

A group of five diverse children, including a white boy, a Black boy, and two Hispanic boys, are arranged in a circle, looking up at the camera. They are wearing white shirts and dark blue pants. The background is a bright, overcast sky. The entire scene is framed by a circular teal border.

# AMERICAN LIVES

**A BRIEF LOOK**



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# INTRODUCTION

**I**t may be impossible to capture the essence of a typical American in a few sentences. Possibly images can bring us closer. The vivid photographs selected here depict people from across the United States. These individuals represent many ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, and religions. Their diversity is a central and defining part of our nation.

This book presents Americans at every stage of life. There are toddlers entering the world, children starting school, young adults going to college, people working and senior citizens in retirement. The photographs illustrate

the freedom of religion Americans enjoy, and how they spend their free time. They also display the tight community bonds that Americans form in every part of the country.

An American life can be many things. It is a group of children playing sports and gaining confidence. It is a Native American preserving her culture. It is a senior citizen volunteering in his community. It is the freedom of expression all Americans enjoy. The people you see in the book are bound together by common values and experiences.



*“We may have all come on different ships,  
but we’re in the same boat now.”*

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

The pictures speak for themselves. The lives, experiences, and interactions they depict need no translation. There is a saying that “a picture is worth a thousand words.” The photos in this book express the stories of Americans “from sea to shining sea.” These are not the images one sees in movies or on TV but rather authentic portraits of American daily life.

Diversity is a common theme. Chapter 5 is titled, “Patchwork Quilt: Diversity and Community.” Like a quilt, American lives are sewn together. Each individual possesses his or her own

story and experiences, but together these American lives form a colorful and varied national identity.

The pictures show us America as lived by individuals, families, and communities. Hopefully the pictures also reflect universal values and experiences. Like people all over the world, Americans build families, get an education, strive to be productive members of society, and form vibrant communities. We are glad to introduce you to these Americans.



