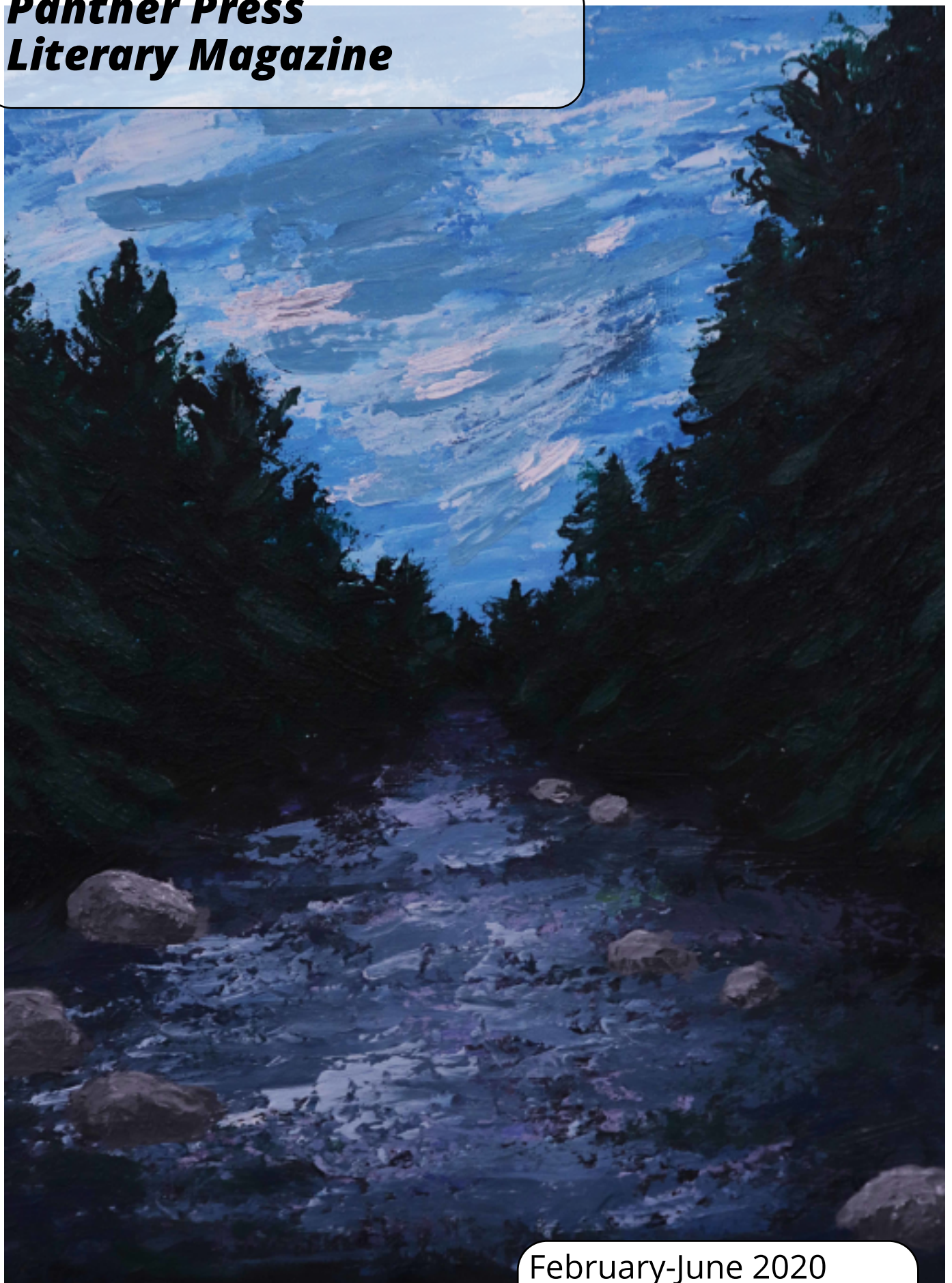
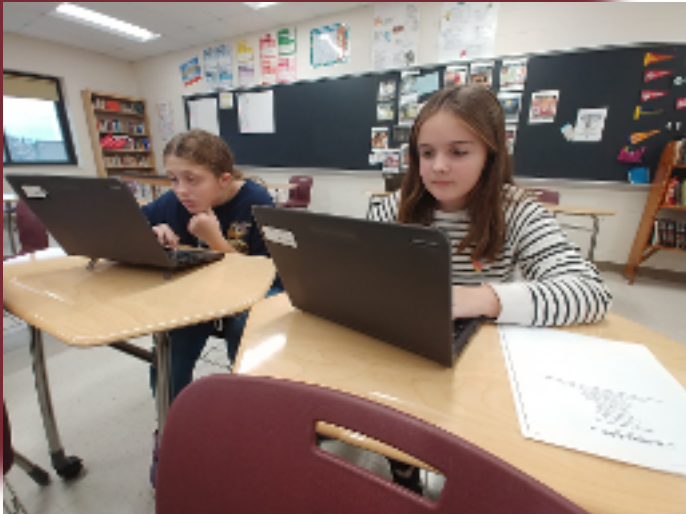


***Panther Press
Literary Magazine***



February-June 2020



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Junior Editors: Gabriella Turo
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Contributing Artists: Cobie Burke
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Modena Phillips
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Gabriella Turo
Kloe Verdi
Bryanna Wilbur
Katelyn Ware
Brianna Wellington
Advisor: Ms. Gendron

Cover Art:
Taylor Moore
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High
Grade: 12
Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Port Byron Central School District

Issue 2: Spring
2020

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Submissions:

**Contact Ms. Gendron for a chance
to have your art or writing
published in the next edition by
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bringing it to room 258.
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Photo Poems



Baby Sis

by Ella Bachman

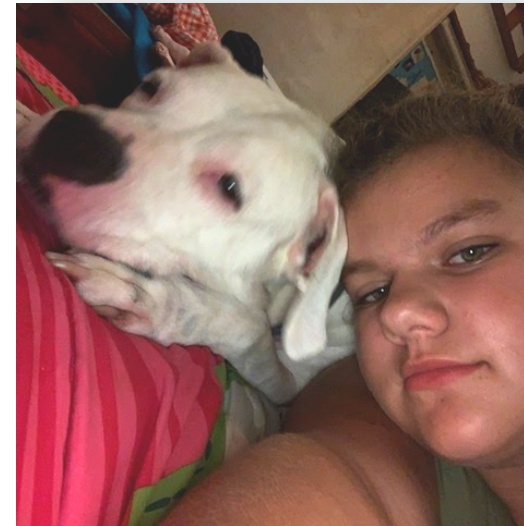
I'm holding my little sister in my arms
on the old colorful couch,
pillow supporting her head
because I'm too little.
My mom stops to take a picture
Me smiling and my sister staring,
the smell of baby powder
hovers in the air.

Now she is eight.

I wish she was that small again
so she wouldn't have as much attitude.
When I babysit her, she doesn't listen:
refuses to clean her room,
always wanting to be the boss.

But when we sit down to play a game like UNO,
I am happy to have her as my sister.
And when I have a bad day,
she always asks me what happened,
listens to every word I say.

And when she makes me a picture
and says how good of a sister I am,
I am proud to call her "Little Sis."



Best Friends

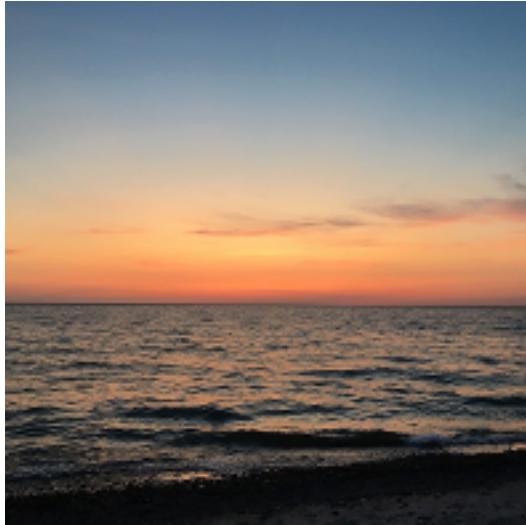
by Brianna Wellington

My best friend Jayleen and my dog Daisy
in summer
hanging out in my room
pose on my bed.
She spent the night.

Drawing together with pencils and markers,
My rose-gold colored leather phone case
that my mom gave me,
suckers - watermelon and strawberry -
perfume, makeup, and nail polish.

My friend laughing.
We were having a good time.
My brothers say my friend is annoying,
but she is not.

Listening to my playlist:
I wish she could stay longer.



