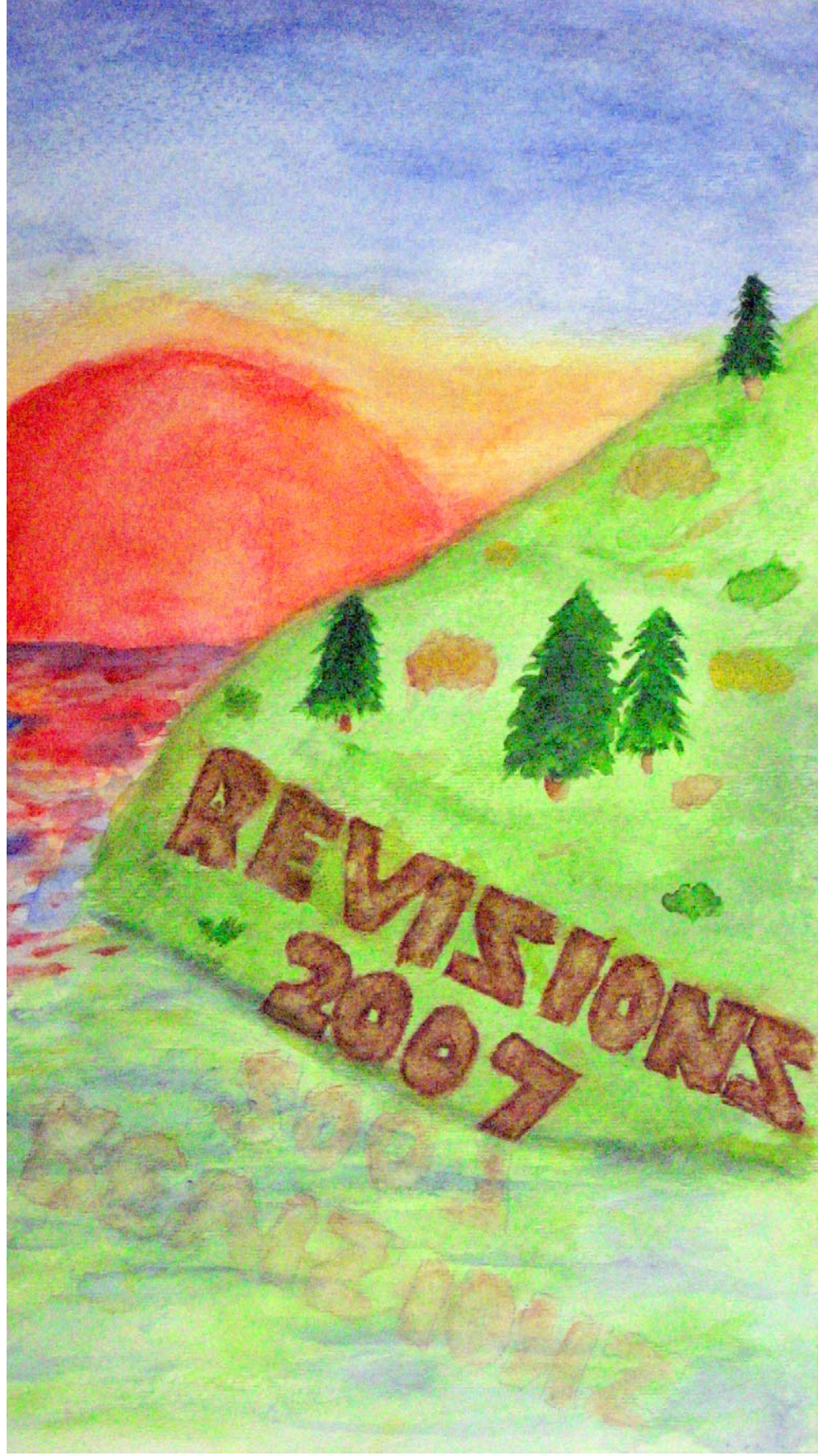


Tolt Middle School



Revisions

The literary magazine of
Tolt Middle School Car-
nation, WA

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yearly basis by the publica-
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is open to all students and
staff at the middle school.

Student last names have been
abbreviated to protect confi-
dentiality.

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Revisions needs
 your

- Short stories
- Poetry
- Essays
- Artwork
- Photography

If you'd like to be a part of making the next *Revisions* even better than this year, we'd love to have your work.

See Mr. S in room J-714 for more Information.

The Unwanted

Unicorn

By Brittany M.

If your daughter wanted a unicorn would you buy it or break her heart? My daughter, Nicole, wanted this horse that she saw at the zoo. She begged me to buy her the horse, but I said that it was not for sale. Nicole didn't want to believe me, but this horse was not an ordinary horse it had a horn in the middle of its forehead. One reason I didn't want to buy it was because the horse had a horn.

When I was little my mom bought me a horse with a horn. The horse started talking to me. It said that I had three wishes. When I was little I hated my parents very much. So one of my wishes was that I wanted to go to a magical island and never see my parents again. That wish came true for me, and I never saw my parents again.

One night I woke up and started to cry because I missed my parents. I wanted to take the wish back but I couldn't. I had to do at least ten things for the unicorn, and if I didn't I had to stay at the magical island forever and ever. So I decided to do the things for the horse. Even though I didn't really want to I knew it was the only way I would ever see my parents again. Something's I had to do was to clean up after

When I was little my
mom bought me a horse
with a horn.



Untitled
Savannah G.
8th grade

the unicorn, and go to faraway places to get food; the unicorn ate carrots and skunk cabbage. Sometimes it took me days to get there and back. The unicorn started to see that I was working my hardest so the unicorn decided to give me a day off.

I was tired and didn't want to work anymore. I wanted to quit but I knew that I couldn't, because unless

I kept working I couldn't see my parents again. Everyday I seemed to get more tired. The unicorn started to notice that I had no energy left. I had done six things already for the unicorn and I had four more to go; I started to think that it wasn't worth it, that I really didn't want to see my parents anymore.

One day I was so mad, so angry that I told the unicorn how I felt and he asked me how many things had I done. I

said I had done eight, and that I had two more things to go. The unicorn decided to change the amount of things I had to do into eight things instead of ten. I was so happy that I got to go back to my parents. The weird thing was that when I got back my parents, they said that I was only gone for a day, but to me it really felt like lifetime.

The real reason that I did not let Nicole get the pony was that, I did not want what happened to me happen to Nicole. I knew what those unicorns were really like, and if Nicole really did get one she would never see me again. I didn't want that to happen. To this day I still can't figure out why the one day I was gone felt like a lifetime to me.

Brittany is an 8th grader at Tolt. She wrote this story because she thought it would be fun for people to read.



Pink Flower
Taylor M.
7th grade

Steps

By Erica D.

“I am taking steps to change that.” -Anonymous

“One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.” –Neil Armstrong

I walk,
One foot in front of the other.
I can feel the vibrations,
Going through my shoe from the grass.
I was wearing my cleats,
But not any more.
Now I have my own agenda.
Some wear boots,
And others wear high heels.
We all take steps,
But very few of us walk them.
Everyone caught up in their own little world,
No one taking the time to walk.
To walk, listen, or hear.
To smell or to touch.

A baby takes her first steps,
Almost falling over but still trying.
The parents over flooded with joy.
You can see the happiness in their eyes,
Singing the song of happy days.
The only time when they care that we walk.
The only time they praise a moving a foot,
Or for trying something new.
All the other times,
They expect us to do it,
And do not watch.
After this,
We get our own schedules,
Our own agenda.
Whatever you call it,
No one has the time anymore.



