video set that tells us what marriage is all about. Last year those videos, along with talking with the pastor, were actually what made us decide that we were not ready for marriage. It is called "So You're Getting Married". It tells you all the good and not so good things about marriage, and makes sure you know what you are getting into. I highly recommend this to any couple planning on getting married. After doing this, you will know if you are getting married for the right or wrong reasons. Marriage should be forever, and you shouldn't take it lightly.

So many people get married for the wrong reasons, and I didn't want to be one of them. The video series is what made me realize I wasn't ready to get married last year, but is reassuring me that I am ready now. Many people get married because of an unplanned pregnancy or guilt, so they may not realize what a big commitment they are making. You have to realize how serious marriage is. Can you look at the person you want to marry and say I want to spend the rest of my life with them? Or can you say you truly love this person? If not, then you should reconsider getting married.

All of this is something you should consider before the dress, before the cake and even before saying "Yes" when he gets down on one knee, or for the guys, before buying a ring. Brian and I felt pressured by other people, and even ourselves to get married. We were the ones getting

married, but it wasn't for our own reasons. This is when we decided we were not ready. This time it is all about us, and we feel a lot better about it.

It seems like one day I am so excited and the next I'm not sure of myself, but I think everyone gets nervous about getting married. All of this is very stressful and quite overwhelming, but I am with the love of my life and I know it is all worth it. I just can't wait until the big day and I don't have any more planning to do.

The Book Corner



The Woman Who Walked into Doors

by Roddy Doyle, reviewed by Becki Giberson

The book I read was called The Woman Who Walked into Doors, an interesting novel written by Roddy Doyle. He wrote this book so well that I didn't see a man telling a woman's story. I saw a woman telling about her own life in such a way that sort of stunned me. It was written very differently from anything else I have ever read. I enjoyed reading this novel only because of the way it was told. It kept me interested and the story itself was intriguing.

It was about a woman, a 39-year-old widowed woman, telling about her life and switching back and forth from her past to her present. She tells about her childhood and her family, her teenage years and her friends. She talks about finding love with Charlo and marrying him. And she explains her struggle being an alcoholic mother and an abused wife.

Throughout the story she irritated me at times. I always thought her children were great because of the way she talked about them. She is an interesting woman and gave me a lot to think about. She was so in love and it all turned to hell.

"She walked into doors. That's why she was bruised, that's why she made many trips to the hospital. She was just a clumsy woman and nothing more. A clumsy woman who walked into doors. She wished someone would ask her. Ask her if there was more to it than just being clumsy. She wished so badly she would be asked because she would tell them. She would tell them everything, but no one ever asked."

I think if people are in this situation they cannot just wait and hope someone will do the right thing and provide their concern and care. They can't wait for someone to read their mind; they have to tell someone before it's too late. This was one of the things that annoyed me about Paula Spencer. She just waited.

Though I didn't enjoy this novel as much as I have others, I would still encourage others to read it because it gives you insight into someone else's life. Even though it was just a book, the reality is that so many women are put in this same position. I think the part I like most about this story is that it's so real to me. You will learn a lot from reading this. I know I did. After reading this story I don't believe I will ever be able to forget Paula Spencer and her struggles. She is the kind of character that will stick with you. I'm very glad I read this book, even though it was hard to get started.

Midwives

by Chris Bohjalian, reviewed by Vikki Mandell

One life is sacrificed for the survival of another. A woman with a passion for helping babies into a new world is accused of manslaughter.

Midwives, by Chris Bohjalian, is a very moving story about the pain and sacrifices Connie Danforth endures while her midwife mother pays a price for being a hero. The story is told from Connie's point of view while her mother goes on trial for involuntary manslaughter.

Sibyl Danforth is a midwife in Reddington, Vermont. She has devoted her life to delivering babies to mothers in their own homes. One tragic night, one of her laboring mothers, Charlotte Bedford, seems to have had a stroke while pushing her baby out. Sibyl makes a quick decision to perform an emergency c-section to save the unborn child. Later, it is discovered that the

laboring mother might still have been alive had the cesarean not caused her to bleed to death.

Connie goes to court with her mother every day and once hides evidence that would certainly send her mother to jail for one to 15 years. Legally, what Connie did was wrong, but if I had been her, I know I would have done the same thing for my mother.

I can relate to Sibyl's passion for delivering babies. I would one day like to become a doula and help laboring mothers through their birthing experience. If I had been in Sibyl's place, I don't think I would have had the courage to do what she did to save the baby. However, I feel she was being responsible by performing the cesarean, because it is likely that both mother and baby could have died if Sibyl had hesitated. I also believe Charlotte's husband, Asa, was inconsistent with his story about seeing blood spurt from his wife's body while the incision was being made. This casts reasonable doubt in my mind that Charlotte Bedford was alive at the time of the c-section. If I had been a member of the jury for Sibyl's trial, these two reasons would have convinced me to acquit her.

