

# **Kaleidoscope**

**2015-2016**

## **Mason Preparatory School**

Mason Preparatory School values writing across the curriculum, and we recognize excellence in writing in all subject areas during our quarterly awards' assemblies. This literary magazine showcases some of our best creative writing from students in our first through eighth grades.

### **Special Thanks**

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*Kaleidoscope* Committee

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## Where We Began

As our eighth grade year comes to a close,  
We all look back on the memories gained.  
In first grade, we counted our fingers and toes,  
Wondering if recess would be inside because it rained.  
In second grade we learned cursive,  
And we practiced every day.  
We all wrote papers that were discursive,  
But our confidence in our work would never sway.  
We did labs in third grade,  
Gaining knowledge and points.  
And with our teacher's aid,  
We would never disappoint.  
In fourth grade, we learned about our home state,  
And we completed long study guides,  
That increased our reading rate.  
Then we learned how each number divides.  
In fifth grade, we went on a class trip where we could cor-  
respond,  
And, of course, learn.  
We discovered we had a closer bond,  
When it was time to return.  
In sixth grade, we went to Disney World,  
The first class to do so.  
At first it was a whirl,  
But we learned until the minute before we had to go.  
In seventh grade, we realized it was close to the end,  
Our experience at Mason Prep would come to a close the  
next year.  
We stayed close with each and every friend,  
Knowing we won't always be with these peers.

Finally in eighth grade, our story comes to a close.

We remember our journey,  
And how we learned to count our toes.  
And we know not to forget our little school,  
Because only a fool  
Would forget where they began.

*Peyton Baxley*

## **Rainbows**

Sun and rain make a rainbow  
Rays of light shining through droplets  
Water vapor that has no end, untouchable.  
Lovely, blended colors of the rainbow.

Working in the garden with my father  
Watering aisles of flowers  
Droplets on my hand make a rainbow  
Reflecting the colors of the flowers.

*Katherine Nguyen*

## **The Pond**

We all begin as tadpoles  
In a pond of new experiences.  
Slowly scooting about,  
Learning new things all the time.  
We blindly swim around  
Searching for our own path in life.

Soon we grow legs,  
And we learn to think on our own.  
New teachers, harder tests  
But we learn to adapt.  
We grow bigger and move to a new environment.  
Everything is constantly changing;  
New friends, everything is much harsher.  
Some struggle, others thrive.  
We try to fit in.  
Slowly we develop into kind, caring people,  
And eventually we lose our tails  
Ending our life in the pond of Mason Prep.  
We journey onto land  
Eager to begin the rest of our lives.

*Christopher Littlejohn*

## **Ode to My Cat**

Like a blanket  
My cat warms my lap.  
My mother calls me  
To set the table,  
But I don't want to wake him up.  
She comes in carefully  
Places him on the ground  
As cold as ice,  
And I go set the table.  
I come back and find

That he is pouncing  
On the shadows waving  
At him.  
I sit down, and I  
Pat my hand on the chair.  
He looks at me,  
Tilts his head slightly  
And then jumps up to me.  
I hug him like I  
Am a baby with a stuffed animal.  
He bathes his arm  
By licking it.  
I pet his side,  
His eyes start to close,  
And I know he is asleep  
Once I hear him snore.

*Mary Wallace Rainero*

## **Snorkeling in St. Thomas**

Do you ever wonder what the ocean life is like? The ocean is a great and interesting place to explore because it has so much life and activity. Some people think that the ocean is a big and scary place, but they need to realize that it is actually a fascinating place. I remember the time I went snorkeling last summer in St. Thomas.

It was a hot and beautiful summer day. The sun was shining on the water making it glisten, and the soft

sand was so hot I could barely stand on it. I was with my mom, dad, brother, and cousins. My dad, brother, cousins, and I wanted to go snorkeling because it sounded exciting. We put on our snorkeling gear and headed for the water. Once we went underwater, we were amazed by how beautiful it was.

The coral reefs were where most of the marine animals were hanging out. There were yellow fish, blue fish, orange fish, purple fish, red fish, and many more colors. We saw many other marine animals like stingrays, seahorses, sea turtles, starfish, crabs, and many more. The fish were swimming everywhere, the stingrays were gliding smoothly through the water, the seahorses were hiding in the coral reefs, the sea turtles were swimming alone and freely, the starfish were resting on the rocks, and the crabs were moving across the sea floor. I never knew the underwater world had so much life. The ocean is a wonderful place to explore and discover new creatures. My snorkeling experience was really exciting, and I will definitely do it again sometime.

*Christie Tran*

## **Suddenly!**

While I rarely take a moment and think about what my favorite word is, upon further thought only one word seems to stick with me; this word happens to be *suddenly*. Yes, *suddenly* is such a simple word, but it is a word that can stand alone where few others can. The look of this word even reminds me of several soldiers standing still, bearing arms, and waiting in a field where all the enemies

are empty, dreary words that make pages leaden. The soldiers wait with parched lips, thirsting for action, and the barren field, once deserted, is flooded with motion all at once.

To me even the sound of the word is interesting as it gives a hint to its meaning. The sharp *s* at the beginning followed by a drop and the connotation of *suddenly* gives it a dramatic flair of hopefulness, just a dash of silence, and proves to be a hinge that many choose to rely on while on the quest to interest their readers. The meaning of this word can be accurately summarized as “nothing, then all at once”, since it diminishes the actions and scenes before it saying, “Oh wait, oh no, no, no, there’s more!”

*Suddenly* is the invisible barrier between the past and present. You are born suddenly, and suddenly you die. It is the brief, eye-opening second where time runs past you, and you are left to ask yourself what happened. The realization that you are not who you used to be, the climax of the story, the coming of age, and a humbling moment is held within eight small letters on paper.