The Plane Ride

By Alex B.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we are having some mechanical difficulties. Please remain calm and in your seats.”

10 minutes later: “Ladies and gentlemen,” the flight attendant trembled, “You may turn on your cell phones; I’m afraid we’re not going to make it to any destination this evening.” These are the last words I remember. My name is MaryJane Gellar, and this is my story.

“Mary, what are you doing? We’re going to miss our flight!” Michael exclaimed. “I’m not going,” I yelled.

“WHAT! You’ve got to be kidding me! Don’t tell me you have another one of those psychotic “feelings,” he shouted.

“They are not psychotic; I know that something bad is going to happen to that plane.”

“That’s what you said last time, so we missed our flight and what happened to the plane?” **Silence** “That’s right, nothing!”

“Yes, but the plane right next to ours blew up, remember?” **Silence**

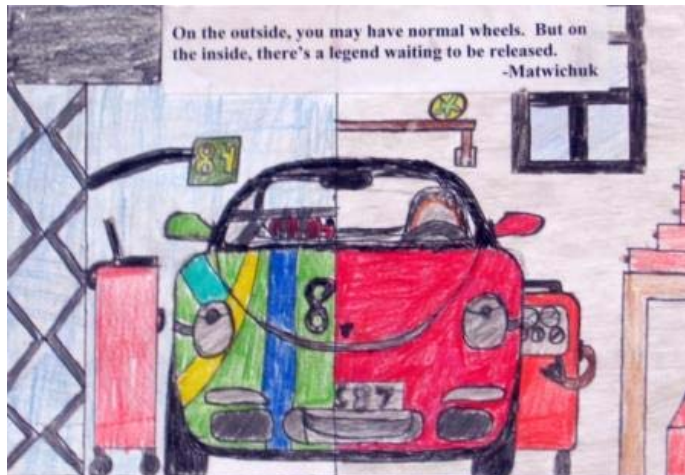
“Ha! This is ridiculous! I’m leaving whether you like it or not,” he stormed.

“No!” I screamed. **Door slams.** “Well I guess our plane didn’t blow up last time, so maybe, just maybe, it won’t this time...” I persuaded.

...

It was a typical Seattle day with both rainy and foggy weather. I watched outside while Michael drove. The dark blue clouds, like the smoky fog that aired out of our fireplace, took over the street.

Untitled
Michael M.
6th grade



“Perfect traveling weather, don’t you think?” I teased because I knew that was not what Michael thought.

“WHY is it that every time we go on a trip it’s raining! And also why is there so much traffic? Don’t people have lives and shouldn’t they be spending time AT HOME with their families?” Michael squealed. I laughed; Michael is always stressed when we go out of town. “Maybe if you had decided to come earlier, we would have avoided all this!” he complained. Did I mention he gets a little stressed and bitter?

“Just focus on driving!” I replied.

His crazy driving reminded me of a freight train. A sign passed **LIMITED PARKING.**

“GREAT!” he cried as we reached the airport garage.

“Now boarding flight 166-- 1st class only!” The desk clerk announced. “Come on come on come on, say coach in section C!” Michael chanted. “Calm down,” I sighed with deep sorrow in the pit of my stomach. **20 minutes later...** “Coach Section C.” The voice announced again. “YES!” Michael jumped with joy. “Ok, let’s just go before I change my mind about this,” I breathed.

“Wow, look at the seats! The commercials didn’t lie; there’s the leather upholstery, built in pillow, and all!” Michael explained.

“Well it is a new plane, never been flown before,” I snickered.

“Do you want the seat by the window or on the aisle?” Michael asked politely.

“Window please,” I replied. A few minutes later the doors were sealed and

the flight attendants were doing their seatbelt demonstrations and “in-case-of-emergency” instructions. “If you would please hurry and take your seats, we would like to prepare for lift off,” the flight attendant spoke through the intercom.

“So far, so good,” I told myself. “Maybe I was just over reacting before.” **The plane swerved** The plane ride wasn’t so bad if you didn’t count Michael’s snoring, the screaming newborn, the barking dog, or the kids in back of us, kicking the seat. We only had 1 hour and 13 minutes left till we reached New

“So far, so good,” I told myself. “Maybe I was just over reacting before.”

York—not that I was counting our anything. A familiar voice over powered the noise of the plane, “Ladies and gentlemen we are having some mechanical difficulties—please remain calm and in your seats.” “Michael.” I whispered.

10 minutes later: “Ladies and gentlemen,” the trembling attendant whimpered, “You may now turn on your cell phones and make the necessary calls, because we will not make it to any destination this evening.”

“MICHAEL!” I cried. But before he could wake up, the lights went out and our plane dropped.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Alex is an 8th grader at Tolt Middle School

Issues

By Evan K.

“Oh, great! You did it again!” said Maurice and Jaqobeam woke up with a start. “Did you forget to take your pills again!?”

Jaqobeam was a small humble little creature called a dik dik. He had narcolepsy. Maurice was a marmoset, he was allergic to green.

“So what if I accidentally randomly go to sleep, who cares?”

“What if you were being chased by one of your many predators, like an eagle lizard, owl, lion, tiger, wild dog, hyena, python, jackal, leopard, caracal, panther, or cheetah and you fell asleep?”

“Well that’s lucky for them!” said Jaqobeam. He had a sour look on face.

“You need to take care of yourself, you’re allergic to green for god sakes and we live in a freaking jungle!”

“Ya well I take my pills!”

“We’re not friends anymore you dumb little undersized monkey!”

That was that, Maurice and Jaqobeam walked off in opposite directions, never to talk to each other forever.

Until two weeks later.

Maurice and Jaqobeam bump into each other in the forest.

“I bet you have been bored lately, not having the coolest most awesome dik dik in the lands as your friend”, said Jaqobeam.



Untitled
Dane G.
8th grade

“Oh believe me, I have been getting a long great these days, I have even gotten married to Helen, she is wonderful. Soft golden fur, short stubby arms, big oversized eyes, she’s perfect!”

“Oh yah that sure sounds perfect” said

Jaqobeam, “I however have made some real friends! They care about me and don’t criticize me all the time like you did.

They compliment me on

how juicy my leg muscles are, and how tender my neck is, it’s flattering.”

“Who exactly are these ‘friends’ of yours” said Maurice. “They sound kind of suspicious.

“They are perfectly fine; they are the eagle, lizard owl, tiger, lion, wild dog, hyena, python, jackal, caracal, panther, and cheetah, your just jealous!”

When Maurice heard what was happening he was horrified, he tried to warn

**“DO YOU REALLY THINK
YOU CAN STOP US
NOW?”**

Jaqobeam, but he just wouldn't listen. He had to stop what he knew what was going to happen.

Later that night. Maurice approached a fire in a small clearing. As he peered over the bushes, he saw Jaqobeam tied up and surrounded by his many predators.

"Oh... this is bad" he said. Maurice felt so sorry for him and regretted fighting with Jaqobeam. Then Maurice thought to himself, I better save him" so he came rushing out of the bushes to stop all the predators, which looked sort of pathetic concluding that he was only about a half foot tall.

They laughed and said "DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN STOP US NOW?" in a big unified, resounding voice.

He knew exactly what he was going to do. He said "panther why do all of you have to share this little dik dik with barely any meat on him?"

The panther didn't know why and soon started claiming Jaqobeam over the other predators. Soon they all started



Self-portrait
Eleanor B.
8th grade

to fight and hiss and roar. After what seemed like hours the fight stopped. The only predator that was still alive was the panther. The big, hulking beast suddenly turned to Maurice with a mangled bloody

face. "After I eat you as a little appetizer I will eat your little friend here with pleasure."

