Deer at Sunset
Evelyn Allen, age 10
Mesquite Elementary School – Janis Mortensen and Paula Maxwell
Grand Prize–Art–Category 3
This book is dedicated to 2019 Living River of Words Teacher of the Year: Annie Tanner - Anza Trail School

And all the teachers and parents/guardians that promote and support the integration of science and the arts while creating opportunities for children to connect with nature.

Living River of Words 2019 – 2020 Traveling Exhibit Schedule

April 13 – May 31, 2019
Wheeler Taft Abbett Sr. Library • 7800 N. Schisler Dr.

June 4 – June 30, 2019
Joel Valdez Main Library • 101 N. Stone Ave.

July 3 – August 29, 2019
Murphy-Wilmot Library • 530 N. Wilmot Rd.

September 4 – September 29, 2019
Dusenberry-River Library • 5605 E. River Rd., # 105

October 2 – October 30, 2019
Mission Library • 3770 S. Mission Rd.

November 2 – November 28, 2019
Quincie Douglas Library • 1585 E. 36th St.

December 3, 2019 – January 2, 2020
Eckstrom-Columbus Library • 4350 E. 22nd St.

January 7 – February 27, 2020
Joyner-Green Valley Library • 601 N. La Cañada Dr., Green Valley
Living River of Words: Youth Arts and Science

Living River of Words (LROW) sets the stage for learning, inspires science inquiry, and excites creativity. The cycle begins with teachers who invite LROW arts and science instructors to their classrooms. Students are introduced to the concepts of watershed and the water cycle, and explore local wetland habitats through a multidisciplinary series of science investigations and the practice of poetry and visual arts. After exploring these topics, children ages 5–19 have the opportunity to share their impressions with entries of poetry and/or visual art to Living River of Words: Youth Poetry and Art Contest. In these pages you see the award winning youth poetry and art works that are the result of the field study trips, school residencies, and independent study.

The Santa Cruz River has long been the lifeblood of the region, attracting the first humans over 12,000 years ago. In fact, the Santa Cruz River Valley has the longest continuous record of agriculture in the United States. Today, due to a variety of factors including groundwater pumping, many stretches flow only when it rains. The Living River Project, conducted by Pima County and the Sonoran Institute, measures conditions of this valuable ecosystem and track the impacts of our community investment. Thanks to the release of highly treated wastewater into the riverbed the Santa Cruz River in northwest Tucson and Marana, the river is alive with perennial flows, lush trees lining the riverbanks, and diverse wildlife. In 2017, we celebrated the return of the endangered Gila Topminnow to the lower Santa Cruz River!

Living River of Words plays a role in the broader Living River Project by introducing students, teachers and parents to the Santa Cruz River, Agua Caliente Park, and the pond at Historic Canoa Ranch, and other wetland habitats in Pima County. While at the field study site, students conduct water quality tests, study aquatic macroinvertebrates, and make vegetation observations, using methods that reflect the Living River Project indicator assessments. A visiting poet or artist spends time with the students by the river to guide their journaling,
photographing, and drawing in preparation for poetry writing and artwork back in the classroom. The ever–expanding reach of LROW is promoted through a partnership with Arizona Project Wet during the annual Living River Academy where teachers are introduced to LROW and explore education opportunities.

We hope you will enjoy the richness and wonder of these special places through the eyes of the Living River of Words 2019 award winning youth poets and artists.

Thank You!

Living River of Words succeeds with in-kind services and financial support from Pima County Regional Flood Control District, Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department, Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, Pima County Public Library, Friends of Agua Caliente Park, Arizona Project Wet, Udall Foundation: Parks in Focus, The University of Arizona Poetry Center, Sonoran Institute, and Marana Parks and Recreation.