The love of Scarlett O’ Hara is a great example. Her love did not come with grace, nor did it come with much beauty, but *suddenly*. The man that wanted her, by the last pages of the book, his love had slowly faded and wilted. With red petals on the floor, Scarlett was left to pick herself up once again. She had promised that she would never be hungry again, but now she hungered for something that was out of her grasp. With this, the ending of their story was not an ending at all, and never would it be. The reader

was merely left with a fading feeling of confusion and heart break. The realization that the story had just disappeared, that there was no end, left people in a daze.

This is the reason that I love the word *suddenly* so passionately. The difference between the beginning and the end is what we convince ourselves to be a long period of time. The possibility that in a split second we might have nothing ... it terrifies me. In a billion years, we will have existed long enough to be compressed into a layer of earth as thin as a sheet of paper. Yet, I approach this word with curiosity and admiration because to me it symbolizes an instant as long as the blink of an eye. To me it is the moment when we see nothing, and the revelation after, when we are willing to open our eyes, and are no longer blind.

*Maria Lutas*

## **The Bacon Hole**

Have you ever been in a swamp standing twenty feet away from a group of extremely dangerous creatures? It was a calm November afternoon on the border between South Carolina and Georgia. I was at Caesar's Camp in the Groton Swamp, one of my favorite places in the world. Groton is a 26,000-acre plantation with beautiful swamps. This afternoon would soon become one of the most memorable events in my life.

This particular morning I was walking with my dad through the swamp of the "Far End." As we walked, we listened to birds chirping, bugs flying around our heads, and we took in the wonderful smell of the swamp.

Soon enough, we stumbled across a group of pigs that was feeding on acorns under a massive cherry oak tree. Reading my 243 rifle, I looked down the scope and aimed at a good-sized sow, but the group soon disappeared. Disappointed that we had missed our chance, we prepared to head back to the camp. Before we left, we got a good look at where the pigs had been feeding. The huge cherry oak tree towered over a small, hidden opening surrounded by cane. There were acorns everywhere, and the leaves were trampled to dust. The pigs had been having a feeding frenzy in here! Thus the title for the spot became the Bacon Hole. Seeing all of the sign gave us the idea to come back to this exact spot in the evening.

Walking back into the Far End, we soon saw the cane ridge that surrounds the Bacon Hole and got very quiet in case a pig was already inside. We stalked through the thick cane and finally got a visual of the concealed clearing. Our minds raced as we saw that a group of pigs was already enjoying an acorn dinner. Thinking of our luck that there were already pigs in sight, we realized that this would be much harder than we thought. Along with the pigs were a couple of turkeys. Knowing very well that these birds have excellent vision, we started to understand that moving into shooting range would be difficult. We tried to move as quietly as possible as we crawled through the dry, crunchy leaves.

After several minutes of crawling, we were finally within shooting range. I rested the edge of my gun against a tree covered in a thin layer of soft moss. We watched as the pigs continued to feast on the acorns. A good-sized

sow trotted into sight. As I aimed and got ready to shoot, my heart began to pound. BOOM! I fired my gun and watched as the pig dropped to the ground. Overwhelmed with joy, my dad and I celebrated our hunt with rewards of a mature sow and much excitement.

Harvesting my first wild pig gave me a renewed look at hunting. I realized that even if disappointing things happen such as missing the chance to take a shot while hunting, unexpected events can make you forget the disappointing ones. The swamp and its natural smell and beauty make it one of my favorite places in the world. I will never forget the joy and excitement I felt while hunting in the Bacon Hole.

*Daniel Nichols*

## **Hanukkah**

Hanukkah smells like chocolate gelt,  
Hanukkah sounds like different colored dreidels spinning,  
Hanukkah looks like blue and yellow candles burning,  
Hanukkah tastes like fried latkes,  
Hanukkah feels like wrapped presents.

*Lizzy Small*

## **How to Decorate a Christmas Tree**

This is how you decorate a Christmas tree. First, you need to go to a tree lot and get the best tree. Then, you strap the Christmas tree to your car. Be sure to carefully put the tree on a stand in the house. Now you are ready to decorate. Next, you need to go up into the attic to look for ornaments. When you have found them, carefully place them on the Christmas tree. After that, it's time to put the SPECTACULAR angel on the almost PERFECT Christmas tree. Be sure to be careful with the angel. Finally, it is time for the presents. Don't put the presents in the water! Follow these simple directions for a perfect Christmas tree.

*Harper Warrick*

## **Haunted House for Sale**

Hey y'all! I have a haunted house for sale. It is \$300, and half of the cost is your screaming. Downstairs there are two bathrooms, one master bedroom, and the kitchen. P.S. Don't open the closet! In the house you will smell rotten eggs, mold, mildew, and potion. Sometimes you will smell smoke. You will see spider webs, ghouls, monsters, ghosts, vampires, zombies, and werewolves. You will feel zombie flesh, spider webs, a cool wind, and worms. You will hear crying, boat horns, creaky floors, water dripping, whispering, and screams.

Upstairs there are four bathrooms, three bedrooms, and the laundry room. There might be a few zombies in the laundry room! Oh, don't forget about the tower! If I were you, I would not go up there! There is a witch up in the tower with a black, bubbling cauldron. Sometimes you can hear the witch cackling. The house doesn't really have a backyard, but there is a graveyard next to the house. By the way, if you had an iPad, you couldn't play because the powerline is broken. The house doesn't have a neighborhood. It is on flat ground with no trees or grass. Did you know there used to be houses? Then the people moved out, and workers came and knocked all the houses down. If you want to look at the house, meet me at 93 Werewolf Drive. The houses are going fast, so get yours before they run out!

