



Especially

for

kids

and their

families

The Mini Page

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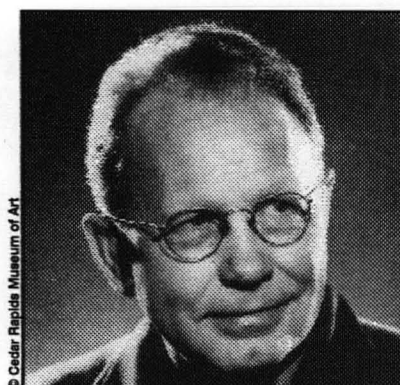


By BETTY DEBNAM

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The Artist of the Midwest

Meet Grant Wood



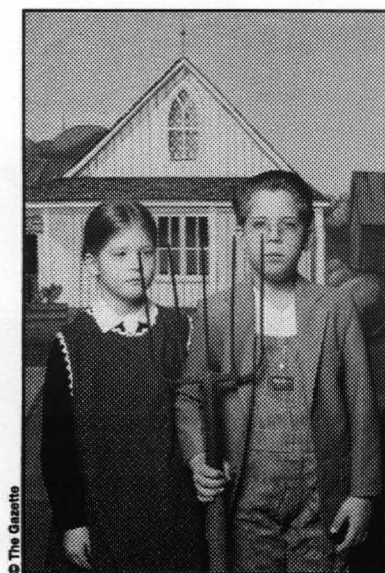
Grant Wood was born in 1891 and died in 1942. His detailed, realistic paintings using simple shapes give us a good idea of the Midwest at the time when that area of the country was growing and developing.

Painting his region

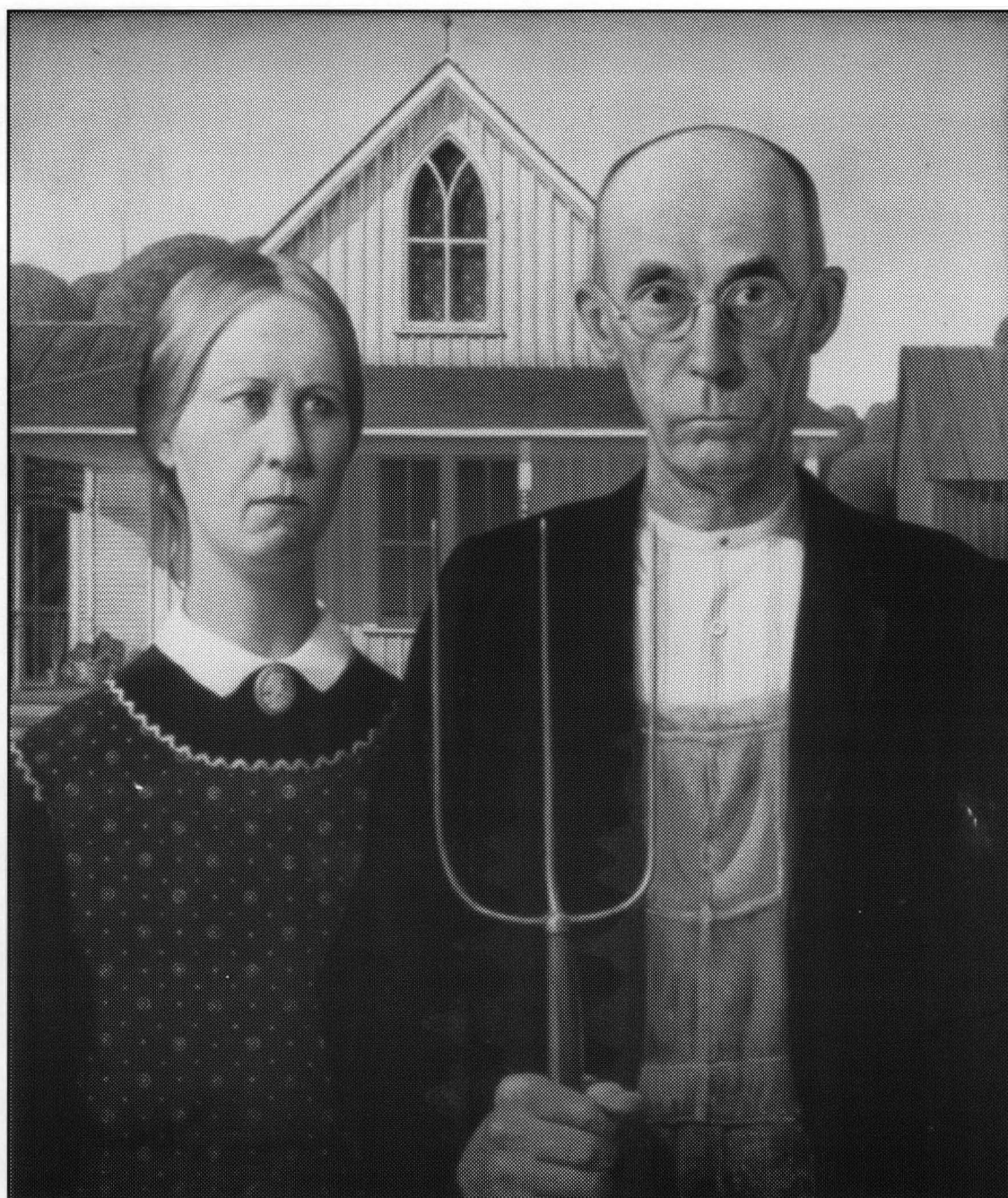
We might think of Grant Wood as a teacher using art to show us about a way of life.

