

LAD LEAF

A Publication of the Language Arts Department of Southwest Missouri (an NCTE affiliate) • Fall 2022

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Join LAD

Just \$20 provides full membership in LAD and gives your students the opportunity to have an authentic audience for their works.

New teachers' first-year membership is free; student members (those entering the profession) and retired teachers have different rates.

Join online on LAD's website (ladfair.com). On the home page, open the Membership Form link at the right under Documents.

Only LAD members can enter student works in the LAD Fair.

Deadlines and Dates

Winter meeting: Thursday, Jan. 26, 2023, location and time TBA.

Postmark date for LAD entries: Friday, March 17, 2023.

Sorting Day and In-Person Entry Deadline: Friday, March 24, 2023, Willard High School. Sorting Day begins around 2:45 p.m. Entries must arrive at Sorting Day by 4:30 p.m.; doors are locked at that time. Sorting lasts until all entries are sorted, counted, bagged and boxed.

Judging Day: Saturday, March 25, 2023, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Willard High School. Data entry and some category judging may take longer. Lunch provided.

Lad Fair Setup Day: Friday, April 28, 2023; Entries #79-#80 accepted.

LAD Fair: Saturday, April 29, 2023, 8 a.m.-11 a.m.

Summer meeting: Saturday, June 10, 2023, location and time TBA.

LAD officers for 2022-23

Slate approved at the Oct. 6, 2022, fall meeting:

- President: Jerra Icenhower (jngillespie@spsmail.org)
- President-Elect: Lori Ochner (lochner@dadeville.k12.mo.us)
- Vice-President: Kelcey Meinhardt (kmeinhardt@spspk.org)
- Secretary: Stephanie Summers (ssummers@spsmail.org)
- Treasurer: Jessica Willyerd (bellpotter@gmail.com)

Additional Officers:

- LAD Chair: Melissa Troxell (melissatroxell@willardschools.net)
- Judging Chair: Kathy McQueen (kathyd54@gmail.com)
- Volunteer Chair: Lori Ochner (see above for email)
- Data Entry Chair: Stephanie Summers (see above for email)
- Public Relations/Membership: **Open**
- NCTE Liaison: Kim Chism Jasper (kchismjasper77@gmail.com)
- SLATE Liaison (as needed): Kim Chism Jasper

Communications:

- Webmaster: Laura Rankin
 - Facebook: Stephanie Summers
 - *LAD Leaf* Editor: Kim Chism Jasper
 - *LAD Leaf* Advisory Team: Melissa Troxell
-

2022 LAD scholarship winners

Joan Collins Award and Scholarship (poetry anthology; category #29)

Emma Grace Carrol, Logan-Rogersville High School; Alicea McDonald, teacher

George Gleason Award and Scholarship (prose anthology; category #33)

Rebekah Flora, Stockton High School; Sarah Gooch, teacher

Kathy McQueen Award and Scholarship (prose & poetry anthology; category #37)

Aicha Barry, Willard High School; Chelsea Russell-Ice, teacher



Rebekah Flora, Stockton High School, winner of the Gleason Scholarship, receives the LAD award from category judge Jim Hamilton, an author and journalist who was a student of George Gleason at SMS (now MSU).



Emma Grace Carroll, Logan-Rogersville High School, receives the Collins Scholarship. Since she was a junior, her scholarship will be held until she graduates.

LAD members who enter student work for juniors and seniors can enter up to four anthologies in each of the LAD scholarship categories. A \$500 scholarship is given to the first-place winner in each of the categories: #29, original poetry anthology by an individual; #33, original prose anthology by an individual; and #37, original anthology of prose and poetry by an individual.

Anthologies are not to exceed 20 pages. If an anthology exceeds 20 pages, the first 20 pages are all the judge reads.

Anthologies are due with other LAD entries by 4:30 p.m. March 24, at Willard High School

If a junior wins the category, the scholarship is held until the student enters college.

Photos of scholarship winners contributed by Jesse Fields and Alicea McDonald

No photo available of Aicha Barry.

THE LAD LEAF is published twice a year and is available online on LAD's website—www.ladfair.com; on LAD's public Facebook page—Language Arts Department of Southwest Missouri (LAD); and on LAD's private Facebook page—LAD Community. The publication will be emailed upon request. The issues are published in PDF form for easy printing.

Contributions dealing with the field of English Language Arts (ELA) instruction at all levels (elementary, middle school, junior high, high school, and college) and suggestions for articles and lesson plans are welcome. Send contributions to Kim Chism Jasper, ***LAD Leaf*** editor, at kchismjasper77@gmail.com.