INNOCENCE AT HOME

# American Children



*“Children are our most valuable  
natural resource.”*

— Herbert Hoover















# Adolescents and Education



*“An investment in knowledge always pays  
the best interest.”*

— Benjamin Franklin

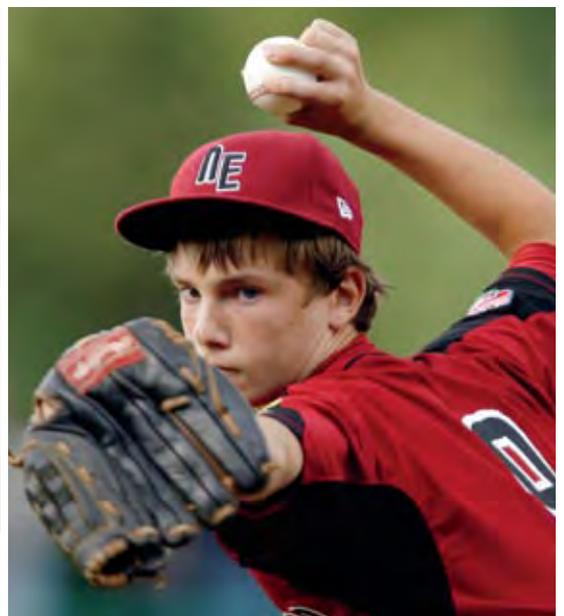








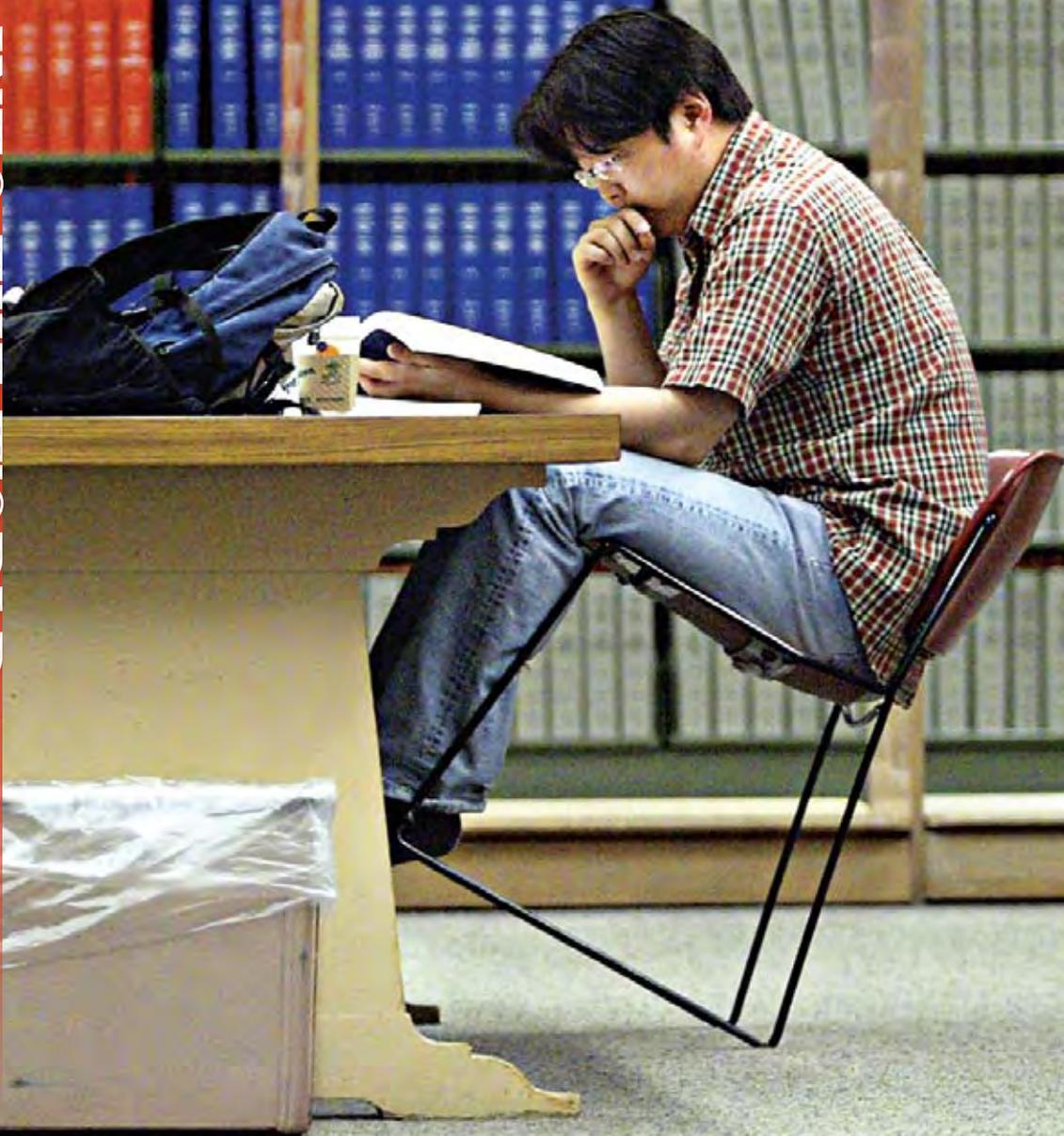






# GOING INTO THE WORLD

# College and Career



*“The purpose of life is to live it, to taste  
experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly  
and without fear for newer and  
richer experience.”*