Grant Wood was an artist from Iowa who promoted a style of painting called "Regionalism." Using this style, artists painted things they saw around them in their own local area.

Wood's paintings helped other artists learn that they did not have to paint like European artists to be respected. They could paint their own "back home" settings.



"American Gothic" is one of our country's most famous paintings. Kids needed to keep a straight face for an "American Gothic" look-alike contest held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, a few years ago on Wood's birthday. "American Gothic" is often copied in an amusing way. Grant Wood meant for it to show hard-working Midwestern people of the type he had known most of his life.



Grant Wood became suddenly famous for his painting "American Gothic." It won \$300 and a bronze medal in a contest held in 1930 at the Art Institute of Chicago, where it hangs today. On a visit to the town of Eldon, Iowa, he was fascinated by a small house with an

unusual Gothic window of the style usually found in churches in Europe. He decided to paint the kind of people who should live there. It is a portrait of a father and daughter (sometimes mistaken for a wife). As models, he chose his sister, Nan, and his dentist, Dr. Byron McKeeby.

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More About Grant Wood

Art in the schools

Mourners' Bench, 1925, Grant Wood and students. © Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Community School District, McKinley School



Carved on the back of the mourners' bench are the words "The Way of the Transgressor [one who breaks the rules] Is Hard."

Grant Wood and his art students were asked to create a bench to set outside the principal's office for students to use while waiting to see the principal.

The first bench they made was too comfortable, so the principal had them make a second one.

If you were to visit McKinley Junior High School in Cedar Rapids, you could see some of artwork done while Grant Wood was a teacher there.

Grant Wood and his students worked on the backdrops (or scenery) for the stage productions. They painted a frieze (a long series of pictures) of Imagination Isles for the cafeteria.

He and his students also worked on a carving in cork above a chalkboard, which is now above the blackboard in Room 208.

The carving reads: "Books are magic doors through which one can walk into innumerable (very many) wonderful worlds."

He painted pictures of the four seasons to hang over the doors in the library.

Grant Wood's works

Grant Wood did many artistic things in addition to being a painter. He:

- designed the largest stained glass window in the world.
- designed and made silver jewelry.
- worked as an interior decorator.
- painted murals on walls in homes and hotels.
- sold artwork in Paris, where he went to study.
- designed and decorated a funeral home.
- illustrated the children's book "Farm on the Hill."
- was director of public works of art projects in Iowa.
- oversaw the painting of murals in public places.