Many thanks to the community partners, school administrators, teachers, science, poetry, photography, and art instructors, judges, volunteers, and graphic designers that worked diligently to bring Living River of Words through the annual cycle of activities: Yajaira Gray, Wendy Burroughs, Jeffrey Babson, Sandy Reith, Axhel Muñoz, Marsha Colbert, Matt Smogor, Eric Scheuering, Edie Price, Helen Wilson, Noemi Zazueta, Neil Diamente, Doris Evans, Elizabeth Quinn, Dominique Sevi, Clel Howard, Mariana Caballero, Andrea Bennett, Miriam Aleman, Susan Knoll, Brian Powell, Bret Muter, Hazelle Gonter, Carol Brown, Kerry Schwartz, Elizabeth Wilkening, Tony Luebbermann, and Tyler Meier.
Roadrunner at noon
Willows weeping from heat
Sweat pours down my face

Maria Robles, age 7
Miles Exploratory Learning Center – Rosalie Perales
Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 1

Saryna Flores, age 8
Mission Manor Elementary School – April Brown
A Day at the River
Sierra Skye Milligan, age 12
DeGrazia Elementary School – Robert Mayer

So Pretty
Waterfall flowing
Rushing flowing crystal clear
Crystal clear water

Sydney Allen, age 8
Tanque Verde Elementary School – Kim Roh
The Wonderful Things I See
Look upon a tree, oh what wonderful things I see.
One big waterfall, two little butterflies,
One fox as orange as can be,
Five dandelions, four little chickadees,
One female cardinal that I can see.
One big woodpecker pecking at a tree.
Three little squirrels running into their hole,
And then what did I pull?
A root from the tree
That’s home to all the wonderful things I see.

Hannah Harrington, age 7
Tanque Verde Elementary School – Cheryl LaRose

David Reyes, age 14
Drachman Montessori Magnet School – Eric Flewelling
**The Calling**

As I head home, I turn around to hear something calling for me.

I turn around to see the beautiful moonlit sky.

In the distance, I can hear the coyotes howling at the full moon, and the soft sound of the running river that flows through here.

I take a whiff of the air and in the air, I could smell the sweet mesquite seeds that are scattered everywhere.

I turn around to see the desert calling for me. And I answer.

_Liam Diaz, age 12_
_Anza Trail School – Annie Tanner_
**Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 3**

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**The Deep Sleeping Rivers**

The deep sleeping rivers
As free as the moonlight crossing
Mist and miles away of your dreams
And the death of the rivers
The stones are still and
The whistles of the birds.

_Madelyn Hand, age 7_
_Agua Caliente Elementary School – Jennifer Mansour_
Owls
Alyssa Hackett, age 6
Gale Elementary School – Hannah Sainz

Outta the Wasteland
Diego Muner Hernandez, age 16
Tucson High Magnet School – Marea Jenness
Tortoise
Slow, reptile
Walking, drinking, eating
Brown, hard
Turtle

William Osborne, age 7
Tanque Verde Elementary School – Jill Vengelen

Ranando Josemaria Jr., age 8
Mission Manor Elementary School – April Brown
Grand Prize–Art–Category 2
A Sunny Day
Corina Canchola, age 5
Sewell Elementary School – Sandra Payton
Black crows flying
Brown river moving slow
Green cactus

Camila Garate, age 6
Miles Exploratory Learning Center – Mary Hope Bergey and Jolene Terry

A Daily Sunrise
Hayden Hishaw, age 11
Basis Tucson North – Carrie Vonier
When Water Moves

Water moves in many ways
Up and down and sideways
It goes up to form white fluff
Super white and super lush
It goes down and down and down
Into the wind and on the ground
Water sometimes falls as snow
As we wait for “Ho Ho Ho”
When the water filters it will link
To our home so we can drink
Water is used in many ways
Taking different shapes each day
A Storm
Cooper Stahn, age 6
Gale Elementary School – Jennifer Nguyen

Eli Graizbold-Michelson, age 15
Tucson High Magnet School – Marea Jenness
A Poem to the River

When it rains it pours
When it pours the earth roars
When the earth roars
The river is full
When the river is full
everyone is cheerful.

Marytza Catalan, age 10
Independent Entry

Sleepy Years

The sleeping years of the ocean’s pearl.