Then Maurice screamed as loud as he could chilling both the panther and Jaqobeam's blood. Then distant screams filled the jungle and hundreds, no thousands of little marmosets came running out of the forest. Then Maurice said "DID I MEANTION I HAD THOUSANDS OF BABIES!" They swarmed over the poor panther and killed him. Later that night Jaqobeam and Maurice decided to be friends forever and to never ever fight again, until Maurice reminded Jaqobeam to take his pills again.

Evan is an 8th grader at Tolt Middle School.

The Bird

By Hannah S.

She lived in a simple gold wired cage,
With a perch, a feeder, and some water.
Nothing special.
Nothing original.
Just the bird that sits in there,
Waiting for the world to turn.
Her owner with her long blonde hair and big
blue eyes and tall skinny body frame.
Occasionally lets the bird soar threw the
large empty room her cage lies in.
She lives behind a smile to impress the
world.
Jealous of her bird,
Who sits in her cage with nothing to do,
Nothing to worry about,
No one to impress,
No one to live for.
Alone in her cage,
Just a bird,
Simply,
A Bird.

The Four Bullets

By Chad L.

A strong, tall man crawled to his feet while weeping. His uniform was ripped across the side and had splatters of blood almost decorating the chest. He looked down on the ground and saw his whole platoon destroyed. He was the sole survivor. All he could see were his friends with limbs blown off and blood on almost every inch of their bodies. He cried as he knew he still might not make it out alive. Grey and black smoke clouded the sky. His vision was blurred from so many tears. His muscles were sore and tired but he knew he must go on. He walked through the battlefield stepping over his old friends and his hated enemies, the German Nazis.

His name was James and he was holding nothing but his M2 Carbine rifle and four bullets, he went on. He walked until he saw a building. It had been bombed, covered in ash, and had holes in the walls. Bricks lay everywhere, and he knew then he would hide there, for now.

Once inside the building the floor creaked with every step he took.

It scared him as he walked. He was determined to avenge the deaths of his comrades and not fall due to a weak floor. He sat down next to a broken mirror. He saw himself as a boy crying, lonely and scared. He was covered in dirt and ash. The skin beneath his eyes was washed clean from his tears. As he took off his dirty green helmet he saw his brown, tangled, and dirty hair, in the reflection of the mirror. He thought of when his

“Darin eilen hier.” He listened for more. “Ich denke, dass jemand innen ist, the same voice rang out again.”

wife used to run her fingers through it and his hair would always be straight and clean, but recently he got a Dear John letter from his wife. This made him feel even more alone. He wept on the ground, staring into his almost lifeless eyes, until he finally fell asleep.

This man woke up by a voice, “Darin eilen hier.” He listened for more. “Ich denke, dass jemand innen ist,” the same voice rang out again. Worried, the man grabbed his rifle. He pulled back on the bolt to load his gun and placed one bullet in-

side. Still laying there he pushed forward the bolt with his heart rapidly beating. A skinny, tall man walked into the room, his large mustache furrowed over his rotting yellow teeth. He was a Nazi. He raised his gun at the James and a gun shot rang through out the air. The Nazi dropped to his knees clenching his chest as blood slowly flowed out onto the floor. The man pulled back the bolt again and an empty shell popped out and jingled on the



*Marilyn
Monroe*
By Muriah C.
8th Grade

floor like a nail falling on glass.

“Deiter, Deiter, sind Sie ok?” Another voice shrieked out, most likely another Nazi. James stood up with his rifle, ready for vengeance. Clank after clank after clank, was heard as the Nazi ran upstairs. This short, stump, Nazi turned the corner looking for his comrade. James was left with two bullets, and two bodies.

The man with nothing but anger and disgust on his face marched out of the building and onward to a Nazi controlled town. Just before the battle that he survived, his commander told everyone the purpose of this mission. “We must take this town. If we do

succeed we will have captured at least thirty Nazi tanks. They are hidden in the large factory looking building in the very center of this town. If.....or I should say *when* we capture them, we will

be one step closer to going home. Men you must do this for me, for yourself, and for your country.” This is why he marched. He planned to somehow capture or destroy the tanks.

Finally after climbing a large grass-covered hill, he came to the top. He gazed upon the glorious city of Kharkiv. Banners of the swastika paraded in the wind. Buildings everywhere stood tall with brick walls and cement streets lining the land. Nazi troops were stationed everywhere, mostly smoking. Some were wasting bullets on target practice, but ammunition was something this man couldn't waste. He slowly scaled down the hill with his rifle in his hand. He saw the building that was supposedly full of tanks in the very center of the town. “Here we go,” the man nervously whispered to himself.

Sneaking his way through the back allies and through abandoned buildings he slowly made it deep into the city. While almost to his target, he saw a small boy playing stick ball in the street. His swing was quick and strong. His hair was dark, long and brown. His childish laughter reminded him of his own son. He stood there in the street

thinking of turning back hoping to someday see his son again.

After about ten minutes he got the inspiration to move on. He was approaching the factory only twenty yards away when he heard, “Halten Sie an, wer Sie sind.” The man loaded his rifle and stood in the same place. The German approached. A large, cold hand was laid on the James' shoulder; he swung his rifle around and it bashed the German in his chest. The Nazi fell to the ground. James aimed the gun at the man's face and didn't know whether to let him live or not. The sorrowed, worried and frightened look on the Nazi's skinny, little face was convincing.

“Halten Sie an, wer Sie sind.” The man loaded his rifle...

Their eyes met and a tear ran down both of their eyes. He withdrew his rifle and ran.

Now at the factory he pushed open the large metal door and its sharp rusty edge cut into his hands. He spotted the largest tank and grinned. So easy, no guards, he thought. He turned and saw a group of about seven Nazis running at him with their rifles aimed right on his chest. He climbed into the seat of the tank. He panicked and forgot how to drive it. Sweat dripped down his face and he looked around. “Bekommen Sie ihn,” he heard. A banging at the hatch to the tank; he drew his rifle and raised it. They came through. James fired and the first one fell. He knew he was doomed as they flooded in. The soldier fired his last and final shot. He turned his head to hide and was staring directly up the barrel of a gun. His heart stopped. He fell to the ground.

Chad goes to Tolt Middle School and he wrote a story about a man who is stuck in a war, alone.

Football

By Kyle K.

It's a beautiful day for football,
It's raining,
It's mudding,
Plus coach is in a good mood.
We start off by stretching.
Then we run,
Then we break down into teams.
We work on offense and defense.
Then we scrimmage,
Then comes the worst part.....conditioning,
Coach R makes us do up downs, sprints, bear
claws and others.
After that we get some water.
Then its back to running, if one person goes too
soon we run more,
But if not, then we are done for the day.
As we wait watching for the ball to move, the
suspense grows almost to a point where we just
want to scream...and then it happens the ball
moves,
We take off toward the other end of the field.
Thank God no-one jumps the line;
That's it we are done for the day.

Kyle is an 8th grader who likes to play football.

Always Second Best

By Chelsea J.

She's popular and pretty.
She's smart and athletic.
She excels at everything she tries.
She's everyone's favorite girl.

She's always the captain of the team,
Leading them to victory.
Always the star,
Put center-stage.

No matter what I do,
I can never compare.
She's always one step ahead,
In a race that I can never win.



Untitled
Alexa McCarty
7th Grade

Sometimes it's too hard to keep trying,
Sometimes it's too hard to stop.
Whatever she is,
I am not.