Grant Wood believed it was important to save some of American folklore so events would not be forgotten. "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere" is a part of the collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Grant Wood had a very good sense of humor. One example is the painting "Parson Weems' Fable,"

which is based on the famous fable of George Washington cutting down a cherry tree. It is in the collection of the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas.



© Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

Check the Web site:
www.cartermuseum.org/collection_set.html

Grant Wood's sister, Nan, stands beside a painting of their mother, "Woman with Plants."

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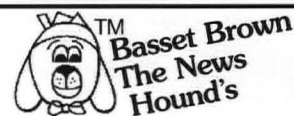
Mini Spy ...



Mini Spy and her friends are pretending to be in the famous painting "American Gothic." See if you can find:



- acorn • fish
- carrot • bell
- mushroom
- coffee mug
- man in the moon
- ladder
- banana
- flyswatter
- sailboat
- olive
- word MINI
- number 7
- letter D
- exclamation mark



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Grant Wood TRY 'N FIND

Words and names that remind us of Grant Wood are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally. See if you can find: GRANT, WOOD, ARTIST, PAINTING, LEARN, LIFE, REGIONALISM, AMERICAN, GOTHIC, MIDWEST, ART, IOWA, MUSEUM, TEACHER, STYLE, SETTINGS, FAMOUS.

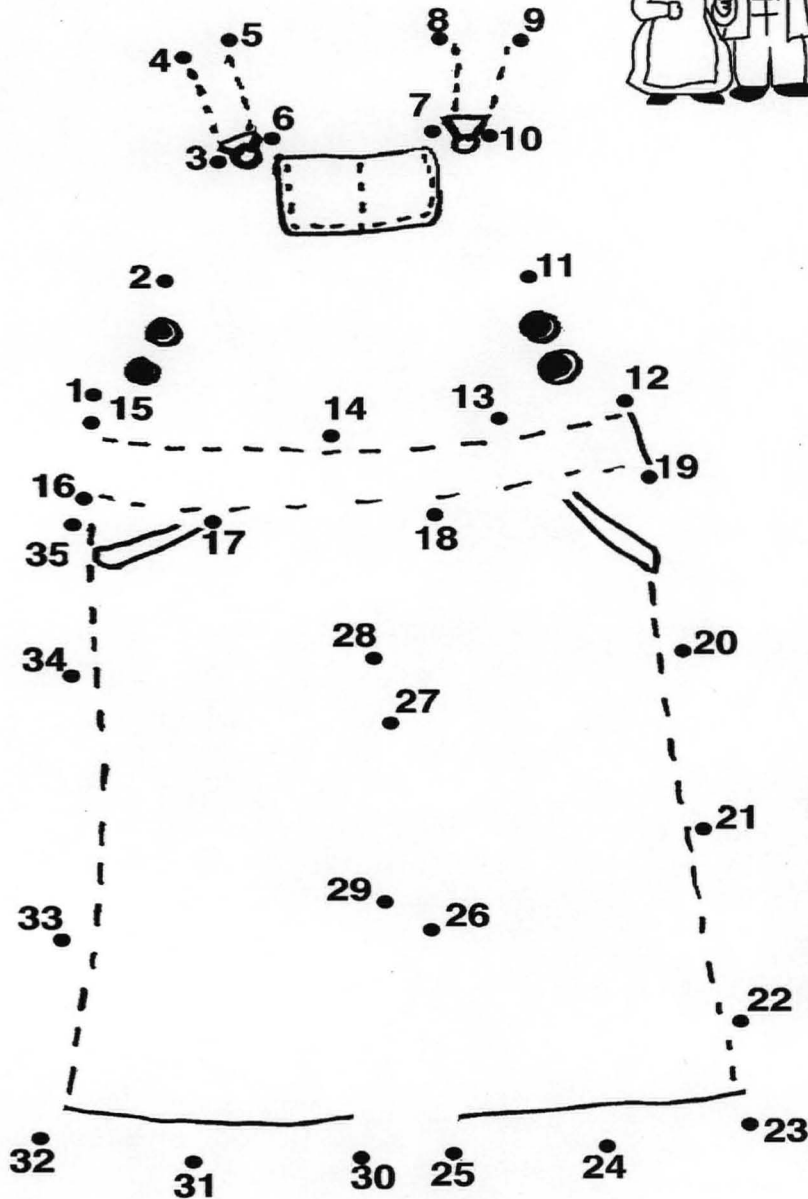
WOULD YOU LIKE TO PAINT A PICTURE?



