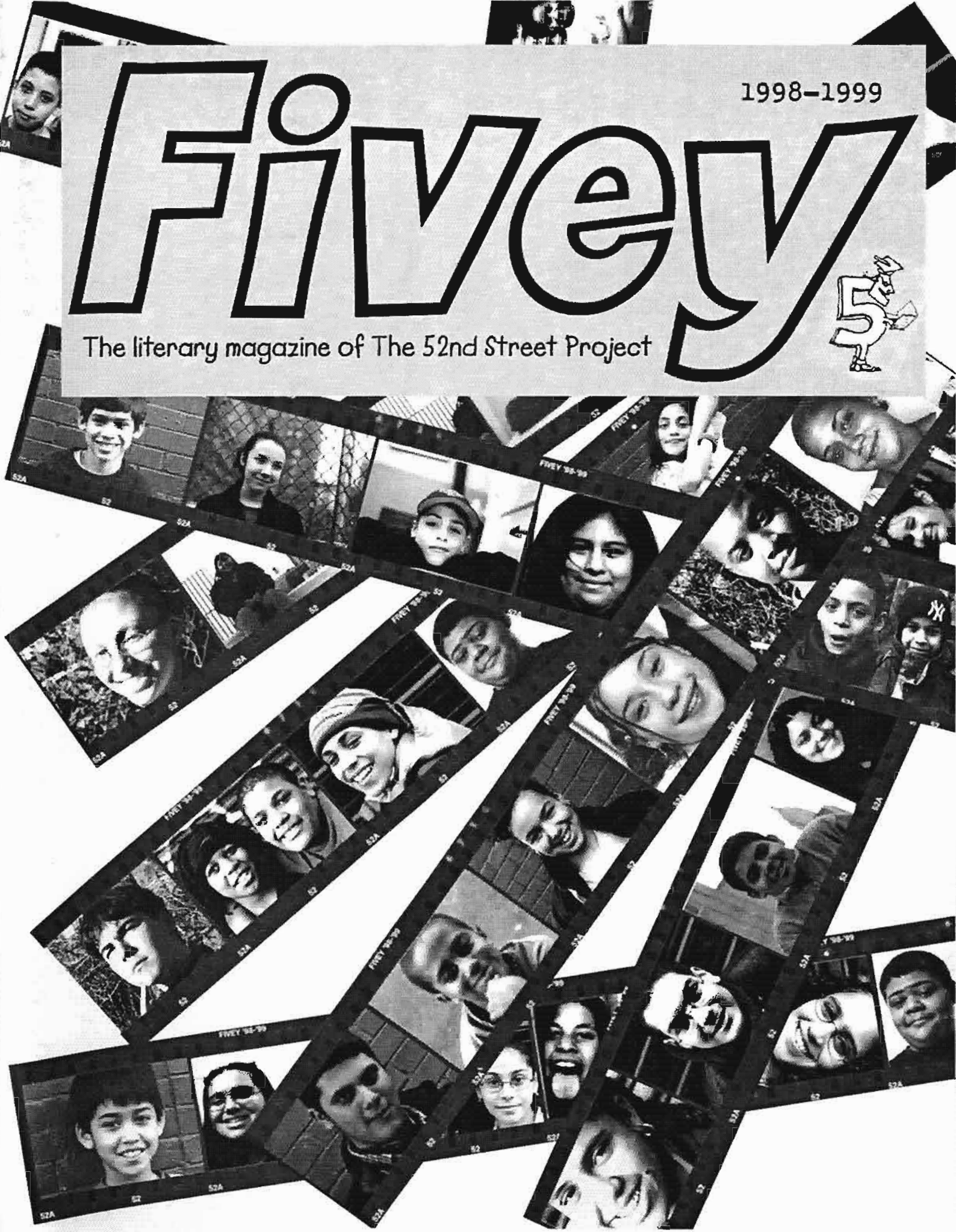


1998-1999

# Fivey

The literary magazine of The 52nd Street Project



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# Smart Kids,

**W**hat do you think when you flip through these pages and look at the ancient photos of your Smart Partner adults? Can you believe that the people helping you with school work were once the adorable, shy, bratty, nervous, funny-looking, cool kids in the pictures?



*Julie, at age 14*

We watch you searching our photos and see ourselves and you with new eyes, remembering how much is the same today, and how much is different. Hold on to your *Fivey*, and in twenty years look back

at your photos and interviews and remember how much respect and love these Smart Adults had for you! Don't even ask how old we'll be then...

Congratulations and thanks to all the Smart Partner kids, adults, and homework helpers for a great year of hard work, fun times, and beautiful writing.

Enjoy! Julie Feldman-Abe

## “WHAT THEY DON’T UNDERSTAND”

**W**HAT THEY DON’T UNDERSTAND about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you’re seventeen, you’re also sixteen and fifteen and fourteen and thirteen and twelve and eleven and ten and nine and eight and seven and six and five and four and three and two and one.

Those are a lot of years to suddenly have to add another to the pile. You think about everything that you did or has happened to you and sometimes it hurts to add to the collection. I find myself on my birthdays digging through the heap and finding that I’ve lost stuff. Some

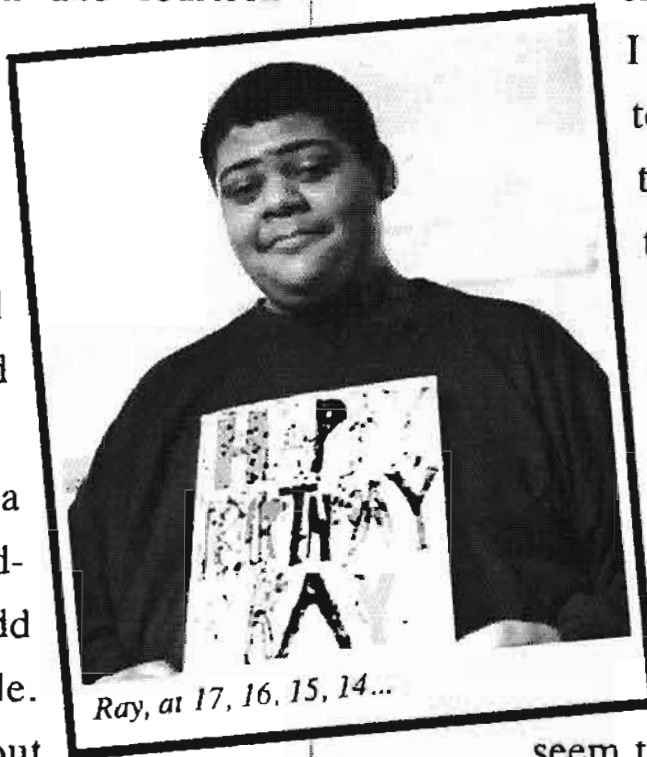
years you place gently and others just get thrown on.

My sixteenth year started with a huge bang so I placed that gently but my seventeenth is

ending horribly so I will most likely toss it on. I find that some years I throw seem to land hard so they stay longer by embedding themselves in the pile.

The years I place gently seem to partly be there.

I’m losing things I’d most likely want to remember. It makes me sad when I find that some times I remember more vividly than others; but those are the times that make me my age. —Ray Harold



# Smart Partners 1998-1999

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Anissa Albaron  
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Iais Anthony Maldonado  
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Marlene Moran  
Zaida Natera  
Raymond Ocasio  
Vionel Ortiz  
Tanika Parson

Noel Polanco  
Isha Rodriguez  
Johnathan Roldan  
Jaya Rosado  
Jaymaree Rosado

Jayne Rosado  
Jaysunn Rosado  
Thomas Santoni  
Gloria Trejo

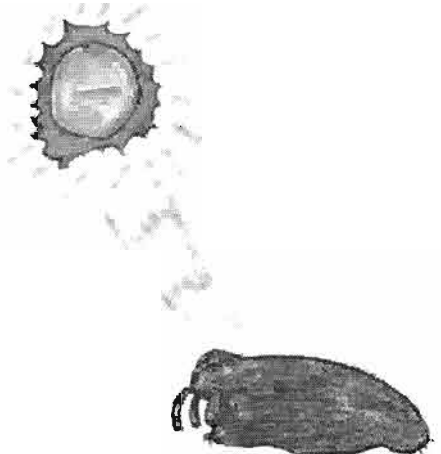
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Anne Garcia Romero  
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Jason Valk  
Camilla Campbell Platt  
Edelen McWilliams  
Tom Schall  
Nedra Gallegos

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David Basche  
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Jack Gwaltney  
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Walrus, by Jazzlynn Hernandez

Special thanks for  
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Mauricio Feldman-Abe  
and Jason Valk



## Project Photos:

Jaysunn Rosado,  
Johnathan Roldan,  
and Amy Rice



## MY SMART PARTNER, GLORIA

**G**loria's family told her that when her brother was born, she would no longer be the baby of the family. She cried thinking that no one would pay attention to her. However, she is very happy that her parents pay attention to all of her siblings equally.

When Gloria grows up, she wants to remember everything she did as a kid, especially the times she spent in Ecuador. One special time she doesn't want to forget is when her family was awakened at four o'clock in the morning by the squeals of a pig. The family had purchased the pig for a party in honor of her grandfather on Father's Day.

The pig was large and chunky and hung by his two legs. While the whole family stood in a circle, the men slew the pig to prepare it for the fiesta. Gloria was amazed and moved by this ritual that she witnessed with her entire family.

Gloria wants to be a lawyer or nursery nurse when she grows up. She already has a lot of experience working with babies as she helps her mother care for small children.

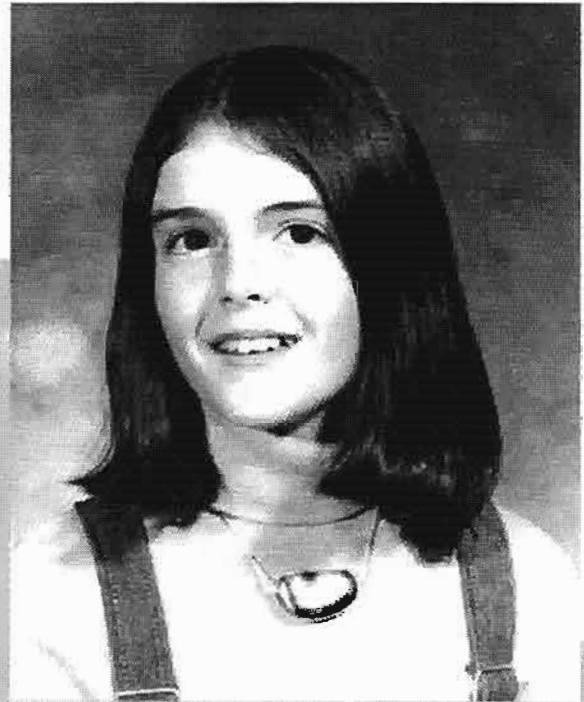
If Gloria could travel anywhere in the world, her first choice would be to go to Ecuador. Her second choice would be to take her whole family on a trip to Paris, France.

☆☆☆

*Anne and  
Gloria*



# THE SIXTH GRADE PHOTO



*Anne as a kid*

**A**nne said the first thing she felt when she looked at her picture was sadness because that was a difficult time in her life. This was her sixth grade photo. The person who took it was the school photographer. Anne was wearing a red jumper that was a gift from her aunt, and a necklace that was a gift from her father's jewelry store. The necklace had a giant silver lima bean. She still has the necklace.

That day was school picture day. She chose this picture because she thought it would be important to accept this part of herself. At that time, it was a lonely time for her but she made the best of it and she always loved to read a lot of books. And she participated in school activities like school plays. She also liked to write songs on her guitar.

Anne was famous in her family for writing poems and for doing impressions of famous people. She always had them laughing really hard.

One of the school plays she was in was where she played a cowgirl. She had a crush on the boy who played the lead of Frank, the cowboy. She told me that the day of the play, when the play was over and everyone was leaving, the boy that she had a crush on yelled to her, "Good job tonight!"

She was so excited that she went home and wrote a song about him. The song was called "Miracle Mirage." The chorus of the song went like this: "Only the miracle of the stage can come over you and only it can change you." She thought it was okay to feel lonely and even though life seemed confused, she was not alone and she knew things would get better. ★★★

# LOS QUINCE AÑOS DE MI HERMANA, VANESSA (MY SISTER VANESSA'S SWEET FIFTEEN)

**O**n August first, it was my sister's *quinceñera* (sweet fifteen). The place was La Terraza Delgado Travel in Manta, Ecuador. In the same place was the mass. The mass was in the same place as the party because in Ecuador, they don't allow the girls to go to church dressed up

and my sister, Vanessa Trejo, wanted *las damas* (the girls) with her.