This book would be good for people who are fascinated by the miracle of childbirth. It is a book for mothers and daughters. This story of Sibyl Danforth and her daughter Connie will break your heart, then mend it again.

Where the Heart Is

by *Billie Letts*, reviewed by *Becki Giberson*

I really enjoyed the book Where the Heart Is. It was soulful, engaging, and so realistic. I can relate more to this book than to any other book I have ever read. Not because I am like the main character, but because of the smaller details in the story. The town Sequoyah, Oklahoma reminds me of my small town where I have lived my whole life. It too is a town where you can trust people and people care about you even if you're a stranger. They are willing to help others with their problems, just like the characters in this book. I can

especially relate to something Novalee says in this book to Forney. She speaks about feeling like she is "playing an adult" when she is packing a suitcase or doing things grownups do. Recently, I have gotten that feeling a lot, because there is so much stuff that I've never had to do before and not many people my age do. I feel like I am just pretending to be an adult when really I have just had to grow up fast.

The story is about a young teenage girl who is pregnant and left in a small town with nothing and no one to help her. She is forced to live in a Wal-Mart. She ends up having her baby in the Wal-Mart, which changes her whole life.

Throughout the book she finds happiness, a family and home for the first time in her life. From this story I learned the real meaning of home, family, kindness, and lies.



The movie is a lot different than the book. I still really love the movie, but the book had so much more detail, many more characters and so much more happened in the book. After reading the book I understood the whole story and theme, because it showed it so much more clearly than the movie did. The one thing I did like about the movie more was that it had more humor in it, but I don't think that humor is as important as the deep, powerful theme that the book gets across better.

I cried at the end of the book. But the strange thing is I didn't cry at the end of the movie. I think the book ending was written more powerfully; it really got to my heart, because I just understood it all so much better. I think an important lesson you can learn from this book is what may seem to be the worst thing that can ever happen to you in your life just might be the best thing that could have ever happened to you.

Life is So Good

by Richard Glaubman,

reviewed by Renee Krummes

This story is a genuinely good book about a black man, George Dawson, who at 101 years of age lived to see three centuries. Born in the 1800's, he lived through the 1900's and was still living in the 21st century.

He talks about how life was growing up with the segregation of the blacks and the whites. How at a young age he had to go and stay in a shack on a white family's farm and help out on the farm so he could send his earnings home to help out.

During his teenage years he had done a lot of traveling and accomplished his dream of one day seeing snow. He traveled by train from state to state, even to Mexico and Canada. He found work everywhere he went to get by.

He finally started missing home and decided it was time to go back and settle down, maybe even start a family, as he did - seven kids and four wives later. He outlived all four wives and even a daughter. He now lives on his own with his children all grown.

At 98 years young he decided to go back to school and learn to read, something that he never got to experience as a child. He enjoys school and is an inspiration to anyone who knows him. This story is an inspiration for anybody to read, if you've ever thought your life was hard and miserable you should read this story. The trials this man has lived through and still he comes out smiling! He just enjoyed what he had - his family, living to see his kids grow, going to school, and knowing the mark he has left on some people is enough for him. He doesn't walk around dwelling on the bad stuff, he just appreciates the good stuff, because after all is said and done, life really is good!

The Mosquito Test

by Richard Kent, reviewed by Ashley Luce

Richard Kent did a wonderful job writing this book. It sucked me right in and I loved it!! It is very inspiring and helpful.

Scott is a teenage boy in a normal high school. He does all the normal things – hangs with friends, plays sports, and doesn't like to do things with his parents. He seems really happy and normal until his hair starts falling out. When this happens, his spirit falls, too.

Scott is trying to fight cancer with chemo treatments. He meets a lot of new friends in his condition, even some that aren't.

This book really got to me because one of my close friends has cancer and he, too, is going through chemo and losing his hair. It helped me to understand how he may be feeling and what is going on in his head. Also, what it is like to go through the treatments, because he does not talk about it a lot.

I would recommend this book to anyone in the world...it is not all sad things, I got a lot of good laughs out of it. Wait until you find out what the "mosquito test" is!!!! Please read this book and take a chance to meet Kevin, Scott, Eric, Vladie, and all the rest of the unique characters that make this book what it is.

Community Service Idea...

Ashley Luce is looking for volunteers to help her organize a benefit craft and bake sale at the Community School. 10% of the proceeds would go to the school. Participants will not only make some money for themselves, but also get credit for Community Service.

If you are interested in helping out, please call Ashley at 691-0254.

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