

Volume 30 2014/2015

Stepping Stones

A Junior High Literary/Art Magazine



PARK RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL • 2 PARK AVENUE • PARK RIDGE, NEW JERSEY 07656

DEDICATION

THIS YEAR'S EDITION OF STEPPING STONES IS DEDICATED TO OUR BELOVED MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR AND HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACH, WHO SUDDENLY PASSED AWAY SHORTLY AFTER THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR BEGAN.

MR. MIOLI WAS A GREAT MAN OF DEVOTION AND DEDICATION. HE WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED FOR HIS COMMITMENT TO THE STUDENTS OF PARK RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIS FOOTBALL PLAYERS. MR. MIOLI HAS IMPACTED SO MANY LIVES OF SO MANY PEOPLE WITH HIS JOVIAL PERSONALITY AND PASSION FOR LIFE; FOR THAT WE WILL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL.

HE WILL BE FOREVER MISSED AND MAY HE REST IN PEACE.

*YEARS OF SERVICE TO PARK RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL
1991-2014*

Stepping Stones

A Junior High Literary/Art Magazine

Stepping Stones is a student run publication that showcases the creative writing and artistic talents of a variety of Park Ridge Middle School students.

All entries are original works of written and Visual art.

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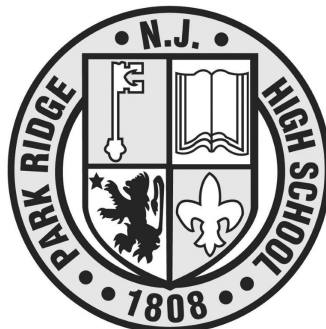
Emily Montanez

Sadie Noble

Carly Wittenberg

Advisors:

Ms. Dalle Molle & Mrs. McCann



Stepping Stones

A Junior High Literary/Art Magazine

Cover Design:

Caily Hunt- Grade 7

A talented student photographer who used her I-Pod 5 to capture a picture of rocks with a small bud emerging from the ground. Photoshop was used to enhance the color of the bud.



Picture of Park Ridge Junior/Senior High School
Photo by Spencer Ghiraldini—7th Grade Student
Spencer's I-Phone was used to capture this photo.

Note From the Advisors:

We would like to give a special thanks to all the students who helped in the production of the *Stepping Stones* Literary Magazine and the students whose work was selected to be published. At the beginning of the school year, all 7th and 8th graders were offered the opportunity of joining the staff of *Stepping Stones*. We greatly appreciate these students for volunteering their time by attending meetings and editing/composing different art forms for this creative publication. We would also like to thank the teachers of Park Ridge Middle School for encouraging these original productions of art in their classroom. Without your help and support, our magazine would not be possible.

Ms. Dalle Molle & Mrs. McCann

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Colophon **59**

BUBBE'S HOUSE

BY RUTH SCHECHTMAN '20

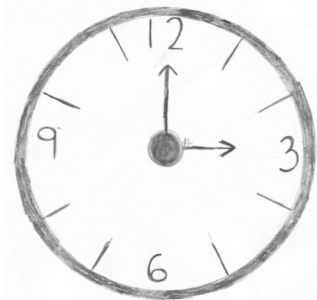
Squeek... It makes as the knob turns
The heat crashes against my skin
Homemade mac n' cheese fills my nose
A greeting from a good old friend.... *BARKKK*
Another door opens from another friend
The smoothness on her skin touches mine
For a great hug
The coziness brings happiness
The fuzzes on the floor go in between my toes
It gives my the giggles and a warm feeling
This is my home
Coldness touches my feet as I enter
Opening the big doors, takes a while
My hairs on my arms stand up as the air touches it
The scent of dirt enters my nose
This is my home
Sadness fills ourselves as we say goodbye
Squeek... It makes when we turn the knob one last time
The heat leaves my skin
Mac n' cheese left
My good old friend, cries....*barkkk*
The door closes from my last friend
This is my home

NIGHTMARE

BY GABRIEL FUCHS '20

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

Tick, Tick, Tick... the clock spins away
Creek... the floorboards cry
I lie on the warm fluffily cloud
Darkness swarms me
I try to make my way back
But I'm frozen
Chills attack me, as the sky turns red
Fire engulfs me
Mountain of rock fall upon me
Still, I can't move
Ash fills by nose as the last of the red sky vanishes
The rock scorches my white skin
The pump of my heart slows to a halt
Then, once again, darkness
In the far, a mirror
I see my self in a blur
Blink
As a look back the mirror changes
I taste salty horror on my lips
Then pain
Tick ,tick, tick
Sound revive my senses, then...
POP
I'm **BACK**



THE KOL CONCERT

BY TANYA GAYTAN '20

Bark, Bark...