*Campbell Fennell*

## **The Trail**

I followed a trail in the woods and found a thicket of thorns. I heard a sound. It was coming from over the thicket. I went through the thicket. The sound got louder and louder. It sounded like, "mmmmmmmy." I found a puppy. I kept it.

*Elizabeth Guinee*

## **Cars**

Fast, cool  
Modern, classic  
Fast, slow, luxury, safe  
Zooming on the road, sometimes slow  
Buy one!

*Grady Kenney*

## **The Ghost**

There once was a scary ghost  
Who was a great host.  
He had nine lives  
And 48 wives,  
So he could only afford to eat toast.

*Clyde Mauldin*

## **Why is the Sky Blue, How Zeus got his Thunderbolts, and Why Pegasus is a Constellation**

Dionysus, one day, was sitting in his wine factory trying to figure out what type of wine to make next. Suddenly, he got this thought in his head. He was going to make blueberry wine. He then heard a knock on the door. He opened it and it was Hermes. Hermes told Dionysus that Zeus and Hera were getting married. He said, "They

want you to make 100 barrels of blueberry wine for the wedding in just three days." Dionysus thought, oh, what a coincidence. They want blueberry wine just when I thought about it. He said, "Hermes, tell them right away that I will fill their order."

Hermes left immediately to send the message to Zeus and Hera. Dionysus sat in his chair writing a recipe for the blueberry wine. Once he finished, he started to make the wine. First he got some blueberries from Demeter, who was invited to the wedding and heard about the order of wine. He then followed the rest of the recipe till the end of it. He took a small sip of it and cried out, "Delicious! What an amazing wine!"

Suddenly he heard an urgent knock on the door. When he opened it, he saw Hephaestus. He was holding 100 barrels that would be filled with wine. Hephaestus said, "Let's fill these barrels quickly." They started to run around the room dumping wine into the barrels as fast as they could. Once they were finished, they went outside only to find Pegasus standing there. Pegasus said, "Put some of the barrels on my back, and you will carry the rest." Hephaestus said, "Hermes sent me two winged sandals so that we can fly like Pegasus." Dionysus thought, so that is who sent Pegasus, I guess.

Once they were in the air, they went towards the sound of the wedding. When they were almost there, Zeus opened the door and yelled a happy hello. This scared Dionysus, Pegasus, and Hephaestus. They dropped the barrels and started to cry. Zeus said that it was all right but

that they could punish themselves if they wanted to, but that he would also punish them. Pegasus then faded. All that was left were the stars of his beauty. He floated up into the now blue sky because of the wine and tears and never came back down again. As for Dionysus, Zeus banned the making of blueberry wine as his punishment. And as for Hephaestus, he was told to make the thunderbolts of Zeus and other nifty things for the gods as a punishment. That is why the sky is blue, Pegasus is a constellation, and Zeus has his thunderbolts.

*Claudia Baicu*

## **Santa is Stuck**

One Christmas Eve, Santa was out delivering presents when all of a sudden his sleigh did a loopy-loop and fell right into my neighbor's chimney. Santa was stuck! He wiggled and wiggled and wiggled and wiggled. After a while an angel came down from heaven. She used some magic to pull him out. He was so happy. He went right back out and finished delivering his presents!

*Madeline Bryan*

## **Fly like a Butterfly**

I would rather fly like a butterfly than jump like a grasshopper. The feeling of soaring high up in the sky would make me feel happy! I would like to fly around and explore the great outdoors. I would like to feel the cool breeze hitting my face. To me it would not be fun to hop

around like a grasshopper because I think my feet would get very tired. Another reason is because I would be green and brown, and I do not like brown! I would rather fly like a butterfly than jump like a grasshopper.

*Isabella Ragucci*

## **My Haunted House**

Do you want to know what my haunted house looks like? Well, I can tell you. It has one room where a witch family lives. The mom and little girl are witches, but the dad is a VAMPIRE! He has a bed in a corner with blood-colored blankets. The mom's bed is pink and green with red lightning all over it. The little witch sleeps in a metal crib with very dark pink blankets. My second favorite room is scarier. It has a big snake and spiders everywhere. No one enters the snake's room! It has a long, long staircase. I think it leads to some sort of hollow tunnel with an entrance to the outside world. One day, I saw a deep hole with a slimy thing coming out like a snake. Another great room is the Caution Room. It isn't just a room; it is a hotel room. My favorite room is a big scary bathroom where a zombie lives! It stays in there so it doesn't have to go to the bathroom. It just sits on the brown toilet staring at the curtains. Well, that's all my rooms. Now enter; if you dare.

*Hannah Finley*

## The Mysterious Note

Dexel Hammer was an unusual boy. He loved mysteries. He saw movies only if they were mysteries. He read books only if they were mysteries. He dreamt of one day encountering a real mystery..... Then one day everything changed.

One morning he woke up and walked downstairs to eat breakfast.

“Good morning, Sleepy,” his mom said.

“Morning, Mom,” he replied.

“Got to eat fast, Dexel,” his brother Sledger said.

He quickly ate breakfast. The school bus arrived just in time. He sat with his friends Duggie and Susie.

“The bus is so annoying,” Susie said.

“You know .... It’s more annoying when you complain,” Duggie said.

The first thing he did when he got to school was write down his homework. Then the bell rang. It was time for art. He went to get his art box in his locker when he realized a weird note on the floor. It said, “Terry, do you want to rob the bank today?”

From: Princi and David

To: Jerry

P.S. Meet me at 247 Saint Avenue

“What in the world is that?” Duggie asked.

“Some joke Princi had I guess,” answered Dexel.

“What are you doing? You can’t ask her. We have to have evidence,” Duggie said.

“Her name is on the note.”

“He has a point,” Susie said.

“F-f-f-fine,” Dexel said.

“There is only one way we can get evidence,”  
Duggie said.

