



Passages Press

Voting for President 11/4/08

by Starr Newell

Today I voted at the Pleasant Point Tribal Office. I was so nervous. I told them that I didn't know what to do and they talked me through it. I wasn't ashamed about who I was voting for. It seemed like they were voting for the same people that I was voting for. It was quick and easy. After I was done I felt good. And I tried to get other people from the community to vote.

When I got all situated at home and with my baby brother, I called my auntie to see if I could watch the news at her house and it was okay. I went over around six or seven and I was watching channels two, five, seven, twenty-five, twenty-four and many more channels. I was watching channel five and that's when I found out that Obama won Maine. It was around nine. Then at ten o'clock Obama got New England and that's when I knew he had a good chance. Then I was watching the numbers come in about McCain and Obama, showing who had the most popular votes and electoral votes. Obama was the highest one and McCain was not too far behind, but I was watching for a couple of hours and the numbers weren't changing.

I was thinking about how I had Tihtiyas this year and how much everything is changing. I had a baby and the first African American becomes President. It has been an awesome year. I was worried about a

change in the United States; I was so used to seeing a white man as President. If McCain became President he would have been the oldest one elected, so I'm so happy that Obama is President. I was watching history being made.

Tonight watching history being made, I learned that we had a better chance at everything. We are finally heard and it's beautiful. I was so excited I didn't know what to do and I cried when I found out. I wanted to call everyone that I knew. I wanted to beep around with people and celebrate. I wanted to do so much and my baby was right there and I picked her up and hugged her and kissed her. She was happy, too and she didn't know what was going on, but she went along with me. My first year voting and the person I voted for was the one who won. It felt like power. It's going to be a wonderful four years and it's going to be beautiful.

Starr Newell is a student from the new Washington County Passages program.



Listen

by Kristina Ott

I feel myself being tossed and tugged around.
Not wanting to hurt their feelings
I never make a sound.
I deserve to share my opinion
say what I have to say.
I don't have it in me to disappoint them
as they do me every day.
I try to make them happy
Do what they want me to do.
Now it's time to speak up
it's time for a change.
It's time for them to hear me
to hear what I have to say!
I'm tired of being yanked
back and forth between you
Not being there when I really do need you
I'm sick of being second in your lives
You've put your relationships before me
more than once or twice
making ours on very thin ice
I want you to think about me for once
I want you to change
I want you to hear me out
listen to me
say what I have to say!

Parenting

by Renee Grey

My parenting I feel is pretty laid back. I do not try to force my child into anything she does not want to do. I do this because I feel a child learns better when learning new things is not forced onto them. To teach my child I include her in conversations when I am talking to her and I listen to her; it encourages her to talk, which I think improves her speech. I also include her in games the family plays and housework, like picking up her

toys or throwing things away. We also make up songs to learn her ABC's, colors, shapes, body parts, and numbers. In the morning time we usually have TV time. After a movie the TV goes off and it is time to play, read or whatever it is she likes to do. I think she learns more doing this, because she is interacting with things around her.

I do have limits. I feel limits are important. When I was younger I did not have any limits. Limits I set are reasonable, like not being allowed to play on stairs, bathroom or kitchen, no hitting, no throwing things in the house, and so on. At Isabella's age these are very big rules for her, so when she hits, she gets a warning; when she hits again, she is told that she is going to time out, and the third time she sits in time out. In the morning and afternoon are two different time periods. If she sits in time out in the morning more than once, 15 seconds is added every time. After naptime it's a whole new period and she starts at the beginning. For the older kids for hitting there is no warning; time out takes place right away. They all usually get 5 minutes. We try to make sure the child knows why they are in trouble and why they cannot do or have whatever it was that got them in trouble.

I always like to try new fun things with the kids on the weekends. With four children it gets expensive to go to a lot of places so I improvise by going hiking, doing arts and craft ideas I find on the internet, walking to the beach and doing a scavenger hunt with them.

Some parents are not involved with their children, exclude them from conversations, do not play with them or may not help teach them new things. They tend to overly punish their child, or do not set limits at all for their child. A child growing up like this often feels like they are not cared for, may develop low self-esteem, often do not do well in school and tend to find other ways to get attention.

Another type of parent sets too high expectations for their child. Their child often feels as if they let or will let their parents down. Or the child may act out because they do not want what their parents want.

January 2009

The Community School • PO Box 555 • Camden, ME 04843 • 207.236.8814 • www.thecommunityschool.org

I feel dads ideally give more security and physical support for the children. Moms give more of the mental support and comfort. Both parents take roles in education, discipline, encouragement, and basic necessities of the children.