L	S	T	A	A	G	N	I	T	N	I	A	P	A	J
I	T	E	R	B	K	F	N	A	C	I	R	E	M	A
F	Y	A	T	G	C	L	Y	Z	S	U	O	M	A	F
E	L	C	I	O	W	O	O	D	D	N	R	A	E	L
E	E	H	S	T	M	S	E	T	T	I	N	G	S	C
I	F	E	T	H	N	M	I	D	W	E	S	T	G	W
A	O	R	G	I	Q	G	R	A	N	T	X	A	D	H
H	R	W	B	C	X	Y	I	A	M	U	S	E	U	M
I	U	T	A	M	S	I	L	A	N	O	I	G	E	R

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Go dot to dot and color this article of clothing that reminds us of Grant Wood.



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Rookie Cookie's Recipe Chocolate Peanut Dippers

You'll need:

- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 24 round butter-flavored crackers
- 1 (6-ounce) package chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons milk



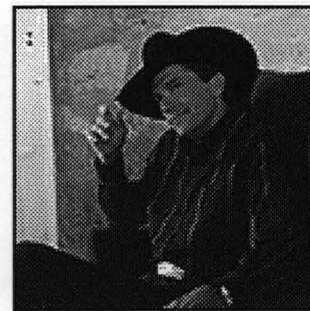
What to do:

1. Spread 2 teaspoons peanut butter evenly on half the butter-flavored crackers.
2. Top with remaining crackers.
3. Refrigerate 1 hour.
4. Place chocolate chips, butter or margarine, and milk in a medium microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high 2 minutes or until melted. Stir every minute.
5. Using a fork or slotted spoon, dip each cookie in melted chocolate.
6. Place on waxed paper and refrigerate until chocolate is hardened. Makes 1 dozen.

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Meet George Strait



Country music fans love singer George Strait. He plays the guitar and piano.

George, 50, was born in Poteet, Texas, and grew up on a ranch in Pearsall, Texas. He went to Southwest Texas State to study agriculture.

After spending some time at college, he joined the Army. While in the Army, he played in a band. After leaving the Army, he formed his own band. That was followed by a solo career. His first album came out in 1981.

George's hobbies include steer-roping, hunting, fishing, skiing and playing golf. He lives with his wife, Norma, and son, Bubba, on a ranch in Texas.

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MIGHTY FUNNY'S

Mini Jokes

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?



Debbie: How do rich people dance?

John: Check to check!

Dan: Why are cows so poor?

Vinny: Because they get milked dry!



Kathy: I've heard that the workers at the U.S. Mint complain about too much work.

Jane: Yes, they'll go on strike unless they make less money!



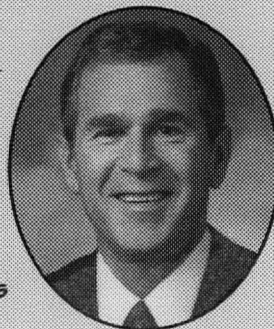
The Mini Page Presidents of the United States Poster

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- Handsome reproductions of engraved portraits
- An attractive educational reference



