Pediatric dermatologic cases make up most of this month’s Pediatric Annals, organized by Guest Editor Dean Morrell of the University of North Carolina, who is also a co-author of all of the cases and discussions. It’s our impression that issues devoted to dermatology are quite popular with our readership, not surprising considering that children frequently present to pediatricians because of dermatologic issues.

Although stamps to illustrate an issue devoted to dermatology are precious few, I call your attention to the two 2005 stamps from Uganda (right). Each shows a gentleman who demonstrates some clinical features of leprosy, an infectious disorder caused by Mycobacterium leprae (an agent that still has not been cultured in vitro) beginning in the skin, and then progressing to involve subcutaneous tissue and nerves. Note the hands of the man in the blue shirt, who has fingers that have been severely damaged by the peripheral nerve disease of leprosy. He also appears to have the “leonine facies” of leprosy. The man in the red shirt has lost his left leg, also presumably related to peripheral neuropathy, as his prosthesis stands next to him. Below each are the words “For a leprosy-free world,” and at the top there is reference to the National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Programme, with the World Health Organization logo just below.

Recently, as I was eating a fairly expensive dinner on an out-of-town speaking trip, I was reading a news article in Science related to insecticide-treated bed nets.1 A bed net is nicely portrayed on the recent bluish stamp from Liberia (see page 765) showing three children sleeping under a net that protects against mosquitoes, while the two people outside the net are bothered by the mosquitoes in the room. At the top left is expressed...
the goal, “Reduce Child Mortality.” Because malaria kills 1 million children each year, primarily in Africa, a cheap intervention that saves lives demands our attention.

Insecticide-treated bed nets are inexpensive and have been shown clearly to reduce childhood mortality related to severe, often cerebral, malaria in young children in sub-Saharan Africa. The nets cost between 50 cents and $2, and data from areas that have been successful in implementing these have documented their life-saving value. For example, in Kenya, a 44% drop in child mortality followed a substantial increase in the proportion of the population with bed net coverage. There are multiple issues that relate to manufacture, supply, delivery, and usage of bed nets in this region, but their effectiveness is unquestioned. A newer, improved version of insecticide-treated bed nets provides 5 years of protection and costs about $10 per net. Any of us who wishes to make a contribution, large or small, to this child life-saving intervention can contact NothingButNets.net, malarianomore.org, or bednetsforkids.org. For the cost of a meal, we can help save some lives.

The second Liberia stamp (right) bears the title “Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases” and shows a man attacking “Malaria” in green and “AIDS” portrayed as a multi-legged purple creature.

**REFERENCE**