

## Sitting on a Park Bench

By Marilyn Reeves

It was a bright, sunny morning and I decided to go for a walk in the park. I was enjoying all the green, leafy trees and flower beds I passed along the way. But before long, one of my legs started to cramp up and I sat down on a bench, trying to knead the pain out of my calf. Then I saw something flashing in the grass. *What is that?* I wondered and leaned forward to pick it up. It was some kind of wand, about 18 inches long, covered all over with bright gold sparkles. *Some little girl must have lost this,* I thought. But as soon as I touched it, I felt a sensation, almost like an electric shock, but surprisingly pleasant. Suddenly, all the aches and pains in my body went away, and I felt a renewed sense of energy and well-being. I smiled as I thought, *This must be a real Magic Wand!*

A young boy around age 15 came rumbling by on his skate board, but when he saw me sitting there holding the Magic Wand he stopped short and came up to me. "Hey, lady, what's that you got there?"

"Apparently it's a Magic Wand. Make a wish and touch the tip of it, and see what happens."

He thought for a moment and then said, "I wish there was somethin' to do. All the kids in the hood just hang out doin' drugs, and I ain't into that. There's a lot of fighting going on, and the other day this one kid got shot. I wish we could all just learn to get along."

All the sudden, the boy was slapped in the face by a bulletin that came flying through the air. "What the hell!" he said. Then he looked at the flyer. A new rec center was opening up just a mile from his house. "Wow! This is just what I've been wishing for. Thanks, lady!" The kid got back on his skate board and headed for home with the flyer in his hand, whooping and hollering for joy!

A young woman came along pushing a baby carriage, her child fast asleep inside. "May I sit down with you? I just picked up the mail from the post office and there's an envelope from our bank inside. They've been threatening to foreclose on our mortgage, so I'm afraid to look, but I've got to know."

"Try touching the tip of this wand and make a wish."

She laughed but she did as I said. Then she opened the envelope and her eyes grew wide as she saw a check was attached to the letter. "The bank made a mistake! They got us mixed up with another Johnson family and are sending us a refund. Happy day! Thank you so much," she said, kissing me on the cheek. "I think that must be a Magic Wand indeed!"

After she left a burly man with a scowling face rushed up to me and said, "Gimme that thing. It's mine!" He grabbed the wand out of my hand, but then let out a scream of pain. He threw it to the ground and ran off again, cursing and holding his burnt hand.

The wand landed in the grass exactly where I'd found it. "Apparently that Magic Wand is intended only for good. I think I'd best leave it where it lies," I said to myself. Then I headed back home, feeling better than I had in years.