Every move I make is wrong.
Every move she makes is right.
Even when they're the same,
She always comes out on top.

I'll always be second best,
In every single test.
I'll always be in her shadow.
No matter what I do..

Maybe she's just lucky.
Maybe she's blessed.
I guess I'll never know her secret,
To making a life a success.

She's popular and pretty.
She's smart and athletic.
She excels at everything she tries.
She's everyone's favorite girl.

And she's my best friend.

*Chelsea is an 8th grader who loves music, dance,
friends and soccer. Her favorite colors are pink and
black. Hannah is her favorite sister-in-law.*

THE GATEKEEPER

By Chris W.

Have you ever wondered if there was a treasure below the ground that you were standing on? Or perhaps that leprechauns existed and actually do have a pot of gold at the end of the rainbows? Have you ever closed your eyes and thought you could hear gold coins clinking around together? The sound of clinking coins as if they were in perfect harmony. Or perhaps as if they were like a waterfall. Well I have and I saw what I thought was Paradise City.

It was four years ago next Sunday; I was walking along, minding my own business when a purple leprechaun jumped in front of me and said, “Oh, boy could you answer me this? I wish I may, I wish I could, get my treasure that I would. And if you could, if you do what makes you worthy I am asking you?” I stopped and thought about it while doing my best impression of my teacher Mr. Stewart. I tilted my head back looked into the sky and stroked my chin.

“I’m always nice to women,” I answered in a questioning tone.

“You’ll need to try harder than that buckaroo,” laughed the leprechaun.

“It’s hard, I can’t think of anything. Also, what is your name?” I was pondering the question he asked.

“My name is Chip,” and with a flash and a bang, Chip the purple leprechaun was gone.

...



The Randomness Bubble

Sarah S.

8th grade

Later that evening, forgetting all about the little episode with the weird dude with purple skin I was enjoying a mock ice cream cone that melted in my mouth like butter on hot toast. And out from nowhere steps Chip.

“Have you thought of my words, laddie?”

“I have, and I say that I am pure of soul and nice to all.”

“Ha! Hardly, the purest of people have no enemies. How many do you have? The only people

who are pure of soul are Gandhi, Buddha, and Jesus.” And as quick as he had arrived, he was gone. Again I was left without a clue. Was there something about Jesus, Buddha, and Gandhi that I was missing? Did my answer lie in the realm of religion?

As I lay awake in a silent room, quiet as a graveyard after midnight, with the smell of cologne my desk and it was dark black; I began to think, but I was get-

“You’ll need to try harder
than that buckaroo.”

ting a headache. Then there was a thunderous ring inside my head as if a sludge hammer was hitting a giant church bell. Then it dawned on me, the church, Jesus, pure souls all those things were holy! The churches were all that is pure and love is never far. I was dressed as quick as the wind and running out the door.

I can hear the soft padding as my shoes hit the cold concrete as I run. The moon is like a slow jazz song, with a hum for a beat. The moon is hanging in the sky behind the clouds. My breathing becomes more rapid and deeper. The church is now in sight and so is Chip. My pulse is also racing.

“Jesus Christ is my savior!” I exclaimed as I rushed up to Chip.”

And just like that with a turn of his wrist and a snap of his fingers, heaven opened before my eyes. No words came out when I tried to ask if I was dead, I always thought of death as a sense of release. No longer felt the same feelings inside that I’ve had almost all my life. It was like a dream, I stepped threw the door and onto a cloud I could hear the sound of music soft and filled with gospel. The light was bright as the sun

“If you would just follow me”, a soft voice whispered to a corner off a cloud-like room. There sat multiple people as I sat down in the chair, I noticed that first to people I recognized where Kurt Cobain and Johnny Cash. They seemed to be having a conversation about guitars and songs.

“Hey man, we’ve been waiting for you”, Cobain said with his laid-back, soft sense of humor.

“We want you to play one of your favorite songs,” said Cash. Cobain reached behind him and pulled out an absolutely beautiful acoustic guitar.

“I’m not that good,” I admitted in front of my idols.

“It’s not whether you’re good; it’s how you play,” said Jimmy Hendrix who I now recognized in the back. I picked the strings to warm up, and then jumped right into the beginning of the song.

“Hey, I remember that song, that’s mine from Nirvana, we called it “The man who sold the world.” Cobain started in on the lyrics while I sat amazed that I was playing this song, as if by magic, with as little experience as I had. I closed my eyes and continued to play, letting the notes ring from my finger tips. When I finished, I opened my eyes and was sadden to see that I was back in my pitch black room that was silent as a graveyard. Was it all a dream? I can’t decide so I closed my eyes and remembered the happiness of playing my favorite song next to Johnny Cash and Kurt Cobain, who both happed to be my favorite artists.

Jesus being my gate way to a special treasure of mine, I often sit and think about what is a gateway for other people. I sit inside of my room sometimes and just play my guitar, pondering the infamous question, “what makes you worthy?”

Chris Westover is an 8th grader at Tolt Middle School.



Untitled
Haley Knox
8th grade



Untitled
Lindsey Brugman
7th grade

Doodles

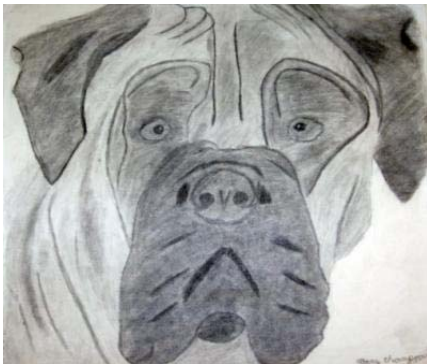
By Samuel P.

Doodles on the side of the page
What do you say?
I speak not in a calm voice
But in a screaming echo
Of thought.
To who do you scream?
To who will listen?
Those who draw.
To those who write.
For they are the doors to me

What do you scream?
The knowledge of the world
The love of lives
Confessions of an unknown.

I am like the boy at the back of the class
That always listens
But never talks.
I am the thoughts
Of rebellion that are floating in a mind.
I am a humble dinghy
Going out to battle rough seas.

I wish to be in the middle of the page
But I am not.
I am pushed a side as a dirty rag is thrown
For I am just Doodles on the side of the page.



*The Face of
Truth*
Albany T.
8th grade

Spring

By Chelsea J.

A breath of fresh air
After a long winter.
Refreshes not only my body,
But my mind, too.
It's now ready for spring cleaning.

It's time to dust away all of the self-doubt
That's like a heavy layer of dust
On an abandoned coffee table
that needs to be cleaned.
And bring in a new wave of confidence.
It's time to sweep out the negative thoughts
And replace them with positive ones,
Just like bringing in a bouquet of fresh flowers
To replace the old dead ones in a dusty vase.

My body begins to feel spring's new life, too.
I want to be outside in the bright yellow sun
That warms my body from a long winter's cold.
I want to be free of restriction and constraints.
The walls of this school hold me prisoner
In a war that won't soon end.
I am chained to the heavy history books
I ache to be free.

Neither does my mind.
My mind wants to be free
to roam wherever it pleases.
It wants to think about life and the world,
Not the 14th president
or the Pythagorean Theorem.
My mind wants to float out of my body
And become one with the world.
But I guess it'll have to wait until 2:45 today.

The **Big** League

By Madi S.

“Kill it! Come on, bring him home! Don’t let us down!” moms would yell to their kids who were out on the field. I happened to be up to bat, and the bases were loaded. Only the rest of the last inning left, and we were down by two. Pressure wouldn’t even describe what I felt. My palms were sweaty, I was getting dizzy, and my eyes were trying so hard to roll back into my head so I could just faint, and let the moment pass. Of course, I couldn’t though. My team had made it, all the way to Nationals. The Florida air was humid as beads of sweat dripped down my forehead. I could only wait, until a screwball, or maybe a fastball, came toward me.

