

THE IMAGINE SOCIETY

MAY 20, 2020



SPECIAL ISSUE CELEBRATING HEALING
KIDS QUARANTINE EDITION VOLUME 6!



**"Although the world is full of suffering,
it is also full of the overcoming of it."
- Helen Keller**

Ramadan: A Silver Lining

By Farah Husain

Covid-19 has infected more than 3.8 million people world-wide, and more than a third of the planet's population is under some form of coronavirus lockdown. However, through all of this, quarantine has brought to light the importance of connection.

The holy month of Ramadan has motivated my family, and muslims all over the world, to give back to their communities and make a positive change in this tough time. This period of heightened spirituality has been the perfect reprieve from the chaos, as we gain a more grounded perspective and feel the spirit of Ramadan awaken our compassion for others instead of focusing on just ourselves.



TWO special featured essays this
issue courtesy of our friends and
fellow members of
The Imagine Society and MV4NY
Farah Husain (15)
and Sherali Khaqan (11)!

...continued from page 1

It's inevitable to feel the distance between people when we are separated by the walls of our homes and the fear surrounding us. I have found myself grappling with the side-effects of social distancing as my family members and I try to maintain some normalcy within our household, yet remain acutely aware of the outside world. Life seems more dreary and purposeless when stress about an uncertain future and the inability to make any concrete change drags us down.

However, my bleak mood has been lifted through the infectious happiness of this special month, and I am filled with newfound energy. The familiarity of anticipating a delicious iftar after a long day of fasting, preparing our meal with loved ones, listening to Prophets' stories after dinner, and falling asleep knowing that all of this will repeat the next day, has comforted me more than I can describe. It shows that even though the world is struggling right now, our faith has not abandoned us and that some normalcy still prevails. For me, these simple activities have combated the negativity of our current situation and made me feel safe and hopeful.

Although we've been separated from our friends and family, we use this opportunity to become more in-touch with God and lean even further into our religion, Islam. During these trying times, our faith shines as a beacon of hope. When I pray, and touch my forehead to my prayer mat, I can feel a blanket of comfort wrap around me that dispels all of my fears and helps me stay positive. I'd even like to think that I'm making a change, however small, by making duas (prayers) for everyone's safety and health from inside my own home. And for me, the love binding my family together is a reassuring sign of God's presence in and of itself.

I am inspired by people's kind gestures and common desire to help each other, as we all unite to combat the virus together. From donated medical supplies to a few motivating words, communities are coming together to help one another.



My family has been trying to make a positive change by participating in a Ramadan Food Drive, Covid-19 Fundraiser, and Ramadan Card-Making Workshop, all organized by Muslim Volunteers for New York (MV4NY). My younger brother helped with the technical aspect of virtual Card-Making Workshop, proving that everyone can help out no matter their age. I have definitely noticed people becoming more and more creative with ways to help those in need as we abide by social distancing guidelines.

In these uncertain times, I often find myself conflicted and concerned for the future. But one thing I have learned is that when life can seem a little dull, it is love and faith that paint it with color.

Farah Husain (15) is in 9th grade at Trinity School

Follow us on Instagram! @theimaginesociety

Ramadan 2020

Sherali khaqan Age: 11 years 5/2/20

Ramadan is a religious month for Muslims around the world, in which you Fast from Sunrise to sunset. You reflect on what you have done in the past. You give charity, which is calculated on the amount of money you earn. You are also encouraged to volunteer and help the community.

Ramadan is important because you become closer to Allah SW(God). This happens because you realize how much God has given you. You also understand how the under privileged feel every day. You feel that because the unfortunate don't get much food if any, and you give up your food and your water, and you only feel a sliver of the hardship that many other people go through every day.

I feel that Ramadan is tough, but during these times Ramadan is much easier. This is because you are staying with not much to do, so it is much easier to fast. This Ramadan in quarantine helps us because it helps us be more grateful for our blessings. Therefore quarantine has been a blessing in disguise for people fasting.

Meet
the
Author!

Sherali Khaqan (11) is in the 5th grade at Success Academy.

Thank you Sherali for your amazing essay!



THE SUPERSTAR KIDS BEHIND THE ASCENSION FOOD PANTRY



The Imagine Society deeply admires Robin Klueber and The Spirit Squad and all the hard work they're doing at The Ascension Food Pantry keeping the food insecure fed. Robin took some time out of her busy day to tell us about 3 of her superstar kids so we can tell you more about the incredible work they are doing!