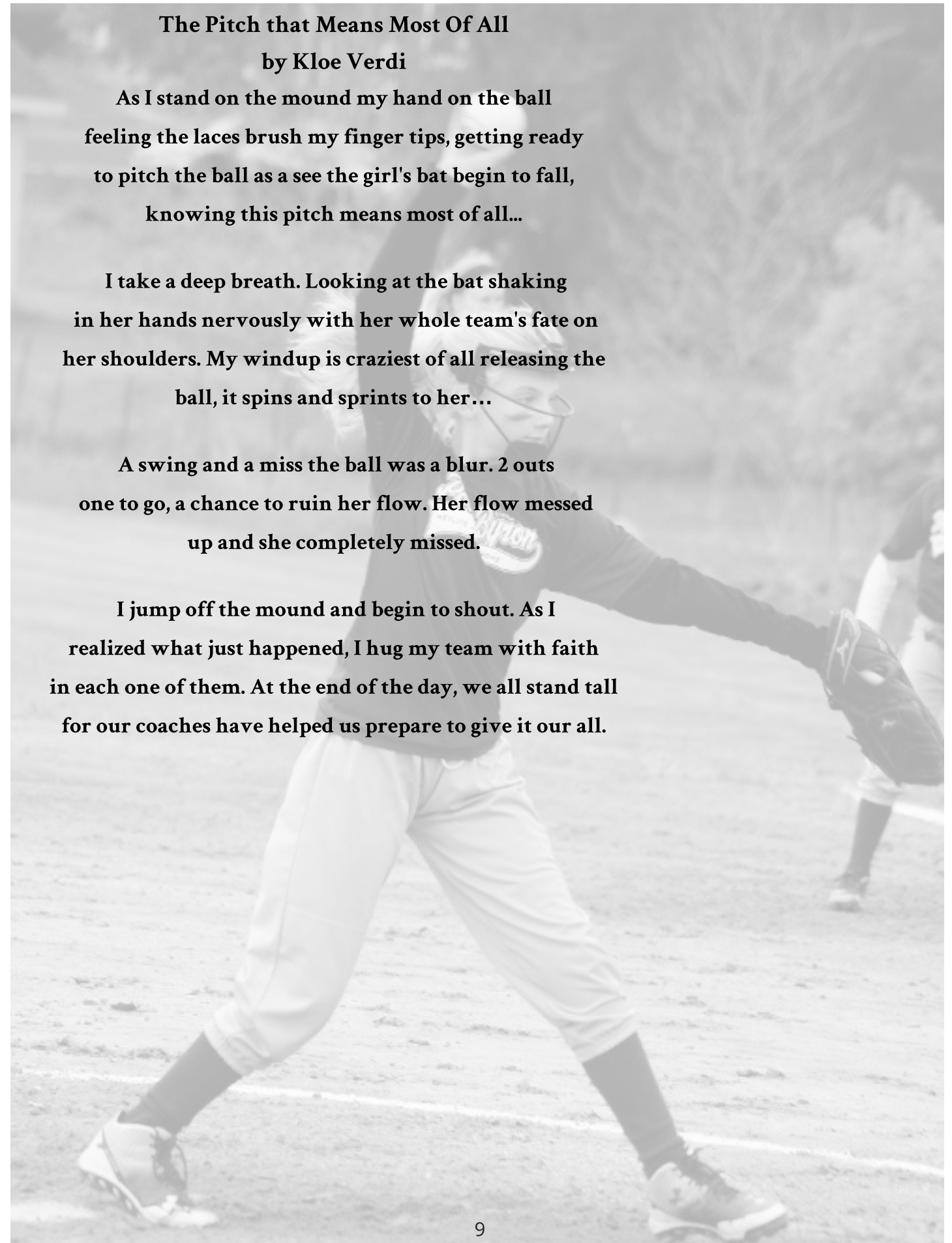
Camp by Madison Gillespie

In Fair Haven,
it's August: summer's nearing an end,
school's coming soon.
We pull in, setting up camp, hot and humid.
I get on my bike, going for a stroll.
Our company pulls in,
we hang out, hot dogs sizzling over the fire: lunch is ready!
We devour our meals, chatting at the picnic table.

Long walk down to the beach,
warm breeze blows my hair,
we admired the colorful skies,
the waves crashing against the pier,
while we take pictures in the sunset.

We finish up at the beach,
hop in the trunk heading back to camp,
sitting around the campfire,
laughs breaking the silence,
warmth from the fire against my feet.

Getting out the somores,
marshmallows golden brown,
melted chocolate, crunchy graham crackers:
the perfect combination,
enjoying our dessert,
we end the night by gazing up at the stars.



The Pitch that Means Most Of All

by Kloe Verdi

**As I stand on the mound my hand on the ball
feeling the laces brush my finger tips, getting ready
to pitch the ball as a see the girl's bat begin to fall,
knowing this pitch means most of all...**

**I take a deep breath. Looking at the bat shaking
in her hands nervously with her whole team's fate on
her shoulders. My windup is craziest of all releasing the
ball, it spins and sprints to her...**

**A swing and a miss the ball was a blur. 2 outs
one to go, a chance to ruin her flow. Her flow messed
up and she completely missed.**

**I jump off the mound and begin to shout. As I
realized what just happened, I hug my team with faith
in each one of them. At the end of the day, we all stand tall
for our coaches have helped us prepare to give it our all.**

The Final Berry Pick
by Henry Smith

I woke up bright and early,
ready for the big day
I walked into my parent's room to wake them
Soon after 5 annoying minutes of me jumping on their bed, they got up
They dressed while I played upstairs
Then I could smell breakfast:
smells of sausage, bacon, pancakes, and much more!

I was three
The wind was picking up as we walked outside
There was pine on the ground
As I ran farther into the woods, my footsteps grew louder
Fall and slightly chilly, but great for berry picking
Under my feet I felt the pinecones crumple and heard the leaves crinkle

The farther I walked into the woods, the more berries I found
Berries galore!
Since there were so many of them,
I couldn't hold them by myself
so Mom helped me

On our way back, since I didn't have to carry them
I ran down the trail - zooming -
but somehow I ran into a pricker bush

When we returned
I ate so many berries until
My Mom yelled at me and told me she wanted them to make food
I ate half of the bucket, so they weren't really weren't many left
A little while later, we had a big dinner with the whole family
And then I drove my Little Tikes Truck into the sunset¹⁰



Nationals
by Dylan Nolan

At Nationals
We wake up early in the morning
Warming up getting ready
Seeing the crowd start to fill up
Sweat dripping, getting nervous

I walk out onto the mat
Nervous feeling goes away
I shake his hand
Get in my stance
The whistle blows

The match starts
I take him down
And pin him quickly
I shake his hand - match is over

I walk over and use my inhaler:
Four more matches to get to the finals
I win all of them!

Finals:
Whistle blows
match has started
I win, run off the mat, and hug my dad



Cinquains

Snow
Cold, Wet
White as clouds
Sparkles like diamonds
Hail

Christmas
Cold, Snowy
Sweet as family
Happy as can be
Xmas

By Sara Ferrin

Reading
Enlightening, mystical
Like entering a new world
As enchanting as a waterfall
Study

Fire
Pretty, deadly
Like an angry bull
Sparkles like a ruby
Burning

By Sean Gillmore

Family
Loving, caring
Feels like home
As sweet as sugar
Relatives

By
Abigail Gist

Books
Interesting, fantasy
Traveling like an airplane
As mysterious as the unknown
Excursion

Death
Scary, sad
Upsetting like depression
As sorrowful as blue
Dark

By Alisha Traver

Fall
Pretty, breezy
Colorful as crayons
Leaves crunch under my feet
Autumn

Winter
Chilly, White
Snow fills the air
Soft as fur
Cold

By Madison Gillespie

Grandpa
Old, Crippled
Wrinkly like a finished bath
Smells like Oldspice
King

By Anthony DeWolf

Argument Essays

Sports in High Schools Add to Students' Success

By Mackenzie McDowell

In America, schools spend more money and care more about sports rather than academics unlike other countries. Some people believe playing sports in high school takes a toll on the academic ability of the student athlete and causes unnecessary stress. But others believe sports are a good way to form bonds, improve test grades and learn to have respect and responsibility. Playing sports gives students something to look forward to and that outweighs the fact that they have homework to do when they get home after a practice or a game. Sports are a positive thing for students to participate in throughout the school year.

Playing sports in school helps kids trust and form bonds with not only other kids, but coaches too. Sports help children learn to accept responsibility and respect one another. In the article "High-School Sports Aren't Killing Academics" by Mike Blake, he states, "Sports are used to form bonds between the boys and their mentors to teach self control." Forming bonds with their mentors gives the children someone to look up to. These bonds form self-control which makes them less likely to engage in violent acts and makes them more likely to try in school and participate. Students who have behavioral issues or do not have a good home life need something to look forward to that helps them trust and make friends. Mike Blake states, "The need to build trust and social capital through sports is also essential when schools are serving disadvantaged and at-risk students." Sports give underprivileged kids something to care about that keeps them in line throughout the school day and teaches them to have good morals at home. They give all different kinds of children new opportunities to form friendships and bonds with other people and also learn respect and discipline.

Playing sports in school gives kids a reason to come to school since sports have also been shown to improve test scores and increase graduation rates. Kids who are in sports have to come to school to go to practice that night, and if they don't go to practice, they don't play in games so it helps motivate them to come. Amanda Ripley in "The Case Against High School Sports" states, "sports lure students into school and keep them out of trouble." Without school sports children would be less likely to come to school on time or even at all. Also they may be more prone to getting into trouble because the only consequences they would be facing is their parents, not their coaches and playing time.

Sports also help improve test grades and graduation rates because student athletes come to school and receive all of the lessons and help from their teachers. Blake states, "measures of a school's commitment to athletics are significantly, positively related to lower dropout rates as well as higher test scores." Student athletes would be less likely to dropout because they have friends, mentors, and commitments at school. Also they will score higher on tests because they have to pass all of their classes to stay on the team and they have after school practice and are able to stay after with teachers to get extra help. School sports are a good way to motivate kids to get higher test grades and come to school, which will increase the graduation rates of the high school.

Others believe sports are too expensive and serve way too many disadvantages in students, such as distracting them from academics and taking up too much of their time. Ripley states, "more kids play on travel teams outside of school." She argues this because if kids are playing sports outside of school they shouldn't be playing them in school too, but she fails to consider some kids come from poorer backgrounds and don't have the ability to play sports outside of school. Also children from single parent homes may struggle with transportation as well as the money aspect because there is only one person contributing. Blake states, "They find that lower income students have less access due to challenges with regards to transportation, non nominal fees, and off campus safety." Getting rid of school sports would limit the opportunities for disadvantaged student athletes. Also getting rid of them would keep them from getting the same acknowledgment as other athletes who can afford travel teams would get. Considering the evidence, school sponsored sports are a benefit to the student athletes and shouldn't be terminated.

Sports provide many benefits to participating student athletes, such as helping them form bonds with coaches and friends to helping them learn respect and self-control. Also sports help students come to school and get the extra help they need, which will improve overall test scores and graduation rates. Keeping sports in schools is consequential to the success of many children because it gives them something to strive for.

College Athletes Deserve Compensation

By Joseph McNally

During every sports season in college, people bring up the constant debate of whether college athletes should be paid. One stance on the issue is that paying college athletes would start a bidding war among teams where only the richest ones come out on top.

However, another point of view is that the money is unjustly being distributed so the students who spend most of their time on training rarely make anything for their effort.

Although both sides make valid points, it is clear that college athletes should be paid for their work. These students spend hours of their time and frequently struggle in classes only for their money and merchandising rights to go to the school.

In the article "It's Time to Pay College Athletes," Victoria L. Jackson, claims that the college sports system exploits athletes who put in most of their time for sports by not paying them. Jackson, a former athlete herself, said "Universities with top teams can make millions of dollars from sponsorships by companies like Nike or Adidas while the athletes whose talent attracts those financial relationships get nothing" (Paragraph 4, page 3). Even though the players are the ones making brands more popular, many don't see a cent of what the deal makes. The schools take their hard-earned money, profiting off the likenesses of these student athletes. One statistic from The Economist shows "If college players were paid in proportion to the amount of revenue they bring to their schools, 'the top 10 percent of football and 16 percent of basketball players would be paid around \$400,000 and \$250,000 a year respectively'" (Paragraph 2, page 4). The data provided by this newspaper shows how much these athletes are missing out on. Even if they were paid a fraction of this proportion, it would allow them to have financial security in case

injuries or other things that can impact their career happen. Many players have failed college and dropped out, and having some extra money would let them have something to fall back on. Overall, the statistics and experts both show how college athletes are missing out on large amounts of money that the university takes for itself.