The tradition of going to church is so the Father could bless my sister. The priest was giving the blessing to my sister and all the girls. He wore a white overall (not jumper) with a scarf and a cross in the middle.

The party started at nine, right after the mass. Then we had the walk-in and the presentation. For the walk-in, everyone walked in with their partner and stood in line until my sister walked in. When my sister came, all the girls were holding fifteen pink long candles. When she walked in with her partner, Lucho, she blew out all fifteen candles.

I was holding a basket. The basket was pink and it had pink strings hanging out and two bows on the side. Inside the basket there were fifteen pink large candles. The person who made the basket was my mom.

**I** came in after all the girls and the boys and before my mom and the grandparents and anyone else. The boys were standing with their right hand in the back and the left hand in the front. The girls were standing straight with their hands down.

When I walked in, I handed each girl her candle. When they all had one, I went to the end next to my sister's chair. Then I got the lighter and lit all the fifteen candles. Then I

went back to my position which was next to my sister's chair.

**B**efore my sister walked in, starting from the end, the boy and the girl held the candle together. The boy's hand was on the bottom, the girl's hand on

the top of the candle.

Then when my sister started blowing the candles from the back of the line, the boys and girls started separating. When my sister was all done blowing out the fifteen candles, then the boys and girls got back together in line. They made a large circle around the dance floor, when they started their presentation.

The presentation was a song of the waltz. Then the other presentation

was a song of *Big Pun*. When the presentation finished, the party really started. During the presentation, the only people that were dancing were my sister, *las damas* (in other words, the girls) and *los caballeros* (the boys). There was a man who was calling us out while we entered. The man

BY GLORIA  
ELIZABETH  
TREJO



Las Damas — The Girls



was calling each person by name.

My sister and her *caballero* walked in after our grandparents, my mom and dad and the little *quinceñeros*. The little *quinceñeros* were my brother, Luis, and my cousin, Stephanie.

**M**y sister's dress was a long, pink tight dress and the bottom was loose and the top was tight. My sister's dress was made of satin. The dress was made here in New York. *Las damas'* dresses were different from my sister's dress. *Las damas'* dresses were light blue satin. When my sister came in, she was wearing *zapatillas* (sandals). The sandals were pink with a little bow in the front. They were flat. *Las damas* were wearing blue shoes, the same color as the dress. There were different types: some were heels, some were flats.

My mom bought jewelry for all the girls. She bought pearls and diamond earrings and necklaces. My sister had a necklace, earrings, and a crown. My mom bought *los caballeros* only the tuxedo shirts with the bow. They brought their own suits. Some of them already had suits. The color of the suits were black. *Las damas* and *los caballeros* were fourteen girls and fourteen boys. In addition, there were the flower girls, the girl bringing the crown, and the boy bringing the shoes so my sister could change her sandals.

After everything happened, it was party time. The types of songs that we danced to at my sister's party were merengue, house (free-style), bachata, y *una orquesta* that played old people songs. In the party, our parents let me and my sister drink anything we wanted, so we drank champagne and beer.

My father hired cooks that cooked a special food for the guests. The waiters gave out the food to the people. They served rice with chicken. In the rice it had olives and raisins. The side was salad and flan of vegetables.



My sister Vanessa

**P**eople kept dancing until three in the morning. In Ecuador, they don't serve the cake during the party. Instead, they get special boxes that you put cake in and everybody takes their piece. The cake is called *maza especial*. It has almonds, walnuts, and rum. Before they bake the cake, they have to soak it in rum for a whole week.

The boxes were pink and on the side they had a girl standing in a dress and it said, "*Mis quince años.*"

When everybody left, we gave them a box of cake and their souvenir. The small souvenir was a ballerina sitting on a mirror. The big souvenir was a glass cup with the almond candies inside and two pink shoes on top of the cup. And that was a night we'll never forget. ★★★



Los Caballeros - The Boys

★★★



# Here's a story

about my Smart Partner,  
 Who, when younger, was a destructor,  
 Who grew up in Canada with all those Canadians  
 Smellin' like cheese and Canadian Bacon  
 This Smart Partner of mine was pretty bugged out  
 He would bounce all around, imitating monkeys  
 He had long blond hair, down to his ears.  
 Walkin' around with his collar stickin' out.  
 Smart Partner (boom-boom, boom-ba-doom-boom)  
 Smart Partner (boom-boom, boom-ba-doom-boom)  
 Let me fill you in about my Smart Partner,  
 He loved to stick his fist down his esophagus.  
 My SP was so smart, his pick-up line was  
 "Can I help you with your homework?"  
 Being smart and all was always his thing,  
 Even though sometimes he would slam the door on his head.  
 Lookin' at his picture, you may think he played soccer,  
 But in reality, he was a pucker.  
 Lookin' at his complexion and his blond hair,  
 You may have thought he'd grow up to be a farmer,  
 Who knows, maybe even a lawyer.  
 But you'd be wrong, cause he's really a teacher..

**I**'m famous in my family for closing doors on my head and improvising multiple personalities. Once, I saw someone protesting against the KKK on the news, and I picked it up and made the character my own. I do monologues, I go crazy, and my family gets tired of it. They tell me, "Shut the hell up and watch TV."

When I'm old like my Smart Partner, Stephen, I want to remember the great people at the Project and the people around my neighborhood. Almost everyone in my neighborhood knows me—Popular Ray Ocasio.

When I'm Stephen's age, I think I'll either be a superhero, so I can save people from burning buildings and rescue them when they're tied to train tracks, and I could turn green when I'm pissed off, or I'd like to be a potter or a glassblower, so I can shape things, make something original, shape it the way I want to shape it, the way Ray wants to shape it.

My favorite food is food.

If I could change one thing about the world, I would make there be less poverty, more money circulating, so everyone has a buck or two in their pocket. No jealousy. I would also make sure everyone could speak more than one language.

I know some good jokes. Ha, ha.

—by Stephen Haff (in Ray's voice)



Stephen, the Canadian kid

Smart Partners (boom-boom, boom-ba-doom-boom).

Peace.

—by Ray Ocasio

Smart Partner (boom-boom, boom-ba-doom-boom)  
 Smart Partner (boom-boom, boom-ba-doom-boom)  
 So all you Smart Partner kids that be dissin' your SP's pic,  
 Watch out, cause when you're older, this may be you getting dissed.  
 For those SP adults, if you ever hear this:  
 "Can I can I help you with your homework?"  
 Beware, you might be hypnotized by his blue eyez..  
 Smart Partners (boom-boom, boom-ba-doom-boom)



Ray and Stephen today



*Johnathan Roldan*

**M**y smart partner Johnathan is a very unique individual. At home he has always been known as the "Quiet One", but he shows us a much livelier side at the Project! His favorite thing about the Project is homework help and playing with everybody here (especially George).

Johnathan sets a great example by being really focused on doing his homework: he is at the Project everyday!

With all of his hard work, he is well on his way to fulfilling his ambition of being a lawyer or a cop. He would like to live in Staten Island with a wife and one kid – a girl. When he's my age he wants to remember never to do any drugs or smoke.

Thus far, his best year was when he was eleven. That was when he spent the summer visiting relatives in the Dominican Republic. His days were filled playing with his cousins – swimming in the river, riding bikes, climbing trees to knock down mangos and catching (very small) fish. It was in the river that his cousin almost drowned and Johnathan saved him!

In addition, all the kids looked up to Johnathan because he was from the great USA where they have things like a rampant popular culture and snow.

I can understand why that summer was so important and exciting!

—by Beth Janson



*Jaymann Resaldo*

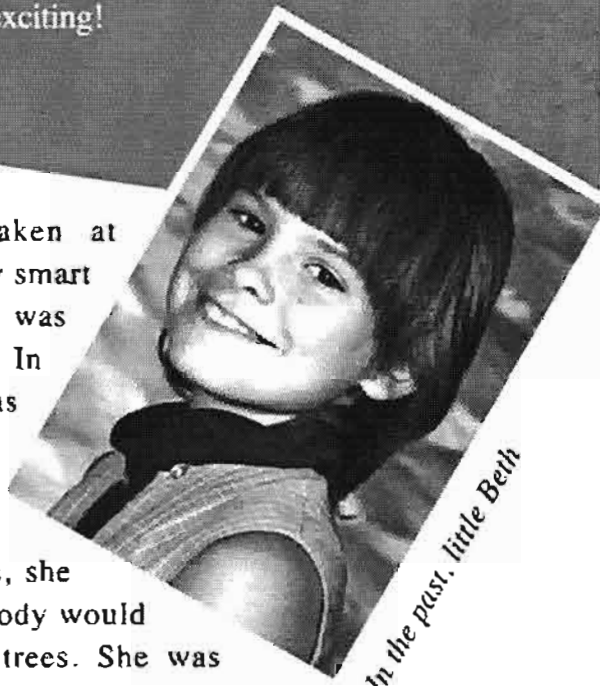
*Johnathan & Beth*

**T**his picture was taken at school when my smart partner Beth was 12. It was taken in South Africa. In South Africa there was only three hours of TV

to be watched per day. Because there was no TV, she spent a lot of time outside and one of her favorite things to do was climb trees. When she climbed trees, she took icing sugar and ate it at the top of the tree so nobody would catch her. She also pretended that she lived in the trees. She was famous for being loud.

People always thought she was a boy. Once when she was shopping with her mom and two sisters, she got onto the elevator before them, and then the man on the elevator said "Young man! Ladies first!" and told her to step aside. And she did!

She wanted to be a pilot when she grew up because she thought that flying was like being in heaven. —By Johnathan Roldan



*In the past, little Beth*

# CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN\*

**O**ne little 12 year-old dorky kid named Stephen was traveling with his best friend Eric and Eric's dad, Dr. H. Stephen (my Smart Partner) was the youngest of the group. They went to Switzerland. Stephen was feeding pigeons on St. Mark's Square, when he saw the Swiss Alps, and he thought that if he climbed the mountain he would be very popular. So he asked Dr. H. and Eric to climb the mountain with him. They said if he could make them laugh, they would come. So Stephen asked, "What do you get when you cross a black guy and a lawyer?"

"What?" asked Dr. H. and Eric.

Stephen said, "A brother-in-law."

They started to laugh. They laughed so hard they started to cry. Then, Stephen, Eric, and Dr. H. started to climb the mountain. Stephen put on his gondolier hat, because it was so hot. As he was climbing the mountain, he thought about himself as a little boy scoring a touchdown in football for the other team (he was so embarrassed about that moment that he really needed to reach the top).

His crew reached the halfway point. Dr. H. was so scared of how high they were that he asked if they could go back down. Stephen did not want to, but he had no choice. They were so exhausted that they had to rest there for one day.

In the night, everybody did their own thing. Dr. H. wondered why he had not



Jonathan Rollin

Osage and Stephen

invested in Microsoft. Stephen was watching the Beatles in concert on his portable TV, and then went to look at his Playboy book. But he did not understand what he saw, so Eric told him about the Birds and the Bees.

In the morning, Stephen got a call on his cellular phone saying that he was accepted at college. So he could do anything. He remembered that earlier that year his father had died, and Stephen vowed that he would climb to the top of the mountain, no matter what Dr. H. said. Eric and Dr. H. climbed down the mountain, but Stephen kept on going. He climbed and climbed and climbed, and then he made it. He reached the top!

Dr. Hall saw him from the bottom and took a picture of him with his Super-Duper Intergalactic Mega-lens camera. Later, Dr. H. put this picture into his new book, but forgot to put Stephen's name in it. So Stephen was not popular, but he was still happy. ★★★

*\*(loosely based on fact, with some fiction for effect!)*



Young Stephen feeding pigeons

# A Highly Skilled *Thumb Wrestler*

**T**he name "Osage" means "warrior who has come to save his people," and it requires only a short time in Osage's company to realize that he lives up to his name. How will he save his people? Osage already possesses some of the necessary skills: for example, although only twelve years old, he is already "the best video game player, ever," as he personally told me. On top of that, he is a highly skilled thumb wrestler, although—as he admitted to me with disarming frankness—"I have been defeated sometimes."

To save your people, you have to discover things you like doing, because those are the things that you will be able to do well. Osage loves acting: "making people laugh and cry," as he put it. However, when questioned about what he might be doing when he's my age—46—acting was only one among several possibilities he mentioned. He might be a lawyer instead; but Osage has his



Johnathan Roddan

Osage

own take on the law, as on most things. When I asked him whether he would prosecute people or defend people, he hesitated, then answered that "it would depend on

whether they were right."

Osage tells a revealing story about himself: once, while watching a TV show called *Cops*, he felt a sudden urge to turn somersaults. Being Osage, he gave way to this urge, but in the course of doing so he cracked his head on a piece of furniture. Bleeding profusely, he was taken to a nearby Emergency Room and stitched up. While to some people this might seem a random, meaningless incident, Osage pointed out to me that it proves his power to foretell the future: "I knew that *Cops* would go off the air," he explained, "and that E.R. would be the next hit series."