— Eleanor Roosevelt











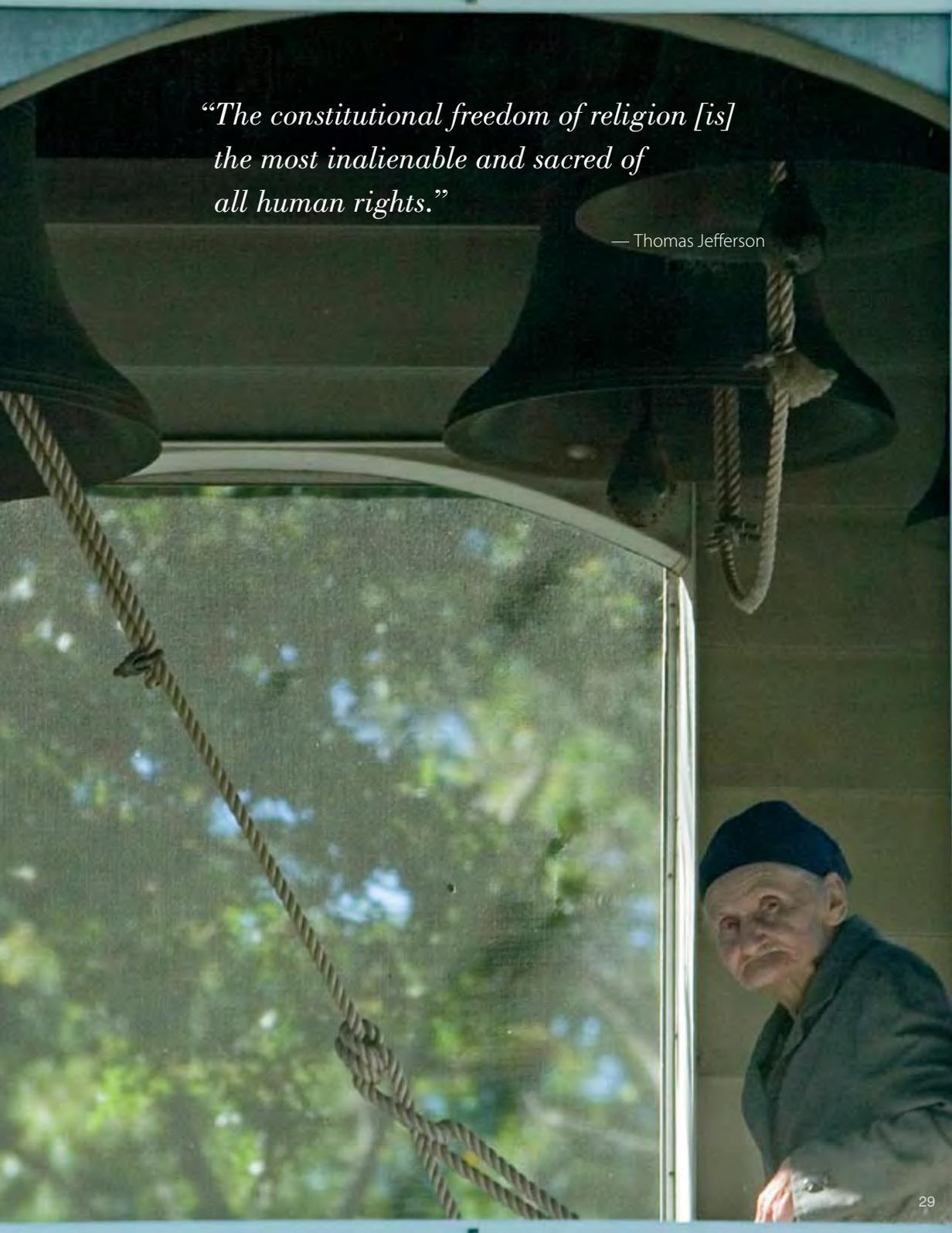




FREEDOM OF RELIGION

# Reason to Believe





*“The constitutional freedom of religion [is] the most inalienable and sacred of all human rights.”*

