



## 2024 Pack a Punch Contest Entries

*Some light formatting changes have been made to create consistency in the PDF.  
Where students included their last name when signing off as editor of their magazine, we  
changed the last name to an initial to protect privacy.*

**Olivia S., 13, New York**

Dear Madam,

Over the summer, my family and I drove from New York to Texas. While we were in Kentucky, the time on my phone went back one hour. Did we time travel? I know that there are different time zones across America, so I guess that might be what happened. But if it was time change, does that still count as time travel? I wanted to get your expert advice on this topic.

Sincerely,  
Blake Anderson

Dear Mr. Anderson,

Unfortunately, what you experienced was just going from Eastern Time to Central Time. However, this does technically count as time travel because you traveled across time zones. I hope this helped.

Sincerely,  
Alexis Tealstone

**Briana S., 13, Ohio**

Dear Editor,

I've been waking up in the middle of the night to strange noises coming from my garden. I think there are UFOs stealing my cabbages. Do you perhaps sell alien repellent? Or maybe do you perhaps know some other way to keep UFOs out of my cabbages? You recently published an article on the benefits of geese. I went to our local farm store and got one as soon as I could after reading it. When I brought the goose home however, I didn't really have a place to put it (I guess I may have gotten a little over excited) so I plopped it in with my sheep. A few days later I checked on it and it seemed to be thriving. I feed him grain and hay because I figure he doesn't want to be made fun of by the sheep for being different. I swear I can hear his meaning from my house and the other day, I thought I could see a tuft of wool growing out from the top of his head. Thank you for recommending geese. They really are quite enjoyable and fit into their surroundings very nicely.

P.S. Do Giltofsky Witopserbats eat beets?

Sincerely, your very grateful friend, Agnes McFarley Witherbane

Miss Witherbane,

We appreciate your trust in us to be able to answer your questions and answer them correctly. We here at the magazine value our subscribers trust in us and wish to help you in every way possible. It's great to hear about your goose and how he's doing with your sheep, because every discovery our subscribers make, is another article we can publish in our magazine. Then everyone can learn from your experiences. I'm sorry to let you know that we do not sell alien repellent. Though it might be helpful to tell you that it would be a good idea to lock up your sheep at night. We think they might be the culprits. Sheep do love cabbages.

P.S I really am not sure what a Giltofsky Witopserat is, but I would think that they do not eat beets. They sound slightly carnivorous.

Your friend, the Editor

## **Zeke B., 13, Gitega – 3<sup>rd</sup> PLACE**

Dear Editor,

I've been reading your magazine every chance I get. That isn't often, mind you. I am a judgeful fellow, and in this letter, I intend to do just that. First of all, I want to say good things about your magazine, 'cause I'm trying to be nice. I think the way you write so colorfully really hooks certain readers. It's a shame I'm not that kind of reader. I like the news! I buy your magazine to try to keep up with the current events over in Africa, and frankly, all you have for me is a bunch of stories. They are very well written, and I appreciate the time you probably put into them, but I like the straight-forward news! Anyway, I continue to order your magazine in hopes of getting the news I deserve. Please keep this in mind and tell it to whoever is behind all the stories and whatnot.

Your hopeful follower,  
Andy Quarts

Mr. Quarts,

Thank you for reading M.K. Life and pointing out a way to include a different kind of reader. I'd like to tell you that our team is discussing a news section. My magazine is written for entertainment, while also trying to give the news. We will take your suggestion into consideration, as we do all our followers' suggestions. Thank you for keeping up with M.K. Life.

Sincerely,  
Taut N. Tight, Editor

Dear Taut N. Tight,

Is that your real name? I guess that's none of my business. So, I'm proud to hear you guys are taking my suggestion into the highest of consideration. Above all the other suggestions, too! Ha! I am pretty important, aren't I? Well, respond when you have a decision. I'll keep reading. The corner drug store, where I buy all the magazines, just went out of business. That's a shame. I was a friend of the old timer who ran it. (Well, I'm getting up there too, but we don't talk about that). I'll start looking other places now, I guess. Well, you're probably too busy to hear about *my* life, so I'll stop.