What can we conclude from all this? First, that Osage will save his people; second, that he will do it in some unpredictable, utterly original way. There may be occasional setbacks, but he will win through in the end, with humor, style, and intelligence. This is a truly smart Smart Partner. ★★

## FLYER BAR

Flyer Bar, Flyer Bar Oh so sweet  
As Sweet as a Flyer Bar  
I would eat

Ants love it  
But hope they don't get near

It's not a regular bar  
It's a Flyer Bar  
Living in the world without a Flyer Bar

Is like living with Marilyn Manson  
I wish that I lived with a million Flyer Bars

And I wish that Flyer Bars made an amusement park  
called Flyerland  
I could see it now  
The world with a Flyer Bar

—Osage Lewis

# My

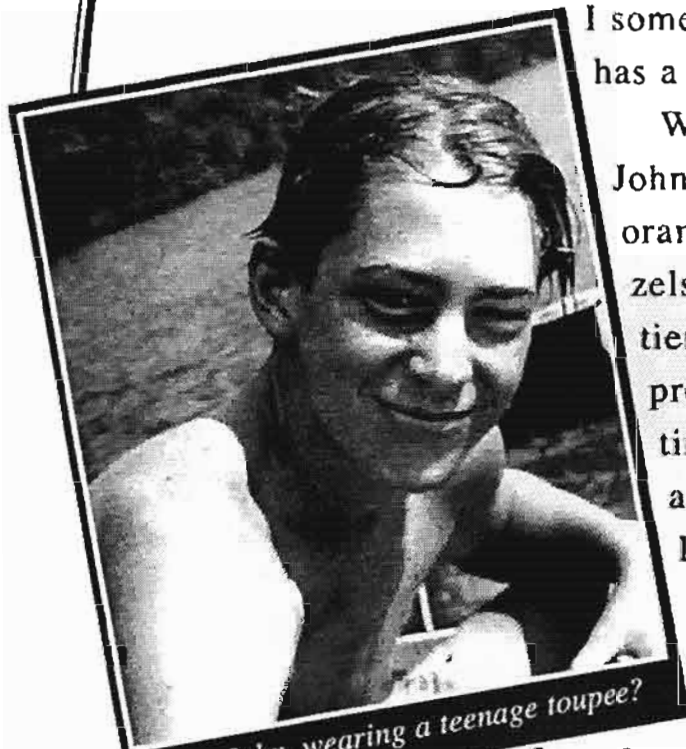
Smart Partner John wouldn't mind being a fish. He told me that the place he feels most peaceful on, under, or near is the water. In this picture he is canoeing in Wyoming when he was fourteen. He had a little more hair back then or maybe he was wearing a teenage toupee.

These days John does all sorts of different kinds of acting, movies to plays, and voice-overs. When I have seen him on TV, he looks different, probably because he is doing his best to play his role. On TV it looks like he has less hair. When I am finished with all my homework John and I sometimes go to the corner restaurant and he has a coffee, a burger, and a milk shake.

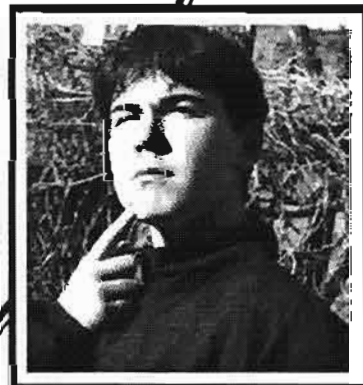
When we first met in November of '97 John brought me chocolate chip cookies and orange juice. After that, he brought me pretzels and orange juice. John would get impatient with me because I was sticking the pretzels to my forehead and I wasn't getting my homework done. He also bugs me about being late. If I am two minutes late he starts to go insane.

When I first met John, to me he looked weird because he was tall and I was about four foot ten inches. For the last year and a half we were supposed to play a one-on-one but it hasn't happened yet, but by the end of this year we will go one-on-one. My smart partner is tall, but at six foot and five inches he still can't dunk the ball.

—by Joseph Mohamed



*Young John, wearing a teenage toupee?*



*Joseph Mohamed planning his one-on-one strategy*

# Ultimate Eighth Grade Renaissance Kid

What do you say about a kid whose heroes are Michael Jordan and Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777-1855 – look him up!).

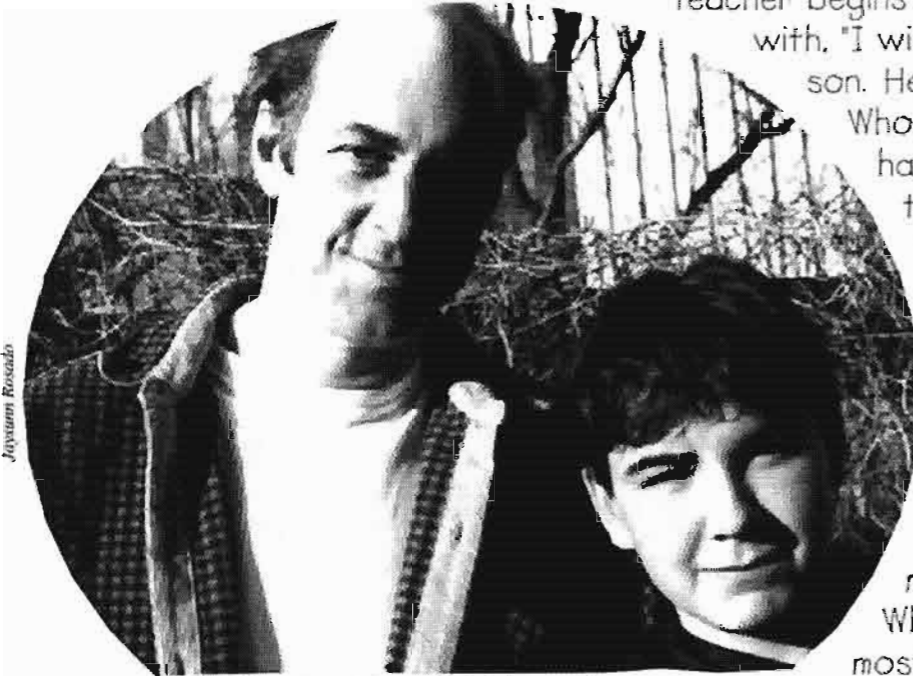
What do you say about a fourteen-year old who walks the sidewalks of Hell's Kitchen like a prince of all he surveys, weaving through the warm greetings, high fives, and kind words of everybody who passes by? Whose math teacher begins his academic conference with, "I wish this boy were my own son. He is such a sweetheart!"

Who has grown three and a half feet since I met him in the fall of 1997. Who, at the corner restaurant, sweetened his hot cocoa with four chocolate Easter eggs, and then convinced the waitress, me, and even the cook that mayo and ketchup mixed together makes French dressing.

Who can jet-ski with the most extreme of the extremists and play hoops like a legend. Who's been an international secret agent fighting crime on stage and anywhere it may erupt. Who is an ace architect and builder of fabulous dreamhouses and is surely the architect of his own dreams. Says he, "I wish to do well in everything that I try." And who has been a treasure and a pleasure every single week. What do you say about someone like this?

You say "This is the ultimate eighth grade Renaissance kid!"

—by John Bedford Lloyd



*John Lloyd and Joseph Mohamed*

# Marlene *about* Beth

**M**y Smart Partner is Beth Gardiner and she used to live in Baltimore, Maryland when

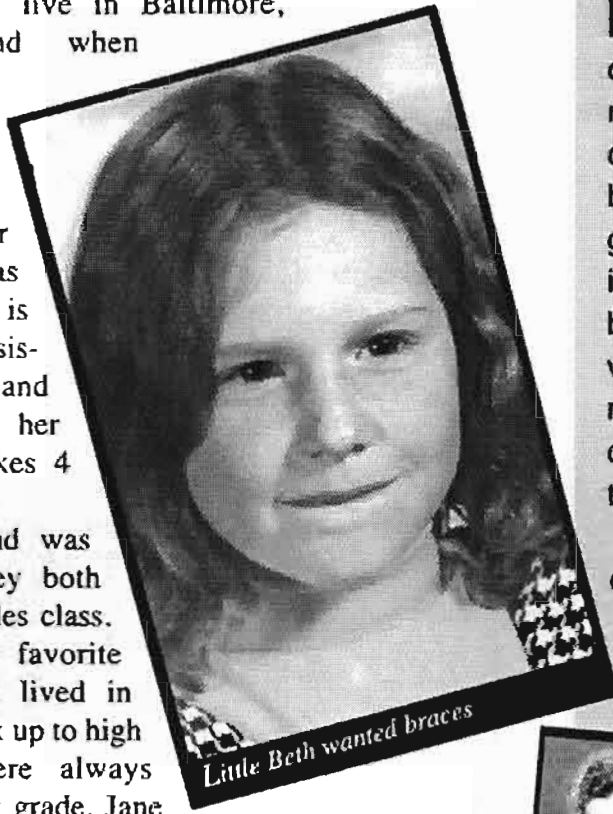
she was a kid. She took that picture when she was 6 or 7, or in the 2nd or 3rd grade. Her Mom's name was Mary and her Dad is Joe. She has two sisters — Katie and Alison. James is her brother. That makes 4 kids in the house.

Her best friend was Jane Berger. They both met in Mrs. Quarles class. She was their favorite teacher. She had lived in Africa. From pre-k up to high school, they were always together for every grade. Jane kept Beth's secrets. Jane had blond hair with bangs. She had a scar on her top lip. She got her scar by taking a plug out of the outlet with her teeth. **NOW THAT'S PRETTY DUMB!** Not even my cousin does that and she's four years old.

When Beth was little she wanted braces because she thought that it was like jewelry on her teeth. So in every picture she would come out with buck teeth.

Beth is so nice. (not really) Ha ha ha ha. Ummm. Ummm. Giggle. Giggle. I really like her a lot. My favorite things to do with her are talk about everything, like boys, fingernails, school, my teacher, and that mad short girl. We've gone to the movies and bought books. We walked through Central Park to go to the Museo del Barrio. It was not good. It was boring, because it didn't have any pictures.

—By Marlene Moran



# Beth *about* Marlene

**H**er tag is "Taz." She lives with her Mom, Eva, and her cousin Sandra. Her cousin has a baby that is two months old. She helps take care of him. She gives him a bottle, changes his diaper, and gives him a bath. She was born in Chicago, but her Mom was born in Ecuador. She went to visit last summer for two months, and a half. Her family calls her "bonchinchera" — that's "big mouth" in Español.

Her mom knows when she doesn't do her homework, or when she lies. No one knows how her mom knows these things, she just

d o e s .

When she doesn't do her homework or has an attitude problem she has to do detention.

Detention is from 3:00 — 3:45 in the afternoon at Ochs. You have to be quiet and

if you are a "bonchinchera" that's really, really hard especially when your friends are there too.

—By Beth Gardiner





# CHEEKS

**A**isha (from now on I'll use her baby nickname — "Cheeks") tricks some into believing that she is quiet and reserved (some would call her "unathletic") but Cheeks is in fact an active thinker who is proud of finding ways to do a lot with very little. ("You know, like on Gilligan's Island, when the professor made a radio out of two coconuts.") Cheeks likes to create something extraordinary out of the ordinary and makes the best out of whatever surrounds her.

Cheeks has already started to plan her future. She will design a store that sells household accessories and has a comfortable cafe. On the side, Cheeks will write her own books of poetry and maybe a play or screenplay. She pushes herself to write every day. From her future home/ office in Soho, Cheeks plans to work as an actress/

writer/director/photographer/sculptor/fashion designer/interior designer/painter and will one day direct and star in her own movie.

Cheeks does not want to tell too much about her movie masterpiece, in case someone steals her ideas, but she promises that her film will cause people to question sanity

and identity. When not writing or performing, Cheeks will volunteer at a teen shelter or with the homeless as a guidance counselor/therapist. She is interested in helping people solve problems with their families and friends and other troubles. She will also volunteer at the 52nd Street Project (of



*Young smiley Nikola*

*Cheeks plans to work as an actress/  
writer/director/photographer/  
sculptor/fashion designer/interior  
designer/painter*

course)!

