

Madison Sigona

# Panther Press

Literary Magazine



September to January  
2022-2023

## MEET THE STAFF

**Senior Editor:**  
**Colleen Jump**

**Junior Editors:**  
**Haleigh Kepple**  
**Sophia Mucedola**  
**Garrett Poyneer**  
**Lily Ridley**

**Staff Artists/Photographers:**  
**Adriana Carner-Ward**  
**Dominic Churchill**  
**Lacee Hymer**  
**Madison Sigona**

**Advisor:**  
**Ms. Gendron**



## Contributing Writers:

Liliana Berkey  
Morgan Brown  
Dominic Churchil  
Brady Cochran  
Alyx England  
Anthony Ferri  
Aurora France  
Madison Garrad  
Nikko Giacona  
Lacee Hymer  
Alisa Ilcu  
Colleen Jump  
Haleigh Kepple  
Mallory Mills  
Jaesona McMullen  
Sophia Mucedola  
Lily Ridley  
Sara Ripley  
Peyton Skutt  
Emma Taylor



## Contributing Artists/Photographers

Haven Alfred  
Mackenna Ball  
Richard Beach  
Catarina DeAngelis  
Alexander Doerle  
Alexandra Marshall  
Ares Nielens  
Alyx England  
Michael Guarnieri  
Jodi Smith  
Emily Sobolewski  
Madeline Weibley  
Dalton Wilson

# Port Byron Central School District

<b>Volume 3</b> <b>Issue 1: Fall 2023</b>	<b>Multi-Genre</b>	<b>22: Shania, a Corvette, and a Warm Breeze,</b> <b>By Brady Cochrane</b>
	<b>6-8: Sweaters,</b> <b>By Alisa Iluc</b>	<b>Poetry</b>
	<b>9: Spinglocks,</b> <b>By Dominic Churchill</b>	<b>23: The Riverway,</b> <b>By Anonymous</b>
	<b>9: Hats,</b> <b>By Peyton Skutt</b>	<b>24: My Cat Walter,</b> <b>By Haleigh Kepple</b>
	<b>10-11: Rings,</b> <b>By Alyx England</b>	<b>25: Preview,</b> <b>By Sophia Mucedola</b>
	<b>12-13: Cell Phone,</b> <b>By Sara Ripley</b>	<b>26: The House on the Hill,</b> <b>By Anthony Ferri</b>
	<b>14-16: The Magic of Books,</b> <b>By Haleigh Kepple</b>	<b>27: A House Next to My Cousins,</b> <b>By Anonymous</b>
	<b>17: The Flute,</b> <b>By Jaesona McMullen</b>	<b>28: Ramen Doodles,</b> <b>By Lacee Hymer</b>
	<b>College Essays</b>	<b>29: The Bright Yellow House,</b> <b>By Nikko Giacona</b>
	<b>18-19: Mental Game,</b> <b>By Colleen Jump</b>	
<b>20-21: Tomorrow's Melody,</b> <b>By Morgan Brown</b>		

<b>Poetry Continued</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>46: Sneaker,</b> <b>By Mackenna Ball</b>
<b>30: I Am From Visiting</b> <b>By Aurora France</b>	<b>Cover Art,</b> <b>Madison Signona</b>	<b>47:Portrait,</b> <b>By Haven Alfred</b>
<b>31: The Big Grassy Hill,</b> <b>By Mallory Mills</b>	<b>9: Hat,</b> <b>Adriana Carner-Ward</b>	<b>48: Peace,</b> <b>By Jodi Smith</b>
<b>32: The Public Playground,</b> <b>By Liliana Berkey</b>	<b>27: Tree House,</b> <b>Dominic Churchill</b>	<b>49: Sylvia,</b> <b>By Ares Nielens</b>
<b>33:Childhood,</b> <b>By Madison Garrad</b>	<b>35: Softball,</b> <b>Lacee Hymer</b>	<b>50: Portrait,</b> <b>By Madeline Weibley</b>
<b>34: Little League Championships,</b> <b>By Anonymous</b>	<b>37: Stage,</b> <b>By Adriana Carner-Ward</b>	<b>51-52: Dragon's Eyes,</b> <b>By Emily Sobolewski, Dalton Wilson, Alexandra Marshall, and Michael Guarnieri</b>
<b>36: Nervous Performing,</b> <b>By Lily Ridley</b>	<b>38: Dog Under Table,</b> <b>By Lacee Hymer</b>	<b>53: Collection,</b> <b>By Alyx England</b>
<b>39: Man's Best Friend,</b> <b>By Anthony Ferri</b>	<b>40-41: Hello Kitty,</b> <b>By Madison Garrad</b>	<b>Closing Art: Reflection,</b> <b>By Alexander Doerle</b>
<b>40-41: A Kid Again,</b> <b>By Madison Garrad</b>	<b>43: Dog,</b> <b>By Michael Guarnieri</b>	
<b>42: Beaner,</b> <b>By Emma Taylor</b>	<b>44: The Macabre,</b> <b>By Catarina DeAngelis</b>	
	<b>45: Landscape,</b> <b>By Richard Beach</b>	

## Home of the Panthers



# Multi-Genre

## Shield

Sweaters are a shield  
Protecting me from numbing frosty temperatures  
The soft material against my skin  
I forget about the frightful weather outdoors  
And settle down pleasantly on the couch  
My sweater holding me adequately  
I drift off to sleep  
Knowing that I'm sheltered from the cold

## Sweater in the Closet

My sweater, my protection  
From the nefarious cold

It guards me from shivering  
From chattering my teeth

It holds me in a tight warm hug  
and doesn't let go

Until warmth comes again

It rests all summer long in my closet  
Waiting  
Knowing  
Planning  
For when winter will come again  
And even my sweater knows that it will,  
Cold will come again and again  
My sweater being there for me each time



Toasty  
Snug, cozy, outside  
My sweater keeping me warm  
much like a blanket.

Sweater  
Warm, lull  
Soothing like lotion  
As soft as a lullaby  
Cardigan

**Introduction: Sweaters, they keep you warm. Without them winters would be colder and fashion wouldn't be as fashionable. There are many different types of sweaters. Some are thicker than others, some are thinner and some differently colored than others, but they all have one job: to keep us warm and safe. A sweater is your own shield from the cold. This is why I chose sweaters.**

By Alisa Ilcu

## The Betrayal By Alisa Ilcu

"Ahhhh!" screamed Jenika. That's all she could really do. There was power in this situation, but she didn't have it. Jenika felt helpless; she wished she could help herself somehow.

"Why are you doing this Lanie!" Jenika screamed in pain. She didn't answer. Jenika thought about her family. What if I never see them again? She thought about her little brother Zane, he would have no older sister to help guide him through his hardest times. Her mother would be missing a daughter, same with her father. They would have to say that they have two kids instead of three every time they get asked. But she was worried about her sister the most. Their kids were supposed to be best friends when they were older; they were supposed to do everything together. She and her sister Anika's bond would be broken if she was gone: their special twin bond. She looked down at the bloody scene Lanie had created with her knife. The bright red blood started to stain her white sweater. She knew that was her blood and there wasn't anything she could do about it since she was tied up. She looked up at Lanie in her eyes.

"Please don't do this Lanie! What if they catch you. You always used to tell me how much you would hate prison if you ever went. What happened to you, I don't even know who you are anymore!" Lanie put the knife down.

"I'm sorry, Jenika," she said softly. Lanie grabbed the knife and quickly jabbed it into Jenika's chest. Jenika screamed until she felt lightheaded and knew her time was up.

"I forgive you Lanie," Jenika said as her last words before her body went limp. Suddenly the sound of Jenika's alarm started blaring. Jenika woke up startled. She had now realized that it was all a dream and that it was time for school.

"Jen! Breakfast!" she heard her mom yell. She gratefully got up and ran to the kitchen where her family was.

"I love you guys!" she said.

"Ew! stop being weird!" said Anika. But Jenika didn't care, she knew she was safe, sound, and alive. That was all that mattered.



**Winter Warmth**  
**By Alisa Ilcu**

**I felt my mother's soft coat touch my arm  
It was winter in the city  
I wasn't used to the cold  
We had just moved here from Mexico  
My English wasn't too good, but I got by  
Back at home New York seemed like a dream  
All my friends wanted to come to big great America  
but all I wanted to do was leave**

**I was shivering  
My mother grabbed my hand  
Before I knew it I was being dragged  
into a strange store  
"Why are we here?" I asked  
"It's winter and you're cold," replied my mother  
She picked up a few sweaters  
and told me to try them on  
I've never even owned a sweater before  
I hated them all  
Until a pretty purple one  
caught my eye and I tried it on  
The soft texture against my skin  
And the beautiful purple detail  
It looked like heaven on me  
I just knew I had to get it**

**On the subway home  
I held my sweater tight,  
excited to wear it the next day  
I have never bought any warm clothes before  
At home there was no winter**

**Maybe New York wasn't so bad after all  
Maybe winter could be fun  
I went outside with my new sweater on  
I wasn't shivering or chattering my teeth  
I felt as I was home  
It was winter  
And I was warm.**

Springlocks  
Metal, locking  
Cranking like a jack-in-the-box  
Shoots like a cannon  
Slam latch  
-Dominic Churchill

**No More Chances**  
**By Dominic Churchill**

As he held one of those weird ink creatures by the throat to the wall, he was thinking about what he had done to get to this point. He hurt the ones he loved, his son and wife, but knows where his son is, in the same place that the cartoon used to be made to be fun for kids and adults alike. He thought hard enough, and he ended up popping the throat of the ink creature. He threw down what was left of the creature on the ground as he thought of that dreadful day, when he had put on the suit at the wrong time because of the springlock failure. He wanted to end the suffering, but knew he couldn't because after a fire. He hadn't died. He now sensed someone was in the room with him. He looked around, just to find that young lady from earlier. He swung at her, trying to scratch her, but missed. As he tried to attack again, something grabbed his arm... He looked over to see an animatronic he made about 24 years ago, but now it was attacking him.