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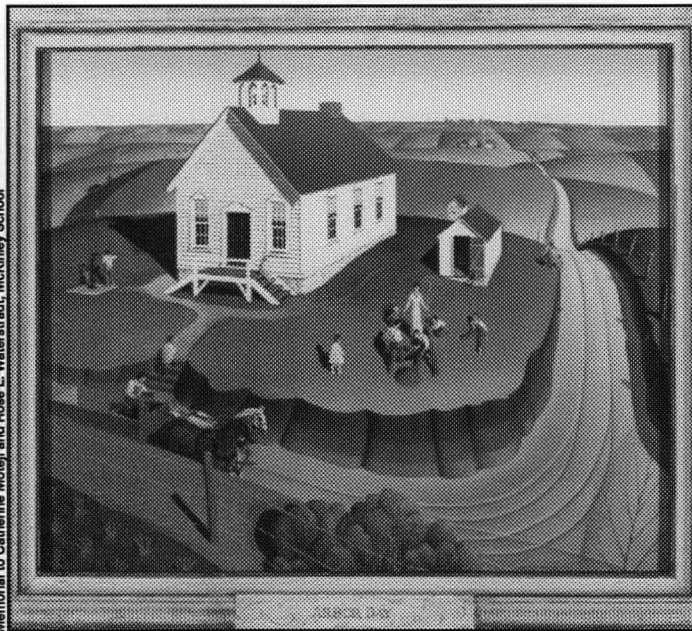
More About Grant Wood

photo by John W. Barry, Cedar Rapids Museum of Art Archives, Gift of John B. Turner II in memory of Happy Young Turner, (c) Cedar Rapids Museum of Art



Grant Wood poses in front of his "Arbor Day" painting. He often wore overalls, even on his trips to Europe. Overalls showed his steadfast farmer spirit. This photo was made in 1932, after his "American Gothic" had made him famous. Grant Wood and overalls go together. He died in 1942, 10 years after this photo was taken.

Arbor Day, 1932. © Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Community School District. Memorial to Catherine Wood and Rose L. Waterstrat, McKinley School



Grant Wood was hired to paint "Arbor Day" by the Cedar Rapids School Board as a memorial to two teachers. One of the teachers had planted a beautiful grove of trees. She planted one tree each year on Arbor Day. For inspiration, Grant Wood visited schools and also used his memories of growing up in a small country school.

His childhood

Grant Wood was born on a farm near Anamosa, Iowa. When he was young, he began drawing with materials that were available. He used charred black sticks and charcoal from the cooking stove and old paper he found inside cardboard boxes. He drew animals, chickens, trees, farm scenes and people.

Cedar Rapids

Grant's father, a strict Quaker, died when Grant was very young. At the age of 10, he moved to Cedar Rapids with his widowed mother, two brothers and a sister. Life was not easy. They were always very poor.

Schooling

In elementary school, he won a prize in a national art contest held by a crayon company. In high school, he did drawings for the yearbook and designed stage sets.

World War I

During World War I, he served as a camouflage artist. He also sketched portraits of the men serving with him.

As a teacher

Like so many artists, Wood could not make enough money to support himself by his painting. He did many things, including teaching in junior high school and at the University of Iowa.

While he was not a good student himself, he taught his pupils to find out what they were good at. They could then use their new confidence to improve in other subjects. At that time, this was a new idea in teaching art. He also trained students to work in groups on projects.

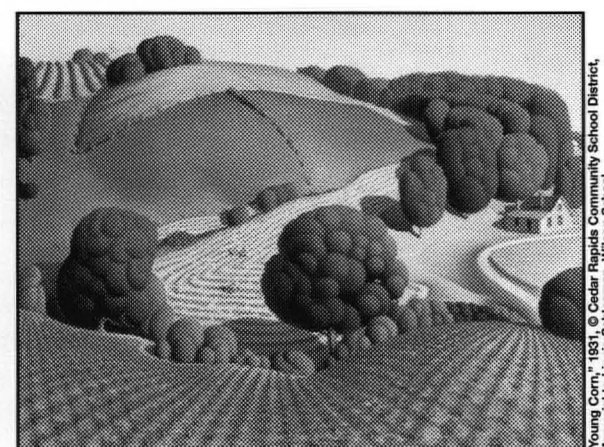
As an artist

After studying art in Europe on four visits, Grant Wood decided he would paint in a style that some of the old-master artists in Europe used in the past. This was an original idea, since most artists in his day did not paint that way. He painted clearly and simply and added detailed backgrounds.

