



HUSKY

HIGHLIGHTS

WINTER 2011

The Desert Dome Arrives at St. James'

By Vanessa Herman, mother of Simone, First Grade

Had a time machine arrived at St. James'? Was it a space alien's craft? It appeared that St. James' had been invaded one recent morning in January. Students walking into Parish Hall came upon a giant black dome connected to wires and computers. It was not clear what to expect but the children soon learned that they were to squeeze their bodies into the dome via a narrow canal. The only sign that nothing was amiss was the presence of two friendly Desert Explorers, Sean and Nick, from the California Science Center.



"Wow! Cool!" Once the children overcame their excitement and were comfortably seated inside the giant Desert Dome, they were transported to our local Mojave Desert filled with Joshua Trees, giant rocks, and deep burrows via a 360-degree multimedia program projected onto the inside walls and ceiling of the dome.

Using computer-generated animation, real photographs, and fun folk music, the Desert Explorers took the students on a virtual adventure that taught them about local desert animals, their eating and sleeping habits, adaptation methods and the world in which they live.

The Desert Explorers helped the students understand that all animals are uniquely suited to live in a specific habitat. They saw snakes and lizards, gophers and foxes, Bobcats and bats.

Who knew that a kangaroo rat never drinks water or that a tortoise has its own water bottle inside of itself or that the area around our school doesn't come close to meeting the definition of desert?

The children were thrilled to be freed of the need to raise their hands as they gleefully called out responses to the Explorers' questions. Second-grader Brooke said her favorite part of the experience was finding out about kangaroo rats while her friends liked learning about jack rabbits. To First Grader Simone, the whole experience was, "scary at first but then just fun!"

So maybe it wasn't a space craft, but the Desert Dome certainly did take the students to a whole new world.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

By Brittany Hong, Fifth Grade

To celebrate Martin Luther King Day, Fifth Graders were asked to imagine that they were sitting in class discussing English when, suddenly, the door opens. In walks Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Their assignment was to answer Dr. King's questions. Below is Brittany Hong's answer which she read aloud in chapel.

When Martin Luther King Jr. came into the classroom that typical Monday morning, he asked us three important questions. The first question he asked was, "How has the world improved since my death?" I was thinking about that question all week and now I am writing it down. After Martin Luther King, Jr.'s death the world has improved a lot. One thing that improved is that black people and white people became more friendly with



Dr. Martin...Continued from page 1

each other and now they are not separated. Another thing that improved a lot is that all people are now equal and go to the same bathrooms, restaurants, and other places.

The second question he asked was, "What areas still need to be worked on?" My answer to that racism will never go away. I think that people should be less racist and should be proud of who we are. Adults should also teach their kids to play with other kids of different races.

The last question Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. asked was, "What are you doing to keep my dream alive?" The final answer to this question is that I am trying to cooperate with different kinds of people everywhere. I am trying to be nicer to them and participating in a lot of games with a lot of different kinds of people.

That afternoon, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. came back and asked us to share our ideas or answers. When it was time for him to leave, we each gave him a little picture to take with him to heaven. While he was leaving he told us, "Try to keep my dream alive and let freedom ring. I'm counting on each and every one of you!" The next day when we came into the classroom, guess who we saw? Rosa Parks! Here we go again!



A Vacation in South Africa

By Eva Hilton, Sixth Grade

Over the vacation, I visited South Africa. The only image I had of game reserves before I went to that country was the movie *The Lion King*. Even though that movie showed a little of what the bush looks like, seeing it in real life is so much different. The national game reserves are full of strange, exotic bugs! I don't remember a time when I didn't find a bug in my bed.

But the insects were only a small portion of the bush (the South African way of saying wildlife). On a safari, you drive around the

game reserve on a dirt path in an open vehicle. Sometimes I saw a lot of animals. Other times, I saw nothing. It took a lot of patience.

The first time I saw an elephant I was blown away. It is so different seeing animals in the wild instead of in the zoo. Once I saw a pride of lions sleeping after a good hunt. They looked so cute but at the same time, if you got out of that truck, they would kill you in one pounce. I was excited and frightened. My heart was pounding. That's why our ranger always had a gun with him. Another time, there was an elephant walking in front of the vehicle right in the middle of the road and we had to wait behind it for about 30 minutes before it finally walked off. You never know what you might run into on a Safari.