I heard as the homeless dog ran passed my sister and I
The sound of bicycles and panting sounded more like a gym than a park
The trail of dominos got longer and longer as more people arrived

Energy produced

As we got closer to our destination

Crash went the symbol as the crew was testing out the equipment

Skin pressed against me, as we got closer to the stage

The sirens and honks ruined my fantasy of being up there

A smile slowly crept upon my face

As the clapping and shouting rushed in the atmosphere

My mind, it wasn't controlling me anymore

It was the music

The guitar was taunting me as it was being played

The smell of morning breath and breakfast sandwiches fills the air

As the crowd cheered at the end of the first song

The heat started to fly in as the I pad stopped recording

My eyes were glued at the performance

Forgetting the pain on my tippy-toed feet and giraffe neck

Click, Click...

I heard and saw as people around me started taking selfies

Trending the #KOLonGMA on social media

Their hit song fueled the audience

As the guitar riff started playing

Using it all up by singing along

Finishing it up with a song

Titled by the most populated borough in the Big Apple

The end didn't hit me until we got home

Creak...

Went my bed, as the sheets welcomed me home with a hug

Melancholy crept over me

It was all over now

But later, satisfaction filled me

How four simple human beings like us

Could make me wake up at 6 in the morning

And feel alive for one moment that feels like forever

MY SECOND HOME
BY SUSIE RUBENSTEIN '20
ILLUSTRATION BY MARY LISA '19

Canada
I past the enormous IGA
I pull up Erck the car stops
Standing there is my nanny waving
She has a smile from ear to ear as I walk out of the car
I wobble as I stand my legs feel like jelly for sitting in the car for seven hours
My nanny asked asked how long the ride my dad says 7 hours
To me the ride felt like 100 hours it always feels like that
The wind pushes me in to the apartment
When we get down we go out
The weather was perfect
Not boiling hot
Not freezing
Perfect
We go out to eat on a beautiful night
When we get in the smell of food hits me face
After we're done we go out to get beaver tails the most delicious things on
Earth
The donut pastry fried with cinnamon and just fresh lemon
I finish it a like a second
We spend 5 days
Then we go
Home



THE BEACH

BY EMILY MONTANEZ '20

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

Soaked in salt

Sticky from the salt

The coarse sand brushing up against my feet and legs

The sound of crashing in the distance

Crash, crash, crash

The blazing sun beating on the surface of my skin

Making my skin color darker and darker and darker...

Like my skin is a piece of paper and someone is coloring me

The heat of the sand burning my soles

The shade of the umbrella cooling them

Diving into the waves

Running on the sand

Dancing in the water

The waves fighting the sand for the in between territory

The sand refusing to back down

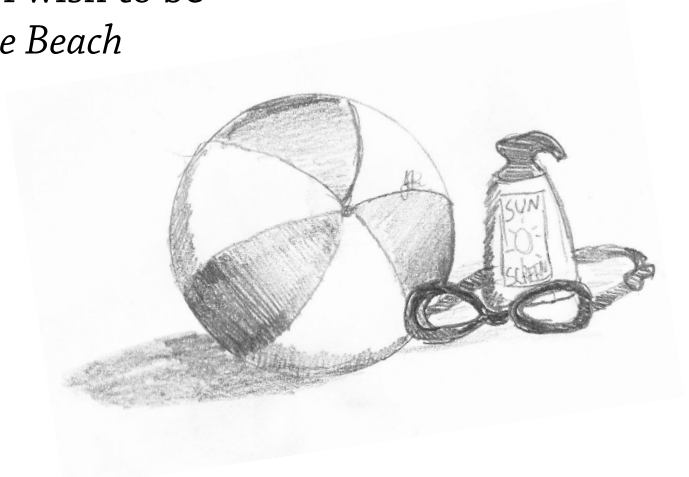
But taking the hits from the waves

Relaxing and reading on my chair

Hearing the sounds, feeling the warmth

Where I wish to be

The Beach

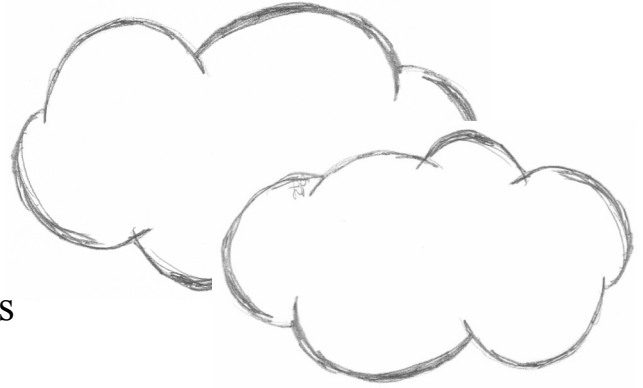


WHY AM I ON THIS CLOUD?

BY CARNIG SHAKARJIAN III '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

This big, white, puffy thing
Is what I see every time I
Look up; thinking that up in the
Sky is another world blocked by the clouds



Each cloud could be its own
World that we don't understand.
Maybe that's why all clouds are different
And maybe people as a whole are their own cloud

The question is, why am I on this cloud?
Why aren't I on a different cloud that
Could lead me to my dreams
Or my nightmares

One that gives me a different life.
One that gives me a life I want.
Maybe when the clouds merge
They become their own world.