Your slightly impatient, but quite hopeful reader, in Small-town Little town,  
Andy Quarts

P.S. Maybe you can come down sometime, and we can talk over a mug of the Mrs' *stronger-than-black*, coffee!

## Ben M., 12, Gitega

My finest man editor,

Yo. What up? I was just flippin' through ur article when, BLAM! Is that really true? Really? Like me was taught up well, but never did I learn that. Woah. All this stuff make me feel like I could walk down the street and just BLAM! Walk into the big school down there. With all the stuff me learning from yon article they'd be sure to hand the position of professor to me! So before I come out of the box I've lived in for a while (quite comfy ya know?) and walk straight to the school (called Harvlard or something) I wanted to thank u with all my groaning heart. I used to love to write poetry back in yon days. But ur poem brought back dat feeling of love for words. Mountain dew and true love ae all good and well in the bottom of a trashcan for all I care, but man, the way yoo talk and write! Mmmmmm! Me love that more than a fresh bag of blueberries straight from the vine!

Sincerely,  
Randall Muldoon III of Beatem Up

My good ~~friend~~ accomplice, Randall Muldoon III of Beatem Up,

As I was reading you letter Mr. Beatem Up I could not help wondering what article you were reading. After all, I am the owner of a very large and successful chain of magazines each with dozens of poems and other articles. Please contact me, or ..... maybe just ask someone else to tell me. As for your plan of going to Harvard and applying there, I strongly recommend you get a house first. I know that a box may be comfy, but it really can not compare to a strong house.

Sincerely,  
Joe, Po

P.S. Please do not mention me or my magazine ~~when~~ if you ever get arrested for just walking into Harvard.

## Lucy G., 13, Western Australia – 2<sup>nd</sup> PLACE

To Mrs. Harding,

Your magazine is very nice, in its own way. I like that it is about the outdoors. But honestly, who cares about the ocean these days? The ocean is DANGEROUS. Only the other night on the news was the story of a surfer being attacked by a shark.

Anyone who dares to swim in it may be looked upon as brave, but really, they are fools. That includes you.

I, being the only sensible person on the planet, advise that you either include multiple safety issues about the ocean so people are warned or stop publishing that 'Ocean Activities' magazine, or whatever it's called and write a magazine about camping, or geocaching or blacksmithing or... well ... something sensible.

My unrefined loathing,

Mr. Barry Aptos  
*Government Official of the Anti-Marine Society*  
[www.antimarine.com](http://www.antimarine.com)

To Mr. Aptos,

Thank you for voicing your concerns. You were very polite, at least at first, in your letter.

The ocean can be dangerous at times, what with sharks, rips, waves and other things, but mostly it is very pleasant to swim in. You should probably forget what you are hearing on the news and revisit the beach.

In case you weren't aware, there are lots of magazines about the land. In fact, there are very minimal amounts of magazines about the ocean. That is why I am not going to stop writing my 'Natural Ocean Activities' magazine.

Some of my friends, Mr. Cowl, Mr. Bosveld and Mr. Kluger are writing magazines to fit your interests. Check out Mr. Cowl's magazine called 'Camping in the Outback.' Or Mr. Kluger's magazine about the ups and downs of geocaching. You might even find Mr. Bosveld's which shows his blacksmithing talent. I hope you can find and enjoy these delightful magazines.

Kind Regards,

Laura Harding  
*Editor of Natural Ocean Sports Magazine and 49er Olympian Gold Medalist*

Dear Mademoiselle,

From the first time I read your magazine, I really felt more connected to the ocean...even though I have never touched it. I was in love, so to speak. My son gave me the issue several years ago, and I have read it exactly 2,547 times. Your poems are so descriptive that I can vividly imagine what is happening in them.

Sailing sounds so scary, being out in the middle of the ocean with the sharks and then tipping upside down. That thought chills me down to my bones. You are so brave to accomplish that so many times. Why are pictures of sailing always of people who are falling out of the boat?? I would think it to be similar to motor boating, no?

The ocean on pleasant days is quite stunning, although I would not bathe in it. On stormy days, no one could get me to touch it, let alone swim in it. Do you not think your bravery is unspeakable, no?

Your awesome and true bravery wows me every time I read your magazine.