Cheeks wants to see as much of the world as she can and plans to have houses on several continents including — Spain (to learn the language and how to play the castanets), Ireland (for its beauty), Barbados (for the water), France (an apartment in Paris would be fine) and Saudi Arabia (because it's close to Mecca). Cheeks would also like to visit Australia (so she can see toilets flush in the opposite direction). Keep your eyes peeled for this actress/writer/director/photographer/sculptor/fashion designer/interior designer/painter extraordinaire — (or crash at one of her pads sometime). She'll be hard to miss. ★★★



*Joyce Kovacs*

*Aisha (Cheeks) Jabour &  
Nikola Smith*

## Ms. Thompson

by Marlene Moran

Red as a  
Tomato is  
Ms. Thompson as  
She screams  
Be quiet

Sit down  
Do your work  
Don't talk  
And Still  
We never listen until  
The principal  
Comes in

# I'm a Lucky Smart Partner

by Anne Torsiglieri

I'm a lucky Smart Partner. I get to spend time with my good friend Vionel Ortiz. She is a beautiful young woman with the brightest smile on the block. Of course we do spend time on schoolwork (math's her favorite subject "cause it's easy") or tackling the mysteries of the computer, but my favorite times with Vionel are when we're just hanging out, talking girl to girl.

Vionel thinks she might want to be a psychologist someday and I can understand why. She's an excellent listener and she's got a keen insight into human nature that's way beyond her years. She "likes helping people" and one of her favorite things about herself is that she's a "nice person." I wholeheartedly agree. Vionel's close friends mean the world to her and I'm sure that they must feel lucky to have such a loyal and caring person in their lives.

Vionel is quite a talented actress and she considers acting a potential career. I'm sure her family wouldn't be surprised... as the youngest child and the only girl, Vionel is famous in her family for her great sense of humor and her love of acting. I'm sure she keeps them all entertained!

She has a lot of respect for other people,

and that's one thing she hopes never changes. She wishes she could have more self-confidence and would like to be able to trust people more. As difficult as it sometimes can be, Vionel admits that she is constantly learning from her mistakes. This is one insightful young woman!

Not only do I have fun with Vionel, but I am constantly learning from her. I am a better person for knowing her and I know that the world is a better place

**I KNOW THAT  
THE WORLD IS A  
BETTER PLACE  
BECAUSE VIONEL  
IS IN IT!!**

because Vionel is in it!! ★★★



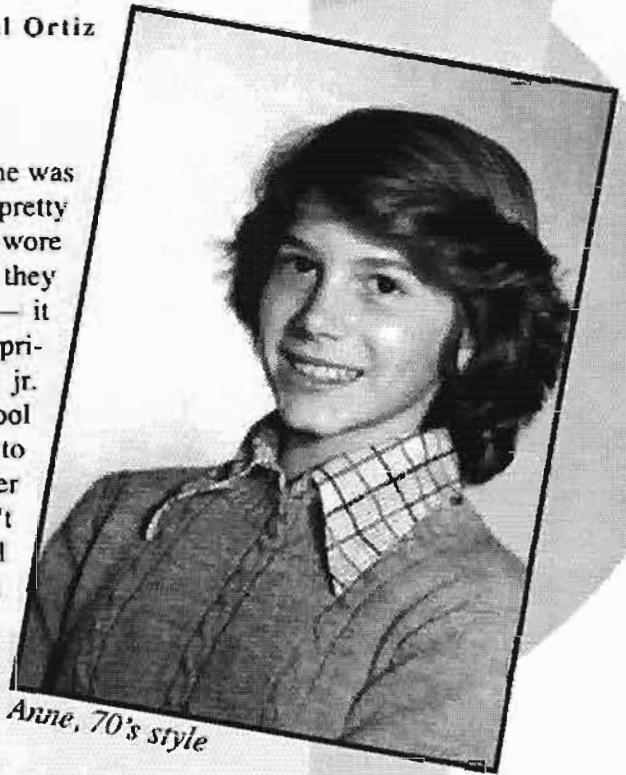
*Anne Torsiglieri and Vionel Ortiz*

# Annie

by Vionel Ortiz

**W**hen my Smart Partner Anne was younger she was very pretty but in a dorky way. She wore these funny glasses but they were kinda cool. She had a nice hair style — it looked like a 70's style hair. She went to private school all through elementary and jr. high so when she finally got to high school she didn't know how to dress. She used to call her friend who went to school with her when she was younger, who also didn't know how to dress, and they would call each other in the morning and decide what they were going to wear that day. As she said "No sense of fashion."

She says she was excited to go to a new school because she could make her-



*Anne, 70's style*

She used to call her friend and decide what they were going to wear that day.

self over. But her brothers were going to the same school as she and they were popular already. The thing was, she was scared to become like them; she did not want to be like

them. In her family she was known for acting and singing, she was in her freshman play; she was the only freshman in the play. The only reason she likes this picture is because you can see the innocence in her eyes.

Annie always knew in the heart that she was going to become an actress. She had some really motivating goals but before I get into them let me tell you the background to each one. She says, she pictured her life different. "We get what we need even if we don't know it." I asked her if she wanted to make changes in her life and this is what she said "In moments I'm glad and in moments I think about making changes... Not to worry so much about the future but to enjoy each moment, have more self-confidence."

She said that she was very naive, that she did not know that much about life at age 14, like the kids now-a-days. She says I'm mature.

Thank You.

She says  
I'm  
mature.  
Thank  
you.

# INTERVIEWING ALISON

One day, I called my Smart Partner Alison. We said hi to each other, and I asked her if I could interview her. She said yes, so I started asking her some questions.

When Alison was little, she didn't like any name-brand clothes. She wore clothes without names on them. One time she made her mother drive half an hour to the suburbs because she didn't want Nike sneakers because everyone had them.

I asked what her most embarrassing moment was when she was a kid. Funny enough, it's all about clothes. She told me that when she was 14, she tried on a pair of pants. Then, she went out and looked in the mirror and she didn't have a shirt on. So she was very embarrassed. She hid in the dressing room for a half an hour. (Her mother loves that story).

Her mother took this picture because of her clothes. (Does she ever stop talking about clothes?) Her mom took it at Christmas when she was visiting her cousin's house. She is wearing a new outfit. It's a cowl neck sweater — very popular in the 70's. It's a beige-colored floppy turtleneck.

Now when she looks at the picture, she remembers she was always the responsible one in the family. She worked hard in school and did all her work. She had a wild sister. When Alison got older, she became an actress at the Boston Children's Theater. She worked with Michael Bernard. I asked her if she had a crush on Michael. She said, no, he was too old for her.

She also remembers that she was in love with a guy named David. It took her two years to get him to notice her. Then they became boyfriend and girlfriend. He was a different David than the one she is with now. I guess she likes Davids. ★★★



*Does she ever stop talking about clothes?  
Alison Tatlock as a teen*



*The author Tanika*

# Tanika

by Alison Tatlock

**T**anika is famous in her family for being the laziest one, "like not doing a lot of chores." However, I am happy to report that this reputation for laziness is balanced by her excellent ability to take care of her little brother, Glenn. In fact, Tanika's parents told her that even when she was a very little girl and Glenn was a baby, she would watch out for him and was never jealous. She says that it's actually fun taking care of little Glenn (her father is also named Glenn) because they have a lot of laughs making fun of their mom and dad.

When Tanika is the ripe old age of 31, she would like to look back at being 13 and remember all the fun she used to have, "like going out and hanging out with my friends, and going to the movies with my boyfriend," she tells us. She wants to be sure to remember this stuff

in particular because when she gets older she might forget how much fun she had as a kid and "turn into a boring person."

When she grows up she would like to be a correction officer, like her mom, "following in her footsteps," as she says. She comments that contrary to what you might think, being a correc-

tion officer can be fun because the inmates have lots of interesting and amusing stories to share. She says that even now, when she visits her mom at work, the inmates joke around with her and tell her stories. Recently one of them explained to her that he was locked up because of racism, and that related to

what Tanika had just been studying in school: prejudice, and how you shouldn't pre-judge people because of their race.

Tanika's most embarrassing moment in her life so far was when she accidentally went to school in her pajamas. ★★★



*Tanika Parson and Alison Tatlock have embarrassing moments in common*

# The Don

by Tom Schall

THE DON



*Jonathan Villanueva and Tom Schall — They built the telescope!*

**W**hen we walk down Tenth Avenue he is like a little “don,” greeting people on every block, engaging in brief wrestling matches, and shouting across traffic. He seems thoroughly at home in his neighborhood, giving me the latest gossip on Hell’s Kitchen real estate and petty crime.

Born and raised here, he has strong feelings about the effort to call his neighborhood “Clinton”.

“It’s Hell’s Kitchen. You can’t just change that. If a kid is born named Red, you can’t just start calling him Blue!”

I ask him where else he would like to live and he answers without hesitation: “I’d stay here. Every day you see something new you don’t see anywhere else... or Hawaii. It sounds nice.”

Some of his stranger Hell’s Kitchen sightings include “Dave the Transsexual, the green-haired guy on Ninth and the three-legged dog.”

His favorite places in the city are the

Egyptian room at the Metropolitan Museum, the dinosaur exhibit at the Museum of Natural History, and Lazer Park in Times Square – an uncommonly balanced take on the New York cultural scene. Clinton Tower is his favorite building because, “Most everybody I know lives there, and you can get up on the roof. Roofs are the best part of buildings because you can see so much sky. You don’t see sky from down on the street.

As talk turns to places outside Manhattan he observes, “Outside the city the major difference is the quiet. In Maine, at camp, it was so quiet it was sort of creepy. Next time I go away I’ll make a recording of New York sounds so I’ll be able to sleep.”

His advice to kids moving to Manhattan is: “Find a few friends, and don’t go out at night without them. Keep away from Central Park after ten.” Sage advice from the Don of Hell’s Kitchen. ★★



Jonathan Korman

## He Was Known For NEVER FINISHING

# his Veggies

**W**hen I look at the picture of my smart partner Tom, I think of this kid in a house in the countryside, with a dog and no brothers and sisters, but the truth is he lived in the Mojave Desert, his pets were wild snakes, and he had a brother and a sister. His picture has no resemblance to him now.

One thing he noticed about the picture was that he was happy. He also noticed his big ears. And as he puts it, he looks like a “geeky unhappy kid.”

This picture was taken in the Mojave Desert, 100 miles from Death Valley.

His haircut was home-made. He says he used to run and hide in the bathroom when his dad tried to give him a haircut. His dad would wrap a sheet around his neck and would start to cut away with these big gigantic electric clippers.

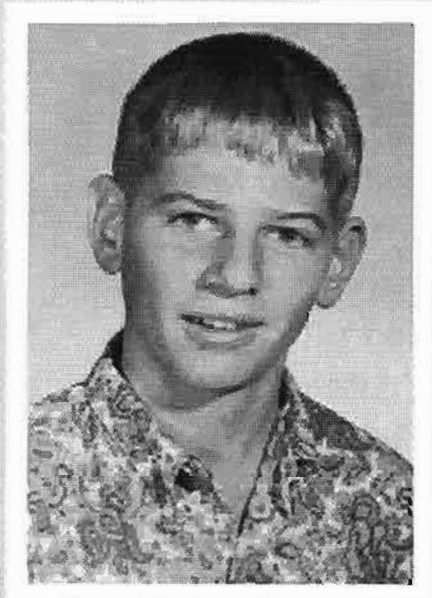
He wasn’t too crazy about school; in fact he had to push himself to do work. All he wanted to do was play ball with his friends and hang out. He was on a junior high swimming team though (in the desert?)

One time this girl walked out into the desert, got lost, and died.

When his family did chores he earned the nick name Tommy Trash. He and his brothers would go to the desert and catch snakes. One time he lost a snake in the house and never found it. He was

known for never finishing his veggies. He would be ill before finishing, so one day he threw them out the window and the next day he had to eat double veggies because his father found them.

Tom felt really guilty about giving his sister a rocket ride — when you lay on your back, feet up, and the rider sits on your feet and you heave the rider. He did it off a 12 foot hill. He thought it would give her hang time but it



*Tom Schall a.k.a Tommy Trash*

only gave her a broken arm.

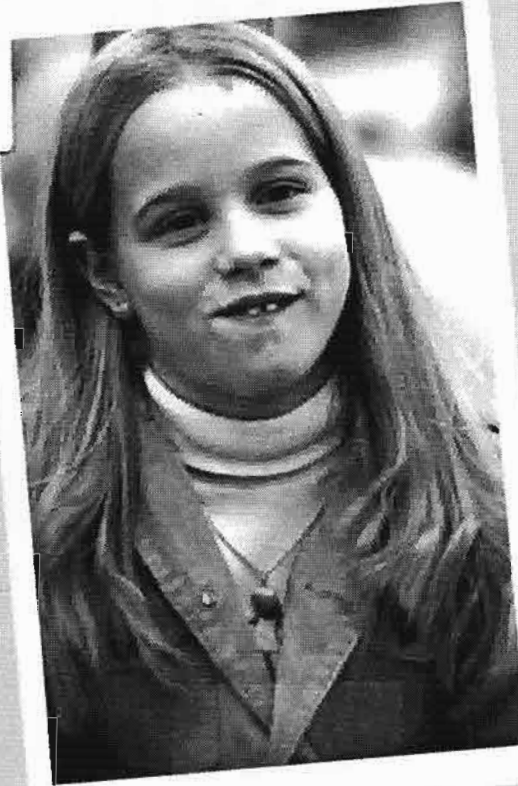
He had a yellow dog named Meatball. It was a yellow mongrel. He wished he knew how to cook.