Charlie (8)
and his mom
Fran Terazzi

Meet **Charlie Terazzi (8)**, and his mom Fran. One day Charlie was watching TV and felt an overwhelming need to help the hungry people he saw on the news. His mom, Fran, called Robin Klueber to ask if there was any way he could help. In fact, the pantry had just missed a delivery to a 90 year old woman. Perfect timing for Charlie to help! After he was done with his online schooling, Robin asked Charlie and his mom to come to the pantry. Charlie packed up grocery bags for Dolores. He really wanted to bring her Fruit Loops to make her happy (who doesn't love Fruit Loops!), but Robin advised that Bran Flakes was probably a better choice for someone Dolores's age. Charlie then wrapped the shopping bags around the handles of his scooter, and he and his mom carried another two big bags to get much needed food to Dolores. That made her happy, and it made Charlie happy too! **Way to go Charlie!**

In this photo you can check out the "anchor" volunteers who run The Ascension Church Food Pantry every Saturday during the COVID pandemic. Right next to Robin are **Dayelin DeLaCruz (16)** and **Jesus Tiburcio-Zane (14)**, Spirit Squad members, who not only help load crates of food up to the street where they distribute it safely and efficiently, they also play another integral role in the pantry service. Since **Dayelin** and **Jesus** are both bi-lingual, they help the team communicate with the Latinx clients. They also make sure to wear protective facial shields (Thanks to a donation from The Imagine Society).

Thank you Dayelin and Jesus, for your heroic commitment and contribution!



Jesus &
Dayelin
left of Robin
(in center)

For more information on how you can help The Ascension Food Pantry please email us at outreach@theimagesociety.org

A Very Special Imagine Mother's Day!

Sunday May 10th was an epic day of GRATITUDE to our Mothers and Caretakers fighting on the frontlines! Thanks to your generous donations, The Imagine Society was able to send Paletas from **La Newyorkina** to **Siena House Shelter**, Muffins and Pastries from **Panera** to **BronxCare** and **Wyckoff Medical Center**, Ice Cream from **Mr Softee** to **Mount Sinai West**, and **Wafels and Dinges** to **Mount Sinai Hospital** on Madison Avenue! To make your own donation so that gratitude services like this can continue please visit: theimagesociety.org/donate





THE STORY OF LA NEWYORKINA

by Zaylen Palacios



After the success of the Ample Hills ice cream donation and the positive effect it had on our beneficiaries, we knew that we had to continue making special things like ice cream part of The Imagine Society's #Foodforfearless mission. For medical and essential workers, food pantries and shelters, special treats can change someone's whole attitude for the day and give a glimmer of hope for the future.

On Mother's Day, we partnered with La Newyorkina, a Latinx owned Mexican sweet company specializing in handmade ice cream and baked goods. We sent 50 of their famous paletas (ice pops) to the residents and staff at the Siena House Shelter in The Bronx. Siena House is a shelter for mothers and their babies, led by Sister Mary Doris, that works to help them find affordable housing and employment.

When The Imagine Society was looking for a partner for the Mother's Day donation, we wanted to help a small business. Our friends at Big Gay Ice Cream connected us to La Newyorkina and we found their story very inspiring. La Newyorkina carefully sources their ingredients, works closely with farmers in New York and the surrounding area to get delicious organic dairy, seasonal fruits and herbs. La Newyorkina also spends a lot of time working with small producers in Mexico as they believe it is very important to support them. They import high quality Mexican vanilla beans, Oaxacan chocolate, tamarind, dried chiles, passion fruit and hibiscus. La Newyorkina is also a green company that composts their scraps, and uses recycled containers and napkins. La Newyorkina is proud to support a wonderful organization called Crea and donate a portion of their profits to them. Crea is a group that generates employment opportunities for low-income women in Mexico by offering training and business development support. To learn more or to join in aiding these women, you can visit Crea's website at crea.org.mx