photo courtesy Collection of the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

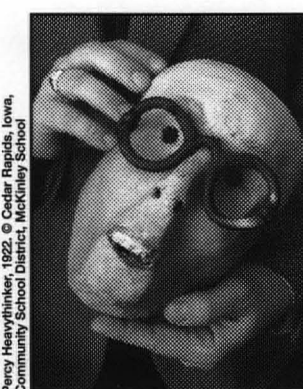


"Woman With Plants" was one of the first paintings that Wood painted in the Regionalist style. It is a portrait of his 71-year-old mother, whom he painted as a symbol of the pioneer woman. He used painstaking detail to paint the plants, the clothes and jewelry.



"Young Corn," 1931. © Cedar Rapids Community School District. Memorial to Linnie Schlemmer, Wilson School

"Young Corn" was painted as a memorial to a teacher at the request of students at a junior high school in Cedar Rapids. The farmer and the children are caring for the young corn just as teachers care for the young students.



Percy Heavythinker, 1922. © Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Community School District, McKinley School

Grant Wood created many works of art while he was teaching. The "Mask of Percy Heavythinker" was created in 1922. Each year, the outstanding student was allowed to wear it in class photos.

The Mini Page thanks contributor Oline Stigers, manager, Newspaper in Education, Cedar Rapids Gazette; and consultant John Fitzpatrick, fine arts facilitator at the Cedar Rapids Schools, and NAEA Western Division, National Arts Administrator of the Year, 2002.

Meet artist Grant Wood



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in

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by Betty Debnam

Appearing in your
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(Note to Editor: Above is camera-ready, one column-by-4 1/4-inch ad promoting Issue 40.)

release dates: Sept. 28-Oct. 4

40-5 (02)

The Mini Page® Standards Spotlight:
Meet Grant Wood

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Mini Page activities meet many state and national educational standards. Each week we identify standards that relate to The Mini Page's content and offer activities that will help your students reach them.

This week's standards:

- Students identify works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times and places. (Visual Arts)
- Students understand how an artist's experiences influence the development of specific artworks. (Visual Arts)

Activities:

1. Draw a picture of a scene you can see from where you live. What does the scene tell about the area of the country in which you live?
2. Find a story in the newspaper that would make a good subject for a painting. Why did you choose this particular story?
3. How was Grant Wood's art influenced by each of these elements in his life: (a) his early drawing tools, (b) his home, (c) his school and (d) his trips to Europe?
4. Look in the newspaper for examples of these elements that reflect your region of the country: climate, environment, buildings, jobs, professions. How is your region different from other regions of the country?
5. Use reference books and the Internet to learn more about Regionalism in art. Use these questions to guide your research: When was Regionalism most popular? Who were famous artists from the Regionalism movement? What kind of scenes were the subjects of Regionalist artists? What artists come from your region? How does their art reflect your community?

(standards by Dr. Sherrye D. Garrett, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi)

(Note to Editor: Above is the Standards for Issue 40.)

Goldie Goodsport's Report

Supersport: Lisa Leslie

TM

Height: 6-5 Birthdate: 6-5-70
Weight: 170 College: U. of Southern California

Lisa Leslie is one of the best basketball players in the WNBA. She plays center for the Los Angeles Sparks.

This season she averaged 16.9 points and 10.4 rebounds per game.

She recently led the Sparks to their second WNBA Championship. Last year she was named the WNBA's Most Valuable Player.

Before joining the team in 1997, she played for one season in Italy.

Lisa, whose mother is a truck driver, has two sisters and four half-brothers. She studied communications in college and would like to work in broadcasting after her playing career is over.

Some of her favorite foods are pork chops, rice and corn. She is also a model.

(Note to Editor: Above is copy block for Page 3, Issue 40, to be used in place of ad if desired.)

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