Maybe my cloud could
Fuse with another cloud
And give the life
I've always wanted

THE FOOTBALL FIELD

BY JUSTIN WAGNER '20

Slam! The car door shuts

Boom! Boom! Boom! Sounds the bridge

Chop! Chop! Chop! Sounds the pavement

Squish! Squish! Squish! Sounds the mucky mud

The Mud grabs onto my feet

but NOTHING can hold me down.

The field chemicals burning my nose.

The bland taste of rubber in my mouth.

Light bouncing off helmets and blinding eyes.

Heart is beating a mile a minute.

The screaming crowd sounds silent.

The music is as loud as a roaring lion.

The two teams are in two different herds.

My body is raining

Our team huddles up

Today is game day.

CHEER

BY MARY LISA '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

The anxiety
All eyes on you
Screaming
Crowd cheering with you
Stunting
Spirit
Chaos
Cheer is my sport
My squad
From practice to games
Fun, sweat, and tears
We fight through it
Messing up leads to 10 times over again
Sticking together through thick and thin
Cheer is a hard sport but there is nothing our squad can't encounter!



BASKETBALL

BY LINDA COLLINS '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

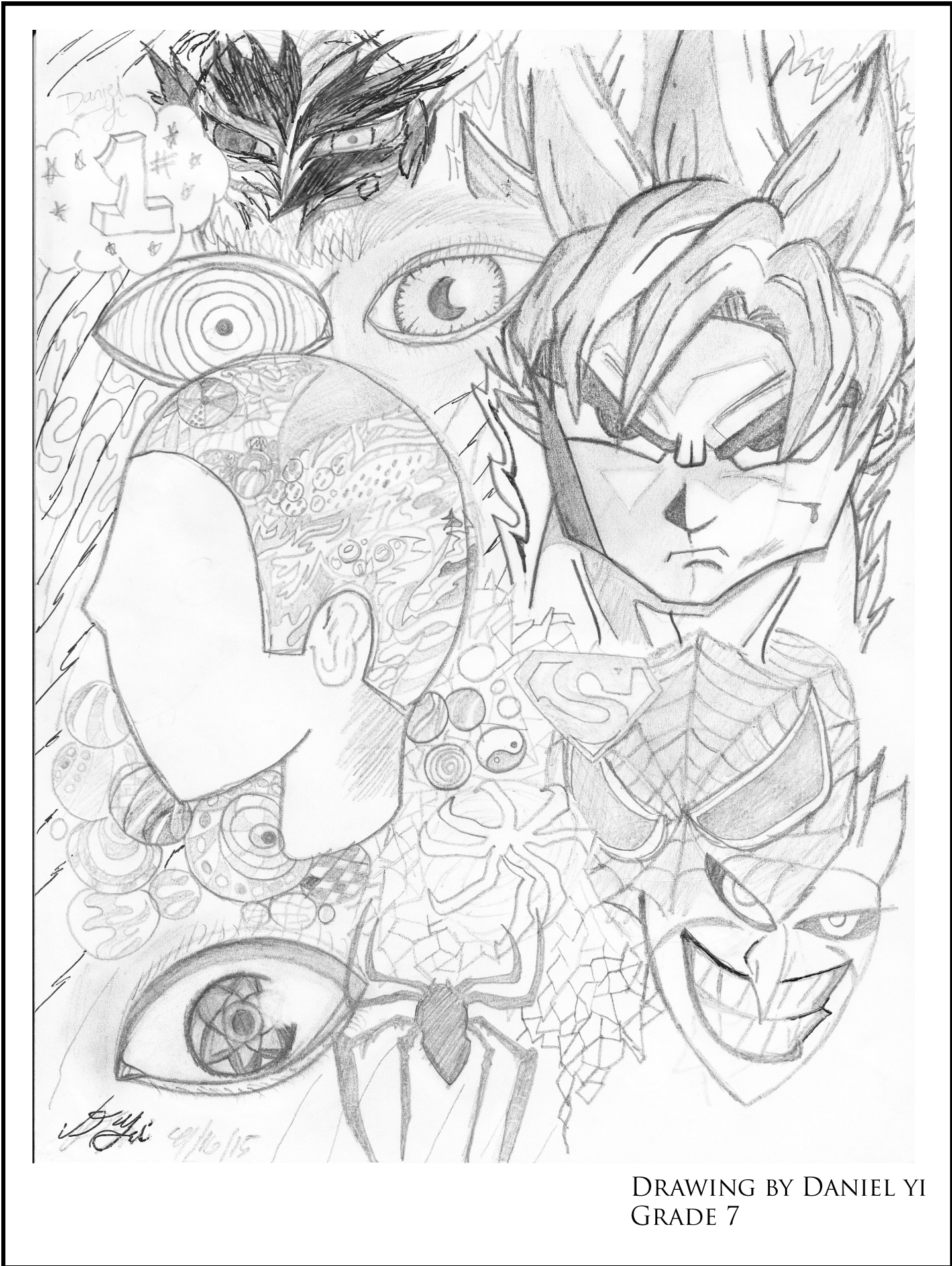
BUZZ

The first half is over
This is it; it's all or nothing

The championship game is almost over
The bouncing of the orange ball haunts me
The last seconds of the game tick down
The final shot goes up
BUZZ

The game is over
The shot is in the air
Closer
Closer
Closer
Swoosh straight in the net
We won!