The quiet sleeping river
Is flowing through the waves.

The branches are on fire
And I am in the dark alone.

Adam Nelson, age 8
Agua Caliente Elementary School – Jennifer Mansour
Grand Prize—Poetry—Category 2
Angeleeza Alvarez, age 16
Tucson High Magnet School – Marea Jenness
Grand Prize–Art–Category 4
The Santa Cruz

I remember the wildlife
The sound of birds chirping,
I remember the food,
Sweet red wolfberries.

I remember the crane,
The big white bird flying sky high,
I remember the smell of rain,
The humid wet smell.

I remember the river,
The river of life,
The stream that moved like lighting,
The Santa Cruz River.

Lucas Nguyen, age 11
Ironwood Elementary School – June Hall
Desert Water
Isabella Vaughn, age 7
Tanque Verde Elementary School – Shelley Sanchez and Jenna Childers

Colors in the Desert
Alana Torres, age 11
DeGrazia Elementary School – Robert Mayer
Leon Obezo, age 6
Cragin Elementary School – Heather Wenning
Grand Prize–Art–Category 1
Remembering the River

I remember the Santa Cruz River
The cold, slow wind and the small grass
The water gave me a vision of soft, smooth glass
I remember the cold gravel beneath my feet
The air was fresh and sweet

I remember the soft, glowing sun
The clouds were dark and covered the light
It was so quiet, it seemed like night
You can hear the birds soft chirping as the river flows
I remember the red wolfberries that were
Vibrant against the deep green leaves.

Sadie Chintis, age 11
Ironwood Elementary School – June Hall
Yoana Romero, age 15
Tucson High Magnet School – Marea Jenness
Sunrise
Madelyn Pertile, age 5
Gale Elementary School – Briana Gryzynger

Desert Javelina Walks on Rocks
Trevor Jensen, age 7
Roadrunner Elementary School – Elizabeth Gary
Reyna Blanca Santillanes, age 7
Mission Manor Elementary School – April Brown
The Wolfberry
The wolfberry
Was red and little.
It was good and smooth
Like a baby turtle.

Valerie Flores Machado, age 8
Miles Exploratory Learning Center – Mary Hope Bergey and Jolene Terry
Noah Fish, age 7
Safford K-8 School – Callista Radloff
Time

It is of the dragonfly, souring.
   It is like a snail, sliding.
It is the emerald of creative and useful imagination.
   It is a sly fox, keep in mind.
   It has no beginning.
   It has no end.
It is the Good Samaritan.
Yet still the robber passing by.
It assumes many shapes.
   It assumes many sizes.
   It is a creator,
   Yet also a destroyer.
   And still,
   It is time.

Devon Meeker, age 11
Anza Trail School – Annie Tanner
The River
Brianna Brock, age 11
DeGrazia Elementary School – Aaron Hart

The Ways of the Desert
Jack Fletcher, age 8
Tanque Verde Elementary School – Cheryl LaRose
Gabriel Norris, age 7
Cragin Elementary School – Laura McIntosh
The Busy River
Ian Romero, age 7
Safford K-8 School – Tracey Burton

The Awesome River
I hear the splash of the fish.
The train was roaring
The river was soaring.
The small bugs were in my face
The small bugs were moving at quiet pace.
Were the bugs in a race?

Peyton Puls, age 8
Presidio School – Kelli Aliperti
Noah Huth, age 15
Tucson High Magnet School – Marea Jenness
Britzeyda Delgado-Arias, age 13
Drachman Montessori Magnet School – Jose Haro

The Sunset Desert
Raven Wherry, age 8
Tanque Verde Elementary School – Cheryl LaRose
Brianna Baden, age 7
Roadrunner Elementary School – Ashley Haines
Pretty Lonely Lizard
Olivia Hitchings, age 10
Hendricks Elementary School – Janet Slingerland

Sweet Desert Rain
Rain pouring down
Rivers start roaring
Animals drinking
Plants growing
I wish it would stay
Sweet desert rain

Braden Irwin, age 9
Mesquite Elementary School – Janis Mortensen and Paula Maxwell
Michelle Ley Mar, age 15
Tucson High Magnet School – Marea Jenness
Stars

Once there was a tadpole looking up at the stars then he saw the reflection of his Eyes off the surface of the Water and saw the inner frog in him.