"How's it been?" It said with a voice that sounded like it had been made of two people, a male and female. A fire broke out before they could fight. He tried to run after the girl, Beatrix, he recalled her name to be, but he was trying his hardest to grab her, but the door closed and closed on his arm, breaking it off, showing the wires in it. He left himself to burn after the doors closed, knowing he couldn't die.

Hats

Round, cotton. People  
wear them and collect them, too.  
They're comfortable.

Hat  
Round, soft  
As comforting as a blanket  
Warm like a fireplace  
Cover

**By Peyton Skutt**

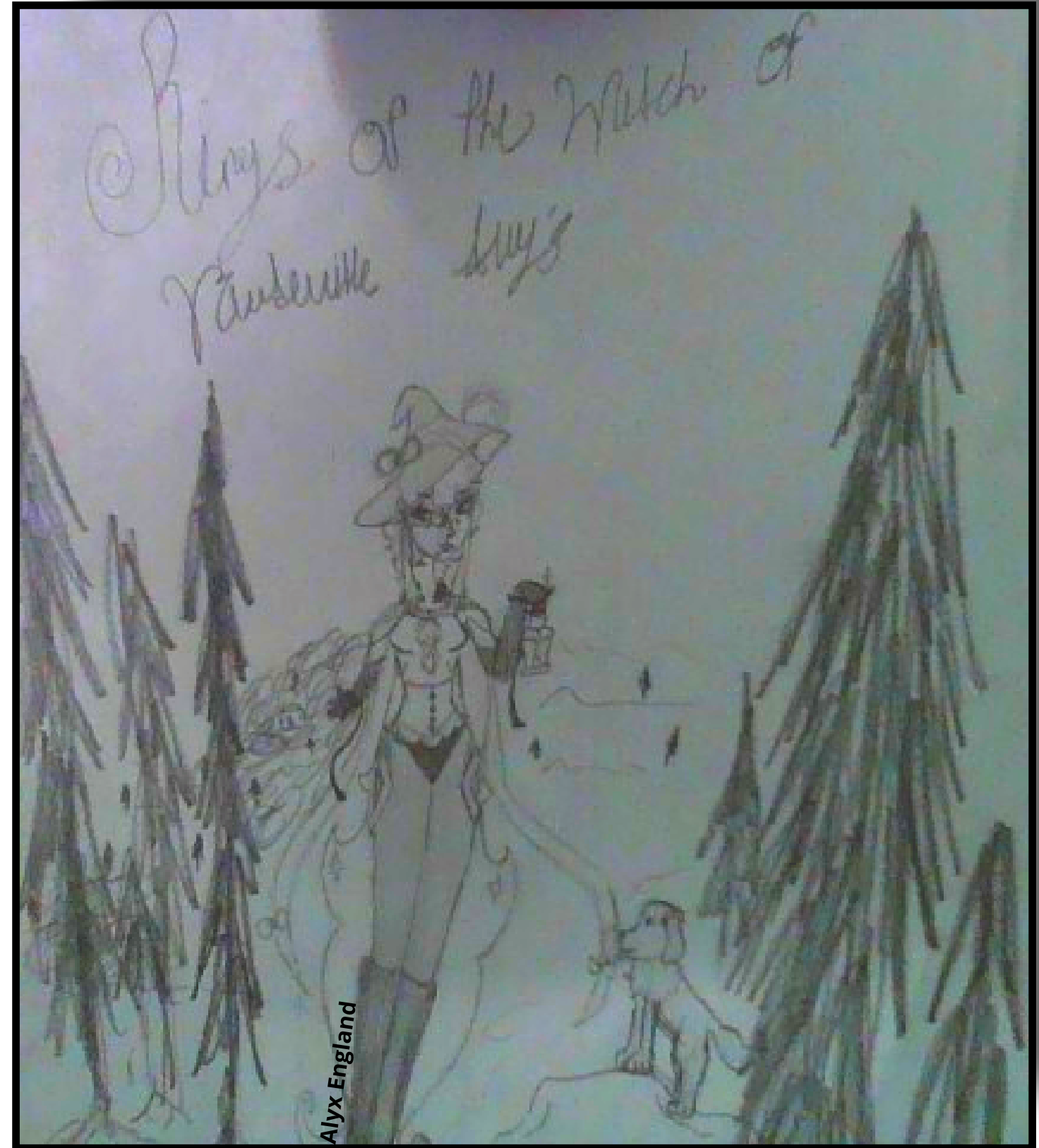


A. Carner-Ward

## Rings of the Witch of Vaudeville Alleys

By Alyx England

I buy these mysterious rings at a shop in the deep depths below,  
put them on and my eyes glow of a color never seen before.  
They too glow as I start to float in place,  
flailing in one place, wondering how I can stop.  
I take off the ring and I plummet down to earth at a fast pace.  
While I land on the concrete, I begin to wonder what I could do with these rings.  
I go home to try the rings on random objects.  
They all turned out to break as I tried.  
One particular item in my house caught my eye:  
A plush dog.  
I put a magic ring to the test, waving my fingers, hoping for a response.  
I close my eyes for a split second to hear a bark coming from beyond.  
I open my eyes to reveal a dog prancing in front of me happily, wagging its tail viciously.  
I look around in confusion trying to find the plush,  
but I'm flabbergasted, realizing the ring has actually worked on the plush dog.  
I have made a disaster I can't reverse.  
This dog is one heck of a miracle.  
My dog doesn't leave my side from now on.  
I bring this dog to help the evil be beaten from this world.





**The Break**

I walked up the drive-way  
Ready to sit down.  
“SLLLLLIP” is what I heard as  
I stopped. “WHOOOOSH”,  
It fell it fell out of my sleeve  
And down my pant leg  
As it hit the pavement it  
Made a “BAM” noise.  
I look down in horror to  
See my phone facing  
Towards the pavement.  
I slowly bend down  
And pick up my phone.  
“CRRRRRACK” as I pull  
My phone up and see  
The giant break in the screen.

Gone  
“Oh no!” she said.  
Her mother had gone.  
She searched around in panic:  
“Where is she?  
Where could she have gone?”  
she thought.  
Emma felt dizzy, nauseous,  
as though everyone was staring,  
especially the mannequins.  
They bore into her soul even.  
She checked the time on her phone.  
“2:30, just like she said,” she thought.  
Finally, she ran, she didn't know where,  
but she ran. She searched, and searched,  
And searched. She spotted her!

**The Finale!**

We rush inside to watch  
all of the chaos commence.  
I feel like lightning as  
I run to get my costumes  
and other excessive accessories.  
Dashing into the locker,  
I almost run into a girl whose name  
escapes me. As we change into our costumes,  
our characters come to life, and  
we start fool around more  
and more, and more.  
My phone screams with music  
and we join in, singing along.  
We set up the kisses booth and  
snack bar to pass the time.  
Without warning, the show has started.

**Cities**

A phone is a city,  
helping you find others,  
meeting new people.  
You build up platforms.  
You can try new things  
and find a passion,

**Snowflake  
By Sara Ripley**

There she waited, under the old willow tree that was losing its leaves, just like the note had asked her to. May, though, was unaware that Theo was up way high in the top branches, hiding where she couldn't see. He was waiting till the sun got to just the right spot in the sky to jump down. He admired her features in the meantime. Her green eyes, that he swore he could see purple in, were perfect with her chocolate brown hair.

It had gotten colder so May decided to put her coat on. She took her bag off to get her coat out. As she got it out, she froze, unable to move or think. The tree branches all scattered at the feeling of the boy. Her face went pale, except for her cheeks and ears, they were red from the cold.

“You look so funny waiting around for me.”

She hadn't heard him properly and replied, “Go away Theo, I'm waiting for someone.”

“He's here.”

“You sent that stupid note?!?” she shouted angrily. May quickly grabbed her bag and coat, which she had not had time to put on. She tried to storm away, but Theo jumped out and stopped her. She tried to move around him but he was too fast.

“Just hear me out!”

“Fine, what?”

“Um, you left this in tech...” he said, handing her a necklace, a tiny snowflake charm with a diamond in the center was connected. May took the necklace into her hand, staring at it, “I spent almost all day looking for this,” she thought. She stared at the necklace for a few seconds until she looked back up at him.

“Thank you so so so so much!” she yelled as she threw her arms around his neck and embraced him. Theo was stunned for a few seconds before embracing her back. She pulled away and pecked him on his cheek before running off, leaving him with his mouth hanging open. She quickly pulled out her phone, sticking her hand that held the necklace, and taking a picture. “I FOUND IT!!!!” she texted to her mother, letting out a breath she didn't know she was holding.

May had found her grandmother's necklace.



**Introduction: Have you ever thought about books? Have you ever thought that they were like magic? The magic in the ink? The thought put into each page? Each sentence? Each word? Books have a magic. A very special magic that sparks lights of imagination. A magic that creates fireworks of thought, and pulls you into a journey. Books are amazing things that don't always get the thought they have earned. I dedicate this project to books because I'm such a bookworm that I thought I should share the magic. The unseen magic in books.**

**From the First Page**

By: Haleigh Kepple

"Bring"  
Time to go to the next station  
  
"Thump"  
I sit on the fuzzy world map carpet  
Fun fuzz all over  
I chose a book  
boring  
  
"Flip"  
Then fantasy  
captured the fun and funny desired  
  
"Crinkle"  
Crisp pages all in chronological order  
Catching my 2nd grade brain



"Flop"  
It was finished  
The final page  
Lead to a final decision  
  
"Huh"  
I said in my head  
I had liked it  
I had loved it  
  
I read that book over and over again  
  
I loved books ever since  
And all thanks to that author,  
My teacher, Mrs. Slabodiak,  
And that character

**Croatia in a Book**

By: Haleigh Kepple

Cars went by,  
lights trailing like streaks of paint.  
I sat there, legs shaking.  
The first frost had set in, the car still cold.  
  