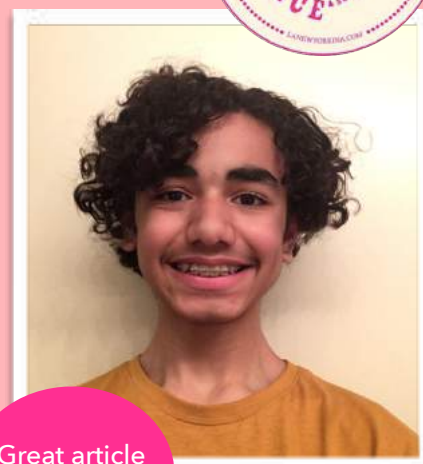
The story of La Newyorkina started with Fany Gerson, a pastry chef who grew up in Mexico City. On her first birthday her father bought her a kilo of chocolate truffles and her love of sweet things began. She graduated from Culinary School, moved to Spain, then went to Mexico to write her first book *My Sweet Mexico*. When she came to New York, she knew she had to share the amazing cultural treats of Mexico but didn't know what to focus her business yet. She had a dream she opened a Mexican ice cream shop. That's where she got the idea to make the quintessential Mexican frozen treat, paletas. She applied to enter a new food market. Fany prepared 850 paletas for the opening weekend. When the market finally opened, to her surprise, they sold out in the first few hours. That was the start of La Newyorkina.

For Mother's Day, what a better harbinger of hope than a "pop drop!" We are so happy to connect our new friend La Newyorkina with our longtime friends, Sister Mary Doris and the staff and residents at Siena House Shelter.

Zaylen Palacios (13) is in 7th grade at Friends Seminary



Founder
Fany Gerson



Great article
Zaylen!

SHINING STARS!

A SHINING STAR IS A TEAM PLAYER!

Laurence Jolicoeur (Advisory Board Member, The Imagine Society) founded his company **Pro Reps** to help support and educate kids through basketball.

Since COVID19 hit, Laurence hasn't been able to train his players in person, but always willing to pivot, he utilized technology to connect to his Pro Reps community! With safe social distancing Laurence is providing children with the guidance they need to stay physically engaged until we can share the courts together again. This May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month!

THANK YOU LAURENCE FOR GIVING US A SHOT!



Laurence &
Pro Reps
team!



SHINING STAR HELPS TAKE THE LEAD!

Meet Lucy Geer, Sophomore at Trinity School. Lucy is an intern for Advisory Board Member Marina Franklin, which is how we got to know her, and we're so happy we do! When we asked Lucy about working on Marina's podcast she told us, "I love the comedy aspect of working with her so much, but the most important thing I've had access to... is being constantly surrounded by powerful women of color, like Marina." Lucy is passionate about activism and is a member of the Black Affairs Club and The Student Diversity Leadership Council at Trinity, and was recently elected as one of the presidents of the Women of Color Affinity Group. When she told us about her work with Sweet Readers we had to learn more. See page 8 for more about her inspirational service helping seniors with Alzheimer's.

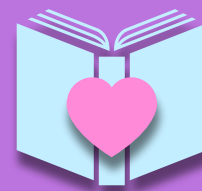
THANK YOU LUCY FOR BEING A TEEN LEADER!



If you have a story, would like to share something great that you or your group is doing, would like to contribute to the next Imagine Society Newsletter or even be a guest editor please email us at outreach@theimagesociety.org



MORE ABOUT SWEET READERS!



We wanted to know a little more about Shining Star Lucy Geer's involvement with the program Sweet Readers. It's an organization that connects middle grade students and adults with Alzheimers in "immersize, art-based programs." Lucy has been with Sweet Readers for three years, she started in 8th grade as a "sweet reader" and now as a high school student is one of their "young leaders." During COVID, Lucy has started virtual visits with her new partner Irving, she even helped him write a letter to his granddaughter - check it out below! Lucy tells us "The most rewarding part of being a part of the organization for me has definitely been forming connections with and seeing the impact on the elders. Although I was only a "sweet reader" for a year or so, I learned so much from my partner and seeing her every week made me so happy. Seeing and participating in programs is amazing to me because I really see all of the impact that all of our hard work has led to. The adults always look so happy and are totally engaged with their partners. Knowing that so many elders have found a new friend and have something to look forward to every week makes me so happy."

Thank you Lucy for sharing Sweet Readers with us, hopefully it helps inspire kids to get involved too!

For more information, or if you are interested in joining, please go to: sweetreaders.org

Lucy (inset right) and her partner Irving with the finished letter!



TO: CHLOE
The Champion Chloe
LOVES to do Cartwheels!
She's great at gymnastics
and has the prettiest freckles!
Her Grandpa loves to watch
her competitions and is proud
of everything she does! She is
an amazing student and sibling
and is a terrific twin. Her
Siblings are just as amazing as she
is, but Chloe is the best gymnast!
She loves her dad so much and
is kind to everyone!
LOVE, GRANDPA



Above photo of all of the Young and Junior leaders. "We're all high school students who used to do Sweet Readers programs and now are in charge of other areas of the organization."