—by Jonathan Villanueva

# Robin's 70's

BY HAKIM LATIMORE

Disco ball shining bright  
Robin is at a party  
And  
It's Saturday night.  
Do the Hustle!  
Monkey men running  
Around in *Planet of the Apes*  
Sister Hilary fighting  
Like a fiend  
Everybody was  
Kung-Fu fighting  
Watanh  
Playing *Lost in Space*  
In the park  
While worrying  
Her head off  
Acting Annie singing  
About tomorrow  
In her living room  
Now she misses  
Those days but  
Not 70s clothes  
And  
May the Force  
Be  
With You



*When Robin was young*



# The wise man's way

"Wise man"

His name means  
a poet of immeasurable  
extremes

Super-smash brothers  
A video game dream  
Strawberry ice cream  
Dribbling down his chin.  
Dreaming of an  
Architect's life  
Building buildings like  
Disney 's.

Letting go of the strife  
As tall as his smart partner  
And proud of that fact.  
He draws like Picasso, is a  
Warrior at scrabble  
A loyal buddy, a friend,  
Adorability in his cells  
Silly, sensitive, funny, and goofy.  
Twelve going on thirty  
And steadily moving upstream.



Joyann Brooks

Wise man Hakim Latimore with  
Robin Morse



by Hakim

by Robin



Ed and Justin

# THE LOVE OF THE GAME



Justin's drawing of Ed

**T**his guy loved to play basketball and hang around. But he didn't like to do what he was made to do. Like ballet classes and playing the flute. He wanted to be with his friends and not go to school. But he did go to school when he got older. He wished he had worked harder then.

He is the baby in his family. "The Brat," he was called. He loved to get his brother in trouble. He would force him to wrestle with him. Then he would fake cry and



Little Ed

get him in trouble with his mom. I think he did this because he wanted attention. Nobody listened to him because he was younger. He wanted to be older so people would understand his words.

He wished he was Julius Erving (Dr. J), who was the best basketball player before Michael Jordan, and always had a lot of friends. I think I would be friends with him because we would both be in trouble together. He learned his lesson about how to be a man, to be serious about life and a disciplined human being.

I'm on my way too. That's the bottom line because Stone Cold Say So. Peace.

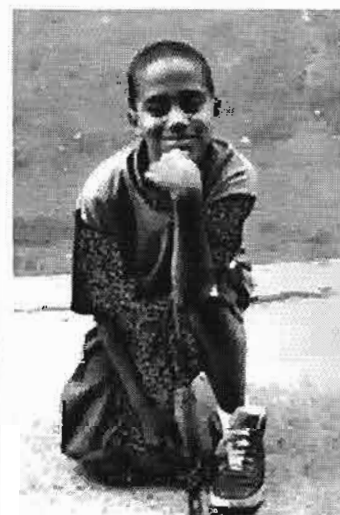
—by Justin James Aponte

## Cool

# Justin

is known for his cool attitude. Justin is known for sharing with everybody. Justin is the first one to get up in his household for the 6:30 Pokémon showing.

They don't have to pull this one out of bed. When he is my age, Justin wants to remember how he was as a kid. He wants to make sure he remembers the mischief that got him into trouble so he can learn from it and correct his mistakes. At the same time he wants to keep the charm and sweet smile that got him out of trouble. And he always wants to remember his family and take care of his sister and his mom. Justin hopes to match his incredible energy and talent with his ever-increasing vocabulary so he can be a poet rhythmic lyric rapping machine. He is a very smart, fast learner and is well on his way. —Ed Vassallo



Justin James Aponte

# Noel on George

by Noel Polanco

**T**his former kid in the picture had no limits. He was a very smart kid but did not know how to use his knowledge. When he was in class he daydreamed.

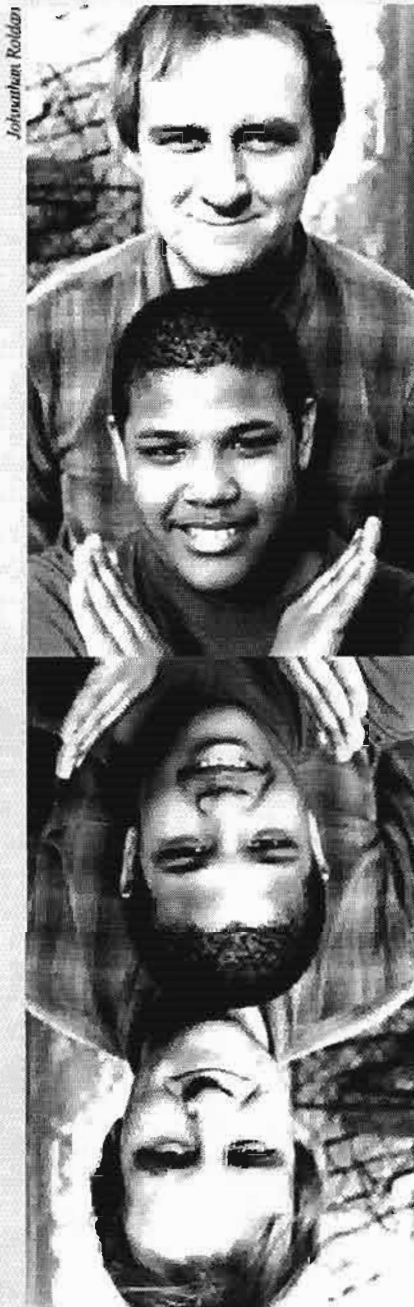
Young George was famous in his family for burping. Once his mother and father took him to a very nice restaurant and he was drinking something and he burped really loud and he didn't even say "excuse me." Everybody just laughed.

He told me a story about when he was five. He and his father went to the beach and there were so many horseshoe crabs all over the beach. He was so afraid of them because they looked like monsters that his father had to carry him across the beach to get him to the ocean.

In the picture he had a tie on and it was different from the usual uniform tie because his mom was so poor that she had to buy a cheap tie and take the letters S.G.S. from a sign store and attach them to the tie. The kids at school liked it a little bit because it was kind of 3-D. ★★★



Famous burper



George Babiak and Noel Polanco

Another thing I know about this kid is that he is very helpful around the house, and frequently helps his mom with the shopping and the laundry. Yep, he's got a lot of good points (and one or two bad ones), but here's what I admire most about this exuberant 13-year old: he enjoys life with an unquenchable passion. In this one way, my Smart Partner is MY mentor. ★★★

My kid has a few other qualities I admire. He is much more comfortable with numbers than I ever was, as a kid OR as an adult. He is also an outstanding performer, and has made a great impression in every show he's ever done with the Project. He told me recently that his life's dream is to be like the professional wrestler known as "The Rock," whom he says is "the most electrifying superstar in sports entertainment today."

Long after everyone is tired of the gag, he will still find the greatest joy in repeating it. Perhaps that doesn't sound so great to you, though. Here's a better example: when this kid decides he wants to learn how to do something, like ride a bike, he won't quit practicing until he gets it right, even if he's injuring himself. I guess that makes him pretty fearless, too.

To give you an example, when this kid thinks a joke or a prank is funny, he will say or do it hundreds of times. Long after everyone is tired of the gag, he will still find the greatest joy in repeating it. Perhaps that doesn't sound so great to you, though. Here's a better example: when this kid decides he wants to learn how to do something, like ride a bike, he won't quit practicing until he gets it right, even if he's injuring himself. I guess that makes him pretty fearless, too.

There's one word that comes to mind when I think of Noel. The word is tenacity (Kids, don't run to the dictionary, I'll tell you what it means). The word "tenacious" describes someone who grabs hold of a thing or an idea and won't let go. That describes my young friend perfectly.

# George on Noel

by George Babiak

There's one word that comes to mind when I think of Noel. The word is tenacity (Kids, don't run to the dictionary, I'll tell you what it means). The word "tenacious" describes someone who grabs hold of a thing or an idea and won't let go. That describes my young friend perfectly.

# How the Vietnam War Finally Ended.

a monologue in  
the voice of my  
Smart Partner  
Michaela Murphy

**O**n a nice sunny day, I can remember driving in my father's car. All around me you saw people dressed really hippie. Girls and women would have big Afros, rainbow shirts, and flared bell bottom jeans. You really couldn't tell the difference between men and women because men would let their hair grow down to their knees.

I didn't look nothing like them, I had just made my First Holy Communion. I was dressed all in white with a beautiful veil that came out to the sides of my face. As we stopped at a stop sign I heard music played by Jimi Hendrix. I saw a lot of protesting about the Vietnam war. I saw people marching down the street. That was a big backdrop in my life, everywhere I went, that was happening. It was like my life could not turn away from it. You saw signs everywhere, flags were being burned, like right now right in front of me — an American flag in flames, cops running hysterically, people chanting "PIGS, PIGS, PIGS."

It was horrible because I had just become a Catholic and my flag was being destroyed. I don't know how I could have tolerated watching this. I felt like they had messed up my day. People my babysitter's age were get-



*Michaela's First Communion*

ting killed from being sent to the war. It was a big disappointment to a lot of people. People started to disobey the rules and everything went out of whack.

We passed a sign that said Cranston R.I. "Dad why are we here?" "Surprise! I'm taking you to a barbecue at my friends house." We got out of the car. After a while my dad yelled, "The war is over!" I was playing basketball in my driveway and everything stopped; it was just silent. People walked out of their houses like zombies and crept down the street not knowing what had just hit them. And then sirens went off and car horns and then fireworks. I stood in the drive way holding the basketball. I didn't know exactly what had just ended but, I knew that the world had just CHANGED!! —by Lorraine Calderon

## The Battery Never Stops!

**M**y smart partner Lorraine Calderon hears these very words at least once a day, from at least one of her teachers in awe of her constantly moving mouth! It could be a drag, this non-stop chatter, but Lorraine always has something wild to report. A bloody accident at the Laundromat, her dog Budda's hemophilia, and the joy of being an only child. You see I was the eldest of four children, and there were many, many times as a child when I would fantasize about the very heaven that Lorraine describes: Her own room! No sharing of toys or clothes, all of her parents' attention and the TV remote all to herself! Lorraine agrees that being an only child has its advantages, but she has always wished for an older brother and sister so that she can feel safe and loved. When Lorraine has her own family someday she too would like to have one child, or maybe even twins. She dreams of living with her family in Puerto Rico where it is so beautiful. Maybe when her child or her children are twelve years old, she will remember what she told me she hoped she'd never forget: "Never let yourself go by what other people say. Find out the facts, not the opinions. That's the way to lead a good life." —Michaela Murphy



*Lorraine*

## HOW THE WORLD BEGINS TO CHANGE IN FALL

Fall

Images seen from the corner windows of 10th Avenue and 52nd Street\*  
(An exercise in adjectives)

A man, twitching hands, steps into the stripes of the crosswalk.

A van, the color of the sky, the color of heaven,  
speeds by as fast as an ostrich.

Hands still, the man climbs the curb and totters.

Cars slowly gliding on to the street,  
Just driving to drive.

The man steps onto a crack in the sidewalk.

He doesn't know its history.

A lady slowly crosses the street and steps  
Foot into the restaurant and orders a plate of food.

Clouds crowd the sky.

We sit and watch our world go by.

## HOW THE WORLD BEGINS TO CHANGE IN SPRING

Spring

A lady walking across the street reads a letter.

Who could it be from?

A silly ponytail bounces on the downturned

Head of a lady writing in her notebook as she walks past the hydrant.

A softball as it is being thrown in the air by a boy.

As he talks to his friend, he throws the ball.

Pink ribbon stays a yellow balloon in the space

Between two little girls as they squint against the western sun.

As I saw my Smart Partner looking out the window, she recognizes two  
boys she knew that used to come to the Project.

And my Smart Partner knows them too.

One is a boy dressed head to toe in schoolbus yellow,

The other is her cousin who was stabbed in the back with a serrated knife.

As the time has passed, we still see familiar faces, only now the  
sun is shining.

