

As the day's last sliver of sunlight dances westward across the land, it reveals in each wetland, lake, & stream a reflection that cannot be described with earthly words. Perhaps these visual reflections are what draw us to lakes & rivers for our emotional reflections – the sights, the sounds, the serenity – there's something about water that captivates us & sets us free.

These reflections reveal our physical connections with water – our actions on land are directly reflected in our streams, rivers, & lakes. If we manage our land wisely, we can protect, preserve, & enjoy our aquatic resources forever. The first step to understanding the interconnectedness of our world is gaining a profound respect for the resources found within it, & the first step in acquiring this respect is spending time in & around our streams, rivers, & lakes – paddling, swimming, fishing, monitoring the quality of their waters – letting their reflections lead us to our own.

Each year, in affiliation with The Library of Congress Center for the Book, River of Words® conducts a free international poetry & art contest for youth on the theme of watersheds. The contest is designed to help youth explore the natural & cultural history of the place they live, & to express what they discover through poetry & art. Entries not chosen as finalists or grand prize winners in the international contest are returned to the IOWATER program, where they are judged in an Iowa statewide River of Words contest.

Printed on recycled paper using private donations.

COVER ART

Scott Skophammer
age 14
Fort Dodge, IA

Freedom...Cool, Clean Water

IOWA WINNER

IOWATER

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2006

IOWATER

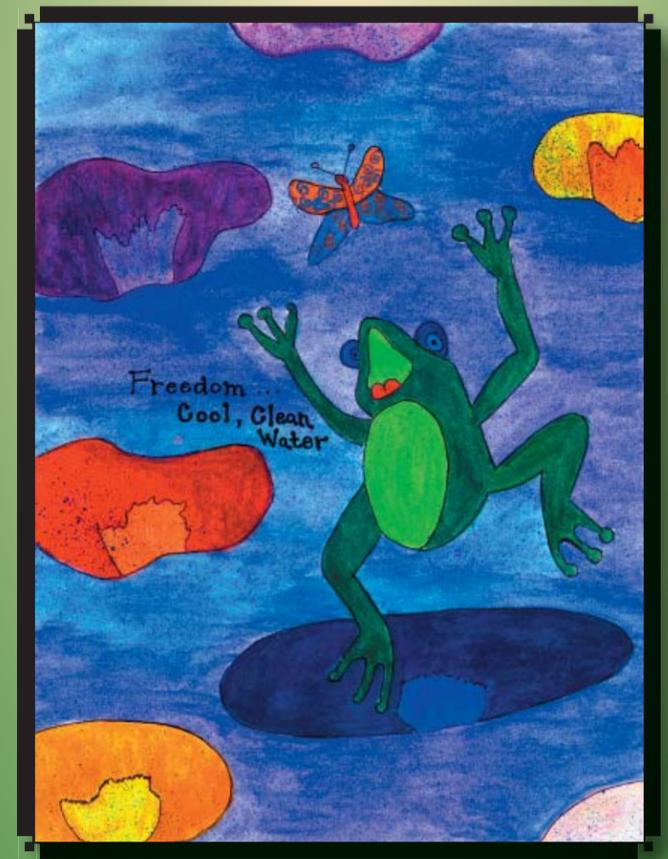
presents the

3rd Annual

RIVER of WORDS

Environmental

Poetry & Art



IOWA Competition 2006

River Run

I run,
But not alone,
For the river runs beside me
The water runs between the banks
Following a course towards an unknown destination
The water
In constant motion
Its only goal
To reach the end of its course
In which
The river leads it
Flowing silently
Yet beneath the surface
Great power can be found
As I run, I tire
I feel I can run no more
And look upon the river for inspiration
I continue running, running to a destination
A destination I will only know when I reach it
My legs, burning with the sensation of each step
Begin a constant motion again
My only goal, to reach my destination
Running silently, breathing in and out
On the surface, I may look like a simple runner
But underneath the surface
I am an athlete
Filled with the will power,
Of a river

Carl Kirpes
age 16
Cumming, Iowa
IOWA WINNER

The River

River you flow so swiftly full of fish.
Boats use you to transport goods.
Through the mountains and through the hills.
Never ending, gaining strength with more rivers flowing into you.
You get so big, you could conquer anything.
Your bottom is mud but you keep going.

Taylor Radke
age 12
Galva, Iowa
IOWA WINNER

edom ...
Cool, Clean
Water

River, Come

River, river,
Come to a sandbar
And take a break there.
Then go back and flow again until you reach a dam.
Say hello to the beaver, who builds the dam for you.

Clayton Dryden
age 6
Marion, Iowa
IOWA WINNER

River Lullaby

The whippoorwill sings a lullaby,
the lark and thrush join along.
But where the stream
meets the river is the beginning
of our song.

We ebb and flow on the water's
light. We dance along like the
river sprites.

May your heart be
bright as we sing tonight of our
river lullaby.

So close your eyes while
you drift along. Yes, sing with us
of our river song. May your fears
be gone as you dance along to
our river lullaby.

Where the stream returns
to the river is where we say goodbye.

But when you return, together
we can sing of our
river lullaby.

Cherell Hayes
age 15
Earlham, Iowa
IOWA WINNER

JURY for River of Words Poetry & Art Iowa Competition 2006

Michael Carey received an MFA
from the University of Iowa Writers'
Workshop & is the author of five
books of poetry.

Liz Christiansen graduated from
Cornell College with a BA degree in
botany. She is the Deputy Director
of the Iowa Department of Natural
Resources.

Pat Lohmann received an MFA
in painting from the University of
Iowa School of Art & Art History.
She is an artist & publication de-
signer for the Iowa Department of
Natural Resources.

Debra Marquart graduated from
Minnesota State University, Moor-
head with an MLA degree & is an
associate professor of English &
coordinator of the Creative Writing
Program at Iowa State University.

For entry forms for the 2007 International contest, contact:

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