That was a long time ago, when I was eight, and yeah, I struck out. I did hit a few foul balls though, so it wasn’t like I didn’t hit the ball at all. Despite my few encounters with the ball that sent it flying behind me, my team was very dissatisfied. The Wolves had lost, Nationals were behind them, and all their practice seemed to go unnoticed. Now ten years later, I’m still playing baseball, only my

My team had made it, all the way to Nationals.



Untitled Haley Epps 7th grade

abilities surpass Little League now. I’m on my high school team, and we’ve got quite a group, that is, besides Jay Allman.

I used to think Jay is the kind of guy who looks like the center of the team, the star who hits home runs each game, but in reality, he is just the guy who’s picked last for dodge ball. I haven’t talked to him much, besides the regular

“hello”, and when we’d warm up in teams, and I got stuck with him. He seems nice; he was just not meant for baseball I guess. Jay’s probably good at other sports, just not this one.

Today at practice I was teamed up with Dan Whitsides, one of our best short-stops. We we’re supposed to warm up and stretch, but Dan had to leave for his tutor class, so I was stuck with none-

other-than Jay. He had been by himself earlier as usual, and when Dan left me by myself, coach paired us up.

“Hey, uh, how’s your arm feeling?” I asked Jay who had sprained his arm early in the season.

“Much better, but my pitching is off,” he replied staring at his arm.

“So, I already stretched out with Dan, so if you need to I’ll be standing over there,” I said pointing over to an open spot, hoping he had needed to still stretch.

“Wait! I stretched too. We can go straight to warming up!” he said pulling my arm back as I started to walk away. I hope he didn’t see my face that was plastered with disappointment.

“Everyone line up, and hop to it!” Coach yelled out as he blew his whistle signaling us to haul in.

“We’re going to be playing a quick game for warm up, so um, Jay, and Robby, you’re captains. Choose teammates wisely...” he snickered as he walked away toward the dug out. Jay picked first.

“Ben,” he said. The last words out of his mouth I wanted to hear, my name.

The game went quickly that day, and our team actually outscored the other one. Jay’s playing was getting better, and the more I saw him, the less obnoxious he seemed to me. Later that day we met up for a shake, the whole team would be there to eat a good and hearty meal.

I walked into the familiar Deb’s Diner, and took a seat next to Jay who was sitting on the end of the bar where they served the infamous milkshakes.

“Hey, how’re things?” I asked him, not really knowing what to say as I took a seat next to him.

He seemed a little shocked that I came up to talk to him because at first he

acted like he hadn’t heard me and sucked down his milkshake. Then he said,

“Oh! Good...you know you don’t have to sit next to me...” he said grimly moving his straw around in his malt.

“What do you mean?” I acted surprised but, I wasn’t. I had never even made an effort to talk to him before, and now I was acting all ‘buddy-buddy’.

“I know the guys on the team think I’m horrible at baseball, well considering I am I guess they should think that. It’s just; I only play for my dad. He’s sort of the motivation behind me in baseball. He used to play for his high school team, MVP.” Jay explained it all to me, and now it all made sense.

“So, you don’t play because you like baseball?” I rechecked in my head, after saying it out loud.

“Nope,”

Now that I think about it, some kids don’t know what they want to do, and some kids do. While other kids have their parents pushing them to do something they don’t want to. Others have parents that don’t push them at all. I look back at it now, as I begin my baseball career, and thank my parents for being the way they were.

Madi is an 8th grader at Tolt Middle School.



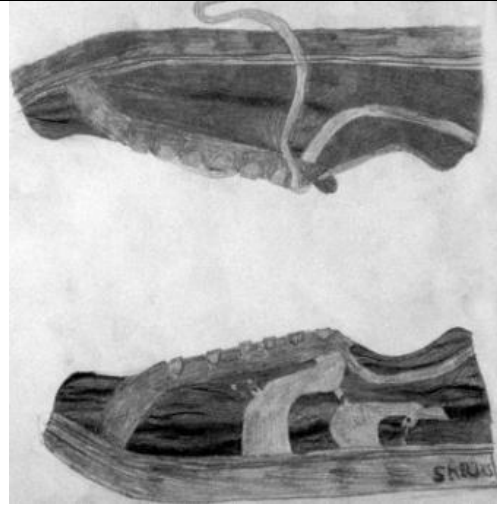
Untitled Carissa S. 7th grade

Skateboarding

By Jason B.

As the wheels on my skateboard spin,
I can hardly bare to look,
A tree awaits me straight ahead.
Going so fast,
With the thoughts of pain,
Rushing through my head,
I hope to get out of this alive.
With no way to stop,
I hit the tree straight on.
My 12 year old body goes soaring through the air,
With the wind in my face,
My cheeks pulled back,
And my life flashes before my eyes,
I was certain I would die.

Jason Barton, 8th grade, created this poem about skateboarding, which is one of his pastimes.



“My Skilled Shoe Drawing” Lane N. 6th grade

Doors

By Hanna P.

They can lead you in.
They can lead you out.
In or out to a world,
The real one,
Or a made up one.
You can knock on them,
To let someone know you're there,
Or you need to come in.
They are all sorts of colors,
With mainly golden hinges,
Framing the left or right side.
The knobs that lead you,
All different kinds.
Round, side to side,
Straight, up and down.
Different shapes,
Squares,
Circles,
Rectangles,
All lead you to a different place.
You never know what hides behind them.
It could be a kitchen full of food,
Or a playroom full of kids.
Doors take you everywhere,
Even if they are locked,
They take you places,

Just like cars and buses do.
If the door is locked, you can't go in;
You're left wondering what mysteries lay behind it.
The knob shakes and rattles,
Pushing and pounding on the wide piece of wood.
So you go somewhere else.
You are just so focused on getting to that world,
That you don't think about how you get there.
You can't get anywhere
without going somewhere new,
Through a door.

Hanna Paradis is an 8th grader. She wanted to take something simple and put a lot of detail into it.

The Douglas Fir

By Megan C.

The wind sways the tree back and forth
Rocking itself to sleep
Having the opposite effect on me

The waxy green ivy spirals up the massive trunk
like a staircase
Waiting for me to enter into small seat
I can no longer fit into
The one I used to play in all the time
Where I would show off how high I could climb

The leaves now ripple in the air
Pushing them in different directions
The water droplets finally find a home on a big leaf
But then it slides off onto the moist ground
Joining other water droplets and forming little puddles

The pokey pinecones rest peacefully at the top of the tree
They are waiting to drop down
But the wind is not yet strong enough to force them away

When one pinecone finally hits the ground
It wants to explode
To expand its seeds all over the yard
To make sure a tree grows near by
So it doesn't become to lonely in the yard

The tree that usually an umbrella
Blocking the rays from our backyard
Is now a toothpick trying to stand up all alone
Through the harsh winds

Mixed Feelings

By Chris W.

My heart is like a flying train,
Always leaving with my love
and coming back with pain.
Wish I had a dollar for every time I felt insane.
Because my heart is like a flying train.

My mind a red balloon,
If I let go it flies straight to the moon.
I try to hold on but I also like to let it go.
Because my mind is like a red balloon.

My emotions are like a dark cloud.
If I hold them in I want to scream real loud.
It makes me mad to feel this way I don't know why.
Because my emotions are like a dark cloud.