When we got home, I sat there on the couch,  
Thinking. Soaking it in. letting the flavor sit.  
It was sour, bitter.  
  
Sky, my cat, jumped up. Purring like a motor.  
She didn't know. She wouldn't and couldn't understand.  
She never had a brother.  
Her mom had her and three other girls.  
  
Mom came out of her room.  
"You should go to bed Gorgie," she whispered. "You have school."  
Slowly I moved my feet. They felt like bricks.  
Into bed I went. Under the warm covers.  
Thoughts flashed in my head, like lightning.  
  
My brother left and went to Croatia.  
He had an offer for a scholarship.  
  
The next day, sunshine floats in the room.  
Something hard under my pillow:  
A book.  
The title read "Croatia."  
I sat there,  
Reading.  
Croatia is beautiful.  
It gets the most sunlight in Europe.  
And all of its beauty birthed from war.  
  
Maybe I wasn't so mad.  
I couldn't wait to see my brother.  
For him to tell me about this.  
Maybe him being away would be fine.  
  
I could see him already.  
Through the book.

**A Bench and a Book**

By: Haleigh Kepple  
On an old park bench  
Open the old yellowed page  
As spring blossoms bloom

Books  
Adventure, amazing  
A daring quest  
A friend in hand  
Reading

**Whispers in Ink**

By: Haleigh Kepple

Books whisper secrets  
Secrets we never thought  
Secrets we never knew  
Once we know  
It never leaves  
  
Time runs by  
As each page passes  
Each one holds something new  
  
Dragons  
Kingdoms  
Dancing trees  
  
All beautiful fantasy  
Capturing us  
  
Books scream  
They Shout  
They tease you  
  
As the pages crinkle  
You find a friend  
A friend that will never leave  
They stay  
Books are loyal  
  
Books whisper  
They whisper 1 million things  
Each message lights up  
Each word clings  
Books whisper their magical message in ink

Books are Waves

By: Haleigh Kepple

They pull you into the tide  
Each chapter and page leaving you,  
thoughts swirling  
Trapping you in the undertow  
  
Seeing the hurricane of words  
Twisting you in a whirlpool  
Each character a bubble in a sea

Lost in a storm  
  
Each page a current  
Carrying you to the ocean of it  
A tsunami  
That hits you when you don't expect it  
  
Books are waves  
Waves of wonder

The Lost Kingdom

By Haleigh Kepple

Drip. Drip. The water dripped in the cold cell. Her auburn hair was plastered to her face, and her body ached with cold, but she would not let them see her shiver. That is what they wanted. She would remember.

"I will not give up," Indigo whispered to herself. "I will remember."

It was three days earlier she broke the law. They were not allowed to read books in their own language. Just 7 little words. And that was all she needed. Her father had said it would be. But he was dead now.

Indigo shivered again, but not from the cold. From the Rolain soldiers. They killed him. He sacrificed himself for her. For her freedom. She had to help finish what he started, for him.

That night the ground shook with the thunder of horses and people. Indigo heard the clunk of boots on the stone floor. She tried to sink into the shadows.

"Indigo!" a voice shouted. It was

Ronan, her cousin and friend. They hugged.  
"You came," Indigo said. He nodded.  
"We have to kill them," she said.  
"The Rolians ruined us," she nearly shouted.  
"No," he whispered.  
"We spread the word," he said, handing Indigo a book. The book that spread the freedom and plan to millions. They walked out to see hundreds of thousands of people. They knew. It was their job before, and it was their job now. To spread the freedom.  
"You know the plan?" Ronan asked. Indigo nodded.  
"Of course. What else does a girl do in prison?" Indigo said. This was the plan. To free the lost kingdom of Alkia. But they didn't need to. It was already freed. The people of Alkia's hearts are free once more. And they planned to keep it that way.

The Trill

By: Jaesona McMullen

I peek out from behind the curtains  
It's the day of the concert  
Mr. Bearup has been teaching us *Flutist We Have Heard on High*  
and it's our turn to go up on stage  
We take our place and start to play  
  
In the beginning you hear the  
BANG!  
From the drums the  
RUMBLE!  
from the trombones and the trumpets  
And then it goes silent and you hear the  
TOOTLE!  
from the flutes and then the  
HOOT! from the clarinets  
And then the  
BOOM!  
from the drums again  
and the trombones add in along with the trumpets  
Clarinets, tubas, saxophones, and last but not least the flutes and the  
BIG ending.

— . . — . . — . . —  
  
Flute  
Happy, calm  
As sweet as a cherry  
As fluent as a mindset  
Music  
Flute  
Playing softly while  
lightly pressing the keys to  
open the sound of my heart.

The Flute

By: Jaesona McMullen

A flute is water  
flowing steadily like waves  
I listen  
the note  
drops  
it flows eloquently  
pure clean sound  
The rival of the drums  
starts to echo like thunder  
going to war  
and the cellos and violins wailing  
with the pity  
of all mankind.  
The flute is our rival.

The Flute  
By: Jaesona McMullen

While straightening my back I blow  
Lightly drowning out all other sounds  
entering my own world filled with butterflies and birds  
that flutter around me as they listen to the  
trill of my flute as they watch me lightly press the keys.  
  
I come back to reality  
starting to hear all the instruments go quiet: silence  
As I open my eyes, I see everyone staring at me  
I look around  
I freeze  
shocked as everyone just looks at me.  
They start to clap and cheer for me  
and I just sit there still in shock.

# College Essays

## Mental Game

By Colleen Jump

Sports can be dangerous, no matter what sport it is. It can be easy to injure yourself and then be out for the rest of a season. Once you get an injury it can be very easy to reinjure yourself in that same exact area, so you have to be careful. When I injured my knee, I wasn't sure when I would be about to go back to practice. I was initially really upset but from this experience I learned that even though you are physically hurt, you can still work on your "mental game" for when you are able to go

back. On October 3, 2020 I was at my practice for my travel softball team. There was about 10 minutes left of practice so we had enough girls to create teams and scrimmage each other. When I went in to bat I swung my bat but the next thing I knew, I was down on the ground with my right leg behind me. I felt a pain in my knee so I sat on my butt and moved my right leg in front of me. When I did that I felt a pop in my knee and when I got it in front of me I could see it was already

swelling. I was carried off the field by my dad and one of my coaches. The next morning, my family and I knew that something was really wrong. I went and sat on my couch and when I went to get up, I couldn't. I needed crutches to get up and off the couch. I then went to the orthopedic doctor that Monday. They believed that I dislocated my patella and when it came back into place it crashed into the inside of my knee.

***I realized that, similar to the experience with my knee, a minor setback did not necessarily mean the "end of the game."***

I was able to get an MRI a few weeks later and it turned out I sprained my MCL. I had to go to physical therapy for months to strengthen my quadriceps, specifically my inner quadricep. Luckily we didn't have fall sports that season so I didn't miss any field hockey. The doctor kept me out of bowling for about a month and a half and I was out of softball for three months.

When I first injured myself however I was very upset. I was on crutches for at least a month. I had to wear a compression sleeve and knee brace everyday. Everyday was the same. I got up, went to school, iced my knee in school and at home, then I went to

sleep and repeated the same thing the next day. The doctor didn't know how long I was going to be out and the only thing I wanted to do was go back to my normal self. All I wanted to do was go back and play sports. About a week in I realized that this injury could actually be a blessing in disguise. I was able to focus more on my schoolwork and improve my grades. I was also able to focus on the mental side of my sports, bowling specifically. I wrote a list of goals that I wanted to accomplish once I was able to go back to sports. The time when I was injured also helped me to work on my mental game for bowling, meaning it

helped me to focus on not getting upset when I miss a spare. I realized that, similar to the experience with my knee, a minor setback did not necessarily mean the "end of the game."

Even though getting injured can be traumatizing, it can give you the chance to really focus on your academics. It can also help you focus on what you need to improve mentally as well. Sometimes injuries are a blessing in disguise. You may not think so at first, but setbacks can help you to learn things about yourself.



## Tomorrow's Melody

By Morgan Brown

I have often found myself lost in the pages of my music. Whether it is a specific piece that I am personally practicing or sheet music that was assigned to the general band, I am quite often entranced with the notes themselves. Hours of practicing only make it harder to look away, so focused on just getting that melody right, or the urge to practice a certain phrase until my fingers ache. The need to learn more is only appeased by the knowledge given to me from my conductor.

As someone who grew up with a hardworking and driven father, it was easy for me to see the simplicity of following in his footsteps. I saw the promise of a simple life that was dangled in front of my eyes. Since middle school, I remember him explaining to me what business was and suggesting that I pursue it as a career, which seemed perfect for me at the time. In eighth grade I began taking classes online that allowed me to go after my supposed goal of becoming a powerful woman in business. For almost four whole years I took these classes, spending hours at a time working toward this goal that eventually started to feel like somebody else's. By the end of my junior year of high school, I could not remember my purpose for taking these classes or business at all. Even with my doubt, I could only continue the classes and hope that something clicked later down the road, working harder and harder to complete the courses before the deadlines. It wasn't until a few weeks after these thoughts began, the last day of junior year, during a conversation with a teacher, that this "click" happened.

Everything stopped that day when my band teacher suggested that I pursue a career as a music teacher instead of my previous plans. He reminded me of the times that I'd assisted him with directing the junior high band. I had never thought about that before, so it came as a total shock to me when his idea made sense in my head. I kept thinking about his idea until I found the courage to ask my friend what her opinion was on the subject. With her encouragement I decided to try it out and actually do it. Before telling my parents I pushed the conversation off for almost a week, trying to plan out what to say before the time came. After finally telling them I did receive a little backlash, especially from my father. He kept asking if it was worth it, reminding me that the salary for a music teacher is much lower than that of even an office employee in the business field. When we went on vacation last summer my uncle asked me the same questions, trying to convince me to change my mind, claiming that he only wanted the best for me. Throughout all of this, I managed to persevere and am currently looking forward to my upcoming auditions for multiple music schools this spring.