Although evidence is on the side of

Overall, the statistics and experts both show how college athletes are missing out on large amounts of money that the university takes for itself.

college athletes, there is an argument to be made about what effect it may have on the

competition between schools. This stance is taken by Cody J McDavis in the article "Paying students to pay would ruin sports," which says "Major brands like Nike would pay top football and basketball talent at the biggest schools, while student-athletes in other sports or at smaller programs would be ignored" (Paragraph 4, page 3). Although brands like Nike would pay top talent, McDavis ignores an important detail. This is that these brands already sponsor teams, the only difference is who the money they pay goes to. Under the current system, coaches are overpaid while the teams they lead get nothing. The author also brings up how paying can affect which players go to certain teams, saying "A handful of big sports programs would pay top dollar for a select few athletes, while almost every other college would get caught up in a bidding war it couldn't afford" (Paragraph 2, page 1). While McDavis is right about which effect bidding likely will have, being paid to join a team isn't the only way these athletes can profit. They can be paid in different ways, like advertising or just getting a percentage of the overall profit they make their team, which Victoria Jackson's article showed is possible. Even though paying athletes to join a team will probably ruin the balance of sports, they can be paid in other ways that don't ruin sports for small schools.

McDavis believes that the richest

schools would dominate the competition if college athletes were allowed to be paid. He claims "It would create a winner-take-all system in which only a handful of top recruits would get a paycheck on top of owning a diploma debt-free" (Paragraph 3 page 3). Although this prediction may be accurate to one method of paying athletes, the issue isn't as black and white as it's presented, because pay can be a percentage of revenue earned. Also, the author ignores that many college athletes aren't even able to finish their education under the current system. A quote from Jackson's article reveals that "They spend upwards of 50-60 hours per week on sports. They frequently are enrolled in easy, sometimes fraudulent courses to maintain their eligibility and often don't graduate" (Paragraph 2, page 2). College students who play sports that bring in revenue, though having a lifestyle that seems easy, deal with more challenges than other athletes. They have to worry more about sports while spending less time on academics, so many fail. Because of this, athletes can fail college while also risking their athletic careers, and they won't have money to fall back on after dropping out. Although there could be negative effects from paying athletes to pay, it also will provide an important sense of security for anyone who's at risk of failing.

Because college athletes work so hard to help their schools profit off their athletic talent, they should be paid some of the money that they make. The money these athletes could be paid would be important for giving students who fail something to fall back on. It also gives something back to the students who can't even profit off their own likenesses. If athletes continue to have their needs be ignored by their colleges, they may start shifting to a different way to play sports. This can hurt college sports overall, and many great athletes may be discouraged from playing due to the predatory nature of colleges.

The Impact of Violent Video Games

By Julia Gislason

Violent video games are becoming more and more common in today’s society, but are they causing violence among their players? This argument has sparked many opinions about video games to arise. Some believe that there is little to no evidence to support that there is any correlation between videogames and violence, while others believe that there is a very clear link that connects the two. Considering the lack of evidence, there is no definitive study or test that has supported the connection of violent video games to violence. There are too many factors such as mental health, or social life that create violence, to single out video games as being the deciding factor.

If video games do indeed cause violence, there would be much more violence in countries abroad, but that isn’t the case. Many people are trying to ignore, or are unaware of what many mass casualties are *actually* caused by, mental health issues and illnesses. In the article *Video Games Aren’t Why Shootings Happen. Politicians Still Blame Them*, written by Kevin Draper, he states that, “... Japan and South Korea... have among the lowest rates of violent crime in the world, and mass casualty events are quite rare.” Considering both of these countries generally spend more on video games in comparison to the U.S., if there was a connection between video games and violence, the rate of mass casualties would be much higher in other countries, especially the ones that deeply value video games. One of the evident issues that is revealing itself as the true cause of mass shootings is pre-existing mental health problems. Chris Ferguson, a psychology professor at Stetson University, mentioned that mass shooters, “... tend to have mental health problems, sometimes undiagnosed.” This redirection of blame on video games is due to our unawareness of mental health, especially in the political and educational systems. Because of this unawareness and unnecessary awkwardness in discussing it with others, many people felt the need to completely redirect the problem onto something

that they personally dislike, and is used by the general population, in this case being video games. If we were to focus more and begin to recognize what the cost of our unawareness actually is, we could actually begin to lower the rate of mass casualties in the U.S., and possibly in other countries as well.

As mentioned previously, there are many factors in a person’s life that could contribute to committing a crime. Too much in fact, that it is ridiculous to exclude any main issues to nitpick small details about the person, like saying they played violent video games. Dr. Ivory, who studies media and video games at Virginia Tech, stated that saying a mass shooter plays video games, “... is very similar to saying the perpetrator wears shoes. They do, but so do their peers in the general population.” For example, somebody could point out that all mass shooters have worn the color green before. It is a ridiculous point to blame shooting on the color green, but you can’t disprove it if people wholeheartedly believe it. Maybe they have, but so have all of us that haven’t committed shootings, the same goes for video games. Dr. Ferguson of Stetson University also mentioned that, “... you could take that profile and collect 500,000 people that fit. There are a lot of angry jerks out there that don’t go on to commit mass shootings.” One of the very clear flaws in the argument that video games *do* cause violence, is the fact that anyone can nitpick a detail of someone’s life and connect it so something bad they did. As long as a couple people dislike the detail, it can pass as an argument. While all opinions are valid, they should not be based on minor details and minimal evidence all because someone doesn’t like something.

On the opposite side of this argument, some say that violent video games are indeed the cause of mass shootings and violence. Mike Snider of USA Today states in the article *Study Confirms Link Between Violent Video Games And Physical Aggression*, “An international study... found playing violent video games led to increased physical aggression over time.” The international study failed to acknowledge, or at the very least recognize, the competition levels in these video games. Regardless of whether it is violent or not, nothing

proves the violence in these games is causing any aggression. Personally speaking, more difficult video games cause aggression, but not anything that you can’t get over in five minutes. There are other factors that are keeping the person at risk of hurting others. Snider also states that, “... an American Psychological Association task force report in 2015 found a link between violent video games and increased aggression in players, but insufficient evidence that violent video games lead to criminal violence.” While continuing under the idea that it is the *competition* in video games causing aggression, as stated, it still does not prove anything about criminal violence being an effect, only increased anger, which is bound to happen in any game that is difficult at times. Although you can prove almost *all* video games cause anger and aggression, it is very short lived, and should not be regarded as a potential harm to others. Anger typically does not last long, so if it does, there are more things you should be worried about. Sane people do not hurt others because of a video game.

To this day, there is no concrete study that proves violent video games and violence itself have any correlation, and almost all studies that have attempted to do such have failed to acknowledge other factors in their experiments and arguments. Many other countries have continuously proven that there is no connection, and that the only risk is short lived anger, but we continue to nitpick just because we are ignorant of, or do not want to bring up, mental health. The more we continue to hold up this barricade of awkwardness to each other, the more people suffer every day with nobody to hear them out. Many find video games as an escape from this suffering. It is not a bad thing to find joy through something disliked by others, and if we continue to say it is, we simultaneously hurt people and make them feel worse. That is the true cause of violence.

School Start Times Make a Difference

By Morgan Brown

Over the past few years, there has been a debate over whether or not schools should start later. However, would this affect students in a positive or negative way? Some people believe beginning school even an hour later can improve students’ attendance, and improve their attention during class. On the contrary, earlier start times offer advantages such as more time available after school for extra curricular activities. When looking at the facts, it can be determined that the advantages of later start times outweigh the disadvantages. The initiation of later start times can save money, offer more focused students, and a higher attendance rate.

If schools were to decide to change their start times, they would save quite a lot of money. In the article *Why School Should Start Later*, Lisa Lewis says “that boosting attendance by just 1% districtwide would bring in an additional \$40 million per year.” Schools can gain a lot by just a few more kids going to class. If students were able to get more sleep through the night, they would have more motivation to get out of bed in the morning. Their attendance at school will contribute to how much money the school will get. Lewis also says that “In states such as California where state funding for schools is tied to attendance, it follows that later start times could translate into extra dollars.” Schools tend to push for higher attendance rates mainly because they want the students to get an education, but the school can also get money from it that could possibly go towards new learning tools. If students were to get more sleep from the later start times, they would be more likely to attend school. Schools would benefit from this, which in the long run, would also benefit the students.

Later start times offer students a chance to get more sleep, causing them to be more awake during class, therefore focusing more. Lewis says that “Repeated studies also show that when the school day starts later and teens get more sleep, both grades and standardized test scores go up.” When students are fully rested, their performance in the classroom improves. They are more likely to listen and pay

attention, instead of dozing off. The article also states “a one-hour change produces the same benefit as shrinking class size by one-third or replacing a teacher in the 50th percentile of effectiveness with one in the 84th percentile.” This means that a one-hour time change can overall benefit both students and the staff. The students will pick up more information, and the teachers, in return, get an alert class that is ready to learn. Although later start times may seem of concern to only a small number of people, it should be concerning anyone who cares about children and their education.

It can be argued that earlier start times are more beneficial because it leaves more time for extra curricular activities. The article *What is the Advantage of Having School Start Early* by Marie Anderson states that “Sports needing to practice outdoors have more daylight, and students walking home from these activities can take advantage of the extra daylight for their safety.” While it is true that students will be safer after practices, it is necessary to consider other options they have such as taking a later bus home, having a parent pick them up, or getting a ride from a friend. A 2012 study of Los Angeles middle and high school athletes shows the interpretation that “researchers found that getting less than eight hours of sleep was the strongest predictor of injury.” These minor, or even major injuries cause student athletes to be unable to participate for at least a week, which can affect the well being of the team, and overall, the school. Although both sides of this debate provide thought worthy claims, the evidence clearly proves that later start times offer a greater benefit.

Switching to later start times can allow students to overall focus and perform better in class. Most students struggle with the stress of getting all their work done, on top of the time spent with extra curriculars. Just a little bit more sleep can create a more productive learning environment for both students and teachers. The amount of students showing up late to school, or not completing their assignments has increased in the past few years, which is a major problem within the school system. By resolving this problem, schools can focus more on other issues besides those directly related to sleep loss.

MicroFiction

Constant Fear

By Gabriella Turo

She was running as fast as she could. Panting heavily, her pace started to slow, she could no longer hear her pursuers behind her.

“Why’d you run!?” Zora said out of breath behind her.

“You wanted me to stop?!” her strength was returning.

“We can’t run forever!” Willow locked eyes with Zora.

“Are you doubting me?!” She couldn’t believe Zora, her friend, left on her own will! “Last I checked you didn’t have to follow me! I’m not ‘gonna let the cops take me back. No! That - that place!”

The air became still and the trees listened with intense silence. Zora’s face darkened as she remembered what Willow had endured.

“The police would have helped you.” Willow looked up, teary eyed.

“I’m. Not. Going. Back!” She stormed off deeper into the woods. It seemed as if the trees leaned forward to hug Willow, comforting her. She could feel Viera silently on her shoulder. The black cat rubbed against her head.