# Mr. Nobody

\* a poem by Michael Feliciano

I met a man named Mr. Nobody  
He had a scar on his cheek and his eyes were bloody

He had a black hat and a black coat  
And he lived all alone on a big, black boat

He had a crippled leg and two big dimples  
When he walked he had a limp - being Nobody wasn't simple

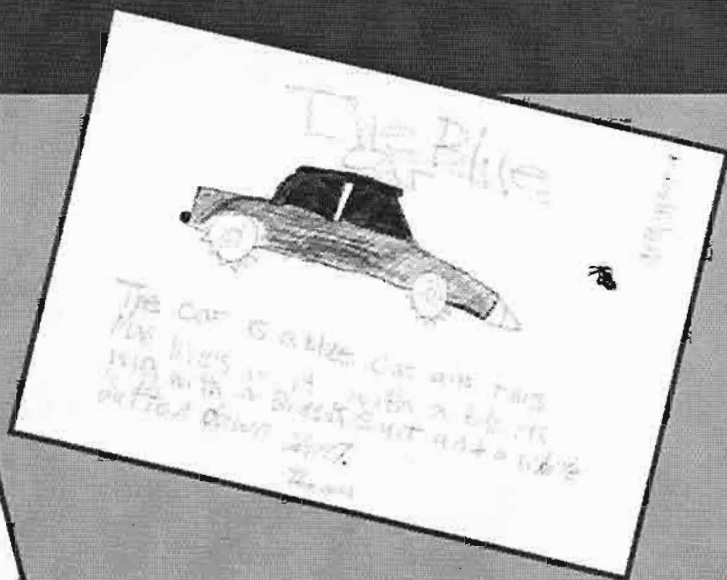
He lost his tongue so he never talked  
And like his world his thoughts were locked

He was on his own, without friends, without buddies  
And I guess that's how you get when your name is Mr. Nobody.

Nobody  
Норобод



The Jungle, part 2



The Car is a blue car with two  
wheels and a black seat and a white  
outlet door 2007.  
The car

Artist, writer  
and animal lover  
Michael Feliciano



**W**ouldn't you find it awkward if someone put reinforcements on every single loose-leaf paper (back and front) in her notebook as a way to prepare for the beginning of school?

Well, if you do then you need to meet my smart partner Jenny — filled with a passion for organization. There is not one time Jenny can recall where she let her passion to be prepared and organized lead her to make strange actions (as the example given above proves).

Filled with charm, Jenny has the incredible ability to bring out the best in people. This I have also learned was true when she was my age. Through her dramatic episodes and crazy remarks she always seems to put a smile on someone's face.

Like me, Jenny was a stubborn kid,

which often made it difficult to get out of situations when she was wrong.

In my smart partner Jenny I see a lot of myself. We have many things in common, one example would be the way we think. We often share the same views on certain subjects. She brings a lot of encouragement and influence on what I hope to be and aspire to achieve.

One thing that Jenny wishes she had known when she was my age was that it was okay to take risks. One piece of advice she concluded my interview with was "to live each day like it was your last and up to your fullest potential." ★★



Isha and Jenny



Jenny Wiener was a passionately organized kid

## ISHA Has a Strong PERSONALITY

**I**knew it the moment I first met her. She walked into the room and, well, there she was. This trait which was so clear to me, is obviously something that is present in her life at home, too. Isha is known within her family for being extremely stubborn. She just won't be beaten, even if she knows she's wrong (which can sometimes make for a spirited Smart Partner session!)

What's so interesting about Isha is that despite the fact that she has such a strong personality, she says that she is afraid of change. She doesn't like the unknown. She wants to know what's going to happen and this sometimes makes her hesitant to try new things. This is an area she wants to improve in and

she says she wants to try to start taking risks, even if they're small.

If Isha could have any job when she grows up, it would be what Gus does at the Project.

She says that seeing the kids happy and knowing that as an adult you are making the Project kids feel so good is what would make the job so appealing.

I asked Isha if she were the adult and I were the kid what would she want me to know. She said that one of the things she would want to impart to her "kid" is that she

should remember to try to enjoy being a kid as much as she can. Although it's important to take care of responsibilities she should try not to worry too much. After all, when will you get to be fourteen again?

The most important thing Isha said about being her age was that "it's one thing to be mature but it's important not to try to grow up so fast."

—Jenny Wiener



"it's one thing to be mature but it's important not to try to grow up so fast"

# a story of truth and imagination

# Anissa is always cracking me up

I interviewed my Smart Partner Kate and I liked some of the answers she told me so I decided to write them in a story of truth and imagination. I took some answers from our interview, then took my own ideas from my imagination and I put them in this story...



Kate and Anissa.

There was a girl who was in 7th grade: the top class, Mrs. Wizwell's class. The classroom was at the end of the hallway and there was this sound coming out from it, the weirdest sound — a student trying her best to succeed, to move on to the next grade. The little girl was in front of the class giving the answer to a math problem. It was the weirdest ever just because no one else cared about school as much as she did. The reason she tried so hard to get out of the class was because she had the same teacher for two years. The teacher moved on to 7th grade but the year before was her 6th grade teacher. Mrs. Wizwell had gray hair and a big nose. The little girl hated her teacher, Mrs. Wizwell.

Most of the time in school the little girl cared about math and the other subjects but she really had her heart set on Jimmy Rosenberg. Well what happened was in 6th grade she went out with him for two months and then dumped him after that because she felt that she wasn't old enough to have a boyfriend. She had a crush on him still.

Well she grew up to forget about Jimmy Rosenberg and Mrs. Wizwell. She went to college and goes to the 52nd Street Project to help someone who needs help which is called a Smart Partner. That person she helps, that lucky person, is me.

— Anissa Albarron

"I like to joke around a lot, have a sense of humor," says my Smart Partner Anissa. She says this is the best part of her personality, and I think it's true — she's always cracking me up. During our interview, I discovered that one reason she's having so much fun is

because when she's my age (25) she wants to be able to look back and say she tried, "not to rush." "You have to pay the bills," she reminds me. "You have to be very responsible. I'm 12 and I have to be responsible too, but..." She spends her free time hanging out with friends, getting her hair done, writing in her journal, drawing, and coming to the Project for classes and Smart Partner meetings.

This 7th grader has very clear goals for the future, planning to become a pediatrician or an obstetrician. Because she's very close with her family, she hopes to spend her college years in New York. She often takes care of her younger siblings (including her baby sister) and points out that her enjoyment of this responsibility is one reason why, when a doctor, she wants to treat infants and children. Other plans for the future include putting her Project-learned skills to use by acting "as a hobby."

When asked what she's famous for in her family, she replies that she's always laughing and smiling. Why? "Cause life is too short."

— Kate Ryan



Above, Little Kate  
Below, Kate drawn  
by Anissa



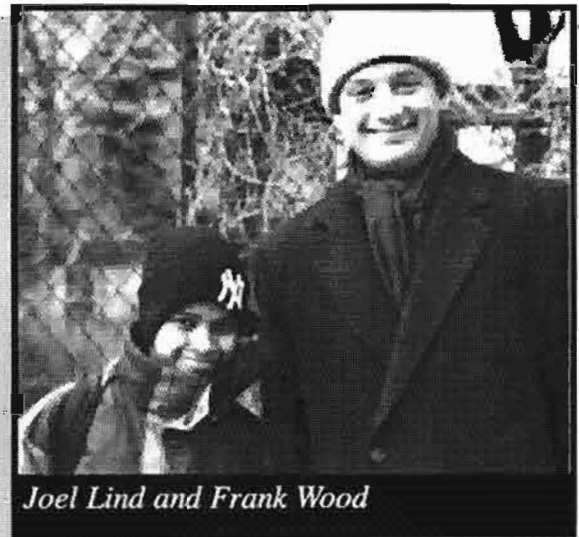


# Frank

by Joel Lind

When my Smart Partner Frank was young, he was nice. Some kids at school used to pick on him while other kids were nice. But when he was young, he didn't care what they said about him. They thought his hair looked funny. The only reason his hair looked funny was because he was trying to look like a hippie. But my Smart Partner when he was young was happy and giddy.

When Frank was young, something weird happened to him. His father told him to put milk on the table. He refused to, because it was too early for dinner. So his father left him and went to Howard Johnson's for dinner, because he liked it back in those days. (Frank remembered this comment because there was not usually fighting in his family.) His favorite side dish was some funny-named pudding called Yorkshire pudding. He ate it with roast beef. The dish was made from flour and fat from roast beef. I wouldn't like to try it. I asked Frank if Howard Johnson's serves Yorkshire pudding. ★★★



Joel Lind and Frank Wood

# JOEL

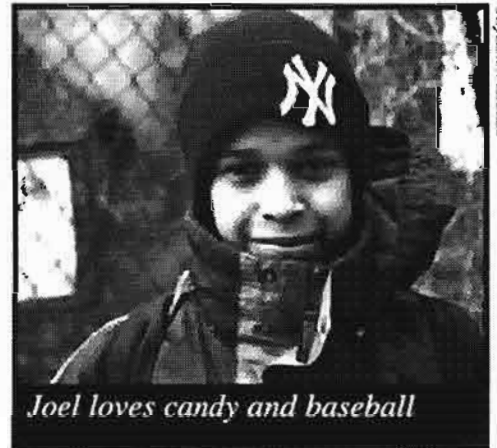
by Frank Wood

My smart partner Joel does not always like to talk about himself. He thinks some things are his business and nobody else's. For example, his sister likes to make him mad and then take pictures of him while he's still angry and show them to her friends; his mother's friends wave at



him in the street and let him know how he's doing in school. That bothers him.

His family knows him as the kid who loves candy and plays baseball - but he'll tell you that he wants to fly planes and carry a gun. If he could be a marine he could fight evil and bring peace to the world. In the meantime, he wants to grow older and spend time with his friends Jovan and Kevin while they ride the bus looking for soda and candy to buy. ★★★



Joel loves candy and baseball

Frank in the old days



# ALL ABOUT JENNY

by Peter Granados

**J**enny looks so young in school pictures, and also with the little suit that she wore when the photographer was taking pictures of her. She also had glasses and braces at the age of 12.

In school she did a play about America. Her part was being a dot for a song about American inventors. She was the dot in the "I." When she did this play, she was 12 years old. In school the kids would always make fun of her because she was so small that they would call her "shrimpy," "short fry," and all these funny names. Sometimes when she worked too hard she would get so tired that she would get in a bad mood. When she was 12 years old, she used to be so quiet and very nice and very, very shy.

She and her friends would get together and they would perform a show for the neighborhood. They did a play of *The Night Before Christmas*. Jenny wrote the plays for them. She always liked to do art projects at school and at home. She was very intelligent then and is now. ★★★



*Jenny Peek, 12, on school picture day*



*Joyceann Rowland*



*Peter Granados today*

*Joyceann Rowland*

He is going to invent antidotes for poisoning and sickness

# ALL ABOUT PETER

by Jenny Peek

**M**y brand-new Smart Partner Peter is eleven years old and in 5th grade. His favorite thing about school is Choice Time (free time on Fridays to go outside if all work is done). When he is my age, he is going to be doing chemical experiments. He is going to invent antidotes for poisoning and sickness.

Peter loves the computer. He types a lot and writes stories. He's very interested in learning more commands, so we plan to spend some of our

Smart Partner time doing that. His favorite computer game is Math Blaster (fun and educational!) The last time he played Math Blaster he worked on math quizzes. He received a Golden Coin for his full score. Maybe one day he'll invent his own computer game.

Peter has three brothers and two sisters. He is the third-oldest. At home, he is known as a "smart kid" who helps his

brothers. He thinks there are good things and not-so-good things about being part of such a big family. The good: everyone helps each other out. The not-so-good: it can get noisy and messy and it's hard to get any privacy.

His fantasy wish: to fly and be free and live forever. ★★★

# Zaida is tall.

by Peter Manning

She loves basketball and pizza and cutting coupons out of the daily news.

Zaida is vibrant.

She enjoys life, she understands what is fair and she speaks her mind.

Zaida is loving.

She wants a family and she wants to teach basketball. She is optimistic, which is great.

Zaida is an individual.

She loves to dance and she'll even dance alone to get everyone started. She loves rap because she loves the beat.

Zaida is smart.

She thinks listening is a great trait but she also likes to talk. Her brother listens and her aunt did too.

Zaida is a leader. She has attitudes and she wants to set examples. She always tries to be good.

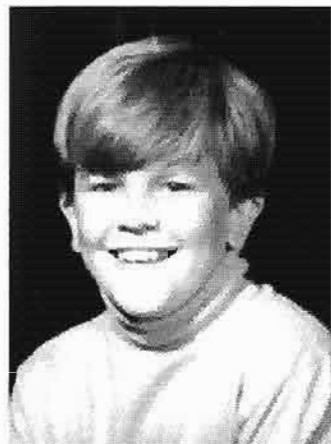
Zaida is funny.

Zaida is wise.

Zaida is great.