When you are on a Safari in the reserve, you sleep in a lodge. One night there were lions right outside the boundaries of our lodge! I was so scared they would get in but thankfully they passed.

I also went to The Cape of Good Hope and it was amazing! The Cape of Good Hope is the most southwest point in the world, not including Antarctica. Every single second I was there I was savoring the smell of the super fresh air. I don't get that in Los Angeles! Along with the air, there is the spectacular view. Table Top Mountain is more than 1,500 feet above sea level and it has the most unbelievable view. From the top, the whole city of Cape Town looked like a huge doll play set! Overall, I think it was the best trip I have ever taken.

If you have visited somewhere interesting and would like to write about it for Husky Highlights, please tell your teacher or send a submission to Lucy Norland lucybroad@mac.com.



Fifth Grade Law and Order

By Cameron March, Fifth Grade



On December 9, 2010, Mrs. Jeffries' Fifth Grade class went on a field trip to the Clara Shortridge Criminal Justice Center. When we got off the bus, we met Deputy District Attorney Bobby Grace. He and Mrs. Jeffries are friends from college, and he was responsible for setting the trip up for us. Upon entering the lobby, we made our way

through the scanners and metal detectors, and then onto the elevators. When we got to our floor, we had to go through yet another metal detector. Then we waited for a trial to start. While we were waiting, Mr. Trester told us that he is an attorney. He explained to us what an attorney does. Our parent chaperones were Mrs. Cabrini March, Mrs. Carla Williams, and Mr. Fred Trester.

When the trial was about to start, we slowly and quietly walked into the courtroom. We were in Honorable Judge Bob S. Bowers's courtroom. After the first trial, Judge Bob S. Bowers came over to us. He talked about the three branches of the United States Government. The three branches are the Judicial Branch, the Executive Branch, and the Legislative Branch. Then he asked us if any of us wanted to be a judge or a lawyer. When he finished speaking to us, he prepared for the next trial. We watched three trials that day. When the trials were over, we went downstairs and a huge mural caught our attention. This mural showed headline news articles from Los Angeles' history. Then we visited the audio room. We got to see how trials are recorded. We also visited the creative arts department, where all of the graphics used in the courtrooms are produced. Then it was time to return to school. It was a field trip that my fellow classmates and I will never forget.



What It's Like to Sing Solo at the St. James' Christmas Pageant

By Sloane Leipzig, Sixth Grade

I was thrilled to be the soloist at the 2010 St. James' Christmas Pageant. I auditioned during lunchtime on a chilly December day. I was extremely nervous for the rest of the afternoon, and I waited after school to see what decision Mr. Casey had made. I was worried, because everyone else who auditioned was great. Finally, I was relieved and excited to see my name taped to the wall in the courtyard.



In retrospect, I have many fond memories of years of St. James' Christmas Pageant rehearsals, and many of them are of watching the Sixth Grade soloist practice. In the days that followed, as I stood in the back of the Church, waiting to begin my rehearsal, I wondered if there was a little kid sitting in one of the pews, maybe a future soloist, making a memory of me rehearsing.

Then, I was standing in front of about 700 people on the night of the pageant, looking out at everyone, realizing that ever since I was little, I had imagined what it would feel like to stand here, waiting to sing "Once in Royal David's City" all by myself. It was like swallowing your first pill; you wonder if it will hurt, you

try to swallow it, and, before you know it, it's gone, over. I looked out at everyone, and many of them were staring at me. I wondered if that was good or bad. I looked over at Mrs. Norland, who was giving me a big thumbs up. That may well have been the most relieving thumbs up ever given to someone. That was the best beginning to my seventh, and final, St. James' Christmas Pageant that I ever could have hoped for.

On The Eve Of The Fourth Grade Field Trip To San Juan Capistrano, Mr. Duggan Explains That Field Trips Are Not Just Fun And Games

By Mr. Duggan

Here at St. James' Episcopal School, field trips are an integral part of the curriculum. Teachers seek out field trips that will enhance the topics and values that are being taught in class. To this end, they make choices and manage the necessary logistics in order to provide experiences that engage students in a direct, personal, and memorable way.