“What? No! ... We can't... Never... It's illegal,”  
Dexel said.

“Yes, yes, yes, yes!” Susie said.

For the rest of the day Duggie and Susie tried to convince him to break into Princi's house. “What if it's not her? It could be a criminal. We could win an award!” Duggie repeated.

Dexel was so annoyed that he agreed to do it. They went to Dexel's house that night and planned everything out.

The next day arrived. Duggie faked being sick that day. He snuck out of the house with his iPhone. Then he took pictures from every side of the Princi's house. Susie faked being sick also. She went to the grocery store and bought (actually stole) some fish. You're probably wondering how much fish she stole. Well, she stole enough to make a house smell very bad. Dexel went to school but not to learn but to spy on Princi.

“What in the world are you doing? You are freak-  
ing me out. Who do you think I am, a criminal?” Princi  
said.

“Maybe,” Dexel replied. Princi gasped and ran the  
other way. Dexel followed her. She dropped a paper and  
kept on running. Dexel quickly picked it up. It was a  
note. It said:

Don, do you have the money? If you do,  
meet me at 247 Saint Avenue.

From: Princi and David

To: Don

When Dexel got home, he showed the note to Duggie and Susie. They all snuck out of their houses at 11:00 P.M.

When they got to Princi's home, they were ready. "OK, Duggie, you get the side window. Susie, get the other side," Dexel whispered. Duggie quickly ran to the left side of the house. He early put a stick in between the window so he could open it later. When he got in the house, he heard a knock on the door. He quickly ran behind the couch. He saw a man walking to the door. "Did you order Papa John's?" Dexel asked. "Yes, I did," the man replied. Come in.

Dexel had a look of horror on his face. Then the lights came on, and all he heard was "Happy Birthday!" Everyone Dexel knew was there: his family, friends, and old teachers. Then he saw Susie and Duggie laughing. "You knew about this?" Dexel asked.

"We were the ones who planned it. Your mom put the note on the floor and gave the other note to Princi. You love mysteries, so we thought you would find out what it meant," Susie said. Dexel had forgotten it was his birthday. Then he realized this was the best birthday present EVER.

*Tawes Wenz*

## **The Boy Who Wanted to be Pitcher**

One day there was a boy named William who loved to play baseball. He had blue eyes and short blonde hair. He practiced all summer to get better at baseball.

Today were tryouts. He really wanted to be pitcher, but so did Jack Hunt. He tried his best and thought that he was good, but Jack was better.

The next day after school he rushed to the field to see what positions the coach put them in. The coach posted it on the fence. William looked and saw that he was left outfield, and Jack Hunt was pitcher. He got back-up pitcher.

The first game was on Saturday. He went to the game. He got to bat and struck out first. He was worried that this might turn out to be a bad game. It was his team's turn to take the field. Jack threw his first pitch. There was a loud crack, and Jack was on the ground. Did he break it? We didn't know, but he couldn't pitch. Now it was William's turn. He threw the ball, and it was a strike. The next ball hit the player, and they walked. They lost the game. William pitched the rest of the games and got better. At the last game of the season they won, because of William. He threw strikes and got the last person out.

*Manny Gottlieb*

## **Fish**

Clown Fish

My stripy body warns my predators. I hide in sea anemones and under them.

Angel Fish

I am the prettiest fish in the sea. My fins are as sharp as razors. Stay away!

Shark

My teeth are very sharp. My back is dark. My bottom is  
light.

Pelican

I dive in the water to catch a treat and then sit in the sun to  
dry my feathers.

Blue Whale

I am the biggest animal on the planet.

Angler Fish

I swim in the depths of sea with the light to guide me.

*\*\* (A book with illustrations by Stephen Guinee) \*\**

## **One Little Pumpkin**

There once was a little pumpkin sitting in a pumpkin patch waiting to be picked. One day, someone picked him, and he was so happy! The next morning, the pumpkin was in a house with a lot of tools. The pumpkin got carved and was placed outside with another pumpkin. They talked and talked until the sun went down. When it did, lots of people came out wearing costumes. It was the best day of his life!

*Sophia Yacoub*

## **Haunting**

Once there was a haunted shadow. He was on display at a museum. His teeth are a rotten yellow. His eyes are like a big peach. Some people say he's just a dream. Some say he rests on Sundays. Some people say that he looks in

your window to haunt you. But if you keep your house clean, he will never come.

*Olivia Smith*

## **Nighttime at the Beach**

As the waves rolled over each other like a salt water sand storm, I realized the beach at night is way better than during the day. I was sitting on the sand dunes thinking about my life when I started to feel wet and mooshy sand between my toes. I looked into the starlit night and breathed in the relaxing smell of the sea salt. I looked around, and I was sad because there was no one else here to witness the beauty of the ocean at night. I saw the old rusty boardwalk with fancy lights all around it, and I thought to myself, "Do they see what I'm seeing right now?" I stood up and started walking back to the house when I heard the soft voice of the ocean saying, "Please come back." So I turned around and sat back down. While I was sitting there, I spotted a little fiddler crab on my foot looking towards the ocean, and I said, "It's beautiful, isn't it?"

*Brison Shaddrix*

## **Giants of the Sea**

"Blue marlin, blue marlin," are the words leaping from everyone's mouth when a monster blue marlin bent the rod. Beating the sunrise, it was a humid, hot, and sticky morning when we headed off the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica to track down the biggest gamefish in the sea.