— Thomas Jefferson





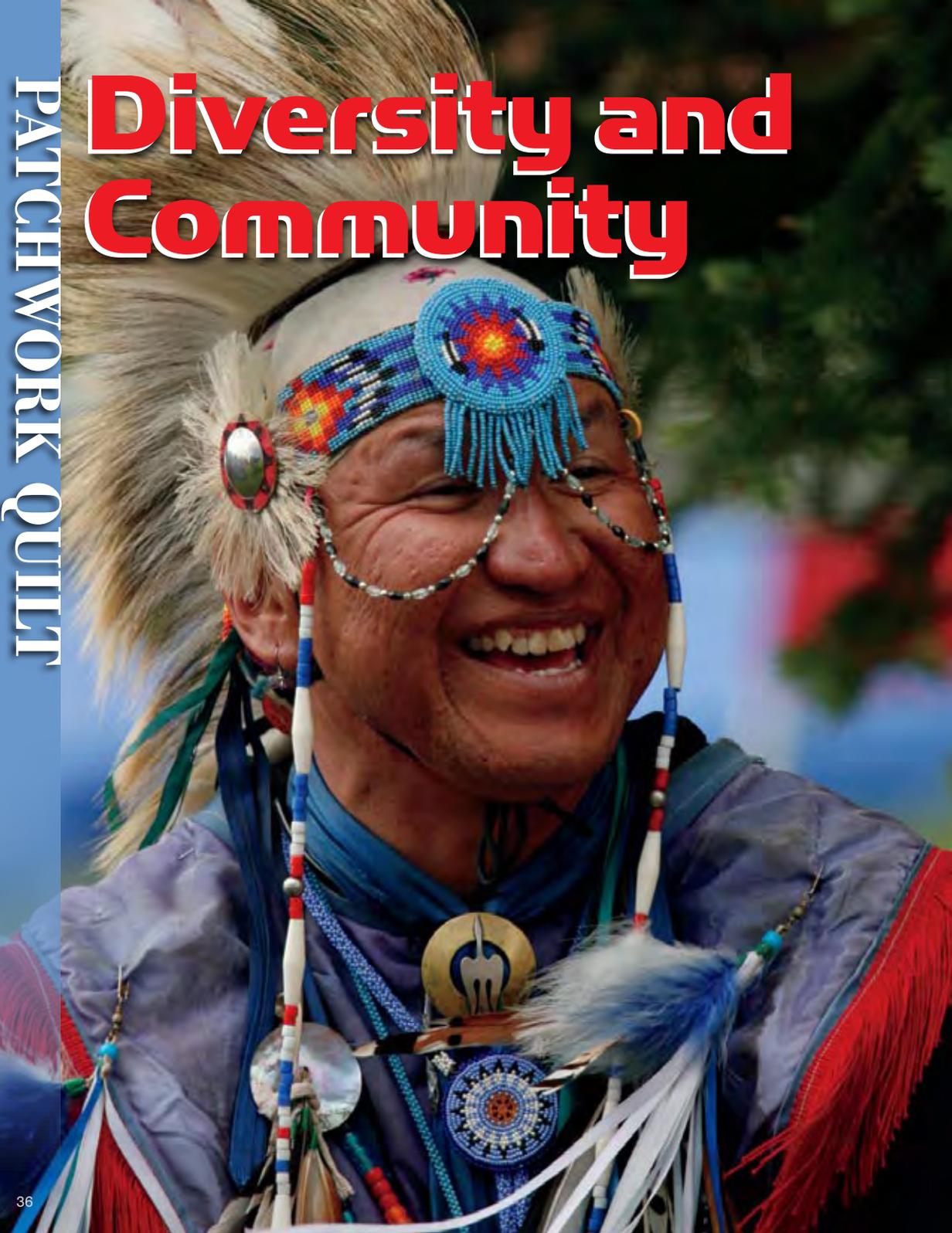








# Diversity and Community



*“We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color.”*

— Maya Angelou















ON THE JOB

# Work and Opportunity

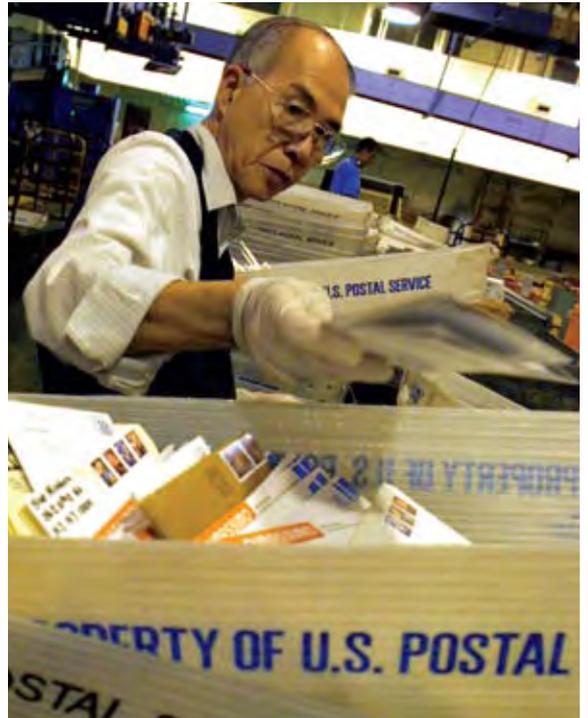


*“I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker.”*

— Helen Keller







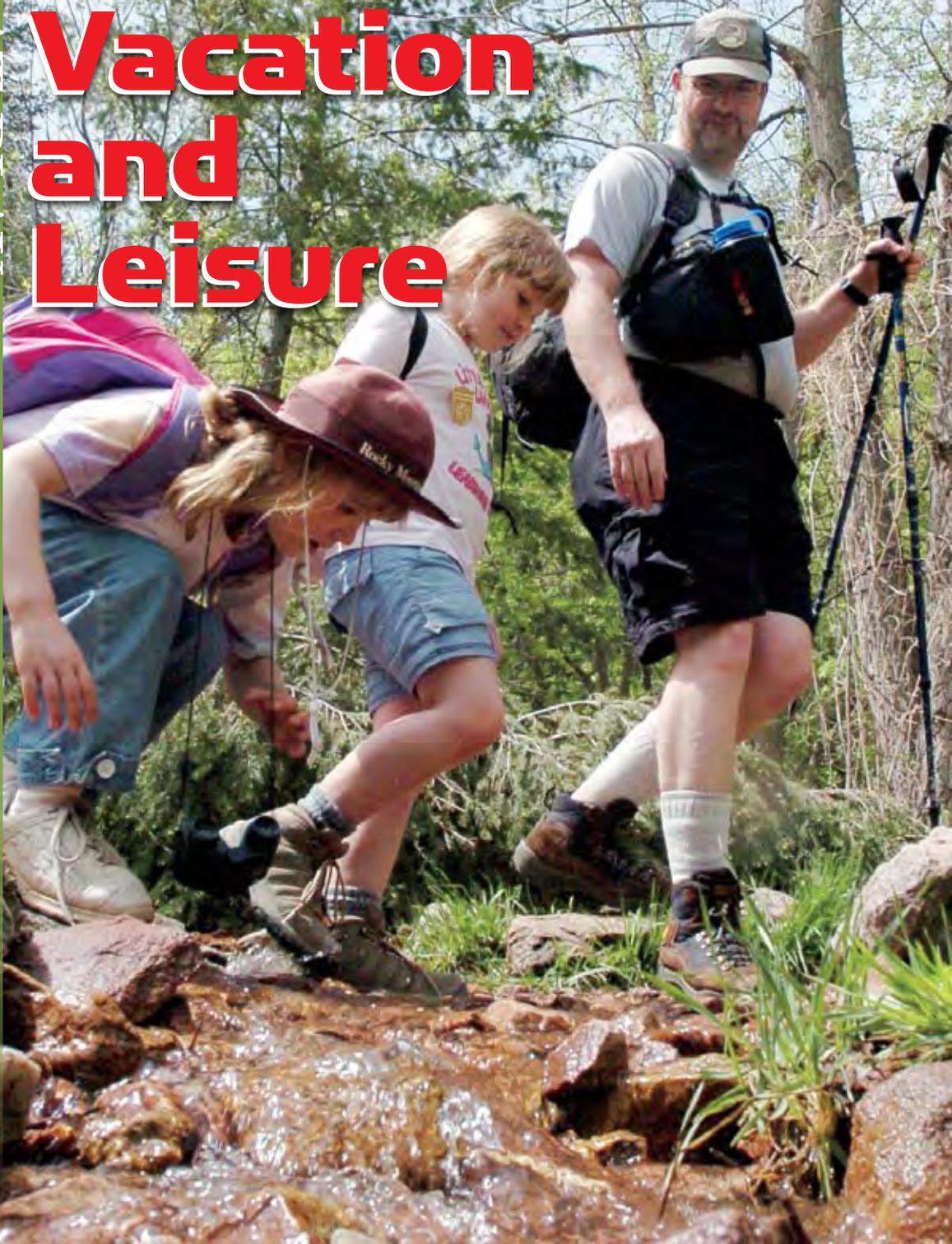








# Vacation and Leisure



*“Whenever you are sincerely pleased,  
you are nourished.”*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson















# Older Adults and Seniors



*“And in the end, it’s not the years in your life  
that count. It’s the life in your years.”*

— Abraham Lincoln

















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