In Fourth Grade we have some unique opportunities to coordinate what we are learning about California's history with the places we visit. Reading about a historic event, observing photographs of where something momentous happened, or even visiting a related website add a great deal to our understanding of the past, but nothing can match seeing and experiencing actual places and artifacts first hand.

In the second trimester we spend several weeks reading about, discussing, and investigating California's mission system. Each student researches and writes a report on a particular mission and builds a mission model. The culmination of our study, though, is our visit to Mis-

sion San Juan Capistrano in February. Students are guided through the various mission buildings. They investigate the production of adobe bricks and tallow, visit the padres' rooms and a Native American structure, and hear the mission's stories in the places where they took place. They even learn how to make rope by actually producing some themselves!

In May we bring together many topics as we embark on a four-day journey through Sacramento and Coloma. While visiting the Capitol, we stop by the Senate and Assembly chambers to learn how state laws are made. We explore such topics as the role of women as we tour the California History Museum and its many artifacts. At the California State Railroad Museum we board actual railroad cars, see the first engines that crossed the Rockies, and gaze upon the famous Golden Spike that made the Transcontinental Railroad a reality. At the Coloma Outdoor Discovery School on the American River, students experience the Gold Rush directly by visiting Sutter's Mill where the discovery of gold changed our state's history. Indeed, they learn to pan for gold themselves, experience aspects of pioneer life, learn from a Native American storyteller, dance in a hoedown, hike up a mountain, and learn to protect our environment.

Through these experiences, we believe California's history comes alive for our students in a way that impacts them now and that will also live with them into the future. For these reasons, field trips are more than just fun and games. They are an important way for students to experience and learn about our world.

Something is Growing in St. James' Garden

By Sarah Thyre (Mother of Will Richter, Fourth grade)

Something is growing along the wall behind the school courtyard: an edible garden!

A few years ago, Mother Gray started a garden. The children in her "One Earth" After-School Enrichment class painted cinder blocks, and built a brightly-colored wall to contain the soil. The idea was to create an edible garden whose harvest could be used by the students in their classrooms or even in the St. James' church kitchen.

Last fall, Playground Supervisor Byron Zapata took over the planting of the garden. Transferring seedlings, he has grown zucchini, tomatoes, romaine and spring mix lettuces.

"Because of the limited sun in that area, certain plants will thrive more than others," says Mr. Zapata. "For that reason, we are still in the experimental stages of what will do well and what will not."

Vegetables planted last fall were harvested and presented at All School Chapel honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Z. will be re-planting this Spring, trying out new crops in varying configurations. He plans on recruiting students to help tend the garden.



As the garden grows, so do ideas for its use. Once it is in full swing, our school garden will benefit the soup kitchen and provide vegetables for Kindergarten and First Grade events. Mrs. Rodriguez plans on incorporating it into her Earth Science curriculum. This will teach the children about conservation, renewable energy sources, organic farming, and more.

If you wish to volunteer to help plant or maintain the garden, please contact Mr. Byron Zapata through the school office (213-382-2315).

Mrs. Rodriguez became our science teacher at St. James' this year. Here is a chance to get to know her better.



What made you want to be a science teacher?

I've always really enjoyed science. There's never a dull moment when you are investigating the world around you. Unfortunately, some kids are intimidated by science because they think you have to be a genius to understand it. I wanted to show them that science is really fun, interesting and approach-

able. I love seeing how excited my students get every time we start a new project.

What are some of the coolest science experiments you have ever done?

I once made a pressurized rocket using a bicycle pump, a plastic cylinder with a rubber nose cone and a few pieces of medium to heavy weight plastic. You put the plastic pieces over the opening of the air chamber so that as you pump, the air gets stuck inside the chamber and builds up a ton of pressure. There is so much pressure in the chamber that it gets really hard to pump and eventually the pressure rips a hole through the plastic piece. When that happens all of that compressed air is suddenly released into the rocket and it shoots into the air. The rocket flies hundreds of feet in the air and goes so fast that it's hard to keep track of it.

Where did you grow up and go to school?