AMERICA THROUGH THE LENS OF COVID-19



The Imagine Society Newsletter is thrilled to introduce: "America Through The Lens of Covid-19." In this four part series, Imagine teens will interview photojournalist and friend of The Imagine Society Tobias Everke about his travels though the United States over the past two months and feature the photographs he took from different American cities ending with our home, New York City.

Jack Gaffigan (age 14, 8th grade at Avenues The World School) kicks off the series with Part One: Las Vegas.

JG: Can you tell us a little about your background as a photographer?

TE: I have been taking photos since I was 14 years old, taking class pictures in my school. At 16, I started working freelance for the local newspaper in Duesseldorf, Germany. After my graduation, I did military service (it was mandatory at the time) as a photographer in the Ministry of Defense in Bonn. In 1985 I spent two months in New York to see if I could work here as a photographer and then I came back in January 1986 and never left. I am a freelance photojournalist, which means that I have no guaranteed income and never know what I am doing next week, tomorrow and sometimes today.

JG: What made you chose to travel around at the onset of the pandemic hitting the US and what made you chose your locations?

TE: My client, BILD Zeitung, Germany's largest daily newspaper, assigned me to accompany their correspondent here in New York to cover the Corona outbreak. We went to hospitals, funeral homes, the city morgue, spoke with doctors and many New Yorkers, reported on the transformation of refrigerated trucks into moving morgues and so on. My wife and my kids were not happy it and every day when I got home, they had me undress and put all my clothes into the laundry. I have been wearing a face mask for the last couple of weeks almost non-stop and at times my nose looked like that of a health care worker, with many blisters. Sometimes my day goes like this: I wake up at 6:30am to make breakfast for Lena and Otto, our 12 year old twins. I check my phone and see a message from the writer "They want us to go to Lansing, Michigan. There is a flight at 9:35 am from La Guardia. Can you make it?". Then I buy a one-way ticket (since we do not now how the story develops and how long we have to stay), order a car service, pack my bag and leave.



PART ONE: LAS VEGAS

...continued from page 9

JG: Can you tell us about these photographs and the observations you made in your travels?

TE: I like Las Vegas. For me it's like Disney World or Times Square. It's crazy, but if you know what to expect it can be fun. But this time it was weird. The fake-ness of it became even more exposed without any people around. Our assignment was to cover the impact of the Corona lockdown on the American economy and nowhere is this more apparent than in Las Vegas, where they have nothing but tourism. When there are no tourists, the city is dead. The famous Las Vegas strip was empty. No cars, except locals on bicycles taking photos like tourists, because they have never seen their city that empty. The last and only time the casinos closed was when President John F. Kennedy died. We heard that some of the casinos did not know how to turn off the lights, because they have been always on. It was funny to see that some of the very large casinos had basic two-by-fours and chain locks behind their entrance doors to keep them closed, because they, once again, never expected to shut their doors.

JG: What is a take away that you would like to convey to people who look at your unique documentation of this historical moment in time in Las Vegas?

TE: Good question and hard to answer. As a photojournalist it is my job to document and to tell a story with photos instead of with words. At the same time I am on assignment with a writer and my photos have to show what he writes about. Our stories and our reporting has to keep in mind our readers and the style of the paper. My first goal was to find a spot that shows that the streets are empty. Then we interviewed an acrobat who used to work at Cirque du Soleil at The Mirage about the lockdown and how it affects her. On our last day we received a call from our editors, that they wanted us to try and get into a casino to photograph the empty casino floors. That was impossible, since all the casinos were closed, but we found some older casinos in downtown Vegas where we were able to look through the closed doors.



Coming up next Issue: Part 2: ALBANY, GEORGIA

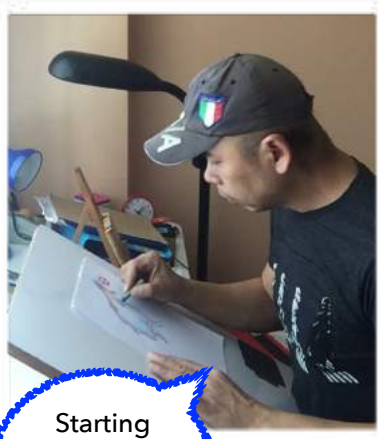
Photo credits: Tobias Everke @tobias_everke

Greetings from The Philippines!

The Salazar Family: Eric, Lilit and Ezekiel (14)



Starting another masterpiece!



Shout out to the REAL HEROES!