DRAWING BY DANIEL YI
GRADE 7

MY LITTLE SISTER

BY TERRI-JEANNE LIU '19

*A pest, just like an ant
Or more like a colony of ants
Sometimes she makes me want to
Rip her hair out or
Squish her like a juicy beetle
Steals my jeans,
And my socks,
And my hairstyle,
And sometimes my personality
Walks with her 11- year old snooty nose
Up
Like the world revolves around her
And talks WAY too much
Mommy always takes her side
Pauline's "a little angel"
She makes annoying
Look like a grain of sand that's sitting next to a mighty T-Rex
And we share a room
What a joy...
Squished into a tiny space
And forced to deal with each other until we crack
(Our parents probably make bets on how long we can last)
Sometimes
When the heated tension in our room is a swirling, darting nest of bees
I wish she were never born*

*But she's my little sister,
My best friend,
A confident inspiration, and
A gift
Think back to
The memories of us playing and laughing
There's no doubt in my mind
I would ever re-gift or abandon that gift
Because I want to keep her forever.*

SUPER BOWL

BY MICHAEL MASTRANGELO '19

As I walk on to the field
I know only one thing,
Its time to win
The chill of being in the stadium brings joy
Like a kid getting their favorite candy on Halloween
This is the moment I've been waiting for
I can feel that shiny metallic Vince Lombardi Trophy in my finger tips
And its only just 60 minutes away
People from all over the world
Over 100 million watching
Many different countries
This is the place to be

My eyes are burning from all those cameras flashing
The cheers straight from kickoff
People at home eating their chips and dip
All eyes on me
With a blink of an eye
There is 10 seconds left
Water boys sprinting out like King Kong is behind them
They rip out a Gatorade and squirt the Fruit Punch into my mouth
Fans on their feet
The ref blows the whistle
We are up
21-20
As a linebacker
Preventing them from scoring means
A win for us
The quarterback screams "Blue 18! Blue 18! Set... Hut!"
All I hear is grunts of the D-Line trying
What is that I see?
A yellow brick road to the quarterback
I charge right through that gap as fast as lightning
The quarterback looks at me in shock
SMACK!
He is lying on the ground
0 seconds on the clock
I knew this was my destiny
We have won.

My whole football team sprinting, with their hands in the air
I stand up
Looking for someone to hug

Cont'd next page

SUPER BOWL

As soon as I knew
My whole football team jumps on me with joy
After we are done throwing a party of our own,
I rip off my helmet
Blood dripping from a very narrow opening from my head
This was a complete war
I couldn't have ask for anything else then,
Playing in the
Super Bowl
We are up
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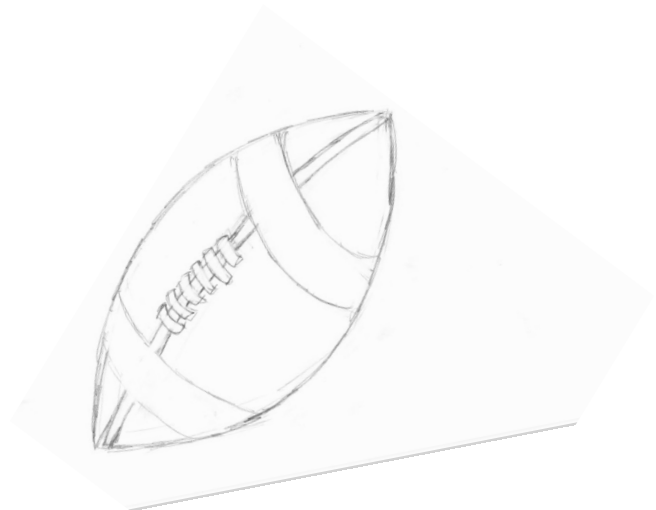
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SUPER BOWL

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

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Preventing them from scoring means
A win for us
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My whole football team jumps on me with joy
After we are done throwing a party of our own,
I rip off my helmet
Blood dripping from a very narrow opening from my head
This was a complete war
I couldn't have ask for anything else then,
Playing in the
Super Bowl



FALL

BY JULIA TABER '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

Fall

Leaves Crunching,
Birds Chirping,
Its fall the best season of all.

Pumpkin Picking,
Cider Sipping,
Its fall the best season of all.

Crisp Air,
Hayride Trips,
Its fall the best season of all.

Apple Pie,
Carving Pumpkins,
Its fall the best season of all.

Leaf Piles,
Sweater Weather,
Its fall the best season of all.

The sun fades earlier,
The shine of the moon comes quicker,
Its fall the best season of all.

Acorns falling,
Football games,
Its fall the best season of all.

Halloween,
Jack-o-lanterns,
Its fall the best season of all.