LAD Leaf Fall 2022 Advisory Team: Melissa Troxell.

Fall 2022 Proofreading Team: Karen Haraldson, Dana Whitesell Martin, Kathy McQueen
Member of the NCTE Information Exchange Agreement.

Nick Harkins Scholarship winner

Nicole González of Willard was the 2021 Nick Harkins Scholarship winner. The scholarship, sponsored by the Piddington Family, was established in memory of Nick Harkins who passed away in October 2013 from PML, a rare and deadly brain disease. According to the application, “hopefully, this scholarship in his memory will remind others that even if you walk a different path than the majority, you are not walking alone. Entries must focus on any theme related to diversity, equity, and/or inclusion.” The entry may be in any genre and may be descriptive and/or issue orientated.

The \$500 college scholarship is for a promising writer on the topic of diversity. The 2023 application forms are available at the LAD website: ladfair.com.



Nicole González with sponsor Kelly Westerfield.

Marine Corps Detachment 993 to give two \$1,000 scholarships in 2023

The SWMO Marine Corps League Detachment 993 will offer two scholarships to 2023 graduating seniors.

A new scholarship is open to graduating seniors related to a U.S. veteran or service member. It can be used for college, vocational training or the military.

The submission asks for a piece



Tyler Johnson of Stockton receives the \$1,000 SWMO Marine Corps League Detachment 993 Scholarship from members of the detachment, from left: Larry Riley, Commandant Joe Szura, and Eddie Flores.

of writing in any genre telling how applicants have been inspired or affected by their relationship with a U.S. veteran or service member.

The other \$1,000 scholarship is for a promising writer on the topic of honor, courage, and commit-

ment. The submission may be descriptive and/or issue oriented and may be in any genre.

Applications for both of the 2023 scholarships may be found on the LAD website: ladfair.com.

Photos of scholarship winners contributed by Jesse Fields and Kelly Westerfield.

Inspired by Nature Scholarships



Tyler Johnson of Stockton, who tied with Keegan Harper of Willard for first place, receives his award from LAD board member Kim Chism Jasper.

First Place (tie)

Tyler Johnson, Stockton High School; Jesse Fields, sponsor
Keegan Harper, Willard High School; Chelsea Russell-Ice, sponsor

Second Place

Collin Chastain, Republic High School; Kristin Crandall, sponsor

Third Place (tie)

Isabella Wilson, Willard High School; Kelly Westerfield, sponsor
Alethea Matthews, Republic High School; Kristin Crandall, sponsor

The Spirit of Nature Scholarship is sponsored by Frank S. Johnson and is open to graduating seniors. The 2023 scholarship application can be found on LAD's website: ladfair.com.

Entries are evaluated on creativity, originality, imagery, artistic quality and mastery of poetic expression. Johnson, also the scholarship judge, will award one full \$500 scholarship or partial scholarship among applicants. For example, in 2022, Johnson gave \$200 each to two first-place winners; \$150 to second place; and \$50 each to two third-place winners.



Collin Chastain placed second, and Alethea Matthews tied for third in the Inspired by Nature Scholarship. Both are from Republic High School.



Photos of scholarship winners contributed by Kristin Crandall, Jesse Fields and Kelly Westerfield.

LAD Fair Chair Melissa Troxell, center, presents Willard students with awards, from left: Isabella Wilson, third (tie) Inspired by Nature; Kindall Smithson, Writers Hall of Fame \$500 Scholarship; Keegan Harper, first (tie), Inspired by Nature Scholarship; Nicole González, \$500 Nick Harkins Scholarship.

2022 LAD judging, fair back in person

LAD Fair judging was back in person in 2022, and entries were up in all grade levels from the previous year when the contest was held virtually.

Teachers entered a total of 4,471 entries in 2022.

The categories with the most entries in 2022 were #26 short story with 219 entries; #49 long free verse with 190 entries; and #44 haiku with 170 entries.

The categories with the lowest entries were #73 individual or group promote writing with 1 entry; #49 original anthology of prose and poetry by a class with 2 entries; and #69, screenplay also with 2 entries.