Eric Salazar is an incredibly talented illustrator from the Philippines. As a kid he loved comic books, he even got his start drawing his favorite hero Batman!

Eric lives in Manila, with his wife Lilit and son Ezekiel (14). Like New York City, Manila has been hit by the COVID19 pandemic. Through social media, Eric and his son read about The Imagine Society, our efforts to help fight COVID19, and specifically our #messagesoflove campaign bringing loving and supportive artwork to isolated patients and frontline staff. Eric and Ezekiel wanted to help and quickly got to work creating the brilliant artwork you see on this page. Eric drew the lines while his son helped with the coloring!

The Salazar family is optimistic things are getting better in the Philippines, but their lives will change and adapt as their country opens back up. Eric tells us his son Ezekiel knows "the virus will drastically change his school experience - he may not connect with his classmates and friends like before but technology will help in a big way."

While he may know how to draw super heroes, Eric knows who the real heroes are:

"In the movies, when New York, the Earth, is besieged by invaders from another world, people from different backgrounds put aside their differences and rise as heroes to help fight the common threat. **We may not have magic hammers or an invincible suit of armor but we've got to do what we can to help each other out.** Here in Manila, we've only got crayons and paper, but we try to send messages of hope and appreciation for those in the thick of the fight. COVID-19 is a virus that connects us in a bad way, so we must stress that love is more infectious than any virus."

Thank you Eric, Lilit and Ezekiel for your support and your heartfelt art!

You can send in your own #messagesoflove just like Eric and Ezekiel!
Email artwork to outreach@theimagesociety.org

UPDATE! FROM OUR PANTRY TO YOURS WITH



By Sabrina Turner

My youth group the St Patrick's Warriors had been volunteering at The Ascension Church, helping to host dinners at their bi-monthly shelter with our friends at The Spirit Squad. When Covid-19 hit New York, we continued to meet weekly over zoom and thought of ways to keep helping. We checked in with our friends at The Ascension Pantry who reported that because of the pandemic, and so many people out of work, the need for food and supplies was getting more urgent every day. People were lining up around the block and waiting hours for groceries. When we heard about this, my family thought of a way we could help. We would open our pantries, and share with others in need. We called it "From our Pantry to Yours with Love." We reached out to our friends and neighbors to see who could donate and we formulated a plan.

On April 28th, we began our first pantry collection, safely gathering grocery bags of food throughout Long Island. It felt good to be helping others. Our first pickup was at The Murphy Family. We then continued to The Goodwins, where my fellow Warriors Gigi and Billy had divided a 50 pound bag of rice into smaller portions for distribution. Everyone in my family helped, my Mom, Dad, sister Alessia and I stopped at so many homes we filled The Imagine Society truck!

Then #maskedmiracles mom Samantha Sheeler picked up the collection of food in Long Island and headed to Manhattan to do the drop-off at The Ascension Pantry, where they were greeted with big smiles from Director Robin Klueber and her pantry volunteer group, including members of The Spirit Squad. At the same time, another Warrior teen Nellie Fitzpatrick and her mom were collecting food donations from Manhattan, and also delivered them to The Ascension Food Pantry.

The first "From Our Pantry to Yours" was a great success. By coming together across the state of New York we were able to help feed many of our fellow New Yorkers. Unfortunately, there are still so many people in need. Food pantries still need more food. We are planning to continue this campaign and would love your help! If your family would like to contribute to our next food drive please contact us at @warriorsyouthnyc



Sabrina Turner (16) is a sophomore at Marymount School of New York

Follow Saint Patrick's Warriors on Instagram! @warrioryouthnyc



Earth Angels



Dayelin DeLaCruz (16) for her commitment not only to The Sprit Squad, but also to The Ascension Food Pantry. She's been doing all she can to help the food insecure during the pandemic. Dayelin is not only an inspiration to teenagers, but to all people everywhere. Thank you Dayelin, we're so proud of you!

Jesus Tiburcio-Zane (14) for having the strength and resilience to help Robin Klueber and The Ascension Food Pantry. The help you are giving is touching so many lives and making the world a better place.

Leslie Schlachter PA-C at Mt Sinai Neurosurgery for being a critical leader, running two COVID ICU units, helping to protect and save so many lives. Thank you being a bridge for The Imagine Society so we can help support the community of heroes at Mt Sinai. Your compassion, optimism and smile reveal you are an angel on this earth.