Overall, following what you enjoy is a much better route in the long run than taking the path somebody else has mapped out for you. I have learned in the past few months that finding and filling your niche in the world is a way for you to connect with others around you in a special way. Even throughout the obstacles I faced, I knew that my constant engagement in music was personally fulfilling, and something that I wanted to keep pursuing in the foreseeable future.

Shania, a Corvette, and a Warm Breeze

By Brady Cochrane

My grandfather and I are the same person, just different bodies.

My grandfather and I were always very close. We did a lot of things together, and he had a big impact on my life really because of the things he taught me and the memories we shared. As I get older, I realize that I am becoming more like him day by day. I hope to become a funny, hardworking man just like him.

My grandfather had the biggest personality and always said he was here for a good time, not a long time. I'll never forget the one time that my grandfather and I were riding along in the Corvette and he was jamming out to the song "Man I Feel Like a Woman" by Shania Twain. These car rides were always fun, especially when he took the glass roof off and had the windows down. The warm summer air felt good on my face as we cruised down the road.

Just like my grandfather, every time I get behind the wheel of the Corvette, I also jam out to Shania Twain and speed in the car - He taught me to always be happy and live in the moment. He taught me that even in the hardest times, keep pushing forward. This advice really hit me the most when I was about 10 years old and I found out he was diagnosed with cancer. He died 5 months later. It really hit me hard because that is when I realized the importance of his advice. You never know when a day could be your last. He and I were so close. I slept in his room on the floor and then that next day, I woke up he passed away. Losing my grandfather taught me to enjoy the little moments and always have fun.

Even though my grandfather knew how to have a good time, his work ethic was great. He

worked for Cayuga County driving dump trucks, plow trucks, and later in his life, he was put in the radio room and on weather watch. After dedicating 45 years of his life to Cayuga County, he was given an award for all of his hard work. They also honored him by giving him own day in Cayuga County called Donald "Donnie" Short Day. Just like my grandfather, I take work very seriously and always try my best, especially when I am completing a task that I really care about. In the end, I really just want to work hard like him.

Because my grandfather worked so hard to get it, the Corvette was his pride and joy . Not to mention, this one was his third one he owned in his lifetime. The Corvette was really our bond. When I first rode in it, I don't remember how old I was, but I do remember I was young enough to not be able to touch the floor. I rode in the passenger seat next to my grandfather and I felt the power.

There were so many different trips we took in the car, but the best one was when we took the car up to the camp he owned and loved in the Adirondacks. My grandmother was already up there and she did not know I was coming. So, we packed our stuff in the Corvette, headed up to the camp, and went down to the restaurant where my grandmother worked as a waitress. We sat down, got food, and surprised her when she came to take our order. I'll never forget the smile on her face when she saw me. After he passed away, my grandfather told my grandmother that he wanted the car to go to my mom. It was definitely the best decision because now I'm the one making new memories in it.

No matter how old I get, I will always have these memories of my grandfather with me. He taught me to not take life so seriously, to work hard and life will be great. There is nothing more important than making memories with family. I'm going to try my best to be like him and do better in some ways to make him proud.

*The warm summer air felt good on my face as we cruised down the road.*

Poetry

The Riverway

By Anonymous



We load onto the boat.  
I inhale,  
the air different than on other rivers:  
fresh, clean, refreshing.  
I can feel the cold steel railings in my hand.  
We sit down on the lower deck,  
and as a tanker goes by,  
everyone gets up to take pictures.

Then we coast into the Boldt Castle dock,  
I can hear the sound of the water,  
the waves hitting the hull of the boat,  
and then we leave with only the smell,  
of the water on our clothes.

The boat starts, the diesel engines rumble,  
then they quiet down and we start to move.  
I listen to the purr of the engines  
and the whistling of the wind.  
As the instructor starts talking, I look around.  
Mansions and castles take over the islands,  
some not even visible from the water.



My Cat Walter  
By Haleigh Kepple

Walter Louis Kepple was our cat  
He had soft grey fur, grey green eyes, loud little feet, and  
had a indescribable stink eye

Waking us up, 4 in the morning  
Purring like a motor  
But then cuddles till 7

He would hunt at night  
Sleep in the day  
Jump and bounce  
At string, for play

Walter Louis Kepple  
Born on Valentine's Day  
Always knew when I was sad  
Would sit on my lap

He died September 2nd  
At age 7  
I wrote this for him  
Walter Louis Kepple was my cat and I loved him



Preview

By Sophia Mucedola

I sat in Math Class  
Tapping my foot  
Not listening at all to the lesson  
I could only stare at the clock

Finally  
Time to leave  
My hand shoots up and I ask to  
leave  
I dart out of the room  
Down the hall  
Down the stairs  
Into the locker room

Most everyone is already there  
They are all frantically getting ready  
Singing along to our favorite songs

I look at the clock  
30 minutes

“This is so unfair”  
Someone would complain  
“Only a half hour”  
“That’s not nearly enough time!”  
I or someone else would exclaim

“Time Check!”  
Someone else would shout  
“20 minutes”  
Would be shouted back

“10 minutes”  
I frantically put my makeup on  
Lots of girls jump in front of the  
mirror  
“We need more mirrors. There’s  
never enough room!”  
We would say  
“Mic Check!”  
It’s time to go out  
We all dash into the hall  
I grab my mic pack and fumble to  
put it on  
It’s freezing on my back  
“Where’s the mic tape?”  
I shout  
I find it and slap it on as I’m  
fumbling onto stage  
Mic check is over

Before I have time to think  
The auditorium fills up with  
elementary kids  
It’s time to start  
We go on and do the opening  
number  
It seemed to have lasted forever  
I had a solo  
Only 10 words

It felt like a trillion

Previews are over

We go back to the Locker room  
And I can feel the mic tape peeling  
off my face  
And I can see my makeup has faded  
“Let’s take a picture!”  
Someone shouts  
So Sam pulls out her phone  
We all gather round  
All trying to fit into the picture  
She snaps it

A single picture among dozens  
taken  
A single moment among hundreds  
experienced  
A single memory among thousands  
past





# The House on the Hill

By Anthony VanDitto Ferri

I am from the house on the hill

With the laundry room overflowing with art supplies

Where dirty dishes tower over the kitchen

I am from dashing through the field to get to Giggi and Papa’s,

And from the construction equipment that rang daily to finish the upstairs

that took months to finish gutting and rebuilding.

I am from calling old school friends, who have fell distant

Playing Xbox 360 all through the night, in my old gaming chair

And the storage garage, filled with furniture, waiting to be brought inside

I am from most of the family living on one road, the road with the house on the hill

The closet filled to the brim with old toys and school clothes

And from late nights on the couch, watching the news

I am from the thousands of trees, blowing peacefully in the wind

And from getting up early to get ready for school

Sleeping in late after hours of spending time with friends

I am from spending hundreds of hours on the porch with mom

And from enjoying nature

And from the stuffed animals, from my earlier years, piled high on my bed

I am from dinners where pasta, tacos, hot dogs and burgers are all over the table

With the fruits and vegetables mom tried to get me to eat

And family portraits everywhere

# A House Next to My Cousins

I am from a house  
next to my cousins  
with conflicts and fights  
but it is still home.

I am from spaghetti dinners  
and chocolate cake with all my family  
whenever there was a birthday.

I am from late nights on the trampoline  
where we did gymnastics  
until our parents called us in.

I am from swimming until we can’t move  
from the creaky swing set  
and repainting it red

I am from playing house and school  
with baby dolls  
where we fought for certain ones.

I am from softball in the pool  
with unfair teams  
and unfair calls.

I am from dance recitals  
that weren’t that good  
and usually ended in tears.

I am from climbing trees  
with “sitting spots”  
which brought us into more fights

I am from a world where anyone older  
could tell you what to do  
and there was nothing you could do about it.

I am from a house  
next to my cousins  
with conflicts and fights  
but it is still home.