I love learning from my children as well as teaching them. I think in each household parenting is different and the role of each parent is different, but that is what works for them. In my house we do what works for us and what works for our children. It makes parenting enjoyable, as it should be. There is no greater pleasure in the world than watching your children grow up happy.

Dear Mom,

I've always had so many questions to ask you. Why did you put yourself through that? How was that making you feel? How did it affect you?

I was always so scared for you, scared I was going to wake up one day and hear that you're gone. Sometimes I wondered if you even cared about what your family thought or if you knew you were hurting all of us.

He did so many horrible things to you, put you through hell! And I could never understand why you would always go back to him. I would often ask myself, does she enjoy hurting like that, does she like being slapped around? I hated it when you would come over and you'd have an arm brace or a foot brace and it would always follow with some stupid story that you'd try

and make us believe, but I knew it was just a shit story to hide the truth.

Since I started learning about abuse I understand more about what you were going through and why you did go back. Even though he was abusive towards you, you still loved him and he made you think he loved you, too. I know you didn't want him to hurt me or Nana or anyone else in the family, so you let him hurt you to protect us.

Sometimes I would get mad at you for not leaving because I hated seeing you like that, but I now understand that it isn't always that easy to leave; you have the fear of getting hurt and he would always say he's sorry and it wouldn't happen again or that he didn't mean to. I want to let you know I'm so sorry for ever getting mad at you and pressuring you to leave. Now that I understand more about it, I will always be here for you and support you in your relationships.

I still hope you make a good choice and never put yourself through anything like that again. We all love you and don't want to see you hurting.

Love Always,
Kristina

January 2009

The Community School • PO Box 555 • Camden, ME 04843 • 207.236.8814 • www.thecommunityschool.org

My New Life (an excerpt)

by Breanna Novicka

Breanna is in the midst of writing and revising My New Life for her Passage. The following is the beginning of her first draft...

“Good Morning Seattle!” The radio blares. God, I hate my alarm. I roll over and throw it on the floor. Well, I guess I’ve got to get up anyway. The sun is beaming through the window on the other side of the room right into my eyes. I need to move my bed. Even the navy blue curtains don’t help the gleaming off these stupid white walls. I get up and put my feet on the floor. Jeez, is wood cold in the morning! My latest foster mother yells up the stairs to me.

“You had better get out of bed, Raven! You’re going to be late for school.” I don’t mind her so much. She’s one of the best I’ve had so far. Then again, I’ve had eight in the last seven years. You could say I’m a troubled kid. That’s why I’ve been in and out of so many foster homes. I really like this place, though. I think this might be the one. That, and she kind of looks like my real mom, in a way. She has honey chestnut hair that seems to curl just right around her face like my mother’s did, and her eyes are that same hazel green color.

In case you’re wondering, my name is Raven. I’m sixteen years old and I’m a ward of the state of Washington. I wasn’t always a property of the state. I was like everyone else. I had two loving parents who gave me the world. Then one fateful night, seven years ago, my parents died. It was New Year’s Eve or, well, I guess, New Year’s Day and my parents were coming home from a party. They had left me with the neighbors. At about one a.m., they were struck by an oncoming car. The driver was drunk, and they were killed instantly. That was the worst moment of my life. That night the police came and took me to my grandmother’s. She passed away three months later. That’s how I became property of the state.

“Raven! Hurry up honey, you’re going to be really late!” Casey yells while I rummage through my laundry basket. Ripping through the basket trying to find something, really anything, I want to

wear. I guess I’ll wear this black A.F.I. shirt. Black jeans as always, and maybe that grey sweatshirt.

“Coming Casey,” I yell while ripping my sweatshirt over my head. As I run down the stairs, I start to smell bacon. Oh, I love bacon! Rounding the corner from the stairs into the kitchen, I see Casey cooking me scrambled eggs. It’s like a scene from some TV show set in the fifties. She’s got that stupid frilly white apron on. Sometimes I think she idolizes June Cleaver.

“Now that your breakfast is done, eat something.”

“Don’t worry, I will,” so I sit down and pile eggs, bacon and toast on my plate. Casey seems to think I need help so she piles more eggs on my plate. What the heck does she think I need to eat for - like, five or something? As I eat, I watch the news. Someone else died last night. No big surprise there. I’ve been in Seattle for about a month now and there have been two murders already. The first one was a kid at my school. Everyone said it was a drug deal gone bad. I guess that’s what happens.

“Casey, can you give me a ride to the mall after school?”

“I don’t see why not. Do you need some money?”

“Maybe a little. Like twenty bucks?”

“Ok, I’ll give it to you after school. Right now we need to get going. School starts in fifteen minutes.”