“Not now, Viv.” Viera seemed taken aback as the shadow cat disappeared and left a cloud of black smoke where she previously was. The sense of movement made Willow look up. The tree line broke as Willow stepped forward into a ray of sun. Her heart raced; she recognized the large building in front of her. Her face went cold as she picked up the scents of the people that held her captive. She felt dizzy as Zora came up, and she watched her eyes widened in fear. The trees drew back as if they knew the people inside only wanted to do harm.

“It- I- T- they-” words stumbled out of Willow’s mouth as she could not describe what she felt.

“The lab,” Zora muttered under her breath.

“Run!” Willow dashed towards the woods, but she knew that her old captors had caught her scent and would catch up to her at any moment. She could hear Zora, not that far behind her, panting heavily. She kept running faster and faster until the woods around her faded to black.

Memoir

My First Goal By Marlena Doerle

It all started on a rainy October night, six o’clock to be exact. The whole field hockey team was playing their last game of the season.

I was standing eagerly under the canopy waiting to be put in. The wind blew the raindrops underneath the canopy, soaking us. I looked over my shoulder and watched my coach walk towards me. I knew it was my time to go in, so I rearranged myself. I slid my goggles down over my eyes, and adjusted my shin guards.

“You’re going to go in for...” my coach said, pausing.

I stood there waiting for her to say a name. Any name, I just wanted to go in.

“Kaylee.”

As soon as I heard that word, that single word, I walked to the white line on the field and waited. I stood in that same position for about two minutes. Then the ball started coming towards me. And so did Kaylee. She ran past me, and I started shouting.

“Kaylee, Kaylee, Kaylee!!”

I kept shouting, but she did not hear me. One last time I shouted her name, and she finally heard me. I watched as she started sprinting down the field, her jersey sopping wet. She came up to me, her hand out ready to hit it.

“Good Job,” I said as she passed me.

I started sprinting down the field, towards the ball. We had to get it away from our opponents, or they might score. My hair distracted me for a minute, curled into a weird style, that was so random, it didn’t even have a name. I blinked for half a second, and then we had the ball. I started sprinting down the field, towards the goal.

“Get open!” Someone screamed.

I don’t know who said it, but I tried to get open. So far the score was 0-1, opponents winning. We couldn’t let them win our last game. Then, I stood right next to the referee, and the loud, black whistle blew. It just kept ringing threw my ears, until it stopped. He lifted his hands up in a position I knew very well. It was corner time. I quickly ran to the sideline and picked

up the ball, walked to a specific white line next to the goal, and placed the ball down. I watched everyone on my team readjust and get into position. I looked at the referee, soaking wet, and watched him blow the whistle. I slowly lifted my wet, cold field hockey stick, and held it there for a second. Hesitation filled my entire body. Would this be a good hit? Or will it go in a crazy direction? I couldn’t be thinking like this now. I swung my stick, feeling the power in the hit. The ball flew towards one of my team members. She was able to stop it with a quick reaction. The rules for corners is that the ball must be taken out of the circle surrounding the goal. That was what she did. She purposely pulled the hard rubber ball away from the goal, which was a big risk.

“Get into position!” She screamed.

I listened, and ran over to the post of the goal. I felt water dripping from my goggles, and every step I took, the water squished in my cleats. I stood there, nervousness filling my body. Stick down ready to go, and I stood there still. My eyes were going in every direction, looking for the bright orange ball. Then I watched the ball roll towards me. I swung my stick far out in front of me.

“Come on!” Someone screamed behind me.

I had the ball, and I looked for an opening. I hesitated as I watched the other team approach me. I looked back at the goal and found an opening. I quickly swung the ball and it rolled into the goal, right past the goalie. I screamed in excitement, and everyone else around me doing the same. I looked up at the scoreboard, and the point was not given. I did not see the glorious “one” that I worked so hard for. I looked over at the referee, with his arms up, dripping with the wet raindrops.

“The ball was not taken out of the circle. No point giving for Port Byron,” the referee said. Anger, rage, so many feelings filled my body. Why did that not count? I watched my team member take it out of the circle. The night went on, the weather, getting worse. The rain came down even harder, making it hard for me to see. Then it was the end, the score 0-2. It was a night I will always remember. But now when I think about it, I should be proud of myself. After all, it was my first goal.

Harsh Tones

By Gabriella Turo

It started off as a normal snowy day, a snow day actually, right before the weekend. The snow was high, covering my mom's car blocking it in, giving us a day of sitting home and relaxing. I was sitting at the kitchen table watching Youtube, while my mom was making rigatoni and butter.

My mom said quietly, "Tonight we're 'gonna have a sleepover at Grandma's, ok?"

"Ok, mom," I replied. Yay! Grandma's house! The words echoed through my head, but were disturbed by my phone buzzing twice.

I looked down to see a text message from my soon to be stepdad: "Come in to the living room, please." I got up and walked to the living room, shutting my phone off, leaving the black screen facing up. He was sitting in the recliner watching television. He paused it to look up at me. I could smell alcohol, but I thought I was imagining it. Boy was I wrong.

He said slowly, but with little emotion, "Me and your mom are fighting; we might break up." He then just continued to watch the television like nothing had even happened, as if he had not crushed my heart. I was devastated, I mean, to a nine year old, that was awful! I ran out to my mom, who had heard everything.

She started yelling, "Why would you tell her that!" then walked out to the living room. I just sat at the kitchen table while the yelling continued. My little sister, who was not even a year old, started to get fussy, so I had my attention on her. After a few minutes, the yelling got louder, too loud to ignore. My mom came out to the kitchen, grabbed my arm and the stroller my little sister was in, and pushed us into the bathroom. She let me go and called my grandma and grandpa, crying. I just sat on the edge of the bathtub, too shocked to hear what she was saying to them, but I knew they were upset.

After the phone call, he pounded on the door, "Let me see my daughter!!" Over and over he chanted. My mom told me to watch Youtube on my phone, but I was only half paying attention to the video because by how hard he was pounding on the door, I thought it would shatter like glass. My mom pushed the door open and told me to lock it. As soon as she left, I did. I heard more yelling and

feet going up the stairs. He pulled at the door handle, but the only way to get in was to knock it down. I heard my mom's voice, louder than his, screaming for him to move. She lowered her voice to ask me to unlock the door. I unlocked it; my mom had a jacket and her purse when she entered, then she immediately locked the door again. My little sister was starting to get fussy, and the pounding on the door and yelling were getting louder, loud enough to make me think my eardrums were going to pop. I clenched my hands tightly around my phone, the video still playing. It seemed as if time itself was paused forever, as we waited for my grandparents to come and save us, save us from a moment. The

As soon as my mom unlocked the door and my grandma and grandpa rushed in, I knew we were not getting out without a fight.

pounding had stopped but I knew he was still outside the door, I could tell by the way the bathroom doorknob twisted, followed by an angry "Huff!"

Finally I could see the headlights of my grandpa's yellow truck shining under the door. Then I heard them approaching. As soon as my mom unlocked the bathroom

door and my grandma and grandpa rushed in, I knew we were not getting out without a fight. My grandma rushed over to my mom and held her. My grandpa went straight for *him*.

My grandma reached out to grab his arm, saying "Honey don't" but he was already out of reach. There was lots of yelling, but I don't remember exactly what was said. My mom ran up the stairs to grab stuff we needed, I wanted to help her, but my grandma was pushing my little sister and me out to the truck, tossing a few harsh words towards him over her shoulder. My grandpa stayed behind to make sure my mom got out safely. I could hear my grandpa's harsh tone from outside. My grandma quickly buckled my little sister and got in the passenger seat, turning to look at me, but I couldn't meet her eyes. Not long after, my mom and grandpa came out, my grandpa slamming the door as hard as he could. I could sense the anger coming from him. My mom asked if I was alright, but I just shook my head. I was not alright; I was definitely not okay. My grandpa drove off, fast, too fast to be going on icy roads.

When we got home, my mom called the police. After a few minutes, an officer got there and my mom made me go to the kitchen. I sat nervously at the kitchen table, my grandpa sitting across from me reading the newspaper. When the officer left, my mom told me this was our home now. After a few weeks we moved everything out. That part of my life is behind me now, but I can never forget the harsh tones.

The Hole

By Cregg Ford

It was the most competitive day for my cross country team because the competition was a perfect match for us. The race was 1.3 miles instead of 1.5. So I should have had my best time.

I did stretches and warm ups trying to get the butterflies out of my stomach. I looked down the long narrow path in the woods. The Start Coordinator was about to shoot the gun to start. I shook my arms and legs trying to get less nervous. I stared down the Start Coordinator waiting for the gun to shoot.

The guy said, "On your mark, get set, go!" I sprinted as fast as I could, so I could get into the funnel and get at my race pace. The tall kid next to me gave me a shove; I wasn't going to move. My calves burned so much like needles piercing my skin. I got into the funnel and was able to get into my race pace.

My dad screamed, "Get the kid in front of you, pass them one at a time!" I dodged the roots sticking out of the ground, like they were trying to get me.

Coach yelled from the side, "Watch the roots!" I saw the end of the woods. I ran around the field, my calves still burning.

I dropped to the ground.

At first I thought the kid behind me spiked my ankle with his cleats. Then I realized I fell in the hole and hurt my ankle. I could see the baseball field and the grass in my face, making my face itch. My knees were grass stained and my arms scraped from the fence next to me. The pain was prodigious. I got goosebumps even though it was 65 degrees. And I had no idea what damage was done to my ankle. I watched the kid behind me leap over me.

"Stay down," the kid said. I was furious.

A guy ran through the baseball field and helped me up and asked, "Do you need me to help you back to the start?" the guy said.

"No, I think I can finish," I said. I started running again even though the pain made me want to quit. Everything started to get blurry. I could feel my ankle starting to swell up. The trail was very rocky, which bothered my ankle.

My dad said from the side of the trail, "Keep pushing, you're almost finished."

I saw the finish line through the woods; it was so close. I felt my ankle give out. I tumbled into the rocks. But I knew I had to finish that race. I got up and brushed myself off and limped to the finish line.

Champions

By Madison Gillespie

"I got," I shouted as I ran up to the pop fly. Then I caught the ball and threw it to my Coach. I jogged to the end of the line, while watching the rest of my teammates do the warm ups.

"I can't believe that our team has made it so far. I'm so proud of our team," I whispered to my friend, Abby. Abby is our pitcher and a great one, too. She is always throwing perfect strikes, and she always keeps a good mindset, always.

I watched Katelyn run up. She was up next. "Got me," she called out, to signify that she was going for the ball. My teammates and I had unusual ways to call the ball. I watched the ball fall right into her glove smoothly. Then she popped right up and launched it into Coach's glove. Katelyn is usually our center fielder, one of the best ones out there. She is always hustling and she is going to get that ball no matter what.