Slowly Chilling,
Brisk rain falling,
Its fall the best season of all.

Fall



SKIING

BY THOMAS WHANG '19

Going up the ice cold lift
My butt is subzero cold on the icy seats
As I go up I see the sun ascent
The beautiful site
My cousin and I are side by side
Butt to a Butt
We are talking about sports
“So, how do the Knicks look this year?” asked my cousin
As we talk
I can feel the cold chilled air in my face
Freezing Cold, I could feel it
I knew where I was going
The Double Black Diamond
As we approach the tiny green lift house
The tip of my sharp atomic skis touch the soft white fluffy snow
We get off
I can feel the flurries slowly hitting my dry check
As I start to go
I take a sharp left
Woods on my left
Woods on my right
There’s no turning back
My mind has changed
Stress
Anger
Sadness
School
All Gone
Deceased from my brain
It’s my skis and me
As we approach I could see it
What I have been waiting for since the day I could ski
The trail is narrow
With just trees, trees and trees
Once we entered we couldn’t return

Cont’d next page

SKIING

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

I was going down with speed
Left
Right
Left
Right
Many sharp turns and UN smooth terrain
Branches lying all over the snow
One bad turn could hurt badly
My cousin did that
He got hit a huge bark tree
He flew out of his right ski
He was down on the ground
I was scared to my stomach
“Andrew!!” I yelled
But God was there
He helped him get up
“I’m ok” yelled Andrew
He shoved the branches and dirt that was beside him
Popped on his right ski and went on
We were in that cold narrow, horrible little trail
For who knows how long
But then when the exit was found
We skied out with joy
“Yes!” I screamed out of the top of my lungs
We knew we had done it
We had accomplish one of the most difficult trails of our life
Life was good but was not completed
One challenge was left
It was the Triple Black Diamond



GENTLY
BY NOAH HECKEL '19

Gently
Smooth
He touches
So different, yet so perfect
They intertwine so
Creating creations
Black & White
Coming together as one
But they are beyond colors
Pictures
Works of beauty
Alone they are useless
Together, unbelievable
Unimaginable
Like thunder to lightning
Mother to child
Known none other than
Pencil
Paper

LIFE IS SURFING
BY CAILY HUNT '20

Life is surfing. You're picked up by the wave and there is no stopping after that. It is an adrenaline rush that never stops. Surfing is the Jedi; it's painful and rough with sharp pointy edges, but also has beautiful features. Surfing is also your hard board with dings and stickers all over it. Surfing has its ups and downs too, you can catch the wave and ride through to the shore and you can catch the wave but get knocked down and pounded by the waves reaching for air and once you get there the ocean's flat. In the end you could have caught the best wave of the day or tumbled through trying your hardest but end the day with the worlds biggest **SMILE.**

SUMMER

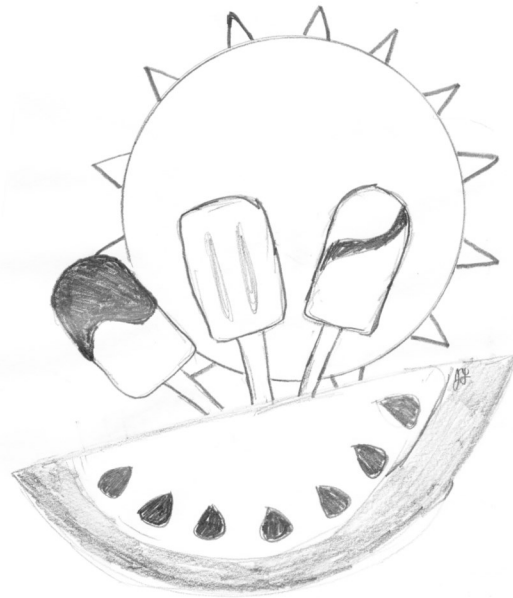
BY CHRISTOPHER LAURENZO '19
ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

BBQ's with uncles and family coming
from near and far. Everywhere you look
you see people eating
delicious burgers and hot dogs that make your
Mouth water
The smell travels around the yard
And the neighbor's dog barks.
Let's play manhunt.
Minutes go by and nobody sees me
Suddenly I turn and there my cousin is
I run like a cheetah to base.
Yes! I made it.

The sun is up till eight.
When the sunsets the colors
Sky is as pink as a dog's tongue.
And as orange as a tangerine.
The colors reflect of the near by houses
And make a beautiful pink orange mixture.
Seagulls sit a top the roofs.

When the sun sets we make a fire.
The fire is burning the bright red, orange and yellow flames.
The fire is as red as an ancient ruby.
And as orange as a carrot on top of the delicious cake.
And as yellow as the sun on a hot summer day.
Mom brings out the marshmallows, the chocolate and the gram crackers.
They look so good! I can't wait to make s'mores.
The gooey marshmallows slowly drip onto the gram cracker and the chocolate melts and
sticks to the gram cracker to make an amazing dessert.
My first bite, amazing.

I LOVE SUMMER!