It felt like a scene from a movie or book with the starting sunrise, sparkling crystal, clear water, and the sight of the twinkling volcanoes along the horizon. There was a distinct scent of diesel fuel floating in the air. We rode in the thrashing sea for miles until we all knew that this was a promising area to start trolling. We put out a variety of lures in every color in the rainbow. We waited and waited until we decided to switch out one lure. We let the lure back, and all of a sudden there was a dead silence. We waited for a few seconds hoping something would hit, and instantaneously we heard "zzzzzzzzzzzz," as line shot off the spool. Everyone's spirits lifted with excitement as I hopped in the fighting chair, preparing for a long, vigorous fight. The blue marlin took line off the reel for 15 minutes, taking out almost 300 yards of line. For two long hours we fought the beast, and every time we gained line, he would run and take it right back. Finally, we got the fish up to the boat after an intense, laborious fight. We decided he was about 400-500 pounds, and we took the hook out and let him go. The fight was over, and the boat was filled with an extreme feeling of success. We headed back to shore with an amazing, indescribable feeling of accomplishment.

*Hampton Gehlken*

## **Oceanic Astronomy**

A wide, shallow touch tank on the second floor of the South Carolina Aquarium is home to some of the sea floor's most stunning creatures. But out of the several animals in the tank, by far the most breathtaking is the sea

star. Five long arms that taper towards the end like the petals of a lily move gracefully under the current of the bubbling filters. The distinctive scent of seaweed, shrimp, and salty water mingle in the air. Numerous sea stars smaller than an adult's palm drag their bodies across a mock ocean floor. Their skin, the color of crackling flames, is covered with miniscule bumps, and yet they feel as smooth as the shells around them. When picked up, the tube feet on the bottom of their arms fight and struggle to stay attached to the rocks placed haphazardly around their tank or to find purchase in the loose grains of sand. Occasionally, the more roughly handled sea stars will end up on their backs and are then forced to flip their nimble bodies over. Luckily, with the grace of a dancer stuck in a slow motion cartwheel, they are able to carefully pull themselves back upright. Adapting to the shape of the crevices in the rocks or false reefs is also not a problem, as they seem to be made of molten lava. With a fluid-like tendency, they impassively drift around their aquatic home without really getting anywhere and seemingly without a destination in mind. Even while having no physical eyes, they seem to know exactly where they are in the tank and are completely aware of their surroundings. The sea stars do not care if they come across another animal in their tank, for neither the hard claws of the hermit crabs nor the needlepoints of the sea urchin can affect their tough skin. The unnatural serenity of the sea stars makes them seem wise and calm. Though many astounding animals live in the ocean, they all pale in comparison to the beauty and elegance of the peaceful sea star.

*Erin Littlejohn*

## **Mason Prep**

Magnificent  
Awesome teachers  
Smart students  
Outstanding principals  
Nice Knights

P.E. Rules! Yes!  
Reading labs  
Excellent playground  
Perfect place for ME!

*Mary Caroline Kiger*

## **Service Learning Project**

The 7th grade service learning project I was a part of is I Heart Hungry Kids. This organization was founded by Riley, Gabriel, and Jackson Silverman to fight hunger in Charleston and help kids in need. It is a nonprofit company, and sells t-shirts, tote bags, and more to help raise money for the food that it supplies for the bags. I Heart Hungry Kids has, since April of 2013, packed over 9500 bags that are sent to children in need in Charleston, all while providing kids an opportunity to do some good in their community. I volunteered to be part of the operation on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. As a part of this service, my job as a counter was to count all of the items in each bag, make sure the items were correct, tie the bag, and pass the bag to the next station, which would put them in boxes.

These bags were filled with food that could sustain a hungry child for an entire weekend.

I believe this organization is a wonderful idea, letting adults and children alike pack bags and help hungry children. While waiting to man the packing line, we were encouraged to write a card that would be sent to a child to brighten their day. I think writing a card is a wonderful idea because sometimes the child's parents may not be there while they are eating the food, as they may be working a full or part-time job that takes up too much time. I would be interested in repeating the experience as it is a great way to help the community in more ways than one. I would also recommend it to other people who would like to help children and feel good about themselves doing it.

*Porter Zach*

## **Shipwreck**

Are you all about survival? If so read *Shipwreck* by Gordon Korman.

6 kids

1 shipwreck

1 desert island

The kids are in a program called Charting a New Course because they all got in trouble. They have to sail on the *Phoenix*, a 60-foot schooner, half-way around the world. Then a ferocious storm hits. 40-foot waves twist and turn the schooner violently. One wave sends the captain flying off the schooner, and no one finds him. A few

days later the only other adult on the schooner abandons them and takes almost all of the stuff. After that, Lyssa fixes the engine, but the engine room isn't ventilated. The engine blows up sending the schooner into flames. Do they survive? You'll have to read the book to find out.

*Will Craig*

## **Basketball**

I like to play basketball in the sun.  
I work really hard to shoot, pass, and run.

*Helms Sander*

## **Ode to Peach Tree**

The bare wintery branches  
Remind me of what's to come  
The delectable taste of peach melting on  
My tongue

Your sweet pink blush  
Of flowers in bloom  
Makes me see the peaches  
Coming soon  
The crisp green leaves  
Break the surface at  
Last, making the  
World feel clean.

The ripe peaches,  
So sweet  
With russet sunsets  
On each sweet skin  
Juice running down  
My chin  
I sigh for  
My dear, sweet tree.

*Lucy Oxford*

## **Butterflies**

Have you ever wondered how butterflies' lives are? It starts with an egg. The mother butterflies set their eggs on the bottom of a leaf. When the egg hatches, it is critical that the butterfly eats. Also, the butterfly is not a butterfly yet. It is a caterpillar. The caterpillar is green, yellow, brown, furry, and sometimes poisonous. As it eats, it gets bigger and bigger and bigger. Finally, it weaves a cocoon around itself and waits. When the caterpillar comes out, it is unsterile and wet. It now is a beautiful butterfly. Butterflies specialize in finding food, but when food is scarce, butterflies find it hard to survive.