“Ok,” so I take the last bite of toast and put my plate in the sink. As I walk out the door, I grab my bag off the coat rack and slam my foot totally into my shoe. God, do I hate school! Walking down the front stairs, I realize I probably should have grabbed a coat. It looks like it may rain today. Heading toward the driveway, I notice an unfamiliar blue Firebird across the street. I swear I’ve seen that car before. Once I get to the passenger side of Casey’s car and open the door the Firebird pulls away from the curb and drives off. Well, that was odd... maybe someone just waiting for their car to warm up. I get in and turn the stereo on to a rock station. I’m glad Casey likes rock music. Then we start on our twenty-minute drive to Grove Brook

January 2009

The Community School • PO Box 555 • Camden, ME 04843 • 207.236.8814 • www.thecommunityschool.org

High School. It's more like a prison to me. Slate gray walls, dim florescent lights, metal detectors, and video cameras periodically placed through the halls to boot. The ride almost seems like it's going too fast. There's no traffic today and Casey seems to be getting all the green lights. I dread that school so much! Oh god, we're here already. Lost myself in thought I guess.

"Bye honey," Casey says as I step out of the car.

"See ya later Casey."

I walk into school, and I get the same weird stares as when I first arrived. No one likes me. I'm different. I look different, I dress different and I'm just really different. I like wearing black. I've got naturally black hair. That's where my name came from. I wear a spike collar, bracelets, and I've got a whole bunch of chains. There is one other person in the whole school like me. I just haven't had the courage to talk to him.

I remember the first time I saw him. As we passed in the crowded hall my first day of school he shot me this crooked little grin. The most mischievous and longing little grin that almost seemed to set fire in his eyes. Those piercing ice blue eyes! Set against his olive colored skin. The first thing that caught me, though, was those beautiful eyes. Just as blue as any husky's eyes! He had such an innate sense of style, that his hair was the same glacial blue. I wondered where he got the dye. I was about due to dye the tips of my hair again.

From that first glimpse, I was captivated by him. He was all I thought about, and I didn't even know his name or who he was. He was my beautiful stranger, with eyes that seemed to pierce through straight to my soul and with the perfect complexion to match. Though I was too shy to approach him, I knew deep down our souls were bound to cross paths again and I'd have to talk to him. I was sure of it!

On my way to first period, I have to drop my stuff in my locker. As I walk up, I notice a note on my locker. It's a black piece of paper with a rose petal glued to the front. I rip the note off my locker

and throw my bag in. I run to first period, and all I can think about is what it might say. With seconds to spare, I get into class and sit down. Not being able to wait any longer, I open the note. It reads:

**I've waited my life for
Someone like you. And
Now I know my dreams
Have come true. You're
Here now. Meet me in
The art room at lunch.
I have something to ask
You. ~You Know Who**

Book Corner



Perfect

by Danielle Ferland

reviewed by Sarah Troxel

"Fine, everything is fine..." This is what 8th grader Isabelle Lee just keeps telling herself. When in reality, everything is not fine. While Isabelle, her little sister April and her mother have yet to get over her father's death that happened two years ago. Isabelle has found comfort in bingeing and then throwing it all up. Her mother is an emotional mess; she acts as though everything is going to be ok for her daughters. But she is heard crying in her bedroom saying her husband's name over and over. And Isabelle's sister April, well... After April found out that Isabelle was throwing up and decided to tell their mother, Isabelle was not pleased with her.

January 2009

The Community School • PO Box 555 • Camden, ME 04843 • 207.236.8814 • www.thecommunityschool.org

This sets up a new reality for Isabelle, one that includes group therapy each week and an unexpected friendship with Ashley Barnum, the most perfect girl in school. The story goes on to tell how Isabelle slowly discovers that private pain, confusion, and sadness can be masked by outer beauty. Now the author Danielle Ferland brings readers in by writing about a common struggle that many teens go through. She goes on and writes about how teens struggle with their self-esteem and body images and a family that needs to find a way to all share their common grief with life.

Go Ask Alice

by Anonymous

reviewed by Tiphani Williams

Go Ask Alice is a good book. Since it was published, many states have banned it. In 2003 it was banned from Maine libraries. It shows the truth about drugs and how addicting they are and how they can change your life. It is a true story taken from a 15-year-old girl's diary. Alice is not the real girl's name, but it is a real life story from back in the 60's when lots of people were experimenting with drugs.

Alice tried a lot of drugs. Her first was LSD. This happened when she went to a party and played button-button with Coke bottles. It's like Russian roulette. 15 out of 18 bottles had LSD in them and nobody knew who was going to be the ones to get the drink with the LSD in it.