I grew up in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles with my parents, older sister, Mykka, and my dogs, Fred and Ginger. I went to a parochial Elementary/Jr. High School much like St. James' and then went to a magnet high school that had a focus in philosophy. I enjoyed studying philosophy so much that I chose it for my major at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). During my junior year of college I went on a study abroad program called Semester at Sea. It was a four-month program in which you live with about five-hundred other students on a big ship as you travel around the world and study about different countries as you visit them. I got to go to countries such as Vietnam, South Africa, India, China and Venezuela.

Where were you a teacher before you came to St. James'?

I taught English for two years in Brazil. Brazil is still one of my favorite countries and I go back at least once a year.

Why do you think it is important for kids to study science?

Science is a part of everything we do, from boiling an egg to developing cures for illnesses. Studying science not only helps people to better understand their surroundings, but also leads to advancements in fields such as health and agriculture. It isn't just about memorizing facts, it's using facts to make new discoveries and create new solutions to better the world around us.

How Safe Are Violent Video Games?

By a St. James' Parent.

It was during the human development classes with Dr. Rami Sadeghi, a clinical psychologist, who comes to St. James' to teach our Fifth and Sixth graders, that the subject of violent videogames came up. There were many boys, it seemed, who played them. This prompted Ms. Arrington to send a note to all Fifth and Sixth Grade parents, warning them that games such as Halo, Grand Theft Auto and Call of Duty are not suitable for Fifth and Sixth Graders. These games carry a 'mature' warning on their covers - that is, they are for 17-year-olds and above. But what is a parent to do when these are the games that boys especially, seem to want? And what is a student to do when peer pressure comes into play? And are violent video games so terrible anyway? I decided to look into the matter.

Firstly, I came across a body of research so great it could blow Master Chief into oblivion. There were many scientific studies conducted. Some showed that children who played these games tended to develop aggressive behavior. Other studies showed that children who are traumatized by exposure to violent media became depressed and fearful. Some kids developed weight problems by sitting too long staring at a screen. Others developed social problems, because they spent too much time isolated with a computer instead of real people.

I could, in all honesty, find no research that said these games were beneficial to children in any way. In fact the evidence against them is so blinding that even President Bill Clinton spoke out about it: "These games teach young people to kill with all the precision of a military training program, but none of the character training that goes along with it," he said in 1999.

"What the studies say, quite simply, is that the boundary between fantasy and reality violence, which is a clear line for most adults, can become very blurred for vulnerable children. Our children are being fed a dependable daily does of violence and it sells. We now know that by the time the typical

American child reaches the age of eighteen, he or she has seen 200,000 acts of violence and 40,000 dramatized murders. That is why I have strongly urged people in the entertainment industry to consider the consequences of what they create and how they advertise it.”

The entertainment industry is making too much money to consider the consequences. In fact, videogames have only become more realistic, more violent and more prolific since President Clinton spoke out. Many parents are, as I was, probably unaware of the content of games like Grand Theft Auto because we all lead such busy lives. But when I sat down and really looked, I saw content that left me feeling sick. And that's me. A grown adult.

I learned that these are not simply movies - where you passively sit and watch violence taking place. These are interactive games where the player becomes the murderer, killer and protagonist. So what should we, as peace-loving parents and children, attending a peace-loving Christian school do, when these games are all around us, tempting our children from billboards and TV? I asked Dr. Rami, who has a 12 year old boy of his own.

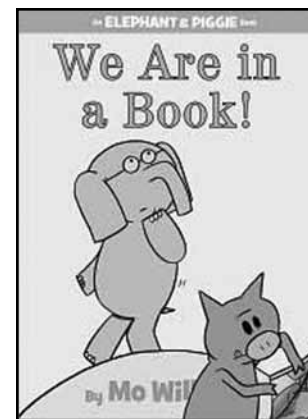
“My son thinks I am the most conservative parent in the world. We do not have those games in our house. If it was a four year old who wanted an ice-cream before dinner, you would, as a parent, stand up to the child and say ‘no’,” says Dr. Rami. “There is nothing wrong with the child wanting the ice-cream before dinner. But for the welfare of the child, you would say ‘no’. This is the same. There is nothing wrong with children wanting these games. But for the benefit of the child’s welfare you should say ‘no’. You say it in a loving, empathetic way, because to a child this will be abject cruelty. But in twenty years time, they will thank you.”