Martin Suarez, age 11
Anza Trail School – Annie Tanner
Sonic Sunny
Edgard Luna Jimenez, age 7
Safford K-8 School – Callista Radloff
Animals
Ryleigh K. Bailey, age 6
Sewell Elementary School – Maria Alvarado-Wells

Puddles
Splash, fun
Running, jumping,
Stomping
I was running in the puddle
Splashy Hole!

Juniper Dorr, age 6
Mesquite Elementary School – Janis Mortensen and Paula Maxwell
Lizard hunts.

Morning.

Fallen wolfberries around

My tracks in the sand.

Nicolas Meschino Earle, age 8
Miles Exploratory Learning Center – Mary Hope Bergey and Jolene Terry

The Masterpiece Picture
Jessini Siqueiros, age 7
Safford K-8 School – Robin Gilbert
Local Winners in International River of Words 2019

River of Words is a regional coordinator providing local support for River of Words: a project of The Center for Environmental Literacy at Saint Mary’s College of California. River of Words is its own watershed: a linked network of people throughout the United States and the world who are committed to teaching the art and poetry of place to young people.

In the pages to follow we honor local student finalists from Living River of Words 2018 who were selected as finalists in the River of Words 2019 Youth Poetry and Art contest.

From a Seed to a Cactus

On a hot, dry day in the desert
A beautiful red fruit drops from a green, spiky saguaro cactus.
It slowly opens on the dry desert floor.
Two thousand black seeds fall out.
Wind and rain comes.
Months, years, and weeks come,
and there is a beautiful cactus waiting to be seen.

Georgina Valenzuela, age 9
Borton Magnet School – Mrs. Bennett
2019 Poetry Winner in Category 1
The Reflection of the River

The quiet light floats through the wind as if it could go through the walls of the earth.

Dreaming spirits whispers blowing together.

Friends run along a starlit path through the trees.

The sparkling stones fall calling their names.

The reflection of the river water running, seems to be making a clean long path.

The clouds still white in the peaceful desert.

If you listen closely, you can hear the wind saying, believe!

Noemi Celani, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary – Mrs. Robinson
International River of Words Finalist
The River of Words
Take heed as you stand among the reeds
Your mind may get lost in the Waters of Thought
The water lays still, until an idea sparks
Sending a ripple
Feel the wind hugging your cheek
Embracing it in the cloak of nature’s welcome
Sit down by the River of Words
Sit down and think
Then write some poetry

Alyssa Thompson, age 11
Agua Caliente Elementary – Mrs. Johnson
2019 Poetry Finalist in the “On Writing” Category

Desert Blossoms After Rain
Maryanne Allen, age 10
Mesquite Elementary – Mrs. Knox and Ms. Mortensen
International River of Words Finalist
I Love Trees
A tree is like my grandpa
drying leaves, bent over
limbs in the winter of
his life deep thoughts
and roots.

Jocelyn R. Sepulveda-Cocio, age 9
Presidio School – Mrs. Nelson
International River of Words Finalist

Andrea Sampson, age 15
Tucson High School – Ms. Jenness
International River of Words Finalist
Waterland
Sean Mergenthaler, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary – Ms. Mansour
*International River of Words Finalist*

Relaxation
Evelyn Grace Brandon, age 8
DeGrazia Elementary – Mrs. Mirlocca
*International River of Words Finalist*
For more information about *Living River of Words: Youth Arts and Science* contact:
Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
Environmental Education
Phone: (520) 724-5375
Email: education@pima.gov
Website: www.pima.gov/nrpr

Photo: Jolicia Sutton, Drachman Montessori Magnet School

Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
Regional Flood Control District
Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department
Pima County Public Library