My unrefined respect,  
Margaret Teanor

To Mrs. Teanor,

Thank you for your letter. I am glad that my magazine has led you to be more connected to the ocean. That is my aim of writing.

You mentioned in pictures of sailing people are always falling out of the boat. That, in sailing terms, is called 'hiking.' You hike when it is windy to keep the boat flat. Some boats are harder to keep flat. The optimist, for example, is shaped like...well, a bathtub. It goes quite slow but is less tippy.

The 29er, on the other hand, is shaped a bit like a 'V.' This means that there is less boat area in the water, therefore more tippy. This also makes 29ers go much faster than optimists. I have included a picture of each below.

You also mentioned that sailing looks scary. Well, in some circumstances, yes it can make your heartbeat faster, but mostly it is just smooth sailing.

Kind Regards,

Laura Harding  
*Editor of Natural Ocean Sports Magazine and Olympian Gold Medalist*

**Hudson G., 11, Western Australia - FEATURED**

Dear Sir,

I am on the verge of throwing your magazine in the trash forever. The only reason I have kept it is to satisfy my anger by tearing it up. Everybody knows that camping in the bush is so old fashioned. Why not write about video games or something more twenty-first century?

Eating grubs and unprocessed food is disgusting. Narrowly escaping death by the claws of a bloodthirsty crocodile is enough to give me a heart attack!

Your devoted magazine loather,  
Bob Schmob

Chief proprietor of the professional magazine destroying factory

Mr. Schmob,

I understand your irritation perfectly. People have followed your advice so flawlessly that there are very few magazines about camping. That is why I, a professional bushman, chose to unveil my skill. It was quite success (much better than any video game magazine.)

As for escaping from a crocodile, it is one of my most exciting stories to share. Eating termites and other native insects are nutritious. Have you ever considered destroying less interesting magazines in your factory?

Sincerely,  
Fletcher Cowl

Experienced Bushman and defender of magazine enlightments

**Eamon B., 12, Western Australia**

Mr. Do It Yourself

66 Pipe road

Foul City, SP 12345

123.456.7890

Doityouself@mail.com

**Safety!**

9th of August 2023

Dear Sir,

I love to read your magazines; they really amaze me how many creative hobbies there are. But I have one complaint: when I was reading your article "How to Fix a Broken Microwave," I was inspired to start fixing people's old microwaves.

However, I was to find out that when you leave the plug in the powerpoint when you pull apart the microwave you get electrocuted. Please check to make sure whenever there is a DIY article please include safety precautions and potential dangers, so that people don't have the same experience as me (very electrifying.)

Sincerely,

Mr. Do It Yourself

Mr. Edit

45 Reading Road

Publish City, ST 12345

(123) 456-7890

mredit@mail.com

10th of August 2023

Mr. Do It Yourself,

I am very sorry for what happened to you. I have had many letters concerning safety, and I am currently working on a magazine to do with safety, which will be out next month. I will make sure that I will include safety wherever possible.

But please, if I do forget, be sensible and don't touch live wires in a microwave.

Sincerely,

Mr. Edit



**Noah K., 13, Western Australia**

Dear Editor,

Being a full-time muggle, I hate your publication. What kind of an abominable topic is geocaching? Every time I go to the post office to get my wonderful fantasy magazine, *Ground Zero* glowers at me from the shelf row above it until I block out the horrible sight by covering my eyes with *Fantasy World*. I have flicked through it once and was shocked. Pages and pages filled with...geocaching!? Isn't geocaching something that should be banned!? Please burn all your past issues and, in future, please write magazines about something else, like blights, or bombs, or batteries...or anything but geocaching!

Anti-geocachy Regards  
Calliope Courtney

Miss Courtney,

We understand that geocaching isn't everyone's cup of tea, but if you do not like geocaching, why do you bother to write to the editor of a geocaching-themed magazine? Why don't you ask the post office to change the order of the magazines instead? We are not able to do anything about the "glaring" (except maybe put a smiley-face on the cover, which we have in this issue), and we apologise for this.

Unfortunately, we cannot stop publishing this magazine. We have too many loyal subscribers that we do not want to disappoint. Why don't you ask someone else to publish your magazine about batteries?