“Therapists come across adults whose parents allowed them to do whatever they want, all the time. Those people often feel let down by their parents, whereas those whose parents took a stand on certain issues, tend to think ‘my parents cared for me enough to stand up to me, and confront my baloney rather than simply saying ‘OK’. And that’s the ammo I use on my own path with my own son.”

For more information: *Stop Teaching Our Children to Kill*, by Professor Dave Grossman. (<http://www.aacap.org/>)

St. James' Best Sellers

You've heard of The New York Times Best Seller List. Now, in celebration of last month's book fair, here comes The St. James' Episcopal School's Best Seller List - the books that get checked out again and again from our school library, composed by Ms. McNamara. Check out the list - maybe there's a book you need to read yourself.

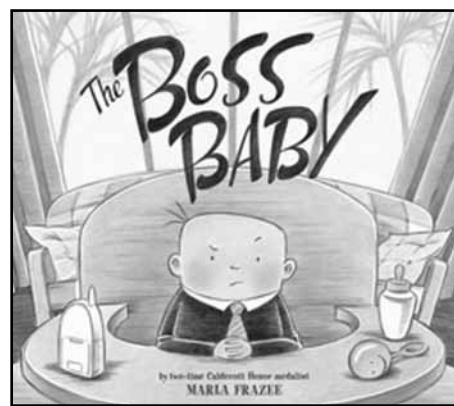


We Are In A Book! by Mo Willems
Piggie realizes that she and Gerald The Elephant are in a book and that she can make the reader say words, but when Gerald comes to understand the danger of the book ending, Piggie comes up with a solution to get the reader to keep reading. (Gr. K-2)

Monsters Eat Whiny Children by Bruce Eric Kaplan
Two endlessly complaining youngsters are kidnapped and carried off to a hungry monster's lair where they overhear arguments about the best way to prepare them: Should they be served in a salad or as burgers or vindaloo? (Gr. K-2)

A Sick Day for Amos by Philip C Stead
Zookeeper Amos McGee, who is adored by all the animals, gets some unexpected guests while home sick one day. (Gr. K-2 *Caldecott award winner)

The Boss Baby by Marla Frazee
From the moment he arrives, it is obvious that the new baby is boss and he gets whatever he wants, from drinks made-to-order around the clock to his executive gym. (Gr. K-2)



Swift by Robert Blake
After his father is attacked by a bear, a young boy must trust the instincts of his dog Swift in order to save his dad and return home safely. (Gr. K-3)

Nic Bishop Lizards by Nic Bishop
Full color photographs and easy-to-follow text profile different types of lizards, with information about their habitat, physical characteristics, diet, and survival skills. (Gr. K-3)

Pop! The Invention of Bubble Gum by Meghan McCarthy
A collection of amusing historical facts on the invention of bubble gum. (Gr. K-3)

Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave by Laban Carrick Hill
Chronicles the life of Dave, a nineteenth-century slave who went on to become an influential poet, artist, and potter. (Gr. K-3 *Coretta Scott King award winner)

Ivy and Bean: What's the Big Idea? by Annie Barrows (series)
Second-graders Ivy and Bean try to find a winning project for the science fair. (Gr. 2-4)

The Secrets of Droon by Tony Abbot (series)
Eric and his friends find entry into the mysterious world of Droon by using a staircase in Eric's basement. What fate awaits them there? (Gr. 2-4)

Ubiquitous: Celebrating Nature's Survivors by Joyce Sidman
Poems that examine survival in nature, and includes information about a number of plants and animals. (Gr. 3-6)

Griff Carver, Hallway Patrol by Jim Krieg
Legendary Griff Carver joins the Rampart Middle School Hallway Patrol and, with the help of his new friends, solves the case of counterfeit hall passes. (Gr. 3-6)