My happiness is a warm rain.
Every time I see the rainbow it always brings pain.
I don't want to lose any friends ever again.
Because my happiness is like a warm rain.

Don't hate me for who I am.
Don't hate me, don't regret me, and don't ever forget
me.
Don't judge my clothes, don't judge my hair.
Just remember standing there,
Remember my face, and my smile.
Because for you I would walk for miles.



Flowers Eleanor B. 8th grade

Pencil

By Kyle K.

The pencil is sitting there with its yellowish orange body
With its silver metal end.
The pencil is sitting there waiting to be used.
The writer sits at his desk in his lonely study.
There he thinks what to write about.
Then it hits him; he'll write about a pencil.
He starts off with the title.
Then comes the body copy.
He takes a short break to sharpen his pencil.
He thinks about the next line, and then it hits him,
What the heck is he doing writing a poem about a pencil?
He decides to keep going, but he has trouble coming up with the next line.
He decides to call it quits. That's it, the end of the poem.
Now he'll sit there waiting to be used again.



Sunset River Miranda C. 8th grade

Copy Cat

By Natalie A.

How does she know what I'm going to do next?
How does she know that my eyes are brown?

I move my hand,
She mimics.

Step back,
Walk across the floor.
She mimics.

I stop and start to wonder,
Staring off into space.
She mimics.

She looks like me,
She does what I do,
Who is she?

I change my position,
Deep in thought.
Arms crossed.

She mimics.

I'm thinking,
Why does she do what I do?
If I am she,
Is she me?

She watches me,

Waiting for my next move.
I test her patience, but she never falters,
For if I don't move then neither will she.

Boredom.
She expresses boredom with every move.
But, if she does,
Then don't I as well?
I am she.

I leave the mirror,
In search of another way to spend my time,
Watching,
Just to be sure.

She mimics.



Untitled Arianna W. 7th grade

THE COOKING SHOW

By Josh D.

A short while ago in a place pretty close, there was a man. His name was Josh, and he was the host of a show called “The Cooking Experience.” It was pretty darn cool. Sometimes he would cook, and other times he would mix. He would mix batter, dips and various other things that needed mixing. All in all, it was a nice job and a pretty well- paying one too. One day as one of the directors of the channel dropped by he mentioned that the ratings were going down.

“Why?” asked Josh.

“I don’t know much except the viewer number went down,” the guy said. “I’ll get back to you on it though.”

“Hmm,” Josh thought, “If I want money, I better spice up my show!”

Meanwhile there was a person who didn’t want him to get paid a lot of money. It was his boss Mr. Thompson! This was what his boss’s equation was in his mind:

Mr. Thompson was an idiot. The next

Mr. Thompson’s thinking	Bad ratings= less \$ for Josh= more money for him
How it actually works	Bad ratings= less \$ for channel= less \$ for Mr. Thompson too

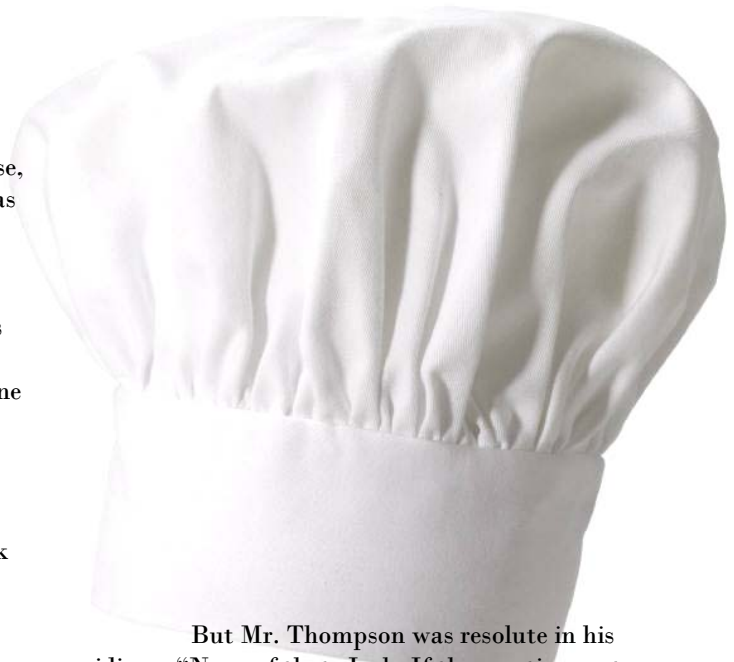
day Mr. Thompson called Josh over for a meeting.

“Josh,” he yelled as soon as Josh closed the door, “What are you doing!?”

“Ummm,” Josh said, surprised, “coming to this meeting?”

“No the **ratings**. Josh the **ratings**. Don’t you know they’re getting too high!?”

“Actually, sir, I heard...” Josh stated, trying to tell Mr. Thompson what the director had said.



But Mr. Thompson was resolute in his idiocy. “None of that, Josh. If those ratings get too high, they’ll die from... from... lack of oxygen, in space!” he yelled proud of this new idea.

He held the door open for Josh with a fake tear in his eye. “The economy depends on you Josh!” he said.

As I’m sure you can imagine, it was a very confusing meeting.

Josh was still determined to make his show better, only now he knew he had to be somewhat sneaky about it or his boss might catch him. When he came to work the next day he was prepared to make his show better than ever before. He had new utensils and even a better chef outfit and one of those cool French chef hats. Mr. Thompson saw this and decided that he would still wreck Josh’s show. So he ran out on a “lunch break” and got all the things he would need to sabotage Josh’s show. Josh started his show with the traditional “hello.” Today’s show was on eggs and he was determined to make it the best egg-based cooking episode ever created. He started with the easiest egg to make: scrambled. He got out his spatula and put the pan on the burner. Mr. Thompson had cut the line to the burner though, so there was no flame! Josh tem-

porarily stopped the program for technical difficulties and personally ran to check the pipelines for the gas. He saw the cut gas pipe and was horribly dismayed.

“Good thing I learned how to weld in college,” he thought as he pulled the emergency blowtorch and welding mask from their place next to the fire extinguisher. He turned off the pipe to make sure that he’d survive the job and quickly fixed up the pipe and turned it on. He could cook once more!

Josh ran back up to his show floor, ready to make those eggs. He got out his brand new bowl to mix the eggs in. However, when he went for the eggs they were all smashed! This must have also been the work of his boss. Luckily, he always had some eggs hidden in a secret compartment of the fridge to use in case of emergency, so he grabbed those and finally finished his show with all

“None of that, Josh. If those ratings get too high, they’ll die from... from... lack of oxygen, in space!”

the new things he had added.

After that things kind of worked out. Mr. Thompson got fired because the next day he suddenly attacked Josh offstage because he had stopped all of his plans from working. This fact would’ve been good news for Josh if he hadn’t stopped working at the show only a week later.

The day after the craziness, the same director walked up to Josh again.

“Do you remember how you wanted to know why the ratings were going down?” asked the guy.

“Yeah...” said Josh

“While it turns out that the only viewer was a 20 year old cat named Whiskers who watched every episode of the show ever made. The ratings went down because Whiskers died”

So Josh started his own restaurant called El Burrito in Alaska (he did this assuming that Alaskans could speak Spanish). The specialty: scrambled eggs.