However, we did publish an article about blights, bombs and batteries in this issue, and we hope that you enjoy it.

Regards,  
Noah K.

## Charlotte S., 13, New Jersey - **FEATURED**

Dearest Mistress,

I have read every single issue of 'Book Lovers Tribune,' and am indeed shookith! I simply adore the way you write! - Your stunning reviews are riveting! You make it feel as if you have lived the character's enthralling lives yourself!

I wait with bated breath month after month for your exquisite magazine. Once it arrives, I race to the library to check out the books you reviewed in that splendid issue. I have devoured every single one!

I also have told my best chums about your amazing magazine and they have all subscribed. We read the books you recommend every month and have our own smashing book club discussing the perilous journey of the main characters.

Since I have discerned that your address is not terribly far away from mine, would you consider joining us for the book club? It would be an honor to have your esteemed greatness in our group! We hold meetings at a local tea room at 4:00 p.m. every Friday, but we can most definitely change the time to fit your assumedly busy schedule. I greatly appreciate your humble consideration.

Sincerely yours,  
A devoted reader,  
Elizabeth Longbottom.

Dear Elizabeth,

Wow! This is honestly a surprise. I've never gotten a request like this before. I'd be happy to join, except I have no time to do so.

Sincerely,  
Ima Hermit

## **Calvin F., 13, Oregon**

Dear Martha,

I started mountain biking a year or so back and have gone to a few places to ride and am wondering where the best place to go mountain biking is.

I have gotten a few different suggestions from people and the internet, so where do you think the best place to go riding in Oregon is?

From, Paul Wilikers

Dear Paul,

I got your question asking me where the best place to go biking in Oregon is. I will cover mountain biking, BMX racing, and road cycling.

The best place to go mountain biking in Oregon from the riding I have done is Post Canyon in Hood River, where you will have a great time if you're a beginner or a professional.

I don't do a lot of BMX, but the best place I have been to is the BMX track in Eugene, because it is a longer track and has a lot of fast jumps.

I have never been road cycling, so I had an outside opinion from the website, Komoot, and they said the best place for road cycling is in Bend and the Twin Bridges loop.

Thank you for the great question!  
Martha

## **Serena H., 12, Ontario**

Dear Serena of "Cooking with Serena Magazine,"

Today, my wife Marie came yapping to me on how you make your own recipes, and on how you are the most amazing person at making culinary creations! I wish I could shut her up!

I will say though that my daughter-in-law Debra tried your bracirole recipe. Usually, she sucks at cooking, you know what I mean? But last night was amazing! She had made this excellent sauce

and everything, and when I asked her where she got it from, she said she got it from you. And after last night's dinner, I think you could really help her. Should I list her phone number so you can call her?

My wife is really jealous all of a sudden. She used to make great braciolo but now... I think Debra's is better! So, hey, since she got the recipe from you, could you maybe put it on your magazine one more time? Then Debra will feel horrible (which she is used to) and my wife will cook for me again, and usually I want to kick her to the curb, but when she cooks, something amazing happens. I have to put on my stretchy pants! Anyway, thank you for listening.

Regards,  
Frank Barone

P.S. Please change all the names in this letter if you put this in your magazine so my wife won't kill me!

Dear Frank Barone,

I guess your wife is a big fan of mine!

Does Debra do badly at cooking? Because I think that if she just follows my recipes, her cooking will be perfect. Also, I can put my recipe in the magazine one more time, but if Debra sees my other recipes, she will still excel at cooking. As I always say, "Anyone can cook as long as they have the love." You don't need to give me her phone number, because I already have it from the time she called about the braciolo. But thank you for the offer.

I'm flattered that you think I can help Debra, because I have helped a lot of other people as well. Just by reading my magazine, people can go from lemon chicken every night to steak pizzaiola every night.

Is Marie irritating, because from your letter it seems that way? I once had a Marie phone call me and ask me how to make steak pizzaiola, meatballs, lamb, and cannolis! Small world, eh?

She was also quite critical of how I washed my pots and pans and how to clean a house, but she did love the recipes. What do your stretchy pants look like and where did you get them? I want to get them for all my uncles.

Thank you for your letter.