The number of entries in each category at the different grade levels is available at the LAD website: ladfair.com. Go to the home

Entry totals for past four fairs

| Grade | 2018 | 2019 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| K | --- | 90 | 1 | 63 |
| 1 | (K/1) 452 | 395 | 119 | 204 |
| 2 | 316 | 229 | 35 | 110 |
| 3 | 798 | 362 | 110 | 191 |
| 4 | 448 | 495 | 103 | 197 |
| 5/6 | 1,378 | 1,258 | 277 | 606 |
| 7/8 | 1,680 | 1,542 | 946 | 968 |
| 9/10 | 853 | 744 | 682 | 1,031 |
| 11/12 | 1,004 | 1,363 | 804 | 1,101 |
| Totals | 6,929 | 6,478 | 3,076 | 4,471 |

K and first grade split into two grade levels in 2019; no fair in 2020 (Covid); virtual fair in 2021

page, where winners sheets are listed. (The grades 11-12 winners sheet is at the right.)

Why might LAD members care about the number of entries?

When specific category numbers are low, some LAD members see the opportunity to introduce new genres while increasing the odds of students winning ribbons.

Competition offers the chance to write with students

One of the best practices for teachers is to write along with their students. What better way to do that than to enter submissions to the same contest? The 2023 Sejong Writing Competition allows teachers and students to do that with its adult and pre-college (students 18 and younger) categories. An added bonus are the cash prizes awarded to winners.

One competition category, the sijo category, also might be an opportunity for LAD members to introduce a new poetry format to their students (and enter in category #48, other formula).

The sijo is a traditional three-line Korean poetic form organized

technically and thematically by line and syllable count.

Using the sijo form, an entrant can enter one poem in English on a topic of choice. Only one entry per applicant is permitted. Deadline is March 23, 2023.

Information about the contest, examples and lessons about the format (including those for elementary students) are available online at the sponsor's website: sejongculturalsociety

Past winners' sijos can also be viewed at the website.

Divisions include adult sijo division open to everyone age 19 and older; and pre-college sijo division open to students age 18 and

younger.

The contest is open to all residents of the US and Canada regardless of ethnic background.

Sijo category prizes are adult division: first (\$1,000), second (\$750), and third (\$500); pre-college division: first (\$500), second (\$400), and third (\$300).

Honorable mention (for both divisions listed above) Friends of Pacific Rim Awards (\$50 each)

The goals of the Sejong Writing Competition, according to the website, "are to discover children and young adults talented in writing" and "to increase the awareness and understanding of Korea's cultural heritage."

Formicidae Sapiens

by Tyler Johnson, first place (tie)
Inspired by Nature Scholarship (2022)

I wish we were like the ants.
Organized, orderly, efficient little bastards
as they invade through the crack in the window sill
and cover a basket of fruit I've left on the counter
like a blanket.

I never thought of ants as single organisms,
but as a mass. A collective.
A single ant is meaningless compared to the
organic railroad
that runs along the dark granite counter,
defying physics as they climb up the side
of the bowl
and swarm my poor, neglected oranges.
A lone ant is to be squashed insignificantly
underneath my finger
or gingerly taken outside to return to its domain.
The uniform marching taking place in my kitchen
requires more drastic measures to contain.

If there is life beyond this atmosphere
spread out across the stars and peering down
on our earthen fruit bowl,
do they see us as we see the ants?
Organized, orderly, and devoted to the preservation
of our colony?
Seamlessly working to ensure that every morsel
of our fruitful planet is used to maintain, sustain,
and provide?

Ants don't draw factions between the colony.
Larger ants don't dominate over the weaker ones.
The ants don't waste scraps they've collected from
my fruit bowl.

What am I to those who see us as ants, but an ant?
A small, meaningless singularity inside of the
colony of humanity?
Something to be crushed or overruled
in value to the presence of 7.3 billion others?

Curious, I place my pen in between the line of ants.
The closest one halts, taken aback by this impossi-
bly
large plastic object that stands in his way.
But before long, it runs along the edge of the barrel
leading his friends around the tip until he spies
the broken
road and continues to lead as if the trail never ended
and a gap in their conquest had never formed.

The ant now has my attention. He is no different
than any
of the hundreds of other ants, but he passed my test,
my trial,
making him a hero compared to his identical
counterparts.

Maybe if our colony had more ants like this one,
we could work our way around large
plastic obstacles,
maximize our fruit bowl,
and become significant enough not to be squashed.

*Editor's note: Tyler Johnson, a freshman at South-
west Baptist University in Bolivar, was a senior at
Stockton High School when he wrote "Formicidae
Sapiens." He granted permission to publish the
poem in the LAD Leaf.*

A Modest Consideration

by Mark Donovan, retired teacher,
currently teaching at Marionville Middle School

You did it. You put in your time. Rule of 80. School's out, school's out; teacher let the monkeys out...for good.