As I was running up to get ready to catch the next pop fly, Coach shouted, "Bring it in girls." I was running into the huddle with my team. I could feel the chills going up my spine. Maybe it was because I was cold or maybe because I was nervous. When I got to the huddle, I put my arms on my friends and smiled. We had been practicing forever for this moment and we were ready. Then Coach started to finish hyping us up and telling us how proud he was of us.

Then I heard, "Where are our positions?" Bella, was shouting to us. Bella is the

energetic, crazy, fun, and a super athletic one of the group. She is also the catcher who helps keep the team's heads up. Then Coach got out his paper and listed off our positions. I stood there waiting to hear my name.

"Madison playing second base and hitting third," stated Coach. When he finished saying all the positions, we ran into the dugout. Since we were in Jordan Elbridge, we were the away team and hitting first. Abby grabbed her batting gloves, helmet, and bat. She went out of the dugout, watched the pitcher, and took a couple of practice swings. The pitcher is good, throws strikes and very few balls. Abby walked up to the plate and stepped into the batter's box. The girls in the dugout got off of the bench, and stepped up to the fence getting ready to cheer on Abby.

Coach yelled out, "Stay hydrated!" So I walked over to my bag and grabbed a drink. I decided to grab my ranch flavored sunflower seeds and bubble gum. Then I brought it up to the fence to share with my friends.

The first pitch was thrown. "Ball!" the umpire called out. The second pitch was thrown and Abby swung. She hit it so hard out to the left fielder and sprinted up to first base.

"Round it, Round it!" Coach shouted out. Before Coach could say get down, Abby had already slid into second.

"Safe!" the umpire called. Then Bella was up next. She walked out there and stepped into the batter's box and got ready to hit.

The first pitch came by: "Strike!" the umpire called out. Everyone in the dugout encouraged Bella. Second pitch came by. Bella swung and hit it out to the third basemen, and she caught it in the air.

"Out!" the umpire called. After a couple of innings, we were tied 13-13. It had been a super close game the whole time. Jordan Elbridge was up to bat.

"Top of the order," I called out, "Abby Ahern is in the batter's box." I knew her from playing All Stars: a softball league for all the best players from each team. She was a great player who had a good attitude and could hit and field. Mostly, though, she was a super genuine person. Abby Mckay threw the first pitch, and Abby Ahern hit a line drive out to our center fielder, Katelyn. But Abby Ahern could run the bases extremely fast. So Katelyn got the ball into our shortstop and we were able to keep her at second base. Finally, we were in the last inning and we were batting. We were up 19-17, and I was up to bat. So when I stepped into the batter's box, I put my bat up, and bent my knees slightly while looking right at the pitcher. First pitch came by. I swung. I hit the ball all the way out to center field and sprinted around the bases as fast as I could.

As I was running towards third, I heard Coach yell, "Get down!"

So I slid into third: "Safe!" the umpire called. The next person up to bat was Kloe. She was our first baseman and was really good at it. She had been doing it ever since I can remember. Kloe got in

the box and hit the first good pitch to cross the plate. It was a great hit right to the right fielder. Kloe ran around the bases until she got to second. By the time she had made it to second base, I ran home scoring us another run. After a couple of more batters the final score was 23-17, making us the winners of the 2019 Little League Championship. Our team ran at each other creating a huge huddle with an overwhelming amount of emotions.

The two teams lined up and shook hands with each other while saying "Good game." After the teams shook hands we lined up on the line out of the home plate and handed out trophies to each player. Jordan Elbridge went first. We listen to each name of every player and clapped after each one. Then it was our teams turn to get our trophies. But instead of our Coach just saying our names when calling us up, he said a couple sentences about each player, which made everyone happy but also super emotional. After everyone had got their trophies, we all took a bunch of pictures together to save the memories. We all started crying because this was our last year of Little League, and it meant so much to us. It was one of the best things that happened to me. Winning this game and becoming 2019 champions taught me and my team that we can do anything as long as we give 110% effort and have our best attitude. I've enjoyed growing with this team and becoming better athletes. After the game, and taking pictures, Coach took us out for ice cream to celebrate.

The Tragic Incident
By Anthony DeWolf

A while back when I was about seven, my family and I went to Cayuga Lake State Park to go camping. I had this really cool bike that I got out of a trade my dad did with this guy. I really liked the bike and I got a lot of attention because of it. The bike looked like a motorcycle with a big wheel on the back, and it was all black with silver lining. It was a really nice bike and I really liked having it.

While we were camping, my cousin and her family came to go camping as well, so we hung out for the whole week. My cousin and I were having a great time riding bikes, swimming, and just messing around. On one of the days we were camping, something happened to my bike and the brakes wouldn't work on it. I really didn't think very much about it, so I just kept on riding my bike without brakes.

Then my mom and I went walking down a trail and we found a tunnel that was dark and there was a lot of graffiti on it. So then when we came back up to the campsite, my mom said, "We should all ride our bikes down the hill to the trail." Then I told my mom that my brakes didn't work.

But then she said, "You will be fine. Just be careful."

My cousin and I took a break from bike riding and my mom said that we would go down the hill to the trail in a little bit, so my cousin and I just walked around the campground and started playing soccer and climbing trees.

Then it was time. My mom yelled our names, "Anthony, Skyler, come on! It's time to go to the trail!" My cousin was really excited to go, but not me.

My heart was racing and I was sweating a little bit. I told my mom one more time that I didn't really want to go, but she said once again, "You'll be fine. Just be careful." I trusted her words (for some stupid reason) and I went with them.

At first we all walked down the hill with our bikes. We were about halfway down the hill and my mom and cousin jumped on their bikes and rode down the rest of the hill.

I could hear them saying, "Come on, it's okay. Just get on your bike and go down!" So I jumped on my bike and started using my feet to slow me down.

Then I lost control of the bike. I tried stopping it with my feet, but all I did was cut my feet open, and then I just kept on going faster and faster down the hill.

I started screaming, "HELP, HELP, HELP!" But no one could stop me. I sped down the hill then went up a smaller slope and then started to go towards the road.

I zoomed past the road almost getting hit by a car and then went airborne down a large, steep hill. When I hit the ground my bike rammed into a tree. I thought I passed out but all that happened was that I just closed my eyes. I opened them and about 15 adults were circled around me. They all helped me up and asked me if I was okay, I said, "Yes." Then my mom started running down the hill and gave me a big hug and started crying. A moment later, a lifeguard came from off his stand - because we were near the water - and brought me to a small room. He checked my feet, my arms, my eyes, and my ears. Then he cleaned up my scraps and cuts. When he finished, I went over to my mom. We went back to the campground with the bike, and my cousin and I sat down, had a glass of water and just relaxed for the rest of the day.

Now ever since that day, I've had that bike in a shed, waiting to be used, getting rusted and torn up by squirrels and mice.

Unbreakable

By Erin Allen

We got Snuggles on April 23. As soon as I saw him I knew that we were going to be best friends. When I first picked him up he cuddled into my cheek, my smile spread from cheek to cheek, I cuddled in harder. Our bond grew and grew as a few years passed. We always fell asleep on the couch together on the striped blanket that held many memories. Every morning I woke up and played lots of games with Snuggles. He was an outside cat so we would go chase mice together, as well. They would hide from us in the grass but we would find them. I would say "Come on Snuggles! Let's get them!" My knees dug into the grass crawling after Snuggles as he sunk his teeth into the helpless mice. I took care of him everyday. And never once neglected him

One day he had to go to the vet, he didn't want to go, so he hid from us. We chased him around the house and he knocked things over. He knocked flowers, glass, and kitchen utensils. My mom got mad and said, " Stop! You knocked over my vase!!" It was a nightmare trying to chase him. One of us got ahold of him and he clawed our faces, my dad screamed, it seemed as if the whole neighborhood could hear him. Everyday we searched for him after he disappeared. Eventually, my parents called the vet and began to stop looking. They said "It was pointless and that it was a waste of time." They believed that he ran away and was not coming back. But I was determined; I needed to see him again because I missed him. He needed to go to the vet or he was going to die.

One day when we were going to clean under the porch. I wanted to get it over with so I ran outside and then... there he was, he was under the porch. I said, "Come on Snuggles," but he didn't move. I started getting worried. I kept saying, "Snuggles, now's not the time to play dead." He still didn't move. I could feel the tears start to fill my eyes. That's when I realized what had happened: His eyes were closed with flies around him, he was very skinny and dirty, and it didn't even look like he was breathing... I stood there looking at the lifeless body before me. I ran inside.

My mom asked me, "What is wrong?" I looked up at her with tears in my eyes. I could tell she saw the pain because I was trembling and had many tears rolling

down my face. I pointed outside, unable to speak. I immediately ran upstairs and took the same striped blanket that held all the happy memories that were spent with him. It held the memory from when I got mad and needed to calm down, Snuggles knew I was upset and tried to comfort me, and lastly it held the despair that dawned on me when he had passed. I cuddled up with it. I cried and cried and eventually I fell asleep, still holding the beloved blanket. He always fell asleep next to me during the night. And now the bed was cold.

A day passed and it was time to bury him. I asked my parents if we could bury him by the flowers.

When my dad asked why I said, "He deserves to be around things as beautiful as he was." I took the striped blanket and I covered him up with it, then he was buried. I stood over his grave I could feel the tears fill my eyes once again, I could feel warm tears rolling down my desperate face as I thought about all the good times we had at the home in which him and I grew up, the warm feeling I get when I saw him in the morning made me grin and automatically made it a great day. His soft fur against my cold hands would help my hands become warm. The time when we first met was magical, I looked into his eyes and thought of the many games we could play and how we would spend every second together, I looked back at the striped blanket and put it in my lap, I picked up the little kitten and placed him on my lap that's when I knew what to call him. Snuggles. I snapped back to reality: He was gone.

I would stand by his grave every day wishing that he would come back and wishing that I would still be able to give him all of my love, like I had always done. Days turned into weeks and weeks turned into months. I began to understand that he was okay and that he was in a better place. I was just glad that I got to spend the time I did with him. I wish it could have been forever, but not everything lasts like you want it to. People die and you have to learn how to cope; you must get out of those hard times in order to be happy, and sometimes happiness is worth it.

Someone once told me "Letting go doesn't mean you don't care."

The Love of Cooking

By Ella Bachman

“Hand me the bowl,” I said.

My Grandma said, “Of course.” She gave me the bowl and I sat down in a chair and started to lick it with the spatula that was in it. It was so good. Everytime I went over to her house, she would always have something new to make from one of her cookbooks. Sometimes it would be dessert or dinner that we would make. This time it was bread.

“The yeast acts like love, as it rises,” we both say. But of course, I don’t like the smell of yeast. But the smell after is good when the bread comes out of the oven.