My Person

By Jordan Cleman

My person has always been there for me,
And they always will.
My person is the one,
Who holds me when I cry,
Who holds me when I shake.
From fear and cold that wraps my heart.
My person sends shivers of warmth through my body,
At the lingering brushes of his hand against me.
My person is the one to speak softly,
Only things I should hear.
My person holds my heart as their own,
Like the fragile rose that it is,
Never squeezing too hard.
My person reminds me of my childhood,
Times where nothing mattered,
Except pavement flying beneath your feet,
The steady pounding of your running.
My person inspires me to be all that I can be,
And then some.
My person’s eyes seem to light up the room,
Along with every smile.
My person’s eyes-
Green as the sea-
They sparkle like sun on forest leaves.
Their tall, sturdy presence hits me like an ocean wave.
When he enters the room,
I feel safe.
His hair nags me,
Its place over the eye ready for me to move it.
My person is my person.

Walking in the Dark

By Natalie A.

With outstretched hands and slow moving feet,
Making your way through the gloom of your
house.

Walking in the dark.

Not knowing what may find you there,
May harm you there,
May frighten you there.
Not knowing what may happen to you there,

Walking in the dark.

Your bare feet slide and grind across the cold
hardwood floor,
Uncertainty.
Your eyes crave light and security,

Walking in the dark.

Every noise every sound as sharp as a needle,
Doubt.
Where are you going?

Walking in the dark.

In a way, life could be like walking in the
dark.

Searching for a light,
Any light.

Looking for protection from what is un-
known.

Walking in the dark.



Curious Puppy Eleanor B. 8th
grade

Demented

By Andrew Wheeler

Here at the asylum,
No one is your friend.
We comfort and take care of you.
Though we provide company,
Your only true friends are the voices in your head.
We can't change that.

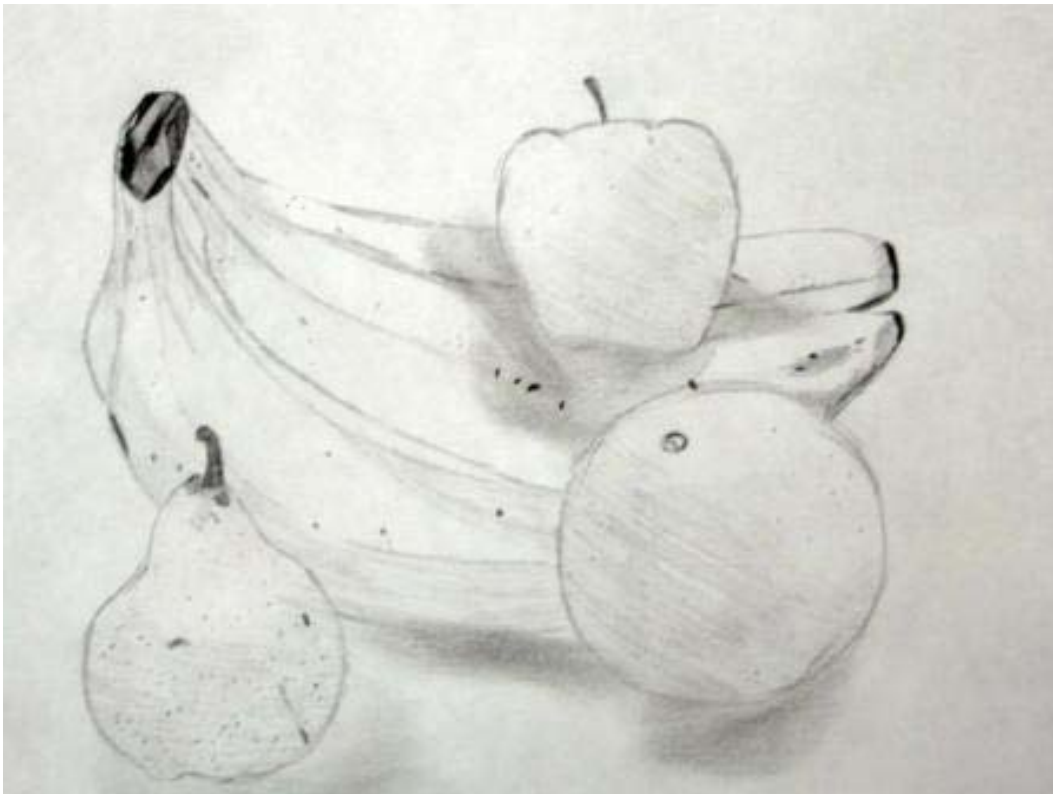
When you're crazy,
You're not alone.
You hear voices in your head,
But they're not yours.
You scream,
But no one can seem to hear you.
Or if they do,
They only ignore.

You see their expressions,
Here at the asylum.
The look on their face is one you don't have anymore.
Sanity. They look sane.

You see it, and a part of you wants it,
But part of you doesn't even know you're insane.
Reality isn't real anymore.

Your brain gets examined like a car that just
won't start.
But the mechanic can't find a solution.
It just doesn't work right anymore.
Your wheels won't turn,
And the battery's almost dead.

You're taken care of,
But you're a burden.
Familiar strangers give you pills, comfort you,
provide company.
But you're an alien in a foreign world.
You could be hostile, but take no action.
You could hurt,
But you don't.
Instead you cry, you scream.
It seems like you're alone,
But at least you still have the voices,
Here at the asylum.



Fruit Shelly McNulty 8th grade

Midnight

By: Erik M.

A time of day when everything

Starts over.
Some are still awake,
And some are
Just waking up.

As I grow older I get closer and closer
I watch my blue ceiling with
my glow in the dark stars.
I still can't make it but
I am getting closer and closer.
Even though I am eager
To get past the night
I can't hold out but there
Is a way.

Getting older and older
still in my room, now
with cars and
guitars hanging on the wall,
I still can not wait.
I watch the clock as it ticks
and tocks, I still can not wait.
I start to drift away, feeling
Tired as can be. I start to
Feel my eyes closing as
The clock ticks away.
Why cant I make it, why
Is this so hard?



Untitled Dane G. 8th grade

One final night in my room alone,
I have a clock that does not tick or tock
It changes colors as the time
changes from 11:55 to 11:56
I still can not wait,
I am so close and yet
I feel fine. So close so close
I get so excited. The clock hits
Twelve and I am now in
The next day. Now I lay
Asleep to excited to go too
Sleep.

*Erik, an 8th grader, loves
popsicles*

Labeled

By Alex Debacker

I'm not the way you see me
I am broken up inside
Labeled something different,
Like a store brand can of food.
I'm a stale piece of candy left up on the store shelf,
Marked down to twenty five cents,
Waiting for someone to pick me up from the ground.
Most people don't see that I am upset,
Those people are like a car with their high beams on.
To get rid of me they turn on their windshield wipers.
I'm the rain.
To confider with a person is like telling your feelings to empty space.
They will never understand.
And forget why you are gloomy in the first place.

My heart is pounding in my chest as I cry into my pillow.
The stain left on the cover is a reminder of my pain.
Tearing off my label would give me peace beyond death.
But death is far from near,
Like the stars that twinkle the night sky.
But no matter how beautiful they are or how wonderful they shine.
They will eventually explode.
When you go to the store don't buy a fancy jar.
Get the product.
Look inside
Candy is enjoyed by those who like it,
Those are my friends.
The stain on my pillow is washable, and the pain goes away.
My heart can return to the normal place,
Life goes on.
Rain is what sustains people,
I can keep my head up and carry on.
I may be labeled,
And I may be sad,
But I buy the store labeled food.



Untitled
Andrew Wheeler
8th grade

The Ocean

By Evan K.

In the darkness it crushes you.
Your thoughts and your body the same,
it crushes you.

It cannot be trusted.

It rushes into your nostrils, your eyes, your ears.
It suffocates you until there is no life left.

It pulls you out,
Away from all hope and lightness
Into its churning black belly
Where you will surely die.