Maybe.

I retired in 2018. I was worn out. Inconsistent discipline, myopic focus on assessment, and the endless construction of the data bridge to nowhere had finally defeated my love for teaching.

The hardest part of retirement, for me at least, was missing the daily affirmations I received from my students and colleagues. I missed the esprit d'corps, the group slog, and our B.A.S.S. (Bitch About School Stuff) nights at our local watering holes.

To fill that void, I subbed. I reconnected. I enjoyed seeing everyone. I teased the teachers that I was just like a grandparent; here to see the kids, spoil 'em, and leave. It was enough. I felt relevant again. Then Covid hit. After a year of worry and isolation, I could not wait to substitute and be a part of the teaching craft again.

In June of 2020, I received a phone call from an old teaching and coaching buddy who was now the principal of Marionville Middle School. A teacher had left, and he could not find a suitable replacement. Would I be interested in coming out of retirement and teaching 6th-grade English? I could keep getting my pension and collect a paycheck and get my health insurance paid again. Critical teacher shortages around the state have forced many districts to delve into this well of experience. Retired teachers can come out of retirement and teach for two more years (recently expanded to 4 years).

I called PSRS to make sure this was allowed. It was. I was two years removed from teaching. Two years of yoga, pilates, tai chi, running, and working out. My tanks were full. I asked my wife what she thought. She had reservations. Literally, she had reservations for a vacation in Wisconsin in September, but we could cancel if I wanted to take advantage of this development.

I could not stop thinking about the money. I would nearly double my income and pay off debt. Finally, after 34 years in education, I could be paid closer

to my worth. I also thought about the grading, the discipline, the daily grind, plus, I would have a 45-minute one-way drive to Marionville. I said yes. (Did I mention the money?)

Now, after starting my second year of work/retirement, I still have not regretted my decision. Yes, it's tough some days. But nothing I have not faced before. Covid was a worry, but I have been shot, boosted, then boosted again. I have avoided the plague so far.

I wonder if I would still feel positive if the school I was teaching in was not well-run, with the students and parents running the show; but fortunately, Marionville Middle School is well-managed with a consistent and firm discipline that supports the classroom teacher. The community has welcomed me with open arms. My new colleagues, mostly young (under five years experience), are wonderful. I love the energy; I feel rejuvenated.

Grading papers is still a grind, but the district is small and the paper load is manageable. While I was retired, I did not get one head cold, but here I am once again experiencing a pounding head full of cotton. I must admit that technology is not my strength, I never really used Google Classroom, but these young teachers are super accommodating and show me the ways. I hear Career Ladder might be a thing again, and if so, I definitely will be taking advantage.

I honestly feel like every teacher should experience the wonder of working the same hours for two paychecks. It's awesome. Plus, and maybe this is more important than money, you can share your experiences with these new teachers. Share with them the battles through which you have persevered, That the difficulties they are experiencing is part and parcel of the craft of teaching. Show them that you are living proof that you can survive the classroom and thrive. If you have the energy, you should definitely step back into the classroom.

Editor's note: A critical teacher shortage led Mark Donovan to come out of retirement and return to the classroom.

Writers Hall of Fame Scholarships

Since 1995, the Writers Hall of Fame has been recognizing and celebrating student writers. After presenting scholarships to graduating seniors for 27 years (no scholarships were given in 2020 because of Covid), the Writers Hall of Fame gave its final scholarships in 2022.

The Writers Hall of Fame board voted to dissolve the organization on July 16, 2022.

A Community Foundation of the Ozarks fund of \$9,600 was divided between two entities: Ozarks Literacy Council and LAD, which WHoF has worked with for more than 25 years.

The Ozarks Literacy Council, which promotes writing in the Springfield area, was given \$2,500, and LAD was given the balance of \$7,100. The LAD money will continue in an unrestricted CFO fund.

The dissolution of WHoF also means no Writers Hall of Fame writing awards will be given in the various LAD categories in grades 5-12.

During its existence, Writers Hall of Fame awarded scholarships to 258 high school seniors.

2022 scholarship winners

- Aicha Barry, Willard; Chelsea Russell-Ice, sponsor (\$1,000)
- Morgan Ford, Stockton; Kari Worsley, sponsor (\$1,000)
- Arwen Ezell-McKinney, Republic; Karissa Talty, sponsor (\$1,000)
- Collin Chastain, Republic; Kristin Crandall, sponsor (\$500)



Morgan Ford of Stockton receives a \$1,000 Writers Hall of Fame Scholarship from WHoF board member Kim Chism Jasper.



