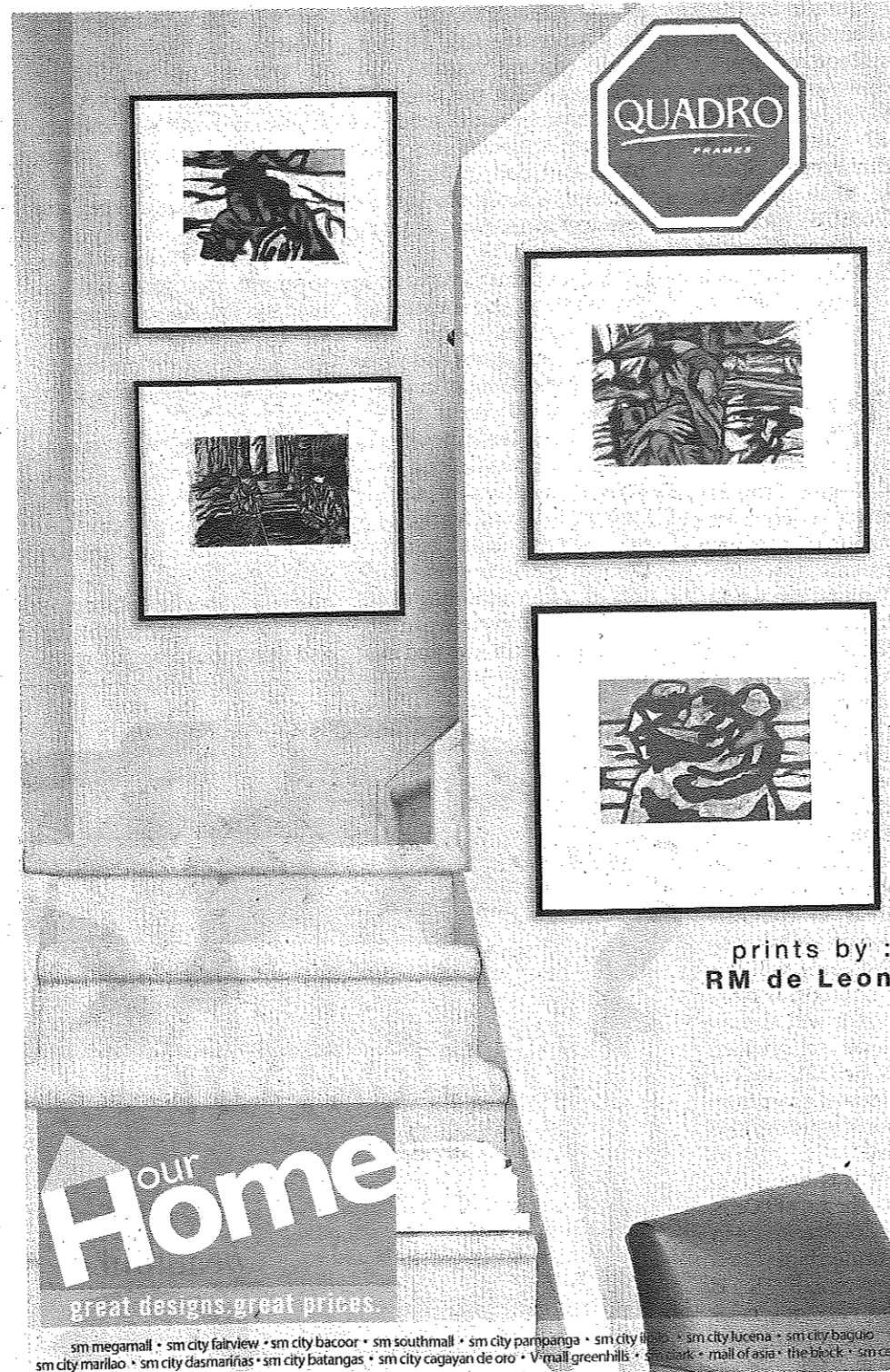


# Get into the magazine habit

The best Christmas gift is genuinely listening to your kids **By Queena N. Lee-Chua**



ASIDE FROM BOOKS, many kids are now interested in reading other print materials, such as children's magazines," says Celeste "Ces" Lecaroz Aceron, president of Bookhive Philippines Inc. "Young kids gravitate to them. Magazines are one of the best reading bargains for our youth, especially those containing fun science, adventure stories and challenging games."

Educators and parents may find it financially easier to buy magazines than, say, an encyclopedia set. Since magazines come out regularly, they can also feature more up-to-date articles than books. They are a handy way to keep up with current happenings.

### Bookhive

Ces, a former ABS-CBN business news anchor, and her husband Marvin, a lawyer, love to read. When they got married, their book collection filled an entire wall of their house. Not surprisingly, their children, Juancho and Hans in grade school, and Tressa and Justin in preschool, have developed the habit of reading early on. In summer, they would participate in Aceron's public-reading programs, part of an education advocacy run by a friend.

When Ces' friend decided to focus on a cancer foundation, she picked up from where the latter left off, and decided to put up Bookhive, her own literacy and media center for kids.

Located on Scout Chuatoco Street in Quezon City, Bookhive offers everyone, especially preschool and elementary children, a chance to read good books for free. Aside from a well-stocked library, Bookhive also conducts storytelling sessions and reading workshops. The group's newest



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venture? Promoting six premium kid magazines, by Bayard Press.

### Award-winning mags

"I fell in love with the magazines at first sight," Ces laughs. "The layout and the content are captivating. I knew at once I had something great to share with teachers and parents who do not want kids immersed only in videos, TV or toys."

The monthly mags include stories and features from award-winning writers and artists. The "Box" series from Britain consists of three titles: the read-aloud "Story Box," for 3- to 6-year-old students; the chapter-book-like "Adventure Box," for 6- to 9-year-olds; and the homework helper "Discovery Box," for 9- to 12-year-olds, with sections on history, nature, science and the modern world.

The "Owl" series from the US also has three titles, "Chirp," "Chickadee," and "Owl," for the same three target audiences, in the above order. The mags contain humor, fables, mystery, science, sports and many more.

"The high-quality content, printing and production make these titles consistent award winners," says Ces. The Owl Spring 2007 Magazines received Gold and Silver Honors from the Parents' Choice Foundation in the US. The Association of

Educational Publishers had likewise given them the Distinguished Achievement and Golden Lamp Awards, the most prestigious awards in educational publishing.

Worldwide, these magazines reach more than 63 million subscribers.

### Reading activities

Bookhive has begun a series of reading shows for schools. "Our hosts are not the usual party emcees that 'only give a show' but are themselves advocates of reading," says Ces. "Each show is unique and based on a particular magazine theme, enlivened by projects, experiments and activities featured in the issue. Kids are enticed to discover more and perhaps subscribe to their favorite titles."

Bookhive has also held several reading races in school fairs, where parents, teachers and children compete to successfully complete given tasks. The group hopes to do a corporate version for companies, to strengthen employees' family bonds through reading.

Bookhive also hosts Reading Camps to keep kids up to date on issues like global warming and responsible media education. Experts, such as scientists, help in handling the various topics pub-