I picked up the pot holders and placed the bread on top of the oven. We put a towel over the pan and let it sit. While it was sitting, we started talking about what we would make next.

“Maybe we could make brownies?” I said.

“How about cookies because it’s almost Christmas time?” Grandma said.

“Okay, that sounds like fun,” I said. By then the bread was done sitting and we started eating it.

“It’s so good,” I said.

“Maybe we can make some again next time you come over,” said my grandma.

“Yes, we should,” I said.

The next time I went over we did it all again but instead we made her mashed potatoes. We started peeling the potatoes as we talked about how our lives were going. She would always make me laugh. We talked about the dogs being weird and silly. Then, when we finished peeling the potatoes, she added them to the pot of water and let them cook. I waited for them to boil. They started to boil and I ran up to the stove and watched the water bubble like crazy. I took the pan of potatoes from the stove over to the sink, but it was too heavy for me so she came to help. We walked them to the sink together. Then we finished preparing them. I took a taste from the bowl.

“These potatoes are really good. I’m ‘gonna call them *Grandma’s World Famous Mashed Potatoes*,” I said. “I love your world famous mashed potatoes.”

She started to laugh because she thought it was a good idea. “I know you do, Ella” said my grandma. When they were done, we each ate a bowl.

“I love you, Grandma,” I said.

“I love you, too, L,” said my grandma. I gave my grandma a big hug. So after that, every Thanksgiving she would bring us her world famous mashed potatoes.

The Comeback

By Ian Mack

I jumped out of the car and walked out towards the field ready to play the biggest and most important game of the season, the finals. Everyone on the team knew it was a big game that we needed to win. We had only lost one game in the regular season, so the odds were in our favor. The game was later than usual, 6 o’clock. It made the game seem more important because it had the same feelings as an under the lights game. Mosquitos filled the air because it was summer, and some were in groups that made them look like a small cloud of blood sucking pests. Thankfully, one of my teammate’s moms brought some bug spray. My team tried to head for the field, but of course we had to take pictures first.

“Everyone lineup for a group photo,” one of the parents yelled. This was going to be a game we could never forget.

We lined up for warmups looking as professional as our 11 year old selves could be. The grass was misty and had small drops of water laying upon it. We shot the ball as hard as we could, trying to look like a military firing squad. We looked over our shoulders to see the other team trying their hardest as well. We weren’t too nervous, but weren’t feeling as good as we used to.

“Bring it in!” the coach yelled.

“Here comes the same pep talk that we always get,” I thought.

“Win or lose, it’s been a great season, so just go out there, play your best and have fun,” the coach said in a

motivating tone. Everyone’s eyes widened as we were filled with hope and competitive spirit.

“Captains!” the ref yelled out. I jogged over to the ref along with my cousin, Tyler.

“Heads or Tails?” he asked us.

“Heads,” I respond with confidence. He tossed the coin and nervousness flowed over me. This was our last game: we had to win.

“It’s heads!” The ref announced. Tyler and I headed back to the huddle to tell our team the news.

“We got ball,” I said. The team huddle erupted in “Let’s go!” and “We got this” messages as we jogged out onto the field for the big game.

We started off with our normal kickoff strategy and had our biggest kicker take a shot straight from the start, but it went wide and slowly rolled off to the cornfield in the distance behind the goal. We didn’t want to waste any energy, plus they were enemies, so we made them go get the ball. Not long after that, their goalie returned the ball and propped it for a goal kick. The game had truly started now. They broke down the field with a good series of passes but were eventually stopped by our defence. Then we headed down the sideline carrying the ball carefully the whole time and sending a good cross to the middle, but it got caught by the goalie. The game went back and forth offence, defence, offence, defence and so on. They eventually had an attack that seemed more fierce than the others. They took a solid shot; it looked like it could go wide. Then a defender reached out and smacked the

ball out of the air. The thud was loud and surprising. Handball in the box, that meant they got a 1 on 1 penalty kick against our goal keeper. Their best striker went into the box and gave our goalie a death stare. He kicked the ball with a lot of power toward the bottom left corner, unreachable by our goalie. The whistle made a loud shrieking noise signaling the first half had ended.

We headed to the bench, and everyone had their heads down. The morale was low for most of the team, some in tears, but I had a strong feeling we could still win.

“You guys aren’t playing your hardest. You’re not playing like how you guys have been. You guys look sad and mopey, go out and have fun,” the coach said.

We went out to the field, heads still dropped but not as sad as before. The opening kickoff went and then we played the back and forth game once again. Offence, defence, offence, defence and it went on. We stopped the ball on defence and passed it to our biggest kicker, who took a shot from just inside half field. It went in after a missed timed jump from the goalie. Then not much longer after, the ball went out of bounds and we got a corner kick. The kick was perfect and went right to our team who tapped it in the goal. We had gained the lead! The crowd cheered and set a good vibe. We passed the ball between ourselves to waste time and the ref blew the final whistle: we did it! Smiles filled our faces as we walked off the field for the last time, in a winning fashion.

6-12 Word Memoirs

I hit rock bottom, but I like to climb.
-Kloe Verdi

They all looked in one direction; I walked past them.
-Madison Gillespie

When the bar is too high, just duck under it.
-Katelyn Ware

There is a roller coaster; ride it.
-Janelle Beaumont

Nervous Skateboarding

By Janelle Beaumont

Hayley and I were on a back road close to my house, and I was trying to teach her how to skateboard. She was one of my friends who I was hanging out with over the weekend. The road was surrounded by woods on the left and a cornfield on the other. It was a bit wet there because it had rained the day before, and it was shady there, so it doesn't dry quickly. She was very interested in skating after she had seen me do it a few times.

It was during Thanksgiving break on a Sunday afternoon around 2:30 pm. It was very cold and a little windy, but quiet there. We were wearing lightweight hoodies because it didn't feel too cold to us while we were there. I was trying to figure out what way she was best at riding the board, either pushing with her right or her left leg and which one she should use to control the board. I used my right to push and left to control the board. I had to tell her what to do when she was riding so she wouldn't get hurt very easily. A few times after my first time riding, I got scraped on concrete kind of bad, but it didn't hurt too much.

We headed down to the backroad and there were many cars going by. After a while of waiting for them all to go by, we ran across the road to where we were headed. We walked down to a sign where there was some flat surface. Hayley had to get used to the board before she actually started to ride. It took her about ten minutes to learn how to use it. I had to hold onto her until she was able to keep balance and control. She finally was doing good, so I let her go on her own to ride down the hill from the top of the road. I was nervous because I knew she would go fast and it would make her feet vibrate, so she might fall off. But she didn't fall, and she had lots of fun doing it.

As she went farther down the road I had to tell her something. I said to Hayley, "It looks like your struggling pushing with your right. Try doing it with your left; it might be easier."

Hayley said to me, "Okay, it would probably feel better that way, I think." She stopped and got off the board so she could switch her stance.

"And make sure to lean the way you want to go because this road is curvy, so it will turn you. I will show you if you're not able to," I yelled to her as she was a ways down the road. I could hear the wheels rolling on the concrete even with her being far from me. They were a little loud, but she could still hear what I was saying to her. She got on the board and did what I had told her to and she did very well.

When she started going down the road farther and farther, there was a car. The color was black as night. It was coming over the hill on the opposite side of Hayley pulling over onto the side of the road. At that moment she was about three quarters away from where she started and close to the car so she wasn't too far from it. I jogged over to her in case something was going to happen. We weren't able to tell who was in the car or if it was somebody that either of us knew. We were both a little nervous because it looked like nobody was in the car. There was nowhere to go hunting or fishing around where we were, so they couldn't have been wanting to do that. They finally came to a stop, so we backed up into the grass by the cornfield by the road away from the person. Hayley stopped quickly and grabbed my skateboard from the ground and she said, "Let's go back to your house," very nervously. I could tell she was scared by how she was acting while she looked at me.

After a few seconds of waiting for something to happen Hayley said, "Run, they might kidnap us." So I ran with her. She ran fast as lightning because she was scared they would try and get us like she had said. She got to where the roads met and I caught up to her a few seconds after. We looked behind us to make sure they weren't following us home. Then we took a turn and walked the rest of the way back. Finally at my house, she set down the board in the grass and we caught our breath. Then we talked about what we thought could have happened if we hadn't ran.

Where I'm From Poems

The Yellow House on Main Street

by Jenna Jump

I am from the yellow house on Main Street
with a dog and the swingset in the backyard
that we think was built wrong by Grandfather
when we first moved in.

I am from the house with a ton of trophies and
a bunch of old baby clothes in the basement that
my mother doesn't want to sell
and from Bethany's and my room
that is a mess
with my parents saying,
"Clean your room"
all the tiime and
"Go outside" or
"Practice."
And from girls
who ride their bikes
on the sidewalks
and eat
steak, rice, and pasta
from the used to be white microwave.

I am from the house with
dog toys
dog fur
and from many stuffed animals,
especially Target Dog
that I got when I was five.
I am from barbies
and Cookie the Dog,
a furreal friend.

I am also from the people
who were taken
from our family
way too early.

I am from the yellow house on Main Street
with a dog and the swingset in the backyard
that we think was built wrong by Grandfather
when we first moved in.

Grateful
by Brooke Brambley

I am from a family of five
a sister and a brother a mom and a dad,
with my brother giving me the nickname,
"Paco."
From Dad bringing me
to the playground
down the road
and to the firehouse
for soccer.

I am from scary movie nights
on the weekends
with my friends
going to the park and restaurants:
always lots of fun.

I am from playing with my dog
with her on her leash
breaking my arm when
I threw her the ball one time,
her leash going behind my legs
flipping me back
on my arm.

I am from dog and kid toys
all around the house,
and from the special blanket that I got
when I was a baby
that sits on a shelf
in my closet.

I am from steak, burgers, and almost any
other meat,
and from the house on State Street and the
house on Havens Ave.
I am from shopping trips to the
"Bass Pro Mall" as I called it with Gramamia.

I am from sleepovers with friends
who are always there
when I need them,
and from a niece and nephew
twins
getting to babysit them sometimes.

I am from the endless
love and fun
of my family and friends that I am
so grateful to have.

In Three Years
by Modena Phillips

I am from a friendly neighborhood
Where it was nice and quiet
until one night where all that just vanished.

I am from not always happiness
Sometimes yelling and smacks in the heads.
We try to have fun
But sometimes we just fight...

*I am from the accident
Where it was just down the road.
There were four soon to be five
When it all happened.
Only one survived.*

I am from Mr. Woodchuck
Who I got from my Great Grandparents
When we traveled.
I got him when I was nine.
Three years passed
And he is still mine.

I am from where we hear
"Phillips don't quit."
Where we try
And we don't give up.