*Susanna Snider*

## **Spring**

Spring

Looks like pink flowers blooming,  
Smells like fluffy, yellow cotton candy,  
Sounds like birds singing from their nests high in a tree,  
Tastes like red tomatoes that have just grown,  
Feels like going to the pool and relaxing under the hot  
sunshine.

*Nicholas Leite*

## **What is Yellow?**

Yellow is the sun  
That shines down from up above  
Yellow can be light  
And darkness turns to love  
Sunflower petals  
A yellow balloon  
Bananas  
Lemonade  
Happiness too  
Yellow is a warm feeling  
That makes you smile  
The beginning of summer  
As long as the Nile

*Isabella Ragucci*

## Deborah Sampson

December 18, 1777

I'm freezing to death! It is 9:00 PM, and I'm so tired from fighting. I'm so hungry. The only food I have is spoiled meat and fish. I'm also super cold. If I wasn't fighting, I would be by a fire. I'm about to die from frostbite. My other soldier friends feel the same as I do. I'm frustrated because the British haven't surrendered yet. There have been at least 400 soldiers that were either killed or hurt by frostbite, but George Washington is leading us through the war. My clothes are ragged, and they are short-sleeved, so they are hard to keep warm in. The weather at Valley Forge is snowy and windy and super cold. The other soldiers are freezing and are starving! I hope this war ends soon.

*Mary Gail Riley*

## Just Dessert

"Ouch!" the small girl exclaimed frightfully as her backside hit the cold, hard ground. She hesitantly peered up at the colossal mass of human sneering down at her.

"That's what you get for not looking where you were going," it smirked then ambled away, receiving high fives from his posse. The small girl scrambled away from that monster—otherwise known as Franklin Ross—the small-town bully. She crouched behind a large bush that shielded her away from any harm. She felt her hot face with her hands. Another black eye. She sighed but stayed where she was as heavy tears rained out of her eyes.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was just another fall day in the small Missouri town. A cool breeze filled everyone with joyful laughter. The heavy scent of Thanksgiving baking coated the air in a spicy smell. A woman with short black hair strolled down the cobblestone road when she suddenly stopped where she was. "This is where Franklin Ross pushed me and gave me a black eye," she thought. "At least I don't have to worry about him anymore." This was because Franklin Ross disappeared. No one knew where he went. Everybody searched and searched until there was nowhere else to look, so his family decided to leave an empty memorial consisting of a small tombstone with his initials engraved sloppily into it in the town graveyard.

The woman turned the street corner and found herself in front of the ancient pumpkin patch. "It's almost Thanksgiving, so why not?" she mumbled to herself. And with that she walked straight into the long rows of pumpkins. None of them seemed perfect enough. They were either rotten or oddly shaped. Suddenly the perfect pumpkin caught her eye. It was bright orange, plump, and had a wavy stem. "Perfect!" the perky woman exclaimed. Then she paid for her prize pumpkin and brought it home.

Later that night the woman walked into her kitchen to get some ice water. She filled a glass all the way up to the brim and gulped it down.

"A lady doesn't drink like that," a voice sneered. The woman shrieked, dropping her glass to the ground, shattering it into millions of the tiny, sharp pieces. She looked behind her, and to her surprise all she saw was the pumpkin...Actually, a glowing pumpkin. The woman pressed herself against her floral walls.

"W-what's going on?" she stuttered out. "Who's there—who are you?"

"Don't you know who I am?" the voice scoffed. Her eyes darted towards the pumpkin. It seemed to pulse, growing brighter with every word spoken. "Well...?" the voice asked impatiently. Suddenly the woman remembered. That voice...That obnoxious sneer.

"Oh, of course I know. You must be Franklin Ross!" she shrieked.

"I know who I am," he replied smugly. "And you need to let me out; it's cramped in here."

"At least tell me how you got in there," she said.

"I was messing around in the old pumpkin patch. That old farmer must have gotten tired of me hanging out there. So he killed me and buried me in the patch where no one would find me." He had wandered off the subject.

"But how did you get in the pumpkin?" she cried, exasperated.

"I was getting to that!" he snapped, but continued, "After I was killed, my spirit was lingering around the patch; then when the full moon wasn't covered by clouds and I could see it, I was rudely sucked into that pumpkin!" With that the pumpkin was pulsing in an irate manner.

"What are you planning to do if I let you out?" she questioned.

The pumpkin thought for a moment. "When you let me out, when the full moon is out to be exact, I plan on finding my body, somehow digging myself out of the cold ground, and beginning the very first zombie apocalypse," he replied.

"Well, if that is the reason, of course, I will let you out!" she said sarcastically.

"Really?" he asked.

"No."

"Then what are you going to do with me?" Franklin asked nervously.

"You bullied me when I was young, and you expect me to forgive you by letting you out so you can start the very first zombie apocalypse?" she yelled.

"Uh, I was just joking around—I swear!" he stut-tered.

"No you weren't. Now it's your turn." She smiled crazily. She lowered her knife, and it grew even brighter.

"You are making a huge mistake! You could become the queen of the worl—" but he never finished. The woman savagely destroyed the pumpkin with her huge butchers' knife, not stopping until the pumpkin rind returned to its normal orange color. Then she had a brilliant idea. Why not make a pumpkin pie—she wasn't tired anyway. So the woman stayed up late into the night making a beautiful pie out of Franklin's pumpkin. On Thanksgiving the woman served the delicious pumpkin pie to her family. After all, it was just dessert.