Marina Franklin for being a part of The Imagine Society. You've brought so much laughter to our events, and now we're so proud to have your help through our COVID efforts. Thank you for securing a large donation of essential and vital masks to the staff at Calvary Hospice in the Bronx!

P.J. McGuire for helping her community head on! Using fabric from her hair product The Wrapperoo, she started home-sewing face masks, started a "buy one, give one" campaign that has generated over 1,000 high quality, reusable masks throughout the Chicago region! We even got some here in NYC through Marina Franklin!

To nominate your own EARTH ANGEL, email us at outreach@theimagesociety.org

You can make a difference spreading love and support throughout NYC!
Robin Klueber sent us photos from Ascension Food Pantry of YOUR #messagesoflove packed in bags of desperately needed groceries to hand out to the food insecure.
Please send in your own artwork! Email us at outreach@theimagesociety.org



SPO

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ON

THE

STR

EET!



So cool!

How cool are these floral arrangements? They were created by Lewis Miller Designs who have been putting out these "Flower Flash" displays on trash cans and street corners to honor medical staff, first responders, and help spread joy to all of NYC during the pandemic.

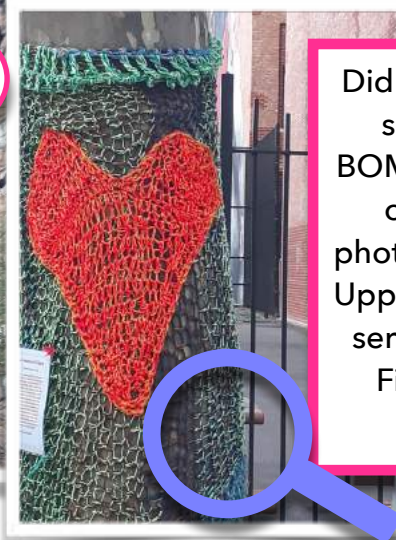


Looking good pinkie!

Flamingos practice safe social distancing!
Photo submitted by friend Sarah Kalikow in Ann Arbor, MI.



Love!



Did somebody say YARN BOMBS? Check out these photos from the Upper East Side sent in by the Fitzpatrick Family.



Doing great girls!

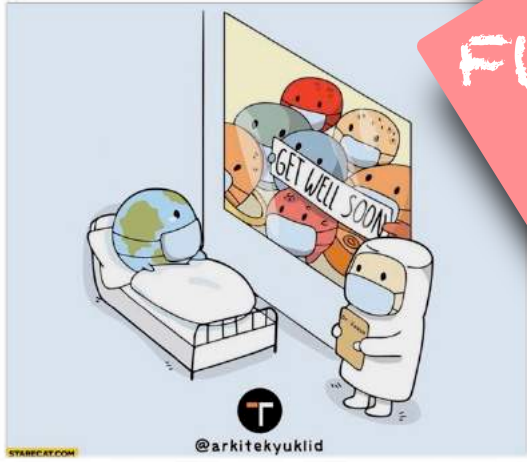


Junior Editor Katie Gaffigan (11) shares downtown creation at Il Buco Alimentari @ilbuco_av open now for "to go" orders. That mural really brightens things up!



Send in your "Spotted on the Street" photos to: outreach@theimagesociety.org

FUN PAGES



Junior
Editor Katie
Gaffigan (11)
Marymount School
of New York



Katie's
Fave
Memes
:)

Lol!



Knock Knock
Who's There
No one because
we're isolating!

UNIVERSE: I have a plan
for your life



The mask we all deserve



HEALING WORDS SCRAMBLE

WORD PLAY

by Katie Gaffigan (11) Junior Editor!

Coloring is Therapeutic!

1. EBLRDUI
2. EIRCONELC
3. GERNARTEEE
4. NJTVUEERAE
5. PRAIRE
6. ETROSE
7. VIEVRE
8. EOOSHT
9. YTRIFNOGFI

10. NEGERNIW
11. IEILTNGARZIV
12. RIVENVIG
13. EIELTALVA
14. GLRIEINEV
15. GEYIMERND
16. ERUC
17. EVTSROETRIA
18. HAPIECETUTR



WORD JUMBLE Answer Key: 1. REBUILD 2. RECONCILE 3. REGENERATE 4. REJUVENATE 5. REPAIR 6. RESTORE 7. REVIVE 8. SOOTHE 9. FORTIFYING 10. RENEWING 11. REVITALIZING 12. RELIVING 13. ALLEVIATE 14. RELIEVING 15. REMEDYING 16. CURE 17. RESTORATIVE 18. THERAPEUTIC