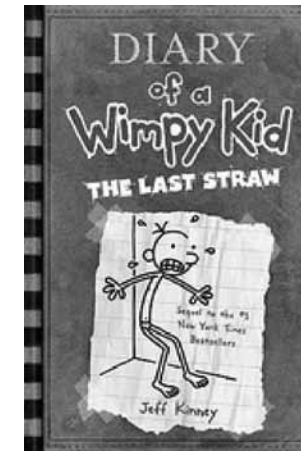


39 Clues by various authors
Amy and Dan, members of the powerful Cahill family, try to uncover the thirty-nine clues which will reveal the secrets of their lineage. (Gr. 3-6)

The Mysterious Benedict Society by Trenton Lee Stewart (series)
After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. (Gr. 3-6)

Bone by Jeff Smith (graphic novel series)
Fone Bone, Phoney Bone, and Smiley Bone are run out of their home, Boneville, and become separated in the wilds. Better fortune begins when the three cousins reunite at a farmstead in a deep forested valley, where Fone meets a young girl named Thom. (Gr. 2-6)

The Lost Hero by Rick Riordan
Jason, Piper, and Leo, three students from a school for "bad kids," find the



themselves at Camp Half-Blood, where they learn that they are demigods and begin a quest to free Hera, who has been imprisoned by Mother Earth herself. (Gr. 4-8)

Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth by Jeff Kinney (series)
While trying to find a new best friend after feuding with Rowley, middle-school slacker Greg Hefley is warned by older family members that adolescence is a time to act more responsibly and to think seriously about his future. (Gr. 4-6)

The Five Ancestors by Jeff Stone (series)
Five young warrior-monk brothers survive an insurrection and must use the ancient arts to avenge their Grandmaster. (Gr. 5-8)

Moon Over Manifest by Clare Vanderpool
Twelve-year-old Abilene Tucker is the daughter of a drifter who, in the summer of 1936, sends her to stay with an old friend in Manifest, Kansas, where he grew up, and where she hopes to find out some things about his past. (*Newbery award winner Gr. 5-8)

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows by J.K. Rowling (series)
Sequel to Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince. Follows the journey of the series' protagonist Harry Potter as he attempts to bring an end to his archenemy, Lord Voldemort. (Gr. 5-8)

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TUTORING AVAILABLE
Mary Wilson, a trusted local resident and St. James' parishioner with over 20 years of teaching experience, is available to tutor students in Kindergarten through Grade Six, especially in English and language arts.
Call 323-934-1270

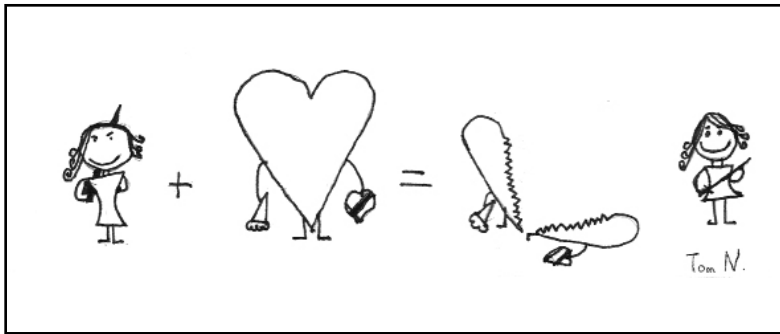
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French Lessons
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AjaBleu@europe.com

A St. James' Cartoon



By Tom Norland

Around St. James'



Cassandra's Bugs

The ladybugs were already there,
eating aphids without a care.
Fuzzy spiders patched their webs
wherever, however big the tear.
Worker bees zoomed, hovered and hummed,
while Cassandra giggled and pointed at
a dragonfly's zooming fun.

She had brought out her sandwich
and little green chair,
to count them all and watch them,
as the sun lit up her hair.

The flowers were many, full and bright,
the air soft, so sweet and light,
making fair Cassandra leap up
and spin 'round at the sight!

Picnic Place

Let's set our blanket well under the trees
with plenty of shade and birds if you please.
Shall we lie back and count the browning leaves,
or gobble our food and chase the breeze?

Maybe we'll find a branch and make a trapeze
then run and dance 'til we drop to our knees!
Maybe we could count some busy honey bees or
YES! -pretend we're pirates on the wide open seas!

By H. B. Morrell, mother of John and Eleanor
Hammond, Sixth Grade.