*Emily Miller*

## **Surviving the *Titanic***

I was in a panic while running like bullets with my mother and brother. We had to make it off the *Titanic* alive. My mother guided us through a cluster of people who were fighting to get to the safety of the life boats. At one moment my favorite hat toppled to the ground. I let go of my mother to pick it up, then sprang back up to rejoin the others. I was so dazed with fear that I could not think. We reached the boat which my mother and brother climbed onto it. I was about to step on when a crewman blocked my path. He told me I was too old to get on. I was infuriated. I wanted to toss him overboard. My mother protested. He did not give in. He said my hat made me look too old and mature. My mother was at the edge of insanity. Finally, after a short argument, I was relieved to find I could live. I stepped into the refuge of the boat and waited as crewmembers lowered us to the water below.

*Mateu Bordas*

## **Mashed Potatoes!**

I woke up this morning and found I was a steaming hot bowl of mashed potatoes. Before you start thinking that the potatoes are just a metaphor, I am going to say it. I was legitimately a steaming bowl of mashed potatoes and gravy. I don't know how or why, but I could still move around by hopping. It took some practice and spilling some gravy, but I got the hang of it. By the way, nobody will ever hear this story unless, in the future, there will be a way to monitor the thoughts of food, because this story is internal. I have no mouth. I hopped down to the kitchen

where my mother and grandma were making Thanksgiving dinner. That is where I am now, thinking about this story. My grandma just walked up to me, and then everything started going dark...

*Jett McGrath*

## **My Snowman**

Today it was snowing outside. I wanted to build a snowman. So before I went outside, I put on my hat, gloves, coat, and warm clothes. When I went outside, I saw a beautiful sight of white snow covering my driveway and snowflakes drifting from the sky. The first thing I did was roll up a big circle, and I placed it on the ground. Then I rolled a medium sized circle, and I placed it on my big circle. Finally I rolled the small circle, and I placed it on my medium size circle. I went inside and got some rocks and carrots. I found two sticks outside, I stuck the sticks in the middle, and I put the carrot and rocks on. Once I had it perfect, I placed an orange bow on her head. I thought I saw her move, but I knew that was silly and impossible. But she was actually talking to me! After a while I named her. Her name is Snowflake. We danced and drank hot chocolate. It was a lot of fun. She melted, but I knew next year I would make her again! P.S. I even met her family!

*Rory Peterson*

## The Noise

Josh heard a loud, grumpy noise, so he ran to his sister's room. He yelled, "Wake up now!" Ella woke up. "You look hideous!" Josh screamed.

"It is just a facial! Have you ever heard of it?" Ella said.

"NO!" yelled Josh. Ella had her face covered in green, mushy, slightly slimy lotion, and there were cucumbers where Ella's eyes used to be. Josh exclaimed, "Anyway, did you hear that noise? The sound was like a dragon snoring and breathing fire at the same time."

Ella said, "Is that why you woke me up?"

Josh admitted, "Yes."

"You are interrupting my beauty sleep!" Ella shouted.

"I can tell. And fine, I will find that noise by myself," said Josh. Josh went into his parents' room into a closet. Slowly, he backed up. Suddenly he felt something grab him. Josh tugged, squeezed, pulled, and screamed. Finally he looked behind him. It was just a jacket hanger. Josh felt embarrassed. Josh took his T-shirt off the hook; then right away he heard the noise again. Josh said, "It's coming from downstairs!" Josh tiptoed downstairs into the family room. Then he looked under the sofa. Nothing but a cheese ball. Next he looked behind the T.V. and under the blankets. Still nothing. Josh could not find the

noise! Josh heard the noise again. He heard it in the sun room. He looked under and behind the pillows and behind the chair. Then he heard the noise getting louder and louder. Josh looked behind him. He saw something fluffy and tiny on the counter. It was their hamster, Bob! He tried to wake Bob up, but he would not wake up. Josh thought Bob had died, but, thankfully, he was still breathing. He realized that he was...SNORING! He was snoring so loud! Josh decided to give up and go back to bed.

As Josh was walking back up the stairs, the room became quiet. Bob had finally stopped snoring! Josh went to Bob's cage, and Bob was awake. Josh said, "Bob must have snored so loudly that he woke himself up!" Josh and his family were so happy they could go to sleep and not be tired or grumpy in the morning.

THE END

*Talula Enright*

## **Winter**

Radiant glow reflecting on my face  
Dancing flames -- red, orange, yellow  
Swiveling in sync as if choreographed,  
Moving apart, then together.  
I'm the audience, entranced.

Wrapped up in a blanket and sitting on a pillow  
A blow from my lips cools the cocoa.  
Warm hot chocolate touches my lips

Swirled whipped cream steams while cooling the drink  
Drizzled sweet caramel on cotton balls of cream  
Sprinkled bits of red-stripped peppermint on the fluff

Safe and snug, staring at my hot chocolate  
My mouth waters.

*Katherine Nguyen*

## **Owls**

Silent, nocturnal  
Flying, catching, eating  
Building nests for young chicks  
Sleeping, waking, chasing  
Birds, wise  
Hunters

*Bowen Enright*

## **This is Lillian**

A Lillian lives in a lonely, lumpy locker room with logs  
and locks.

A Lillian eats leaves, leopards, lemons, and laces.

A Lillian likes lawyers who write laws and lawns and lit-  
tle lilies.

A Lillian is a lazy librarian with a license to drive the li-  
brary's bookmobile.

*Kristina Kakalev*

## **Order**

Neat, organized  
Planning, helping, soothing  
Plans, life, rock and roll, death  
Writhing, hindering, confusing  
Unbalanced, crazy  
Chaos

*Jett McGrath*

## **Writer's Block**

I don't not know yet  
What this poem should be about  
But, it's a haiku.

*Ella Small*

## **Dolphins**

Dolphins are swimming  
Jumping gracefully for joy  
Following the shrimp boats.