*Peter and Zaida*



*Young Peter*



*Zaida Naterra*

She likes to wear glitter

# JENNIFER JIMENEZ



Jacqueline Rotundo

**W**hen Jennifer Jimenez gets to be the age of this interviewer, she plans to be an actress who writes some of her own material. While the shows she writes will be a mixture of comedy & drama, she's such a natural comedienne that they are bound to be funny!

Since she prefers the East Coast to the West, she plans to live in the Big Apple (as opposed to L.A.) in her own apartment in Hell's Kitchen with her pet monkey — who remains as yet unnamed! Because her fabulous apartment will have four spacious bedrooms and a maid who comes twice a week, there will be plenty of room for her friends to "chill" when they need a place to stay.

Right now, Jennifer's love of candy & junk food prevents her bank account from growing too much! (She says she spends all the money her Mom & Dad give her on it!) However, when her acting career really takes off (and she starts making the big bucks) she plans to build a studio for The 52nd Street Project where they can rehearse and put on plays. It's going to be a great legacy, since Jennifer said no matter how hard she tries, she'll never forget her friends here at The 52nd Street Project!

Jennifer hopes never to forget her friends from the 7th grade or several key teachers either, including Mr. Bernstein, Ms. Choplin, Mr. Garcia, and Ms. Sullivan... (and her Smart Partner!) Her teachers have obviously had an

impact on her, because, along with considering a career in acting, she's toying with the idea of being a teacher herself.

If the acting and teaching tracks don't pan out, Jennifer would like to become a rapper. She knows a lot of songs(!) and some of her favorite singers are rappers. She likes rappers who are "real" like Lauryn Hill and Tupac Shakur. (In fact, she thinks Tupac is so real that she suspects he's still alive and living in Mexico!)

When Jennifer was just a little kid ("la niña bony" as her family called her then....!) she

caught hepatitis and missed a bunch of school. She felt sick and screamed and screamed, and remembers that a doctor stuck a needle in her left hand so that she could receive medicine intravenously. Poor kid! I wonder if that experience had anything to do with her growing up to be left-handed!

While she used to be known as "la niña bony," now she's more famous for all the butterflies she wears in her hair. (She's been known to sport as many as forty!) Sometimes the butterflies are sparkly — in fact her whole face sparkles because she likes to wear glitter too - and sometimes they're plain, but they're always plentiful! Her Mom and her Smart Partner both think they look so good, that they've been known to sport them as well!!

★★★

BY SUSAN MCGINNIS

SHE WANTED  
**TO FIT IN**

by Jennifer Jimenez

**W**hen Susan was my age she was worried about herself and what other people thought about her. I think she was

somewhat self-conscious and was stressed out about herself. She was interested in being popular and fitting in. She looked like a smart girl not an air head. It seems as though she should have or could have accomplished anything she wanted to. She did. She wanted to be an actress and she actually is, but I bet that those girls who are popular are probably not as successful as she is now. I think she's happier with herself, actually much happier with herself. She didn't have to worry about herself being fat or not. She didn't have to try to look as if she were in high school because she wasn't!



*Jennifer and Susan*



*Young Susan (left) and Susan by Jennifer*

She should've understood that! (NOT THAT I AM ANYONE TO CRITICIZE HER OR ANYTHING BECAUSE I ALSO HAVE FLAWS.) I think that she should have been Susan the real one, because that's really who she is after all.

XOXO ★★★

# That Jason

by Isaac Trujillo

**J**ASON VALK was a crazy man when he was little. One of his crazy doings was taking too many vitamins so he could be super strong but all he got was a niacin burn. Another one was when his brother and he were alone at the house, he put baby oil on the floor and used his socks as ice skates. Another was when he was determined to be Luke Skywalker. Now that is crazy!

Also Jason used to be athletic. He liked to play sports like kickball, soccer, running, basketball, Lacrosse, and swimming. He didn't like to watch sports because he thought it was boring. Now since he's a man he doesn't like playing sports because he says he's too old. He still doesn't like watching sports.

He also liked to do school projects like sharks and things about ancient Egypt. One of his projects was to do a tomb for an Egyptian Pharaoh. One thing that he was doing, or should I say he was thinking, was that test scores were more important than better grades, but he was wrong.

He remembers he liked to do the bunny dances at school dances. He thought that the world was over because he lost a spelling bee to a girl named Alison Carey.

His parents, I guess, were strict because they only let him watch The Muppet Show and Little House on the Prairie. He liked to read books like Sleepy Hollow and Charlotte's Web. Oh, and I have a little secret, he used to use a barette to train his hair, and only girls wear barettes. So you could call Jason Valk a smart, an athletic, a disciplined child, and a crazy man. ★★★



*Young Jason liked to do the bunny dances*

it begins with ugly

by Jason Valk



Ugliness all around. No flowers for the boy with close-cropped hair. He plays in the park, driving through seas of crinkled leaves. On the walk home he spits in the gutter among the refuse. He dreams of the beauty of the Boylan's Soda. He takes a bath in his next door neighbor's birdbath.

He sings, "If momma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy."

I wonder what all this ugliness has to do with Isaac. "You're ugly 'cause everything's ugly. I know where everything is in this ugly world."

He dreams in color though. In the mountains in Puerto Rico, he camps, fishes, and hikes. At night, the packs of abandoned dogs chase him. He escaped. His bloodstone must have brought him luck this night.

At home, it's hard work as usual—he takes out the trash, cleans his room, and washes clothes and his uncle's clothes for his allowance.

What consumes him most these days is a certain Pokémon game—the "best" game. Isaac recounts tales of this game—he catches, then trains a monster and makes them fight. ★★★



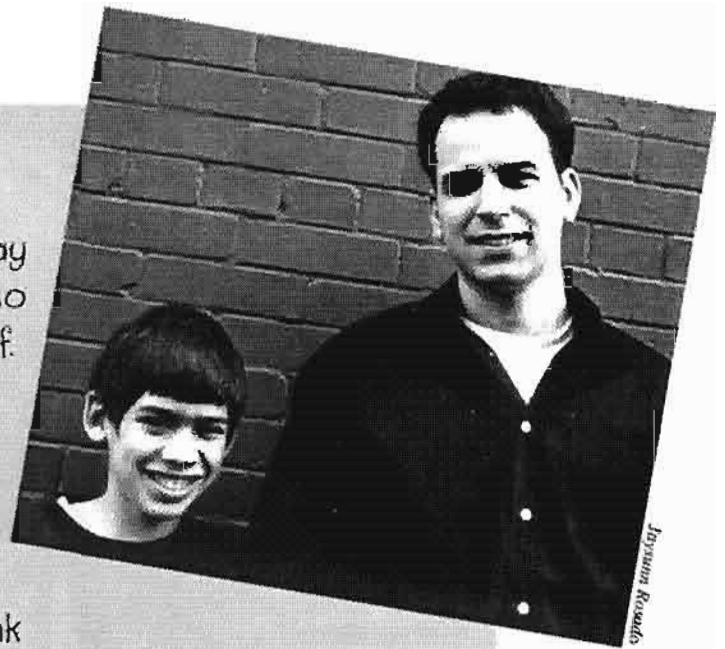
*Joyann Rosado*

*Isaac Trujillo dreams of the beauty of Boylan's Soda*

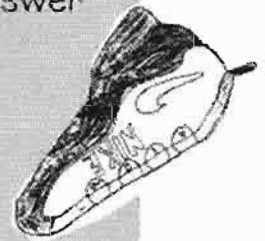
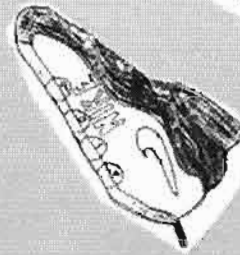
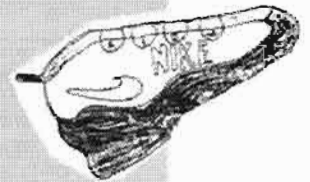
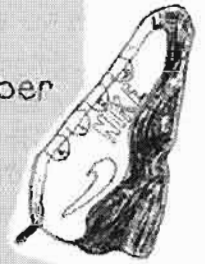
# Lost Shoe

by Isaac and Jason

i saw a lost shoe it was in the highway  
it was so hard to see the shoe so  
lost—a mere shadow of its former self.  
in the shoe was little boy blue  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
because he lived with grandma, girl pink  
and all there was were dishes in the sink  
then i threw the shoe in the puddle of water  
i watched in horror as the shoe sank like the Titanic  
except there was no love story or big budget or Victor Garber  
just a dirty water and a two-bit shoe  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
the little boy blue and grandma pink jump out of the shoe  
with m-16 and grenade launchers  
i cried, i scoffed, i wished i never got out of bed  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and then they blew me up into little pieces  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
then i woke up, with drool on my desk, stuttering for an answer  
in math  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and all i could say was moo-moo  
and then i cried all the way home--wee, wee, wee  
and that ~~shoe~~ should be in the magazine



Jonathan Kovacs



# Judy and Clare

**W**hen my friend Clare was fourteen, she was working in a flower nursery on the weekend. The days she worked were on Saturdays and Sundays. That job gave her extra money to buy clothes and to go out on Saturday night (instead of asking her mother). She was a party girl for a fourteen year old. But she still is.

Her family was unbelievable, because there were twins in her family. Guess what? It's her and her mother. But her family thought she was bad. And noisy. But she was not (I am sure she was). She never talked to her sister because she was always picking on her and making up stories which were not true about her. One day she wanted to do a trick on her sister but she didn't know what to do to her. The BIG BULLY SISTER told her "Run me a hot Bath." So Clare decided to run



*Clare and Judith both played tricks on their sisters*

her a cold bath. I know her sister screamed when she got in.

Clare told me she was good in school. But her friends were the type of people who thought if you were smart, you weren't cool. So when it was time for tests, she used to get the wrong answers on purpose to be down with the crowd. She wishes that she knew then that it's O.K. to be yourself.

Now her life is happy but it could always be better. —by Judith Agosto

**J**udith has been at The 52nd Street Project for about seven years, so everyone knows her pretty well. She likes to give the impression that she is tough and you should leave her alone but really she is remarkably kind and sensitive. If you need help or advice then Judith is the person to come to. She would do anything to help you.

But watch your back! She has also been known to play some pretty mean tricks on people. Once when she was younger, her sister, who is several years older, was looking after her. Judith started screaming and crying. She had a huge gash on her leg and there was blood everywhere. Her sister was terri-

*She likes to give the impression she's really tough, but she is remarkably sensitive.*

fied. What was she going to do? Judith was in her care and she was injured. Her sister had terrible visions of hospitals, angry parents, and ugly scars. Then she noticed something... Judith was laughing, and that's not blood on her leg — it's ketchup!

Judith tells me that one day she will stop playing tricks on people and settle down to a suburban life with a husband and 2.2 kids in New Jersey. Why NJ? Well, apart from the cleaner air, the quieter streets, and the sounds of lawnmowers on a Sunday afternoon, Judith wants to escape from the gossip that pervades the city. Which is pretty strange considering that her favorite hobbies are sleeping, gossiping, and giving advice.

So what does Judith make of this teenage life? "Life is fun", she says, "but you've got to entertain yourself a lot." —by Clare Tattersall



# THOUGHTS on a ten year old

by Nicole Watson

**S**ome people would say that she has an attitude—perhaps a little too loud, perhaps a little too confident, certainly never shy. “Attitude” isn’t really a bad thing, especially in the case of my Smart Partner, Jaymaree.

I have only known her for about a month. She tells me that in her house, she is famous for her acting, or rather, famous for being (overly) dramatic. When she got her ear pierced a few years back, she screamed and screamed. Her aunt told all of the PTA and the PTA told all of their kids. Before long, everybody knew.

A lot of people know a lot of stuff about my Jaymaree, but I bet a lot of people do not know that she wants to be a poet. She wants to write poems, help the homeless, and get married. She wants to have a real-

ly big wedding (I hope I am invited). She wants to raise a family. She wants to be a model, save up enough money and move to the country with her family. She wants to have fourteen kids—so I imagine she will need to live in a really big house in the country.

Until then, she is happy being ten. She told me that one of the good things about being ten is that sometimes she gets whatever it is that

she wants. This Christmas,

she asked for a Furby and guess what? Her aunt gave her a Furby. One of

the bad things about being ten is that her brothers and sisters pick on her—she hates being called “little girl.” It’s also

not a lot of fun being ten on a Friday night in New York City because she can’t

get into the clubs that her older brothers and sisters go to. It’s at that point in time (8

p.m. on a Friday night) that one really gets a taste of my Smart Partner’s “attitude.” ★★★

★★★

★★★

★★★

★★★



## A nice brat

by Jaymaree Rosado

**W**hen my Smart Partner Nicole was ten years old she used to hate her 6 year old brother. One morning she poured orange juice in his hair.