I am from late night dinners
Where we're not perfect
But we still love each other.

I am from my
Grandmother
She was always there for us,
Especially during hard times.

And from my mother,
Where my parents fight,
But in a way, they figure it out.

I am from a house
covered in Lowe's plastic.
It's not the best house to live in
But it's not a house, it's a home.

*I am from the metal pieces on the road
Where an accident happened.
Everything was so traumatic.*

I am from nature
Where there are stones and leaves
Usually where I go to breathe.

I am from cook-outs
Where we all get together
Once a day and we all smile.

I am from my childhood toys
I look at them and think
Of memories of the past.

*I am from the road where it all happened.
When we drive on the road
I look outside.
It's been a few months now
And I still see the marks.*

I am from the accident
Where it was just down the street.
I still think about it
twenty-four seven.

Additional Poems

I'm Sorry
by Bryanna Wilbur

No matter how hard I try,
I can't be perfect.
I can't be popular.

I'm sorry I'm not
everything you wanted and more.
I'm sorry you don't
want to be seen with someone like me:
 someone broken
 someone bruised
 someone lost and unwanted.

I'm sorry I'm the type of person
 who loves to read
 and has her nose in a book.

I'm sorry I don't listen to the same kind of
music.
I'm sorry I don't have friends
and that I look up to you.
I'm sorry that I needed you.

But why, exactly, should I say I'm sorry?
 I'm sorry that I'm not weak?
 I'm sorry that you can't control me?

So Sorry, NOT Sorry!

I'm only sorry for the people that you
have messed with
And
that you don't have your life figured out.

I'm just sorry for the people who think
they're better than other people.

New Year's Wishes
by Natalie Pyle

Wishes I would like to come true:

*Wish I could start over
and get a fresh start on school
and make new friends.*

*Wish I could get a new hobby,
try a new style of clothing,
get a better attitude.*

Wish I could lose some weight.

*Wish I could like my dog,
even if she gets on my nerves.*

*Wish people could change
could be nicer,
maybe even more polite.*

*Wish I could get another pet
like a bunny,
or two bunnies,
or another hamster like Biscuit;
she passed away.*

*Wish I could be cleaner:
keep my room clean
or help clean the house,
keep my language clean,
keep my backpack clean,
keep my mind clean
from all the sad, depressing thoughts.*

*Mostly, I wish I could start everything over,
be reborn,
start over with new bonds,
make new friendships
make a new person
out of me.
Possibly a better me.*

Everyday Wishes
by Jayla Murray

Wishes I keep inside:

Wish I could fly just like a bird,
gliding over all the soft clouds
and smelling the fresh air.

Wish I could get a little taller,
be able to reach the highest shelf
and get into all the junk cupboards.

Wish I could grow more muscle.

Wish I could not care what others say
about My body.

Wish I could be with my mom everyday
to paint nails
bake brownies
and go on hikes to see the beautiful
outdoors.

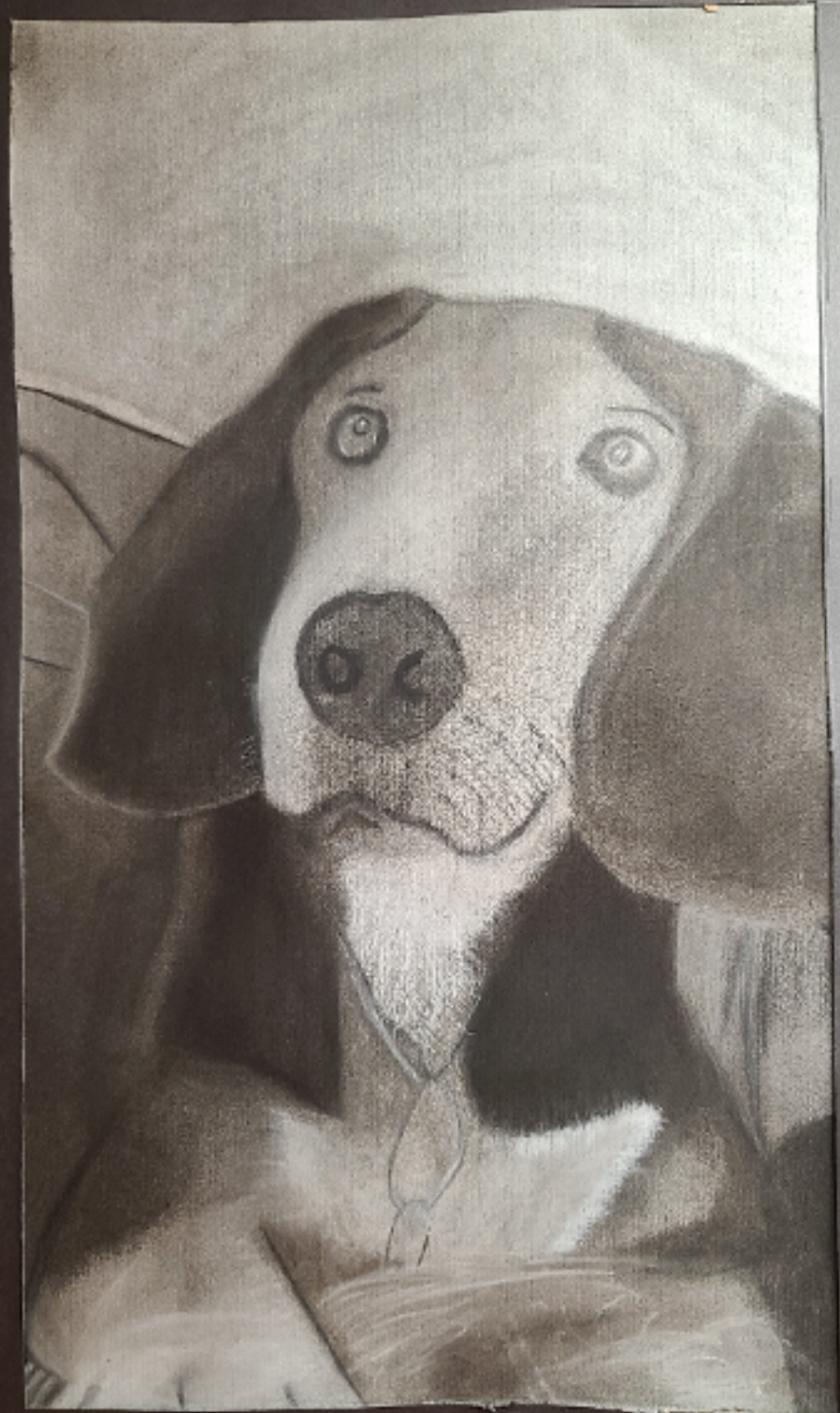
Wish I could have all the basketball skills,
dribble behind my back
and rebounding
or even dunking like the pros.

Mostly I wish I had a lot of money
to buy any clothes
to buy any makeup
to buy any shoes
and most of all, a huge house.

Art



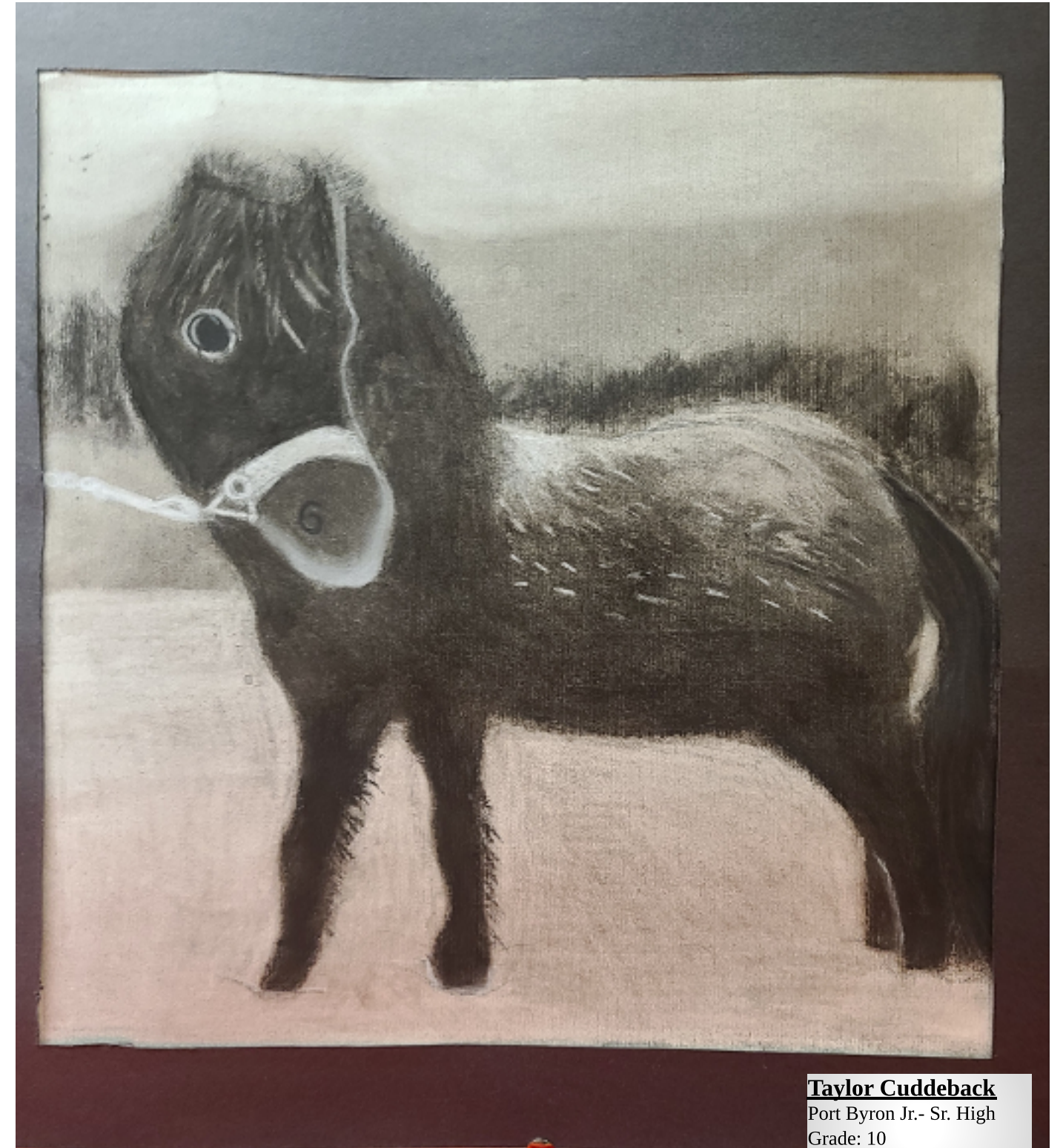
Desirae Stewart
Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
Grade: 9
Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Gabby McCarthy
Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
Grade: 11
Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Emily St. Martin
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 12
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Taylor Cuddeback
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 10
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Drew Nolan
Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
Grade: 9
Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



