



140 BEE GIRL
Stephanie Petit recalls
her 1987 championship.

112 HGTV *Design Star*
Vern Yip decorates a nursery
for his newborn son Gavin

120 Only 14-in. tall,
Einstein is a tiny horse with
a very large fan base

122 Relying on a minia-
turized, battery-powered
heart pump, **Ally Smith** gets
ready to walk down the aisle

135 In her new memoir,
Lips Unsealed, Go-Go's
lead singer **Belinda Carlisle**
writes about her eating dis-
order and her decades-long
drug addiction

140 As word-loving whiz
kids gear up for the 2010
Scripps National Spelling
Bee, five past victors recall
their winning moment

NAME: Wendy Guey Lai, 26,
Cambridge, Mass.

JOB: Math teacher

WINNING YEAR: 1996

WORD: Viviseulture (*n.* The act
or process of burying alive)

A FAMILY'S DREAM: My parents
were Chinese immigrants who
came here speaking broken
English. For their daughter to
win this was noteworthy. The
day after I won, I remember we
went to a Chinese restaurant
in Washington, D.C.; the owner
gave us 10 percent off!



Viviseulture

BEE WI

FORMER SCRIPPS NATIONAL SPELLING BEE CHAMPS

NAME: Kavya Shivashankar, 14,
Olathe, Kans.

JOB: High school freshman

WINNING YEAR: 2009

WORD: Laodicean (*adj.* Lukewarm
or indifferent in religion or politics)

SPELLING GENES: The moment
I heard the word, I recognized
it, and I knew this was it. When
I lifted that trophy, it was surreal.
This year my 8-year-old sister
Vanya is representing Kansas
and is the youngest one in the
bee. I'm so proud.

LAODICEAN



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
RAY LEGO

TCHED!

RECALL THE WORDS THAT CHANGED THEIR LIVES BY ANNE LANG

NAME: Irving Belz, 72,
Houston
JOB: Psychiatrist
WINNING YEAR: 1951
WORD: Insouciant
(*adj.* Exhibiting or
characterized by freedom
from concern or care)
**ADVICE TO YOUNG
SPELLERS:** Read a lot—
and learn classical
Greek and Latin.



NAME: Stephanie Petit,
36, San Francisco
JOB: Lawyer
WINNING YEAR: 1987
WORD: Staphylococci
(*n. pl.* Any bacterium
of a genus of gram-
positive eubacteria)
LASTING MEMORY:
President Reagan
told my mom,
“I hope your daughter
doesn’t ask me
to spell anything.”



Frank Neuhauser
(left) with John
Paola (far right)
at the '77 bee.

THE BEE, THEN AND NOW

In 1925 11-year-old Frank Neuhauser beat eight opponents to win the first national spelling bee’s \$500 award. “I’d never have thought,” says Neuhauser, now 96 and a retired attorney, “it would be this huge.” Now nationally televised (finals air 8 p.m. ET June 4 on ABC), this year’s bee will host 273 kids vying for \$40,000 in prizes. Says 1977 victor John Paola: “I was a geek. Winning boosted my self-esteem—and shaped my life.”

NAME: John Paola, 47,
Annapolis, Md.
JOB: Veterinarian
WINNING YEAR: 1977
WORD: Cambist
(*n.* One who deals in
bills of exchange)
HELP FROM ABOVE?:
I went to Catholic
school, so I had
a little card with a
prayer on it. I held it
the whole time.