THE BEAUTIFUL GAME

BY ALEX MATUSON '19

Those who play soccer call it the beautiful game
Practicing all week waiting for the day; game day
Stepping on the field preparing for the big game
The vibrant yellow sun beams down on the field and the referee blows his
whistle loud

The ball goes from side to side with a glide
Players making tackles in the defensive half
Players making decisive runs in the attacking half
Players waiting to express themselves their own special way

The referee blows their whistle for halftime
Both coaches talk to their teams trying to motivate their team to leave every-
thing they have on the field

The Second half starts the same way the game started, 0-0
Both teams waiting for their opponent to make a mistake and capitalize on the
opportunity

Boom!

Shooting the ball hoping to stop the deadlock between the teams
The ball looks like it's in slow motion as it's gliding through the air
The goalie dives towards the ball but it is too far for the goalie to knock it out
of the net

Everybody celebrates with great happiness
The referee blares their whistle for full time
The opponents have their heads down and silent as your team celebrates with
great triumph

This is The Beautiful Game

FRAIL HEART

BY JANE LIM '19

THIS POEM WAS INSPIRED BY RYAN HALLIGAN, A VICTIM OF BULLYING. AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR, THE PARK RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET RYAN'S FATHER. RYAN'S FATHER CAME TO PRHS DURING THE WEEK OF RESPECT TO SHARE RYAN'S STORY AND SHED LIGHT ON THE SEVERITY OF BULLYING AND IT'S HORRENDOUS CONSEQUENCES. RYAN'S TRAUMATIC STORY ILLUMINATED THE DANGERS OF BULLYING WHILE ALSO ENCOURAGING THE STUDENTS TO BE MINDFUL ABOUT THE WAY THEY TREAT ONE ANOTHER.

If you kill yourself, the pain that rested
Inside of you will release from your
lifeless body and settle within all of

My father once said to me:

the people that love you the most

Dear Frail Heart,

I watched from up above,
How they've really see me,

A chaotic mess.
Taunting my size and mass, as if I was a pebble,
Lifeless, organ-less,

Dear Frail Heart,

I believe that we all have irrational fears,
Though the ones who have it the worst,
Fear either death,
The inevitable consequence of life,
Life,
Or the circumstance before death,
And the reasons why I chose my path were simple,
Just like Quantum Physics.

Dear frail heart,

I am a general nuisance,
And I am many things I wish I was not,
But I am not a mind reader,
Still,
I know there are people like me,

Where could they be?

THE PATH TO THAT BEAUTIFUL PLACE

BY LEWIS GROSSO '19

I look
Into the horizon
Wondering...
“What is on the other side?”
I think that to myself everyday waiting until that day
The day that I grow up
And am able to take that journey
People tell me about it
I ask them and they tell me the same thing
“You will know what it is like when you are there.”
I think to myself
“My Grandparents are up there... in that beautiful place they
now call home”
I now know why in my dreams
They tell me that everything is okay
Because when you get there
When it is your time
You will then know
What it is like
To be in a never-ending path of peace and love

THE VIBRANT, MAJESTIC SAXOPHONE

BY AGUSTIN VELASCO '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

On the exterior, my saxophone is just gold and inanimate

On the inside, a magical portal that blossoms with life

A world where music is in every nook and cranny

One can only be in awe and daze as they look at the instrument while I am at center stage.

My nerves are jumping, and my heart is thumping so hard, as hundreds of eyes watch me.

****Thump** **Thump****

As I begin to play, the magical music moves slowly but starts to caress people like a mother would to her baby

The nervousness then morphs into such a wonderful feeling that cannot be described with words

Everything my instrument plays captures the attention and eyes of the audience. From