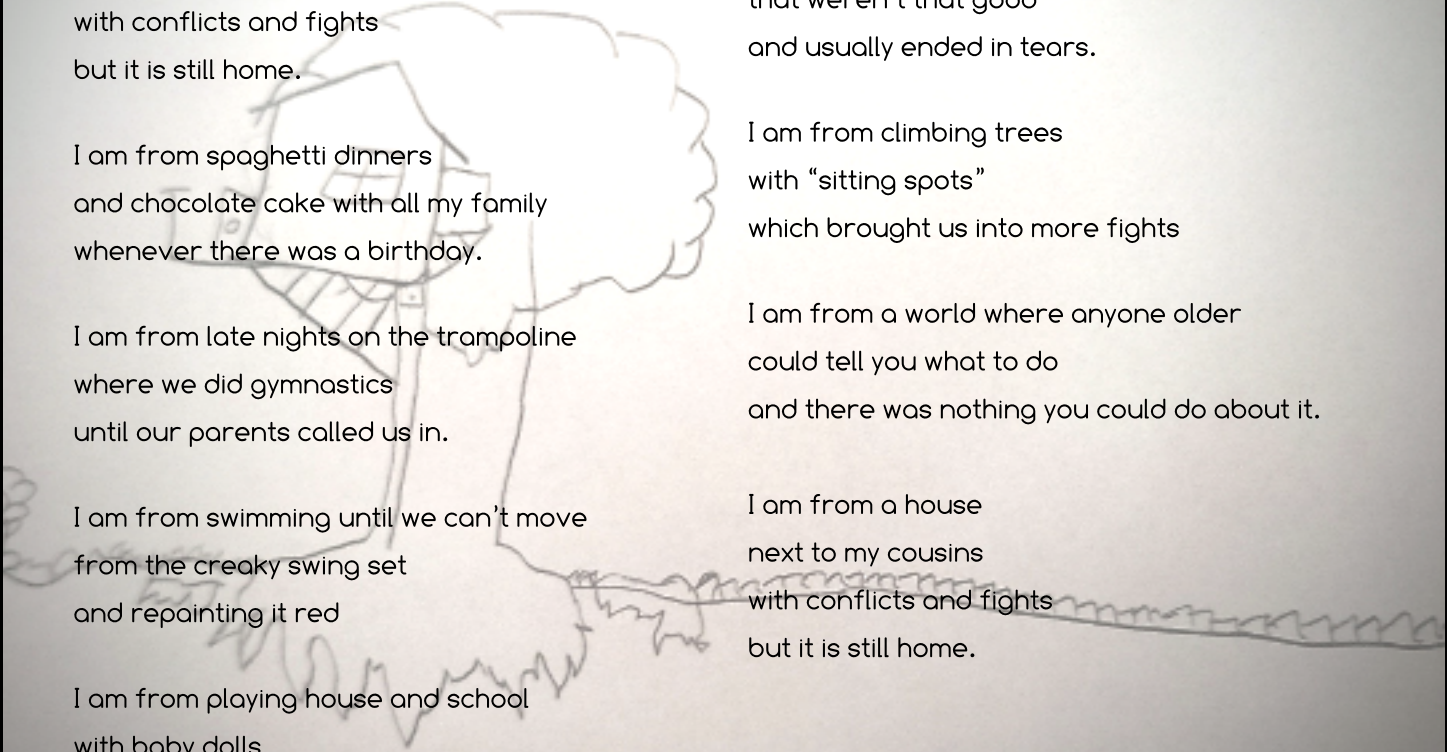


Image by Dominic Churchill

RAMEN DOODLES

By Lacee Hymer

I am from uncooked Ramen  
from Elsa and Anna toys  
to the one hen  
and the sibling that annoys

I am from yelling  
from bike rides  
to retelling me what you said  
and someone saying, “This is my good side!”

I am from aunt Sammy threatening  
from crazy little cousins saying  
"Do you have gaming?"

I am from Dora and Umi Zoomies  
from cartoons  
"Wanna watch Bubble Guppies?"  
and fun looking balloons

I am from Uncooked Ramen Noodles  
and mutt looking Poodles  
from stray cats  
and a fake baseball bat  
I am from carne asada tacos (carny-uh-sat-uh)  
a feast on Thanksgiving  
and unripe avocados  
to sitting

I am from yelling  
to crying  
fake smiling  
and “Stop crying or I'ma give you a reason!”

To shaky hands  
and the anxiety that makes me throw up.  
to staying in bed being “lazy”  
from sleeping and eating

To having siblings getting their way  
and at the end of the day  
I am from dreaming of falling  
and jumping upside down somehow

I am from running into a pole  
to a dentist putting needles in my mouth  
and parents wanting full control  
to people from the south

And to flashbacks  
I am from having a lot of animals  
to none at all in a smack  
to hearing a documentary about cannibals

I am from being a picky eater  
to no pizza with mushrooms or onions  
to my little brother yelling “Cheater!”  
to dead people in London

I am from Queen Elizabeth's death  
to dark humor  
and to adding “depth”  
and dog tumors

I am from laughing  
to smiles  
and snapping  
to miles

I am from writing this poem  
to thinking  
and trying to get to know 'em  
to blinking

I'm from trying too hard  
and trying too "less"  
to being awkward  
and a big mess.

I am from being tired  
to “just sleep”  
and “I'll tell you when you're older”  
and to televisions \*bleep\*

I am from phones  
to Kindles  
and I want this of my **own**  
and being in the middle

I am from dirty socks  
from hats  
and jumping in big boxes  
to siblings being brats.

I am from smiles and giggles  
from to crying during getting  
help with my homework  
to jiggles  
and weird clerks

I am from ending this poem  
from waiting and waiting  
to waiting on 'em  
and sleeping.

The Bright Yellow House

By : Nikko Giacona

I am from the bright yellow house

With the big garage door

To the black metal roof

And the bright green trampoline

I am from my messy room

To going to my grandparents' house,

And eating my grandma’s delicious food,

My favorite being pasta and chicken cutlets

To cousins' birthdays and having so much fun,

Jumping on the trampoline and making up games outside

I am from the crazy dog who loves to lick

To going on vacation every summer

To my parents saying “Please don’t get hurt”

For I have broken my wrist three times

I am from playing with my dog outside

And playing baseball, basketball, and football

To building a ramp out of snow in the winter

And sledding off my deck

I am from the bright yellow house

With the big garage door

To the black metal roof

And the bright green trampoline

I am from Visiting  
By Aurora France

I am from visiting my Nana, Papa, and Aunt Gail  
Who at the end of the visit  
I would always hug and kiss

I am from my Aunt Gail saying, “See you soon, baby doll”  
And would not see them for weeks  
And months later my papa was gone forever

I am from not seeing my Uncle Jarred for many months  
Do to him being in the military  
And later he quit to stay with my Aunt Randilee in Florida

I am from my Mimi bringing us every other Friday to spend the night at her house  
and every morning making breakfast  
then going home later that day

I am from making a town with my Lil Woodzeez  
And designing the building for five minutes  
Then my brother destroying them

I am from going into the living room and seeing pots and pans all over the floor  
this was because of Jack pretending to cook  
and I would step on a measuring cup going to sit down

I am from making a soft pretzel for lunch  
And while I ate my dad asking us if we want to watch Dragon Ball Z  
and watching at least three in a row

I am from having sleepovers with my best friend Melody putting her hand over my mouth  
ans saying “Shhh, it's okay,” joking around and laughing very loudly  
and us going everywhere together

I am from my mom and dad  
Always being there for me  
Especially when I needed them the most

The Big Grassy Hill  
By Mallory Mills

I am from the green house on  
the big grassy hill, where the  
garage is flooded with sports  
equipment and the backyard is  
scattered with dog toys

I am from the pasta dinners  
at my Nana's house where  
everyone’s crowded around the  
large wooden table, with the  
homemade sauce and the delicious  
buttered bread

From the late nights climbing  
high in the tree with my sister  
and my cousins right beside me,  
to my mom yelling, “Come in” at  
9:00 pm, but never coming in until 9:30

I am from the hours spent  
giving Barbies hair cuts and  
dying their hair with Sharpie,  
from the mess all over my  
bathroom counter to the  
hours spent cleaning it

I'm from the late night sports  
games and the ice cream celebration,  
and the carpools with teammates  
to the early morning practices  
where everyone slouches around

From the waking up at 4:30 am to  
go feed the calves to the lessons on  
how to milk a cow, from feeding the  
cats and petting their soft fur to my  
Mom yelling, “Don't sit on the couch!”  
because I smelt like a barn

I am from the sleepovers every  
weekend where Truth or Dare  
is always played, to the picking  
out what movie we were going to  
watch and the popcorn everywhere

From the holidays spent with all  
the family, Thanksgiving lunch at  
our house and the cousin Christmas  
gift exchange at my Nana's house

I am from the green house  
on the big grassy hill, where  
the garage is flooded with sports  
equipment and the backyard is  
scattered with dog toys



The Public Playground

By Liliana Berkey

I am from the creaky swing set  
and many chewed toys from the dog getting to them  
from the many gatherings at Nonni’s  
with my Great Papa showing up late and leaving early.

I am from the Ice cream shop down the street with  
that Public Playground with the big spiderweb that you  
could climb on.The police officer across the street  
that gets home late or doesn't get home at all, or the neighbor  
outback whenever he drives by says “Hello” and starts conversation.

I am from the ball games at the park and Dad always saying,  
“You did good, but you could’ve done this better,”  
and then shows me what he was talking about.  
To the crock pot dinners in the winter and the smell of  
biscuits baking in the oven, making my mouth water.

I am from the many four wheeler rides, and the one  
time I thought I was so good at riding  
I tired to do it with my eyes closed,  
then ran into a tree.  
I never got hurt, though.

I am from the creaky swing set  
and many chewed toys from the dog getting to them  
from the many gatherings at Nonni’s  
with my Great Papa showing up late and leaving early.

Childhood  
By Madison Garrad

**I am from the house with the pantry full of food,  
the crumb covered floors,  
the comfy blankets,  
and the chairs covered in cat hair.**

**I am from the place people call Disney World,  
where my mom is always dragging me  
into the ride lines  
that are always too cramped,  
forcing me to get Dole-whips,  
and always thinking about which ride to go on  
and which park to go to.**

**I am from the place where I remember my Gigi.  
That nursing home  
with the donuts and the milk and the cafeteria,  
and the bed that was next to her roommate's bed.**

**I am from the place next to my school,  
with the long awaited Fridays,  
the numerous tests,  
the first days, the last days,  
the lockers, the teachers,  
and the assigned seats.**

**I am from the beach,  
where I go every year,  
the place where I build sand castles,  
go to the aquarium,  
go swimming,  
stay with my family,  
and go shopping for souvenirs.**

**I am from the place where my dad and I play video games  
and get mad when we lose.  
I will always remember the distinct “Dang It!”  
and my mom laughing  
when we would lose at Mario  
and my dad would quit out of anger.**

**I am from the cozy playroom,  
with my stuffed animals,  
Calico Critters, my long gone slime bucket,  
my Barbie dolls, my LOL dolls,  
my Shopkins, my Monster High dolls,  
my Disney dolls, my American Girl dolls ,  
and my Littlest Pet Shop dolls.**

**I am from my family.  
I am from my best self.  
I am from the person I call me.**

# Memoirs

## Little League Championships

By Anonymous

The second batter walked off the field with a disappointed look. It was the very last inning with two outs. My team ahead, one more batter to go.

Out on the field there were four girls down in a ready position. The sun shined down on the diamond field. The final batter came up to the plate. Our catcher squatted down and held her glove out.

The pitcher took a deep breath and started her windup. The ball released from her hand and seconds later hit the catcher's glove.

"Strike one!" yelled the umpire. The batter stepped away into the grass and took a practice swing. The next pitch...

"Strike two!" The smiles started to appear on my teammates' faces. This whole game we had been working together to get runs and outs.

I could smell the hot dogs cooking in the concession stand. I could hear the cheering of the crowd. This was it, two strikes, two outs, and the last inning.