Every morning before she took the bus to school she used to hug her mother and her father and not her brother. Then one morning her father said,

“You are not going to school until you hug your

brother.” She didn’t hug her brother and she missed her bus.

In her new school she had Mr. Massie last period and she was scared of him.

He had red hair and one tattoo on each arm and he had a

broken leg from being in a car accident and every time

he got mad, he would bang his cane on the table. Nicole passed notes in each class except Mr. Massie’s class. She was really afraid of him.

Nicole always liked to play kickball and this guy named Michael Tafe wouldn’t let her play. He used to always chase her from the field and then they would get into a fist fight.

On the last day of school she was on the same school bus as Michael Tafe and on her stop she sprayed shaving cream all over him and ran off the bus. That’s how I know Nicole was very bad. I know

that she was famous for being stubborn at family meetings. Her parents would ask her to play the piano and Nicole would say no and then her brother would

dance like Michael Jackson and they would love him.

I also know that Nicole likes rum raisin ice cream. And there is one more thing I know about my Smart Partner, she said that she remembered when this

photo was taken. She was at her brother’s babysitter’s house. The babysitter’s son was a photographer and he spent his whole afternoon taking pictures of her brother and her.

Some people might say that Nicole was a brat when she was little, but deep inside she was a really nice girl because she is a nice girl now. ★★★



*Nicole poured orange juice in her brother’s hair*



by  
*Jaysunn  
 Rosado*

*Photos by Jaysunn Rosado*

**I** like Roald Dahl because he is a funny writer and he has a great imagination. The characters that he makes up are weird. In the last year, I read *James and the Giant Peach*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator*, and *Boy*.

*Boy* is an autobiography of Roald Dahl from childhood until when he was grown, and the others are fiction. Though I prefer the fiction, the autobiography was really good. He had a very tough childhood. His dad lost his hand in an accident.

Roald Dahl was sent off to boarding school, where he was abused. He was whipped with a stick. My favorite episode was when he was little and he put a mouse in the candy jar of a candy store because the storeowner was very nasty. I enjoyed learning about his childhood.

There's always something wrong with

the kid character in his stories. They're poor or they're being abused.

I like the part in *James and the Giant Peach* when the peach rolled from his backyard and rolled all the way through the village and crushed everything. I also like the centipede because he's very sarcastic.

In *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, my favorite episode was when bad stuff started happening to the kids, such as when one of them turned into a blueberry, and another one got sucked into a giant pipe.

My favorite part in *Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator* was when they went on the spaceship and met the long green monsters.

So, I recommend Roald Dahl books to every one because he's a very good author who is hilarious and unusual. ★★★



*Jaysunn with Amy Rice and Smart Partner Michael Bernard*

# Her First Kiss

by Steven Vasquez



Jayann Rosado

Steven Vasquez and Camilla Campbell Platt

I have dirt about my Smart Partner, Camilla. Camilla's first kiss was when she was eleven years old and was at a sleep-over party. They were playing a game of Spin the Bottle. Camilla spun the bottle and it pointed at John Denny and they started kissing. If I were Camilla, I would feel embarrassed because a lot of people would look at me.

When Camilla was eleven, her best friend was named Lee. They spent a lot of time together. Their favorite sport was ice skating and every time there was a slumber party, they went together and they had a great time. Lee had a pair of overalls which had red and blue stripes. Camilla also had a pair of overalls and the colors were purple and white. Camilla's dad took pictures of Lee and Camilla with these overalls on Long Island, next to her house. I never saw this picture because Camilla's mom put it in the mail but it never arrived.

Camilla has a baby now. The baby's name is Clare. I've never seen her before but I hope to see her any time she comes.

—Steven Vasquez



Edelen and Steven

# My New Smart Partner Steven

by Edelen McWilliams

I had the pleasure of interviewing my famous new Smart Partner the other day. Now, you may be asking yourself, "For what exactly is this young man famous?" Well, when Steven is older and is Smart-Partnering his own youthful youth he will look back on these present days and remember many things. He will recall how his own mother would always say how cute he was as a baby and how his family teased him sometimes for saying one thing but meaning another. He will smile when he thinks of the time he splashed baby food all over his grandfather, and he'd like to remember his first kiss and how well he rode his bike. BUT the thing Steven would really like to

remember and what will surely make him famous around town is the time he met Mariah Carey.

Just recently, Steven was at 124th Street and Lexington Avenue for the filming of a Nickelodeon show. Ms. Carey was a guest on the show. After she finished singing, Steven went backstage where he was greeted with a special hug and an autograph! A truly exciting day for Mr. V. Steven feels this will be a great memory to recall when he is older, married, and living near the King Kong ride in Orlando, Florida with his Loving Bird and "regular dog" of the light brown variety. ★★★

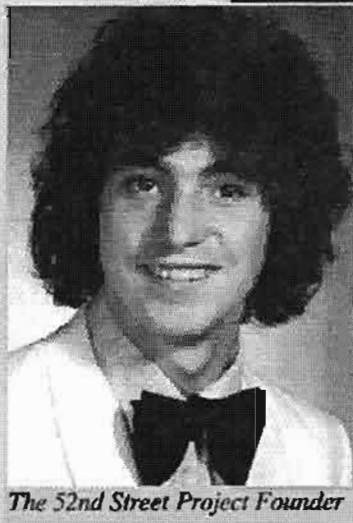
# Phone girl

She spends a lot of time on the phone and her uncle gives her a hard time about it and she "does not appreciate that nonsense." Someone clearly needs to explain to him that when thousands of opinions are cooped up in a single mind, the telephone is a necessary valve for their release. This uncle should be warned that this young lady will "take care of all the people that want to bring me down when payback time comes."

This future photo-journalist or psychiatrist will marry and give the world two children but not until she is thirty-something as her life plan demands that she "get a lot of clubbing out of her system."

"I picture life" she waxes, "as a big globe and it is my job to rotate around it."

—by Willie Reale



The 52nd Street Project Founder

# RANKING ON THIS OLD MAN

I chose not to write an essay because this old man has nothing funny or interesting about him — he's just "plain old boring!!" Nah, just kidding.

When my smart partner Willie took this horrible picture, it was at an all boy's school in the cafeteria. The clothes he had on were supplied by the school. Every boy had to wear them. Since the photo was taken in the school cafeteria, they all smelled like french fries. Willie says that there was always this Italian lady who served french fries who always gave more french fries to the Italian kids. And since he's Italian he was always happy with lunch.

Willie says that he had a girlfriend which I think he was lying. If you don't believe me then look at the picture. Anyway, the girl he used to date was skinny and ugly and then after a while he broke up with her. But that's not all... After 15 years my smart partner was sent on jury duty and ran into the skinny doofy girl. Oh yes, the girl he broke up with was right before his eyes and beautiful and not to mention a lawyer too. Stupid Smart Partner, what have you done?!

Willie also had this job at an old age home where he washed dishes. There was this guy who was a survivor of the Nazis and he always thought that Willie was one of the French Resistance and used to plan escapes with him. They had codes and secrets with each other. I'm sorry to say that this guy was his best friend and he's too shy to admit it.

So like I said in the beginning, my Smart Partner Willie is not an interesting man so I guess that this is all I am going to say about his life. And I'll tell you one thing, I would never like a life like his.

—by Jaylyza Rosado



Jaya and Willie. Willie and Jaya

she's not good in math.

# but she's Great

# N

edra has been a big part of my life. She helped me with everything except math (because she's not really good in math.) She did things for me that nobody else would do (maybe except Paola my ex-Smart Partner) but besides her, Nedra is really great. The thing I liked most was when all three of us (Nedra, Paola, and I) would go out. We went to the movies, we went ice-skating. We even went to dinner. I was never really interested in writing or reading until Nedra showed up. At first I thought Nedra was kind of weird, but she grows on you after a while. But even then, she's still weird. But I still love her. Well, thanks Nedra for everything.

—Lorraine Zambrano



## A FLAIR FOR THE DRAMATIC

When I ask Lorraine what she would be doing when she became my age, her lightning quick response was, "making a whole lot more money than you are." She would be spending riches on traveling just about everywhere on the planet as well as adding to her beloved, treasured and extensive collection of "Backstreet Boys" posters and CD's.

Among the words I would use to describe Lorraine are funny, dramatic, patient, quiet, and kind. So when

I asked what she was famous for in her family, I was slightly taken aback to hear her answer: "The

tantrums I had when I was a kid." Legend has it the kid could raise a ruckus. Her kicking and screaming episodes were a sight to see. I believe these were early displays of the flair for the dramatic she brings to The 52nd St. Project stage.

Being Lorraine's Smart Partner has made me a smarter person. Not only have I had the opportunity to teach but I've learned a great deal from her and our time together.

The best thing about this interview is that Lorraine said one more thing she would be doing in the future, other than being stinking rich, is helping kids — like The Project has helped her.

Lorraine is so cool now I can't wait to see the height of cool to which she will ascend.

—Nedra Gallegos



Nedra Gallegos as a teen (above) and Lorraine's drawing of Nedra



Lorraine and Nedra

# WHEN JILIAN WAS 12

by  
Yazzy  
Troche

**I**n this picture my Smart Partner Jilian just turned 12 years old. That day it was her birthday. Her whole family was there: her mom, father, sister, uncle, grandma, aunt and cousins. The picture was taken by her mom.

In the picture she has a ring on her middle finger. Her grandma gave her the ring on her tenth birthday — it has her birthstone in it, which is called peridot. She still has the ring and still wears it, but not on the middle finger. now she wears it on her left ring finger.

Her birthday is in August, so you may be wondering why she's wearing a sweater. Well, the reason why she has one on is because it was a birthday gift from her older sister. The sweater is an antique sweater with flower designs and beads on it. You wouldn't find a sweater like that now



*Jilian Gersten made her own birthday cake*

When they were young, she and her sister hardly fought, but as they reached their teen years, they got into arguments where sometimes they would get so mad they would really yell at each other and slam doors. But these kinds of fights happened very rarely.

She looked up to her big sister too, but never showed it. Now that her sister is a mommy, she especially admires her, because she says, "Once you're a mommy, you're really an adult!"

She also had other people she admired when she was that age, such as professional ballet dancers, because she wanted to be like them. She was a serious ballet student. By the time she was 12 and 13 years old she thought she did very well, and she was on a scholarship, so she guesses other people thought so too. At the time that the picture was taken, she was taking sixteen classes per week, three a day, with an extra class on Thursdays. So ballet was one thing she was famous for in her family.

Another thing she was famous for was baking cakes. From the time she was little she would bake all the cakes for family birthdays, including her own. In fact, she made her cake for the birthday in this picture!

She still makes all the cakes. Sometimes she wishes she were still 12 years old too. ★★★

Sometimes she wishes she were still 12 years old.

but at the time it was in style.

Her sister isn't that much older than her, she's only eighteen months older. You might think that because she's the youngest that she was spoiled, but to tell you the truth she wasn't. She and her sister got most of what they wanted but they had to work for it. They weren't spoiled brats.

# interview

## with YAZZY

by Jilian Gersten

**M**y Smart Partner Yazzy is caring, curious and talkative! She's already known locally for all of these qualities, and some day she hopes to be famous for these and other talents.

You might say Yazzy is a lot like her parrot: she also likes to dance to music, sing, act and she talks a lot! She doesn't curse though, but as she would say, "that girl has a mouth on her!" In fact, if there's anything my Smart Partner is famous for among her friends and family, it's her mouth. Sometimes her talkativeness gets her into trouble, like at school when she talks in class. Also, when she goes to the movies with her family, she says she always asks the person next to her questions about what is going to happen in the movie, and they are all watching it for the first time so of course they don't know the answer any more than she does, but she keeps asking anyway!

At a young age, she exhibited a very parrot-like ability to repeat back what other people are saying. There's a story her family likes to tell about this time when she was still little when she and her grandma were in an airport lounge. Yazzy overheard a conversation that a lady next to her was having and proceeded to repeat the whole conversation back to her grandma.

But of course, she's no parrot, she has plenty of her own ideas to express, and never hesitates



Yazy Troche



Jilian Gersten (2)

Jilian

to speak her mind. She is known to eavesdrop on people when they are talking about her, and butt in! "They say I'm nosey," she says of this habit, but she would be quick to add that she just wants to get the story straight. One of the stories she over-

hears a lot is about how she used to like to hail cabs when the adults she was with weren't looking — Yazzy prefers driving to walking.

And she plans to travel in style in the future, especially if she reaches her goal of becoming

**She is known to eavesdrop.**

a famous performer, like one of the people she most admires, Jennifer Lopez. She too would like to be in movies, and be a role model for other kids like her. And she loves coming to The 52nd Street Project because she's learning all about playwriting and performing. Once she gets her career going, she hopes to have a nice house in midtown and a family, and who knows, maybe a few dozen pets! ★★★