RIPPING

HIGH

NOTES

To

Faint soft ones

Long slurs to short sharp staccato notes

Playing every piece of music with love and compassion

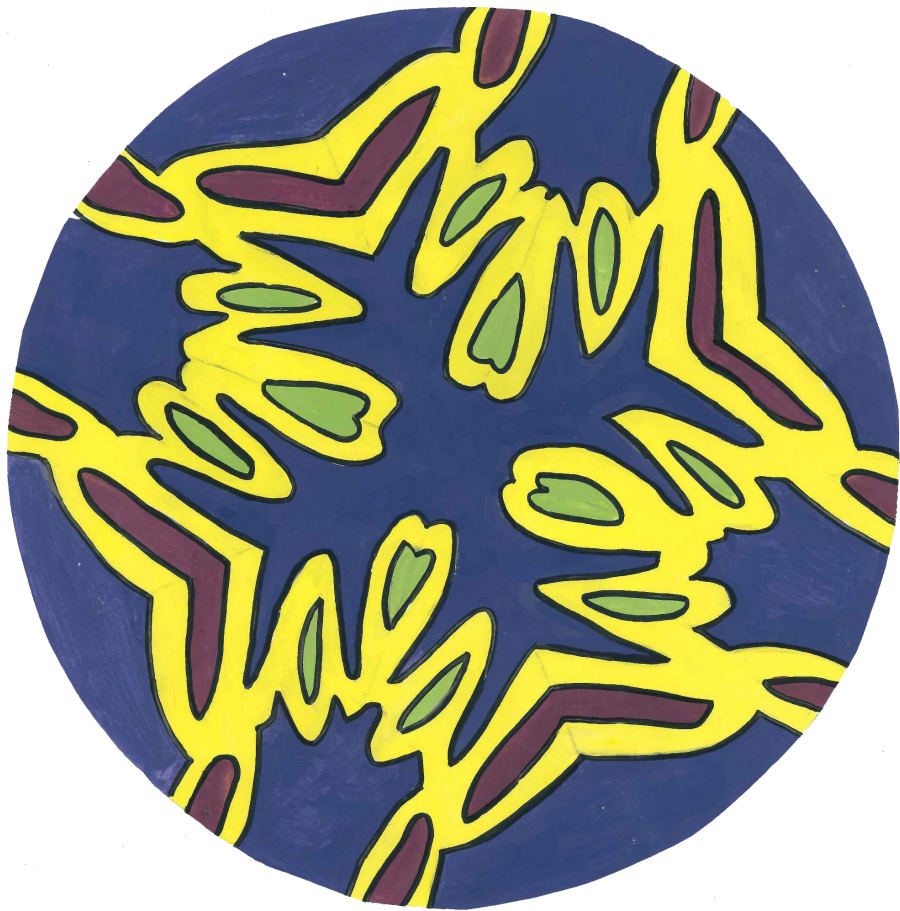
Imagining I am a musical legend like Charlie Parker or even Grover Washington Jr.

The Jazz solo being performed is spoken through mouth of my instrument, and into people's ears.

Though as my journey decrescendos into an end, I stop playing for now.

As I later return to my enchanted friend whom expresses not only music, but also beauty.



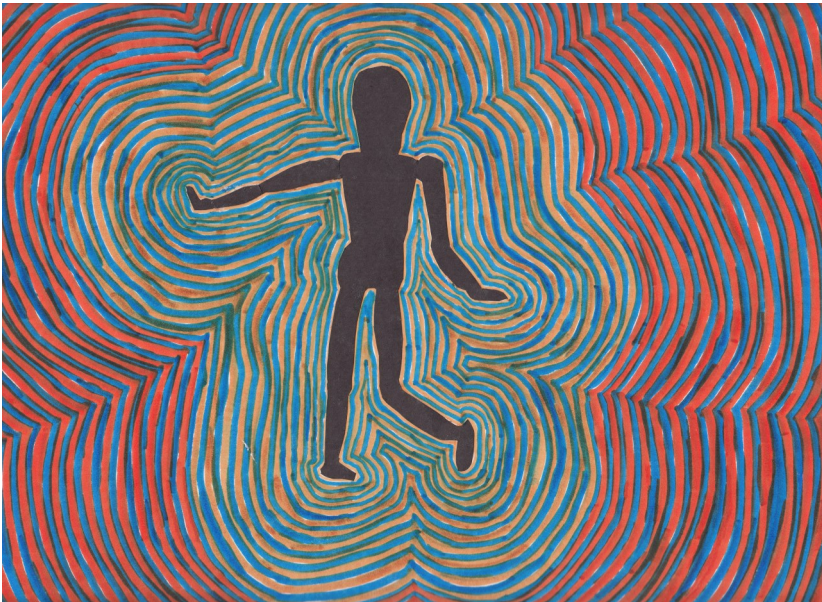


JANE LIM
GRADE 8

MANDALA ART



JULIA TABER
GRADE 8



VIOLET AGOOS
GRADE 8

ART 8 -

GOOD VIBRATIONS

COLLAGE
MARKER ON PAPER



JULIA MANNING
GRADE 8



MARY LISA
GRADE 8

Written by Annie Mioli in memory of her father Gary Mioli.

Annie is a middle school student at Cresskill Middle School in Cresskill, NJ.

She has a sister Kelly and a brother Joseph.

MY DAD

BY ANNIE MIOLI

My Dad was the best! September 12th was a day that I will never forget. It was the day that I lost my hero. Losing my Dad was the hardest thing I have ever had to face in my life. Ever since I was a baby, my Dad has always been there for me. Nothing was more important to my Dad than his family. I have so many amazing memories of special times with my Dad. He was my biggest fan at my soccer games, my basketball games, and my softball games. When I was the lead in the school play, he had front row tickets. When I was named student of the month, he drove through town a million times just to see my name in lights. He was a huge part of every important event that happened in my life.

My most special times with my Dad were at the NY Jets football games. He passed his love for the NY Jets onto me. Being the only two Jets fans in our family, we had a very strong bond! My Dad has had Jets season tickets since he was a kid. When we would head to the Jets game, it was so much more to me than just a football game. We would leave the house early and stop for breakfast. We would arrive in the parking lot early and hang out in the car just talking or playing games. We would head into the stadium to watch pre-game warm ups and drills. Dad was always looking for new drills for his Owls. The game would start and Dad and I would scream so loud cheering on our Jets. Dad always bought me ice cream, cookies and soda just to make our day even more special... and he would always say, "Don't tell Mom!" Even if the Jets didn't win, spending the day with my Dad was always priceless.