The pitcher brought the ball up to her chest, brought it down and started her wind up. It went around until she released it. The ball flying through the air, over the brown, rocky dirt.

The batter swung her bat as hard as she could, but the ball flew right by. The bright yellow ball hit the catcher's mitt

with a fog of dirt.

As the dirt cleared, I could hear a loud voice: "Strike three... you're out!" the umpire yelled.

All of our hard work had paid off. We had won the championships! The batter walked off the field and into their dugout. My team all cleared the field and went back into our dugout. We were all cheering and high-fiving. The moment was so exciting.

All of the "congratulations" and "Great jobs" were coming from every direction. I was over the moon and so was the rest of my team. We had been working towards this for the whole season.

We all lined up to give high fives to the other team. "Good game, Good game, Good game," I said as I made my way down the line.

Afterwards, the coaches handed out trophies.

Our trophies were a bright blue color with golden detail. They had a little gold plate that read,

"First place champions. Minors little league." They called each person up. I remember the feeling of pride and excitement when I heard my name get called. It was one of the best moments in softball for me.

I couldn't have done it without my team.





Nervous Performing  
By Lily Ridley

I stared at the blank curtain. Was I really going to do this? Some people would call this “Stepping out of your comfort zone,” but I was sitting in the middle of my comfort zone, afraid of what would come and poke at the edges. I wasn’t nervous an hour ago. One hour ago, I was sitting, getting changed in the locker room. I was bursting at the seams with anticipation. The show was later that day, and the previews were in a matter of minutes. Mumbles of, “Previews are always the worst” and “I’m so nervous” wreathed and wrapped around me, making a circle of anxiety, and eventually, I felt it too. Then, a seed of doubt was planted in my mind that was slowly engulfing my body in vines. I looked at the curtain again. Then I looked at the people to my left and to my right. On the right, Hare and Nathan were below me. To my left, there was Delaney and Camden; Delaney didn’t look nervous. Neither did Camden. I looked back at the curtain.

“Any minute now,” I thought to myself. “I’m going to forget a line, or mess up, or Something!” I thought again. My heart was thumping so loud and fast, It sounded like a bullet train. My stomach was a gymnast, doing flips, twisting and turning. Just then, I could hear the curtains opening. Oh. No. I was looking up at the booth, seeing when they’d turn the stage lights on. I realized it was time, and said my line. I called out my number. I took a small sigh. The scene had

only just begun, and I had the starting line and the finishing line! I told myself not to mix up the numbers and letters, matching them in my head. There was a big gap where I didn’t say anything. I was hyper focused on the dialogue that was bouncing around to many people like a beach ball. As the seconds passed, I was less nervous, and became confident that I knew my lines.

Then, the looming death crept toward my empty coffin. My big line was coming. And BAM. My cue was said. I started digging in my brain for the right words. Stringing together words like beads on a necklace. I knew I messed it up before. Stumbled, hesitated, any fitting word to describe failing. I had finally finished my long line. I was talking for what felt like an hour. I had delivered one of my final lines. The leads came over to where I was standing and asked me my final question. And just like that, the lights went off. I walked off the stage, and let out a breath I’d been holding for years.

Then, I realized that that was something I loved. The nervousness, The excitement, the crowd. I wasn’t anxious or nervous like I had originally thought. I was excited. I approached performing in a new light. I now saw it not as something to be nervous about. Now, I see it as the product of all of the hard work I had put in over the past months. I looked back on the stage, walked off and realized that I couldn’t wait to get back out on the stage.



A. Carner-Ward





## Man's Best Friend

By Anthony Ferri

"I'll see you soon!" I shouted. The trees outside were blowing back and forth. I sat and waited, hearing the door click shut and outside the Honda Odyssey slowly drive down the driveway. As I stood, I walked over to the kennel, grabbing the lock, and pulling it back. Immediately, my dogs came bolting out, tails wagging. I did my best to pet them, but they were too excited, so I walked over to the television and grabbed the remote, plopping down on the couch. My shy new dog Jambo slowly inched his way over to me. I tapped my hand on the couch, and he hopped up, and rag-dolled on my legs. I gently pet the top of my dog's head, gazing around the living room. I saw the lights shining across the hardwood floor; my other dog had also hopped down from the windowsill and joined me on my right side, the rain pounding on the window and the roof, I was ready.

I selected my channel and kicked back. When a thunderous BANG rang out, of course my dog Opie was unfazed, but Jambo veered down underneath the table. I bent over and tried to reassure him that it was just thunder when BANG, another. I felt bad at this point so I did my best to accompany my dog, covering him up with a blanket, and turning up the heat. As the rain

increased, so did my worries of the power going out, but I thought to myself, how would the dog react if the power went out? Would he start panicking? So I decide to grab my phone, on the couch next to me, opening it and checking the weather channel. It read out "Severe Thunderstorm Warning."

I realized the power was going to cut out shortly, so I stood and went to get comfortable, texting my mother with something along the lines of "Hey, Ma, when will you be back? Jambo is scared of the thunder and we might lose power."

The minutes felt like hours waiting to get a response, when a rumble rang out, followed by a very loud BANG, sounding as if lighting had struck only feet away. As I glared out the window, I saw nothing. When the TV defaulted to the idle screen, white words emboldened on the top of the screen "NO INTERNET." This didn't bother me, nor the dogs. So I texted my mother again, "Hey, Ma, just to let you know we just lost the internet."

Finally I got a response, and I breathed a sigh of relief. She was on her way. I was just hoping my dog wouldn't flip out and hurt himself or break anything, so I stood and shuffled into the kitchen, getting some water. I waited for my mother to come home, scrolling endlessly through my phone, when in a blink of the eye, the room went dark.

Jambo started barking, making my other dog bark, so now I had to sit in the dark, calming my dogs.

Finally, I heard the familiar sound of rocks being cracked and water being splashed. I glared out the window, and through the heavy rain. I saw my mother's car, whizzing up the driveway. I stood up, and the dogs ran to the door, knowing my mother was home, I heard the screen door open, so I held the dogs back because I knew they would jump up to get her attention. The door handle turned, and the door swung open with a creak, I jumped up, and hugged my mother, and headed back to the couch where I always sat.

A couple of hours had flashed by and finally, the lights turned back on.

Over the next few months, Jambo got progressively better with thunderstorms, and now enjoys whatever time he gets with a person. Even though he spends all day with them, as the old saying goes, 'Dogs are a Man's Best Friend.'

## *A Kid Again*

*By Madison Garrad*

*We finally arrived at the mall. My parents and I got out of the car and walked into the doors. I had a bag with my Build-A-Bear (That I got for being in a school play) inside. My dad had the car keys, and my mom had her purse. I immediately bee-lined for the Build-A-Bear store, knowing exactly where it was, even after 5-7 years, or at least I think.*

*My parents eventually caught up to me, and my dad said, "Dang, kid! You run fast!"*

*And I responded, "Heck yeah I do! Way faster than you!" and my dad laughed. We went into the Build-A-Bear store, and as soon as I stepped in, I felt a sudden rush of nostalgia and comfort.*

*It hadn't changed since I was younger, and for a moment, I missed being a little kid, in fact, I wanted to be a little kid again!*

*I immediately rushed to the clothes section, because my parents told me I could get the signature outfit for Hello Kitty (The Build-A-Bear I had), and picked out the dress and the hand-held cupcake for her. I also picked out another outfit for my*

*other Build-A-Bear, but my dad said "Kiddo, you promised you'd only pick one outfit." I realized that I did promise, but I asked "Please?? 'Cause then I can have an outfit for Miffy (The Build-A-Bear's name.)!" and my dad eventually gave in.*

*We waited in line to get Hello Kitty stuffed, and I realized the Build-A-Bear employee that was stuffing the Build-A-Bears looked*



*really cool. We eventually stuffed my bear, and the employee asked, "Would you like a scent for her?" I looked at my parents, and they nodded.*

*So I picked out one that smelled like cotton candy. We put it in and sewed Hello Kitty up. I thanked the employee then went over to the section with the computers, so I could make a birth certificate for Hello Kitty.*

*After making the certificate, we went over to the cashier, checked out, got a little box shaped like a house to put Hello Kitty in, and then we went to the food court, because, hey, We were hungry!*

*After we ate, we went to the Boba shop and got a drink for all of us, I got Passionfruit Green Tea (my favorite!), my dad got Honey Oolong Tea (It was very strong), and my mom just got a regular Strawberry Lemonade, because she doesn't like tea.*

*After we got our drinks, we headed to one last store to buy a pot for our plant at home. We found a pot, and I got to wear it as a (very big) hat. We paid for it, and went back to the car.*

*I was glad that I got to enjoy it, even if it would be considered childish. But I wouldn't mind, because I had felt like a kid again, and it felt good.*





**Beaner**  
**By Emma Taylor**

**I was at my grandparents' house. My grandma was washing the dishes in the kitchen, and she was looking out the window.**

**She yelled out loud, "OH NO!!" and rushed to the bathroom to get a towel. My brother and I looked at each other, wondering what happened. She ran outside. I ran after her but didn't go out. I saw blood all over the road. I didn't know it was blood at the moment because there was too much adrenaline rushing through my body. She came back inside with the towel wrapped up in her hands.**

*Beaner and Idgy were best friends, so it was like they were meeting again.*

**"Beaner died!!" My heart dropped. I felt my knees weaken, and my lip quiver, holding back tears. I looked over at my brother, and he immediately started sobbing. I looked back over at the towel, my hearing blurred out, my eyes focused on that towel, where I could see a**