Kindall Smithson, recipient of a \$500 WHoF scholarship, and teacher Kelly Westerfield.

- Kindall Smithson, Willard; Kelly Westerfield, sponsor (\$500)

A little history

In the fall of 1994, several area writers joined to start an organization called The Write Stuff. From that gathering, David Harrison, Jim Thompson, Eddie Bass and Jeanne Duffey formed the nucleus of a committee to create The Writers Hall of Fame, with its purpose, as stated in the 1996 awards ceremony program, “to recognize



Arwen Ezell-McKinney of Republic celebrates a \$1,000 WHoF scholarship to Drury University from teacher Karissa Talty.



Collin Chastain of Republic celebrates a \$500 WHoF scholarship from teacher Kristin Crandall

Photos of scholarship winners contributed by Jesse Fields, Kristin Crandall and Kelly Westerfield; no photo available of Aicha Barry.

those who have made a significant contribution to writing; and to encourage young people to develop writing skills.”

Author Harrison, who no longer serves on the board, offered these words, about the end of the organization, “What a shame that we finally reached the end of our string. I’m grateful to [those] who have kept the wick lighted through the years. I’ll cherish thoughts of how many young writers we have nourished.”



Georgia Davis, Spirit of Service winner, and teacher Kristin Crandall who contributed the photo.

Spirit of Service winner

The 2023 Spirit of Service Award, open to students in grades 11-12, will be \$1,000. The award seeks to encourage and reward altruism in young adults. Sponsors Rusty Maggard and Kim Chism Jasper are looking for young adults who step outside themselves and make a difference in their commu-

nities.

The award requires the applicant to tell the story of the project and its impact on the community.

An application and information about the award can be found on the LAD website: ladfair.com.

Sponsors of the applicants must be LAD members.

Don't want to count syllables? Try a hay(na)ku

Kathy McQueen, retired teacher and LAD Judging Chair, recently found this assignment as she was cleaning out files. She suggests that it might appeal to kids who don't like to count syllables. If you have writing assignments you'd like to share, send them to the LAD Leaf: Kim Chism Jasper, kchismjasper77@gmail.com

Hay(na)ku

A 21st century poetry form invented by Eileen Tabios. (The last syllable is pronounced "ko.")

Form:

A tercet: 3 lines

A total of 6 words:

1 in the 1st line

2 in the 2nd line

3 in the 3rd line

Multiple hay(na)ku can be chained to form a larger poem.

There are books of hay(na)ku poems. Two are *The Singer and Others* by Eileen Tabios and *The Hay(na)ku Anthology* edited by Jean Vengua and Mark Young.

Example:

Nothing
adds up.

Love isn't math.

Dan Waber

VP on 2023-24 slate still open

Want to get involved in LAD leadership? The office of vice president is still open for the 2023-2024 slate. The opening provides a great opportunity for someone wanting to learn the ropes and work with a great group of people.

Duties of the vice president:

- Preside over meetings in the absence of president and president-elect.
- Serve as Volunteer Chair for fair-related activities.
- Work closely with the LAD Fair chairs to find and manage volunteers for Sort Day, Judging Day, Setup Day, and LAD Fair Day monitoring.
- Collect volunteer forms and keep in contact with volunteers, letting them know dates, times, and duties.

Explosions in the Classroom

Use Barry Lane’s snapshots and thoughtshots to help student writers explode the moment, energizing their narrative writing

by **Melissa Troxell**
Willard Middle School

K. and I sat on the gym floor on a Friday, right after a pep assembly, going over her personal narrative again. No, it was not the best timing, but she was so close to bringing her coming-of-age narrative from a list of events to a moving story. When she came in Monday, she marched up to me and said, “I hated you for making me revise this four times, but I LOVE it. Will you please read it now?” Of course I did, and her coming-of-age moment danced before me on that page while I felt every emotion. It was beautiful.

So, how do we help students translate their events into beautiful dances on the page? Barry Lane in his book *After “THE END”* was my answer.

After students freewrite, create flash drafts, or decide on a moment/story they want to share, they need time to “write that moment in slow motion” as Barry Lane would tell us.