Regards,  
Serena H.

**Bram H., 12, Ohio – 1<sup>st</sup> PLACE**

Dear Sir,

I very much enjoy your Wilderness Survival magazine. I am very excited when I see the monthly copy in my mailbox. I'm writing to you because I need advice. I'm going on my first Cub Scout camping trip and wanted to know some wilderness survival hacks to impress my friends with.

Yours truly,  
Bobby

Dear Bobby,

I am glad to hear that you enjoy my magazine and would love to give you some advice.

Here are some neat tricks that you can use to impress your friends in the wilderness. Being a good cook is an easy way to get on everyone's good side. A great way to impress your friends is cooking a good campfire hot dog. If you buy my Wilderness Survival Guide for only \$34.99, it has a section about how to cook a perfect campfire hot dog.

Another great thing to do in the wilderness is to learn how to build a teepee. And if you buy my Special Expansion Pack, that gives you step by step instructions to building the perfect teepee and many other cool tricks for only \$39.99.

You can't impress anyone while you're dehydrated, so you might want to get a Limited Edition signed Wilderness Survival Water Bottle for only \$29.99.

Lastly, it's always fun to make s'mores and eat them. But if you want the perfect campfire s'more, then there's no better way to make them than with the S'more Making Kit from the Wilderness Survival Catalog for only \$19.99. Because every respectable person knows you can't be cool without some wilderness survival merch.

Sincerely,  
Mr. Editor

Dear Editor,

I regret to inform you that I will be canceling my son's subscription after my son wrote his heart out to you in an advice letter and received an ad telling him the only way to impress people was to buy your "merch".

He has asked for advances on his allowance 12 different times. I chastised him on his spending habits for fifteen minutes straight, and then he showed me your letter. I was mortified by your greed and pulling in a young susceptible fan.

So, to conclude, I will not be supporting your magazine any longer and have already canceled my subscription.

Angrily,  
Bobby's Father

Dear Sir,

I regret to inform you that this is a pre-written message. It is a pre-written message that I send out whenever I get a complaint letter. Because no one likes to hear complaints. That's why the Wilderness Survival noise-canceling ear plugs could change your life for only \$12.99!

Sincerely,  
Mr. Editor

## **Ryan G., 13, North Carolina**

Dear George,

I've have always enjoyed watching superhero movies and books.

But I have been thinking, how long have superhero tales been around? Stories originate from many different things. The Greeks also had their own superheroes thousands of years ago, I would like to hear your opinion on this topic.

Sincerely,  
Ryan G.

## Tyler E. 14, Louisiana - **FEATURED**

Dear Sir,

I have recently acquired a subscription to your magazine to get some assistance on a camping venture with my Pa-pa. I took your advice on how to set up your accommodations, but your instructions led to a horrific screw up of your work falsely advertised as “fastidious”. This column also included inadequate information on how to produce a fire.

This misleading information has made me well aware of your incompetence and led me to a traumatic experience. On this trip with Pa-pa, we meandered deep into the woods and found a pleasurable site. At dusk we attempted to light a fire, but touching the flint and steel wouldn't work so Pa-pa couldn't boil water for the macaroni. Since we couldn't eat that, we ate beef jerky and started pitching a tent. When that fell to pieces, we made a slipshod shelter of twigs and went to bed hungry and scared. In the moonlight, coyotes raided our jerky supply, so we left the site and never went back.

I haven't gone camping since. Now that I see your incompetence, I will be canceling my subscription.

Your not-so-secret hater,  
Von Earlington P. McTigglesworth

Mr. McTigglesworth,

I am ever so sorry that your failure to follow instructions led to a painful loss of beef jerky. I am also sorry that you think my magazine contains false information. This statement, however, is false. I fact check everything that goes into my magazine.

In my article about tent pitching, I gave detailed, yet simple directions on lean-tos and teepees. I don't remember giving instructions to “horrific screw-ups” and “slipshod shelters”. Aside that, I said you had to slash the flint and steel to start a fire. Merely touching won't even produce a spark.

With all of that said, we will continue to fact check. Thank you for your input. We will work harder and continue to deliver our true advice.

Sincerely,  
Ralph Mackenacklack