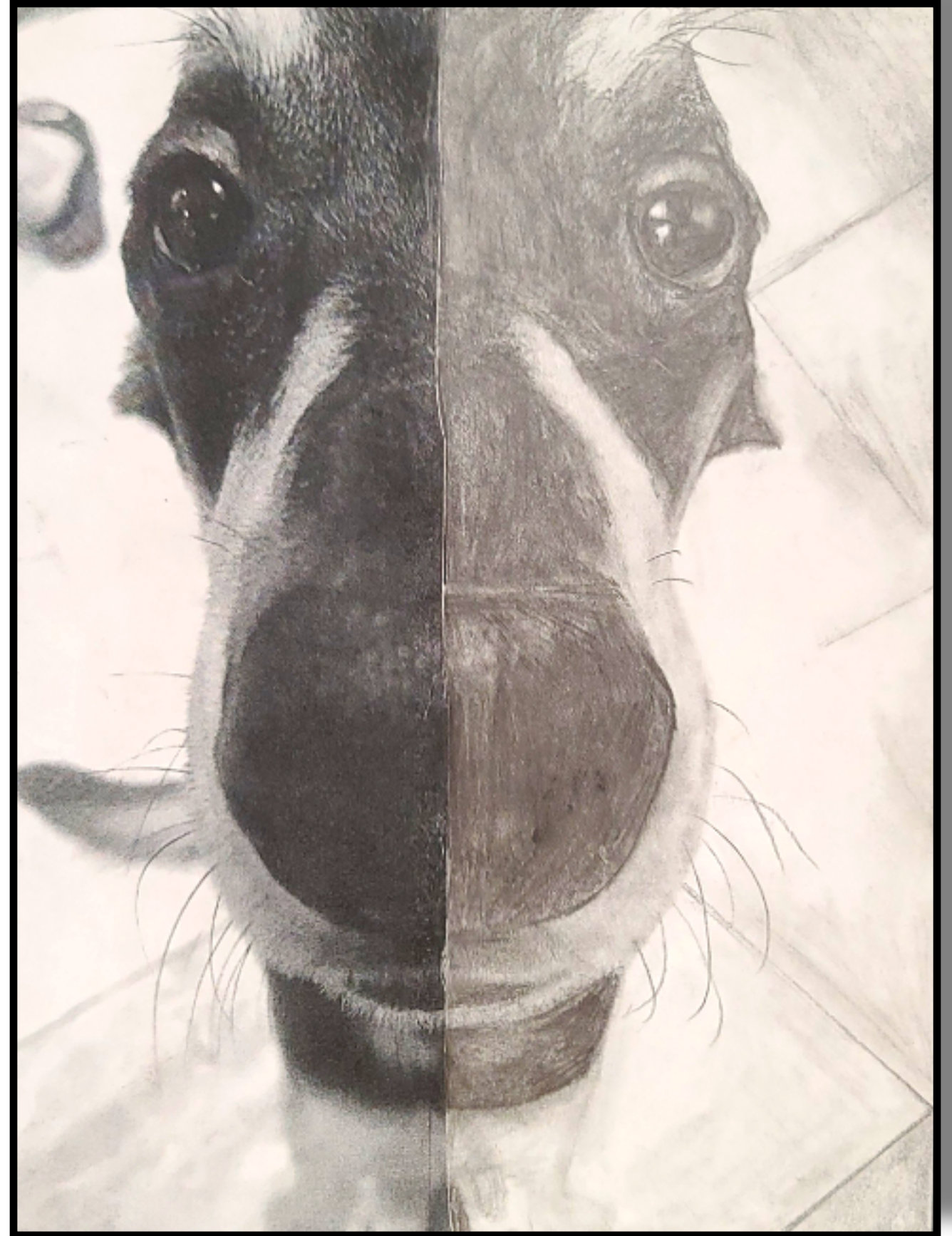
**little tint of his fur.**

**My papa rushed in "Beaner was hit by a truck, there is no way he survived, I am so sorry. I tried to warn the driver, but it was too late."**

**"No, this can't be, he isn't dead. There has to be a chance." I thought to myself. I came back to reality. I then realized that there was no chance, he was dead. I immediately started sobbing, and I wanted to fall down to the floor and cry. Suddenly, my sadness turned into anger "Why Beaner? Why did that truck have to speed down the road? Why did he have to hit MY dog?" were my thoughts.**

**I flashed back to all the good memories I made with Beaner. I specifically thought of the times I would talk to him in a funny voice, and he would bark back. When I would put my hand under the decorative pillows on the couch and move my hand, Beaner would attack the pillow. When his little body would have to jump up to get the treat that I would tease him with. All these memories, I would never get to make with him again. I was angry and sad at the same time. My dog.. MY DOG was gone, and I would never get to see him again. Beaner was a huge impact on my childhood, and the rest of my childhood would be without him.**

**A couple of hours later, my papa made a grave out of wood for him in the garage; it was a cross. We buried him in the backyard and put flowers around his grave. We also buried him next to our other dog, Idgy. Beaner and Idgy were best friends, so it was like they were meeting again. I knew it would be hard to let go. I loved him with all my heart but I knew my family would be there to help me.**



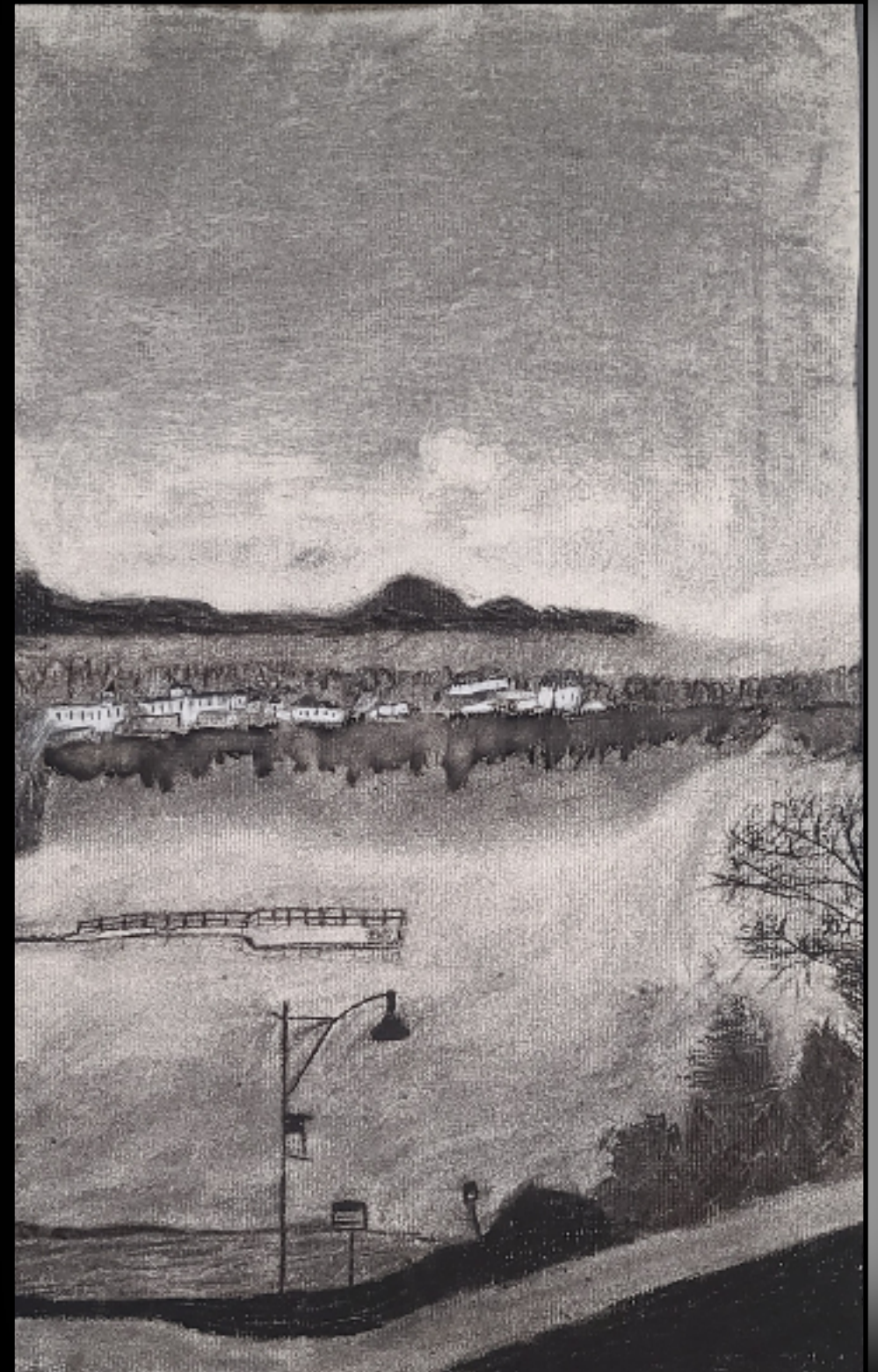
**Michael Guarnieri**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 7  
Mrs. St. Pierre