Write every detail. Use every sense. Make us feel like we are there in that moment; “explode” that moment on the page. For example, I would recount a story to my students from my own childhood as a list of events after I built it up to them as being sooooo great. I would say, “My dad loved to eat chips and dip after he thought we were asleep. My sister and I woke up one night, and he shared.” Much boooing would ensue, so I offered to revise it.

I wanted them to feel the sleepiness as we woke up, to taste the chips and dip as we made a mess, and feel the sadness of my dad when we were too old to do that anymore. When I retold it, inevitably my stu-

dents said, “Ahhhhh.” I exploded the moment, and then we worked on helping them explode their own moments.

To further help students create moments that make our senses come alive, Lane recommends snapshots and thoughtshots. Snapshots are the zoom lens on a camera, showing even more detail, bringing our attention to that particular detail for a purpose. In my story I would always zoom in on the moment we sat in my dad’s lap and grabbed as many chips as our tiny hands could hold while creating a true mess with the dip. This zoom lens brought attention to this specific scene because this was my dad’s favorite part and ours too. It showed my readers/listeners the importance of time together to our family.

Thoughtshots are the specific thoughts or description of a character’s thoughts to help us see his or her personality. Thoughtshots offer us insight into the people of our narratives or other creative pieces so that our readers really see us as they live the story with us. In my example story, I include thoughts from my dad as we children make a total mess with the chips and dip so that when I get to the end and he has left an entire carton of dip and a bag of chips uneaten because it “wasn’t fun anymore,” my readers/listeners felt my dad’s nostalgia and the little bit of sadness as we children got older.

As your students are writing descriptions, narratives, or poetry that jumps off the page, consider a few techniques from Barry Lane to help them energize that writing. Then enter it in the LAD Fair so that even more people will experience the beauty of your students’ writing.

Important Information About LAD Entries

A LAD member may submit a maximum total of **four entries per category**, regardless of the number of grade levels taught. If a LAD member exceeds the allowed number of entries in a category, the additional entries will be pulled and disqualified.

Only one LAD member should be listed on an entry form, and that person must be a current paid member. The LAD member’s name on the entry form will be the name used on winners lists compiled by LAD.

Ask an Expert

Are student misspellings in LAD entries OK?

Question: I am hoping to enter first-grade writing, but want to make sure it is authentic, obviously. How much should I help students with spelling and editing? I want to help them, but still make sure it is their own work of course. Any advice?

LouAnne Sappington
Dadeville first-grade teacher

Answer: Great question! I only turned in things that had student spellings, even with a lot of misspellings. I might help a student use the tools that we normally use to spell when conferencing: the word wall, ABC linking chart, word bank (especially in a content area), etc. However, I would not worry about fixing every word or making it perfect.

If there was a piece I really liked early in the year, I also sometimes saved them and let students go back to the pieces closer to fair time to fix words that they knew how to spell.

If I am ever worried about the readability, I add a note that tells the judge what the entry says. When I judged kindergarten last year, I saw lots of teachers had added notes, as well.

Below is an example from a student who struggled with penmanship, so I typed the work, misspellings included.

Stephanie Summers
longtime first-grade teacher,
now teaching kindergarten

Example of first-grade LAD entry:

One day I had a bike crash. I got hrt and sad. I fell on the ckonchet on the sidlock. How that made me sad is because I got hrt. I hurt my nee. It omost bled. How that hrt my nee is that I fall on the ckonchet . It is hrd. And win my bike was on me it was hrd to git my bike off me. My bike was heve to get off of me. Did you have a bike crash?

Editor's note: Great question and answer. I especially like that Stephanie has her students edit and revise near LAD entry time. That's a wonderful practice for students at all grade levels, allowing students to use what they've learned during the year to improve their writing. Explanatory notes to judges are always a good idea too.

The Great Thanksgiving Listen

Visit storycorps.org to learn about The Great Thanksgiving Listen. The project encourages young people—perhaps your students—“to create an oral history of our times by recording an interview with an elder, mentor, friend, or someone they admire.”

According to the website, since 2015, thousands of people in all 50 states have taken part in the project.

The website includes links for using StoryCorps in your classroom or StoryCorps in your home.

The site includes a wealth of information in the form of printable PDF files, with everything from posters, a great questions list, an interview planning list and conversation tips.

If you have participated in StoryCorps' Great Listen project or if you participate this year, share your experience with LAD Leaf readers.

Join LAD Community private group.

LAD's closed (private) Facebook community is a great place to share photos and lessons or ask for help. Search for LAD Community and ask to join. The group is open to LAD members.