*Amelia Lewis*

## **Under the Rug**

It was once a beautiful living room before chaos erupted. Now, it is only a bland waste of space with beige walls and a gray carpet. The largest piece of furniture re-

maining in the room is a mahogany bookshelf containing all of Dr. Taosin's favorite literary works. It only has five rows and is only four feet tall, but compared to the lone, wooden chair and small table to its right, it seems large. The wooden chair is nothing fancy; it has no armrests, four legs, and an uncomfortable back. Beside it is a short, round table covered in a white tablecloth. On it is a short lamp with a circular base plugged in to a nearby outlet. For the last few days, Dr. Taosin has been spending his nights reading the novels he's read many times before, waiting, just in case it struck again.

Of course, Dr. Taosin was here again tonight sitting in his chair and reading *Hamlet*. He's reading, but his mind isn't actually focused on Shakespeare's brilliance, but on the destruction and disaster that came upon his favorite room recently. He sensed some unease in the house and decided to stay up until the next morning to make sure that nothing happened.

The disaster happened two weeks ago. Dr. Taosin was upstairs sleeping like an average night when he heard a shatter. He dashed out of his bed and sprinted down the stairs. He couldn't even hear his own shoes clattering down this wooden stairs over all the commotion going on in what he hoped wasn't his living room. He took a right at the end of the stairs, but as he walked, the sound got fainter. He turned around to enter the living room, and an agonized scream escaped the poor professor's mouth.

The glass coffee table with golden edges, a priceless family inheritance, lay shattered on the floor. The couch, used for watching movies and drinking wine, was completely torn apart, and the flat-screen television across the room was flat on the carpet, sparks flying. On the oth-

er side of the room, a mysterious lump under the carpet zipped over to the bookshelf. Dr. Taoisn was witnessing his favorite piece of furniture slowly tilt to the left, momentum pulling it down. Remembering his days as a center fielder in 6th grade, he dove under the bookshelf and barely kept it up with his left hand. He slowly got on to his knees and eventually his feet while pushing the 300-pound bookshelf back into its place. He turned around, but the lump causing all the racket had disappeared.

Two weeks had passed and it happened again, but this time Dr. Taosin was in place and ready. As he was skimming through the final pages of *Hamlet*, he heard an unfamiliar sound. Curiously, he looked up to find what he'd been waiting for the last two weeks, the lump. The lump was on the far wall where the couches used to be and was cruising towards the lamp table. A moment of concern came over Dr. Taoisn, but he found the courage to react. He lifted up his wooden chair and slammed it down hard onto the lump, just as it was knocking over the picture. The table and lamp lay broken on the floor. So did the lump.

A combined feeling of relief and curiosity came over Dr. Taoisn, and he began to slowly lift up the carpet. Unsure of what he would find, he was ready for the worst. Was it a monster? A robot? A giant rat? At first, when he saw what it was, he was relieved it was none of the possibilities he thought it might be. But, when he looked closer, he was horrified what lay lifeless under his carpet. His cat.

During what seemed like hours of silence. Tears slowly formed in Dr. Taoisn's eyes. Anger and hatred towards himself were the emotions running through his veins. After some curses and yells rang through the house, Dr. Taoisin fell to his knees holding his cat for one last time. Then, he grabbed his shovel and gradually made his way into his yard. Selecting the back corner, he dug out a nice, little hole to place his lost friend in. He then made a pitiful, depressing trek back up the stairs to his bed.

He finally got some sleep that night and went on with his next day as usual. Dr. Taoisn was ready for another quality night of zzz's, but as he was turning off his bedside lamp, he heard a mysterious, loud thud downstairs.

*Mills Jordan*

## **Catching a Summer Breeze**

A fiery sun burns brightly overhead, scorching my face and shoulders, turning them an angry shade of red. Several beads of warm sweat trickle down my back as I desperately wish for a breeze. The cool, refreshing water flows through my fingers, eventually enveloping my entire hand. Suddenly, a strong gust of wind smoothly glides across my face and through my hair, providing temporary relief from the blazing sun. The sailboat's main sheet snaps and ripples with the sudden burst of wind, and the boat goes from stationary to racing, cutting through the surface of the glassy water like a hot knife through butter. When I turn my face skyward, I see the endless indigo sky

dotted with large, puffy clouds. The sail, taut with wind, gleams white against the background of the deep green forest on the outer banks, the pines releasing a crisp scent of sap. The gentle lap of small waves on the hull, the wind whistling through the trees, and the distant cry of a bird form a calming melody almost like a lullaby. The wind occasionally picks up, but then dies down over and over again.

A gentle breeze drifts past and nudges the sailboat along slowly, but the wind continually gets faster and stronger until the boat is flying across the lake with wind so strong it stings my eyes. The churning of excitement and fear dominates my stomach as I feel the great power of the wind and the speed of the boat underneath my feet. The small boat bounces on a plethora of large waves, and I am sprayed with invigorating fresh water. Trees, houses, and boats blur together as I shoot past them. The wind continues to become faster and stronger, and soon it becomes too powerful for the small sailboat to take. I start to feel the boat begin to tip toward the opposite side of the wind, so I move to the other side to balance it. This seems to work, for the boat temporarily evens out, but the wind is relentless. As it grows even more powerful, the sailboat begins to tip again. This time I can do nothing to stop it as the boat tips farther and farther toward the dark water of the lake. I cannot hear anything over the intense howling of the powerful wind. Eventually, the little sailboat tips so far over that it is parallel to the water and with one little nudge from the wind, the boat would surely capsize. With a knot of fear in my stomach and my hands tightly gripping the bright

white edge of the sailboat, I prepare to be submerged into the dark, churning waters below. Suddenly, the howling of the wind stops, and with the wind no longer pushing it, the sailboat slowly eases back into its previous position. Not a thing seems to have moved. The birds stop calling, the wind dies down, and all is calm once more.

*Amanda Beall*