# ART



**Catarina DeAngelis**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 10  
Mrs. St. Pierre



**Richard Beach**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 10  
Mrs. St. Pierre





**Mackenna Ball**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 8  
Mrs. St. Pierre



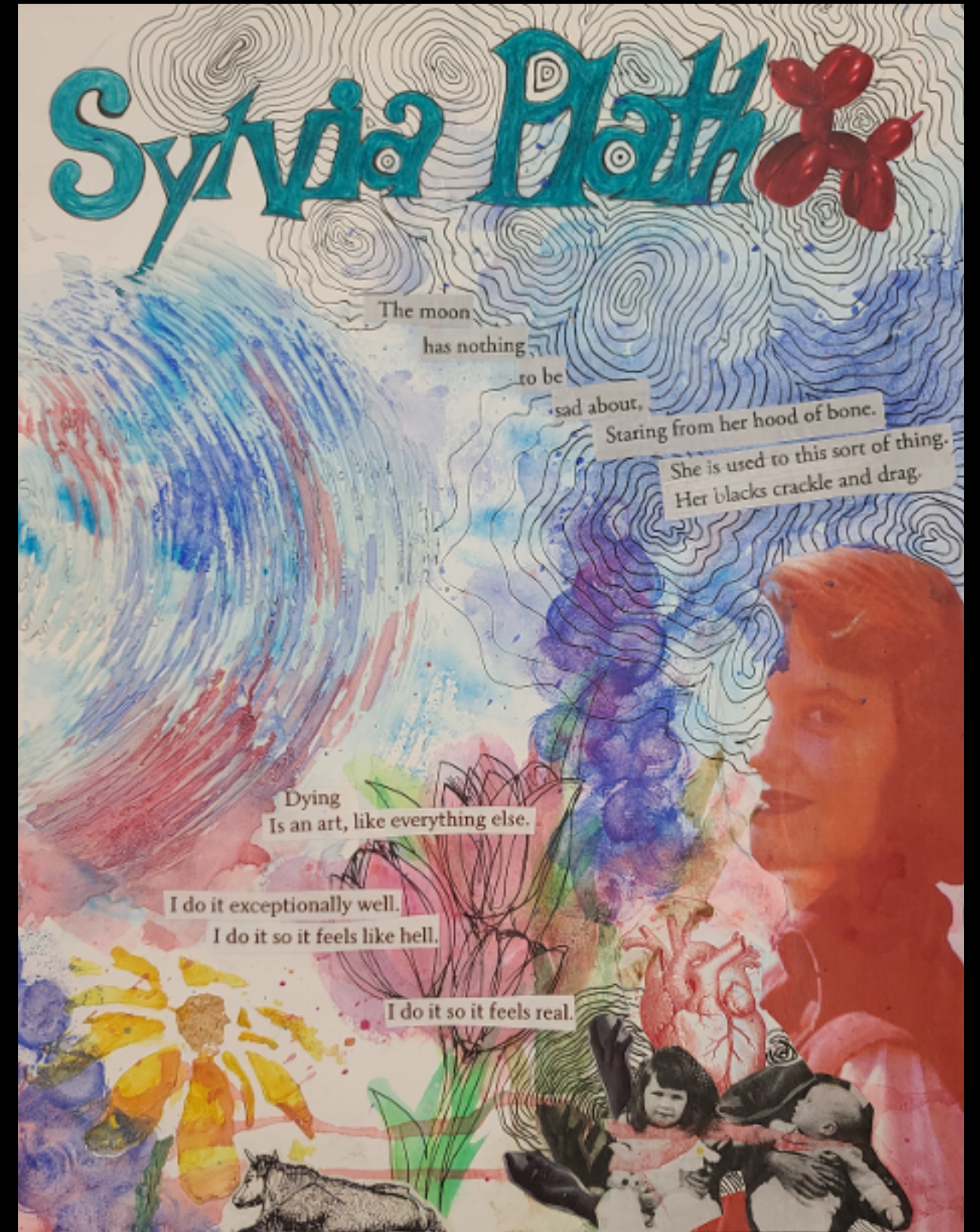
**Haven Alfred**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 9  
Mrs. St. Pierre





**Jodi Smith**

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



**Ares Nielens**

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





**Madeline Weibley**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 10  
Mrs. St. Pierre



**Emily Sobolewski**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 7  
Mrs. St. Pierre



**Dalton Wilson**  
Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 7  
Mrs. St. Pierre





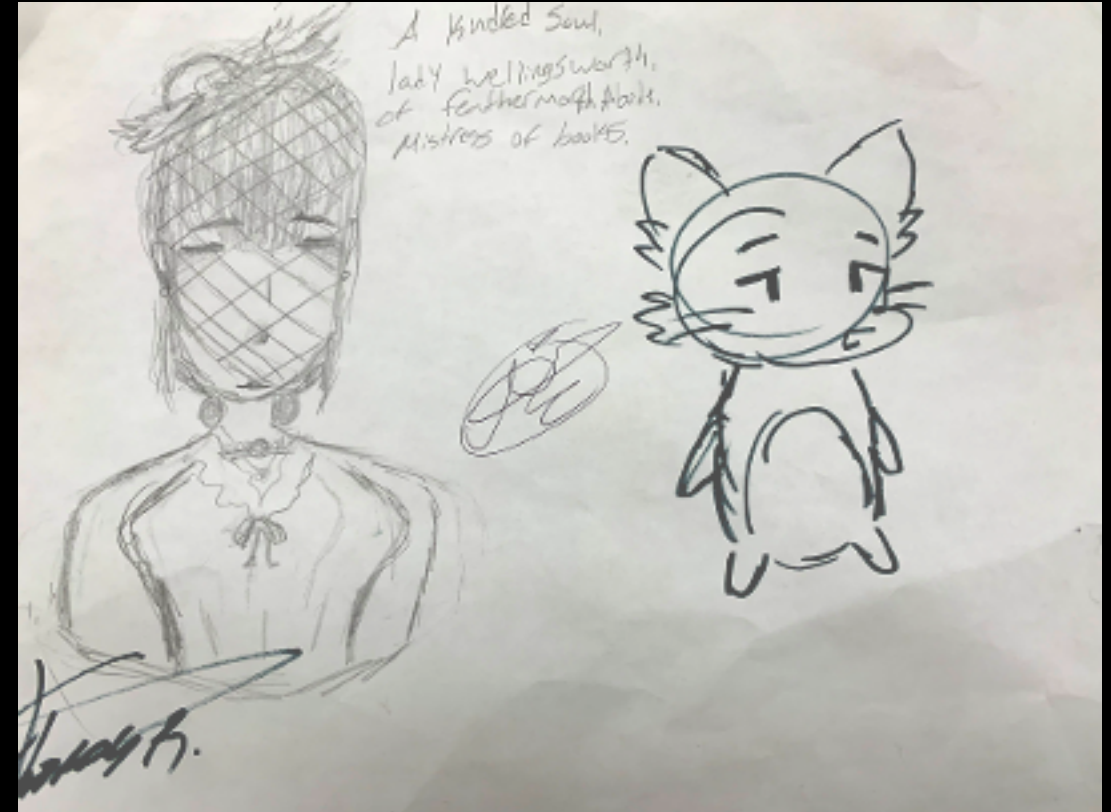
**Alexandra Marshall**

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



**Michael Guarnieri**

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

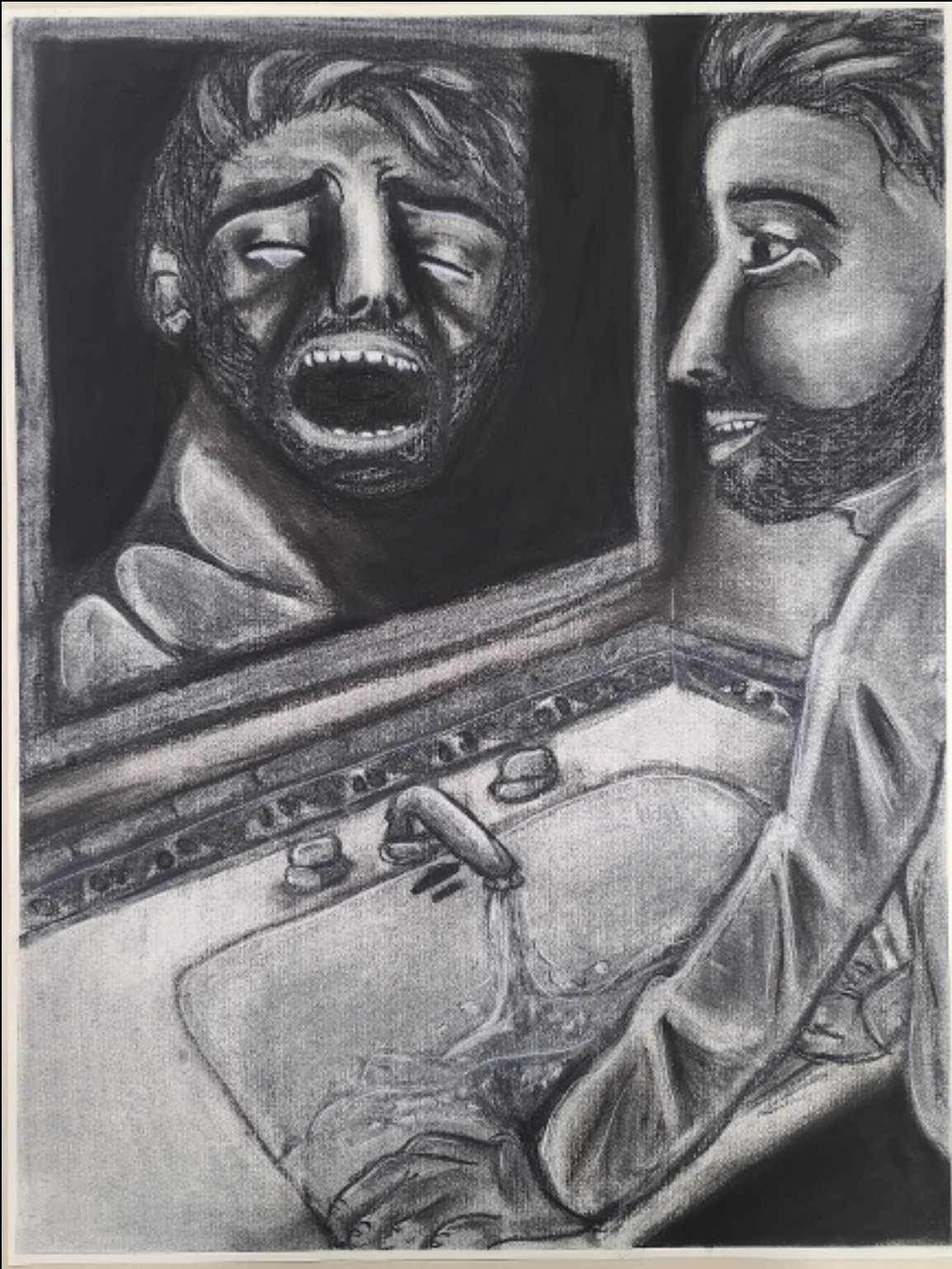


**Alyx England**

Port Byron Jr.-Sr. High  
Grade: 8







**Alexander Doerle**

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