When you're dead,
It will decompose you.
You will rot in the darkness,
Forgotten, you are, forever.
And become one more of its many horrors.



Untitled Albany T. 8th grade

Coaching the High Jump

By Mr. S.

With the meet packed up
and the scorers at the table
under the canopy putting numbers
to an afternoon,
the few of us left
huddle like family
in the dozing, 6 P.M. light.

We watch him, The last jumper here,
pack enough hope
for eight steps and a launch
into a few seconds of quiet.
Mom and dad with, camera,
tight fists, and sunglasses
stand to the side
to let their son guess
with his whole body
the height of the bar.

They are crazy for letting me
teach him this risk.

He rocks forward from his mark,
and runs hell-bent at the pit.
Rebelling against gravity,
he throws 13 years of
meals and doctor visits,
care and genes, at the sky,
trusting the pad to receive
his neck-risking dare.

For an instant,
so small I could
pluck it with tweezers,
he stops over the bar
and starts to fall.
His body hits and he rolls
off the pad, the pole still buzzing
On the standards.

Ever since I was five,
My father took me out every night to see it!
The colors fascinated me:
Orange, pink, and blue enough to color the rainbow.
My father always told me I could catch the colors.
I never knew what he meant till now,
After many years of not seeing the sunsets,
Just letting them sink down with out recognition.

Sunsets My Father Taught Me

By Hannah Smythe



Now that I am thirty-seven,
I sit beside my father's window.
Rocking his chair back and forth,
I try to get up and say good by.
His wrinkled face smiles back at me.
His tender blue eyes light up with happiness.
Then, I know what he means.
He gestured to the window.
For that moment in time I remember
Sitting on my back porch laughing,
Watching the colors of the sunset sink into the hills,
Not caring about tomorrow,
Only that I was at peace today.
The light country breeze blew through my hair.
I didn't have to leave this moment,
So I stayed.

And realizing that I could finally catch the colors.
Sitting with my father in his small room rocking in my chair,
I had finally caught the colors and the joy of the sunset,
Just like my father had told me.



Butterfly Angels

By Jordan C.

As she spreads her wings to fly to her one true love,
I weep at her grave.
As she is filled with joy,
I feel only sorrow as my heart has turned to stone.
As she shouts with glee and dances with The Lord
We speak softly and cry ourselves to sleep.
As she is welcomed to her new home,
We refuse to let her go.
But she is gone as the light is gone during the night.

As the day of celebration ends for her,
My nightmare has just begun.
Now as her welcoming is over she hears my cries and reaches out.
She touches me in a way I cannot explain.
She stops my tears and sings.
I know this is in my mind, but I refuse to forget.
I refuse to forget her voice, her touch, and, of course, her love.
Her love is the gentle breeze through a meadow.
She says to stay strong, and that she is there with me.
She says to love her forever,
I don't need to be told that.

She starts talking quietly.
So quietly it is only the sound
of butterfly wings as the fly away.
She has left me for the second time.
I am alone.
Again I am trapped in my nightmare alone.



Girl of Paper Sarah
Stein 8th grade


The Music of Volleyball

By Hanna P.

“You need to tell me a story of what is going on;
that is how much talking you need to do.”

- Coach Kristine Wilen

Waiting to make a play,
All eyes are on the server with the ball in her hand.
Everything is quiet
Until you hear the slap from the server's hand on the ball.
Then the loudness starts.
From the team,
From the coach,
And from the fans
The talking,
The directing
And the cheering
All make out the music of volleyball.
If the team does not talk, all is lost.
The serve comes over right into the hands of the passer.
The pass goes to the setter
Who controls where the ball is going.
The ball soars to the outside or the middle player,
Who, hits it over the net and right into the other team.
The hit is successful;
It hits the gym floor inches from the black line.



The Run

By Erik M.

I was late home from basketball practice that day and I wanted to take a run before it got too late. It was already dusk so I was taking chances. I put on my shoes and tied the laces as tight as I could. The shoe was squeezing my foot so tight that I could feel the pulse on the bottom of my foot.

I started to run into the forest, but it was extremely muddy that day. I was running around puddles and I had already gotten the inside of my shoe wet. I felt my sock sloshing around in my shoe. Finally, I got to the pipe line, the place where I love to run. The county had widened it a few days ago, but it was still a little muddy from all the construction they had been doing.

The cool breeze was refreshing and renewing. It was cloudy and somewhat misty. I started to do basic stretching so I could get to my run. I sat in the wet grass stretching my left hamstring. My hamstring tends to get sore from previous runs. I got up as my shorts stuck to the

back of my leg.

I started at a fast walk and then began to run. I felt a sharp pain in the back of my throat as I inhaled the cool air. It was from the cold brisk wind and the wintergreen gum I had been chewing. The incline was harsh as I started up the hill. My hair was being blown to one side, the wind was pushing me, and the rain started to fall. I got to the top of the hill and saw a straight shot to the next gate that I would pass. The pipeline was lined by a tunnel of trees, and I could only see what is in front of me, and a part of the sky in the distance. I felt at peace until it started to downpour; I stated to run faster hoping I could get to my destination before dark. The sky was starting to lose its color in to endless black sky. I reached my first gate as I leaned against it and thought about what I should do. I took chances and kept running, but this time I ran very fast through the pelting rain as it fell sharply on my skin. It felt as if little bees were flying as fast as they

can onto my wet cold skin. My hat started to drop water into my face.

The hill started again, but this time it was down hill. I saw the gate I was going to turn around at. I felt the size in rocks change as I ran to the other side of the path. The clouds were now black as could be. I slowed down for a second to look up at the dark sky. I could hardly see the gate now. I started to run again as my legs felt stiff from stopping. My shoes are soaked and I can hardly hear over the sound of the rain hitting the ground. I sprinted for the gate as I see a small flash in the corner of my eye. I stopped immediately to see what it was; I walked the extra few steps and touched the gate. I started to run faster than I was before, and then I saw another flash right in front of me. My breath now felt hot as it hit the cool air in front of me.

It was raining so hard now that I couldn't tell if I was sweating. A third flash came but after this small flash a bang followed. I ran across the road to get onto the other trail. I took my hat off because I was starting to feel dizzy. Then I cracked my knuckles to reduce the tension of my fingers. The trees were now covering me. I could still see the flashes and I could still hear the bangs. I reached the top of the hill that I was about to go down, but then I saw a small figure moving at the bottom of the hill. I thought to my self "why is this happening to me?" I started to run down the hill hoping that it wouldn't see me. I was very quiet as my feet hit the hard unstable ground. The black figure was still moving I knew it was a dog, but I didn't want to take chances. I then sprinted for the trail to my house. I didn't look back because I knew if it chased me I wouldn't have a

chance. I ran through those same puddles, but this time I didn't avoid them.

I then saw my house and started to jog lightly; as I entered my garage and I sat on the step. I was so tired I just lay on the garage floor thinking of what I had just done. I took my shoes and socks off and walked on the cool cement floor into my house. I opened the door and felt the warmth of a home.

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Height

By Jason B.

It's fifth grade,
While I am in Canada,
At my elementary school,
I look up at another student,
Who liked to beat on other students.
I'm in envy of his height.
He looks at me as I look away.
If he comes over to me to ask why I'm staring,
Then I'll simply say,
I was curious like a mouse in a barn,
So please don't hurt me
For I was only examining your height.
If you would please forgive me,
For looking at you like some kind of freak
Because you're freakishly tall,
And muscular,
I envy you for how tall you are.
So please, Mr. Bully,
Please let me live.