Alice started getting involved with the wrong people when she went to her grandfather and grandmother's place for the summer. There she starts going to a bunch of drug parties until her grandfather has a stroke. After that she stays clean to help her grandparents out, saying she's done with drugs and she doesn't want them in her life.

When she returned home she met a friend who got her right back into it again. She meets a guy and starts dating him and later on she even starts pushing drugs for him, selling them to children. When they break up she turns him in along with her

January 2009

The Community School • PO Box 555 • Camden, ME 04843 • 207.236.8814 • www.thecommunityschool.org

best friend's boyfriend. She and her friend stay away from drugs for a few months, but finally get back into them again. They even start trading sex for them, and while she is living on the streets she is raped. This shows how addicting drugs are and how they can wreck your life.

Then a friend from the drug crowd at school puts LSD in some candy and she has a really bad trip where she flips out. A neighbor finds her and locks her in a closet. She hurts herself by trying to get out and winds up in a mental hospital. There she gets clean again. After she gets out she goes back home and decides once and for all to stay clean, but now she is afraid to go to school because she can't trust anybody.

Alice's diary suddenly stops because Alice dies from an overdose. It is a sad story with a message about how dangerous experimenting with drugs can be.

Doppelganger

by David Stahler, Jr.

reviewed by Chris Roberts

I liked the book Doppelganger because I like fiction and I like the concept of shape changing. A doppelganger is a ghost of a person or a person's physical double. It's like an evil twin who takes your identity and pretends to be you.

In the book, the main character is a doppelganger, so he doesn't have a name. He lived with his mom for a lot of his life, but when his mom told him it was time for him to leave, he went through the woods into the nearest town and found a cabin to live in. He ended up near a railroad station where he found an old man whom he killed and then took his form. Once he had taken the place of the old man, he left town and eventually met a teenager named Chris. The doppelganger appeared as a homeless man who was begging for change and Chris spat at him and said rude things to him. Later that night, back at the railroad station, Chris and his friends found the doppelganger and beat him up. When they were through, they went back to the car, but Chris said that he was going to

stay for a minute. When they were out of sight, the homeless man attacked Chris and killed him. He stuck his body in a drain hole and went back to the car looking like Chris. He was a little shaky because killing always made him sick.

When the doppelganger came to his new home he explored as much as he could so he could figure out who Chris was. He had to know if he was to pretend he was Chris. He discovers that he has a sister who is named Echo and has a messed up family. He also falls in love with Chris' girlfriend. She is afraid of Chris, because he used to beat her up. He finds this out when she cowers every time he lifts his hand toward her. When she notices his different behavior, she knows it isn't him and asks who he is. She can hardly believe what he tells her, but she likes this new and improved Chris so much better than the real Chris that she promises not to tell anybody his true identity. He begins to have a life with her and learns what it's like to be a human teenager. He is a monster who kills, but he wants to be normal.

You will have to read the book to find out whether he becomes human or not.

White Oleander

by Janet Fitch

reviewed by Rene Grey

The book I just read is called White Oleander written by Janet Fitch. This book is fiction. After her mother Ingrid was put in prison for murder, Astrid, the main character, is in and out of foster homes and hospitals. Astrid is a young girl who has to learn to grow up fast. Her creative and artistic mind helps her through some stuff and can make it difficult as well. Astrid's mother is a poet and views the world differently than most people and often makes Astrid feel bad about caring for anyone else but her.

In her first foster home she is shot and loses her virginity to her foster father. In another home she is treated like a babysitter and maid. At this house she finds an interest in her neighbor, who is a prostitute. When her foster mother finds out she runs away and

January 2009

The Community School • PO Box 555 • Camden, ME 04843 • 207.236.8814 • www.thecommunityschool.org

is attacked by a dog. She goes to another home and is treated as a slave and starved. She finally ends up in a home of a very nice lady and is there for a couple of years when her foster mother commits suicide. The last home she was in she got into drugs real bad, the people were nice, but the home was not the best.

In the end of the story her mother tries to get out of prison, Astrid moves on to become an artist and well, the rest you will have to read the book to find out.

I liked this book very much. I felt as if I could relate to Astrid. There were many times in this book I would get angry or sad with the way Astrid was treated in some of the homes she was in. I did not like the ending of the book, but it stayed realistic, as you never know what is going to happen in life and it may not always be what you expect.

Upcoming Workshops

Smoking Cessation

Wednesday January 21st

10 – 12 am

The Community School



First Aid

(dates & times to be announced)

Knox Co. Teen & Young Parent Program

Quilting

Wednesday March 4th

10 – 12 am

The Community School