McKayla Thomas
Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
Grade: 7
Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



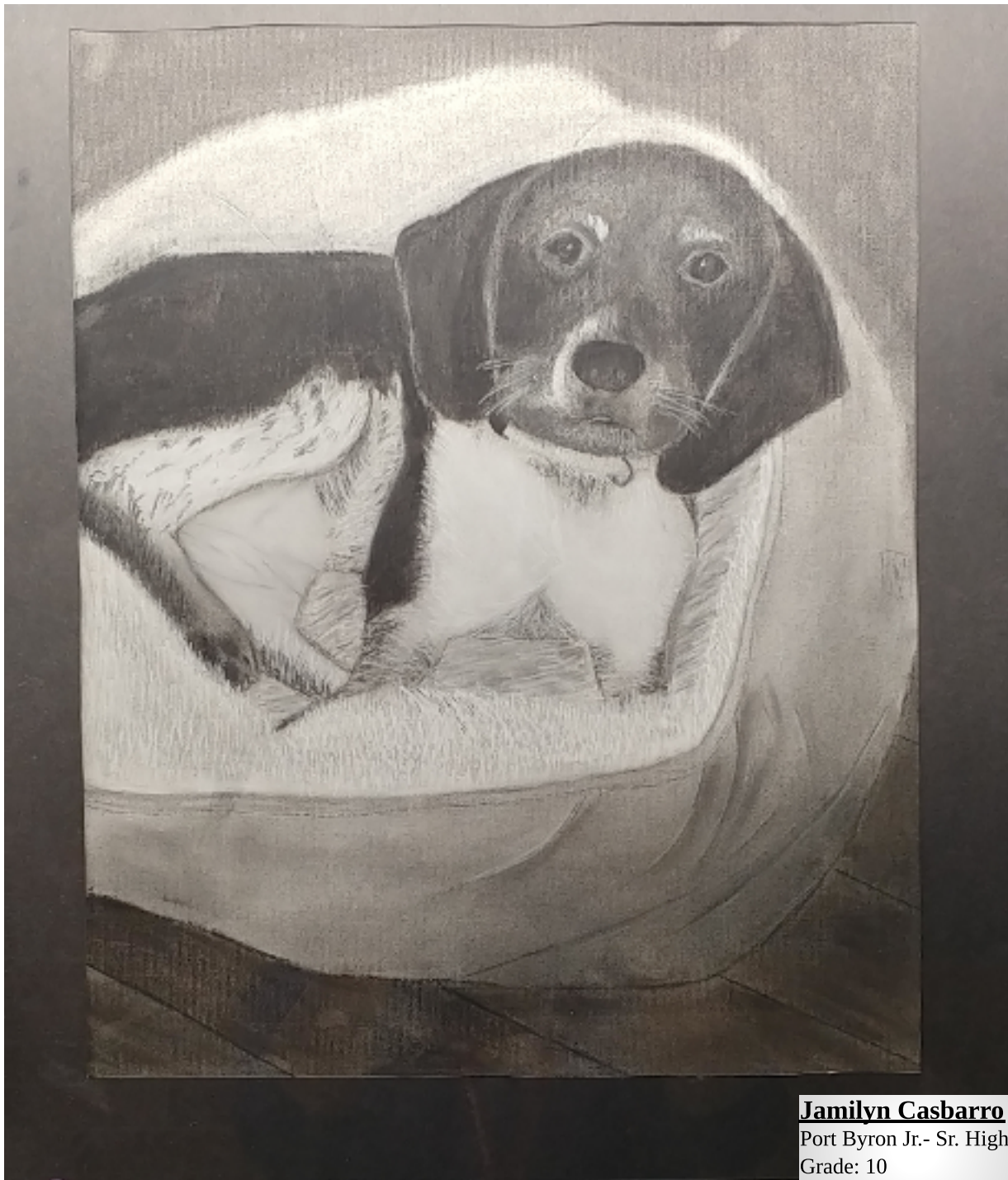
Alex Doerle
Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
Grade: 7
Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Abbey Ryan
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 11
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Madison Cioffa
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 10
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



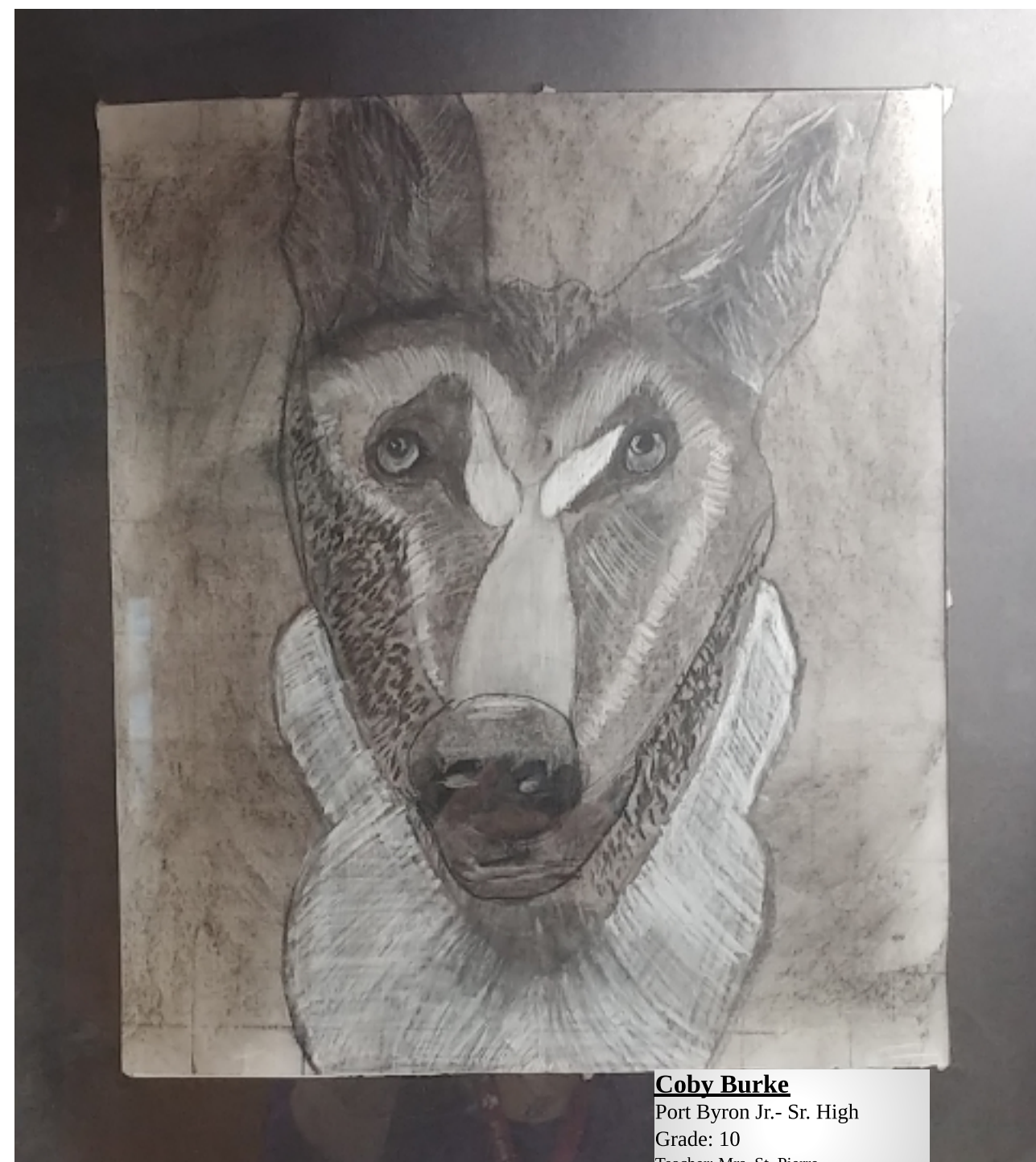
Jamilyn Casbarro
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 10
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



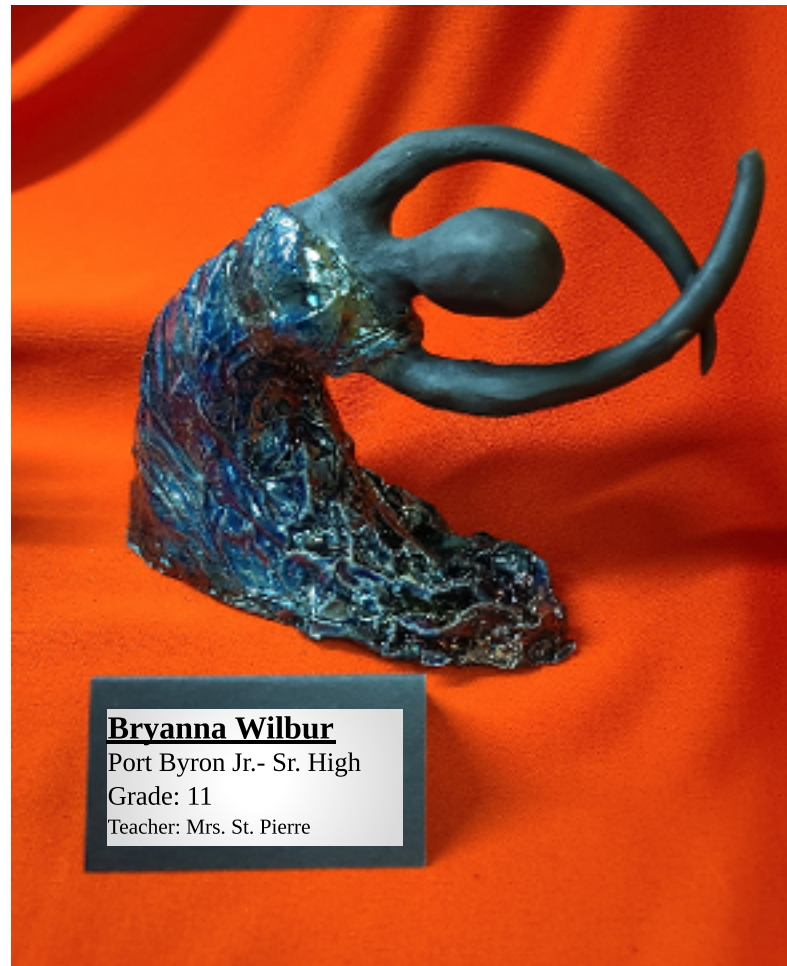
Britany Staring
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 10
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Hannah Jones
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 10
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre



Coby Burke
 Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High
 Grade: 10
 Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre





Claudia Chetney

Port Byron Jr.- Sr. High

Grade: 10

Teacher: Mrs. St. Pierre