My Dad always told me how proud he was of me. The truth is, it is me who is so proud of him. To see the outpouring of love for him the past few months has been incredible. My Dad touched so many lives. My life will never be the same without him but I know he will always be in my heart. He will always be watching over me. He was the best and I couldn't be prouder to be his daughter.

Dad ~ I love you always and forever
Love, Annie

MR. MIOLI'S FAVORITE THINGS...

INTERVIEW OF MRS. MIOLI BY EMILY MONTANEZ '20

Food: Steak (well done) and French fries

Drink: Sunkist orange soda

Restaurant: Village Grille in Waldwick, NJ

Holiday: Thanksgiving because he was all about family

Vacation Spot: He was all about family. It never mattered where we went as long as we were together. He never loved the rides but he always said seeing the smiles on the kids' faces made the trip priceless!

Color: Blue

Movie: "Rudy"



Animal: Cougars (Just kidding)

Owls

Hobbies: Watching any football team on TV.

Sports Teams:

NFL: NY Jets

MLB: NY Mets

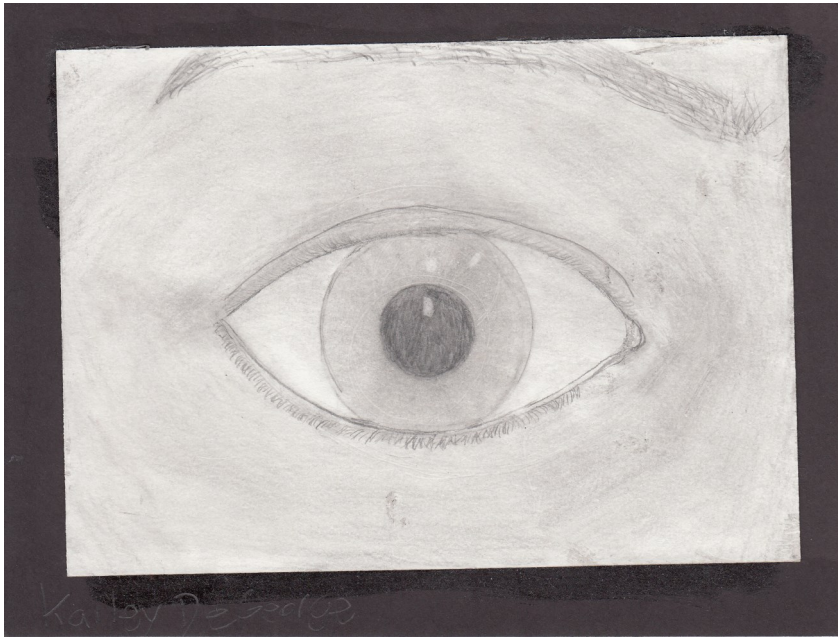
NHL: NJ Devils

NBA: Brooklyn Nets

NCAA: Dayton Flyers & Ohio State Buckeyes
HIGH SCHOOL: Park Ridge Owls

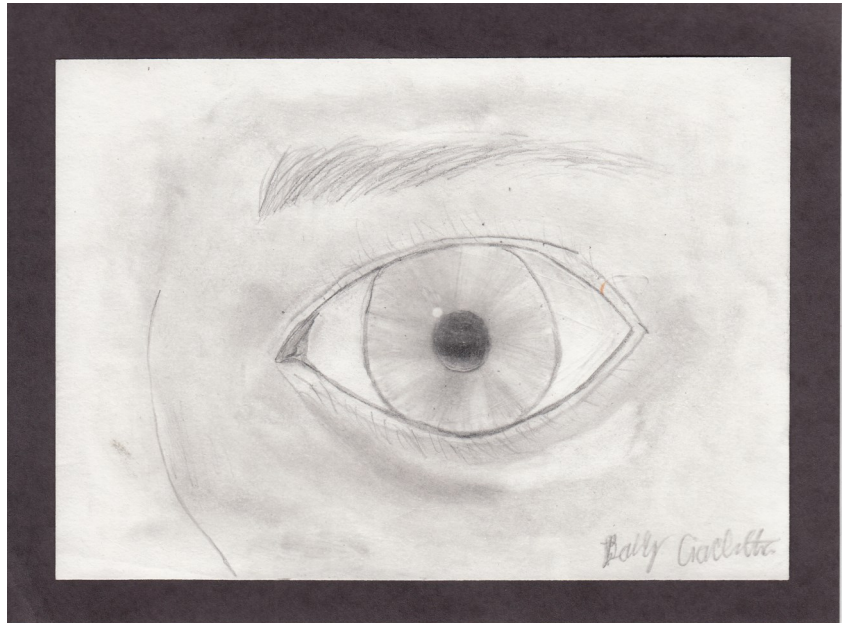


Best memory at PRHS: Winning State Football TITLE in 1995

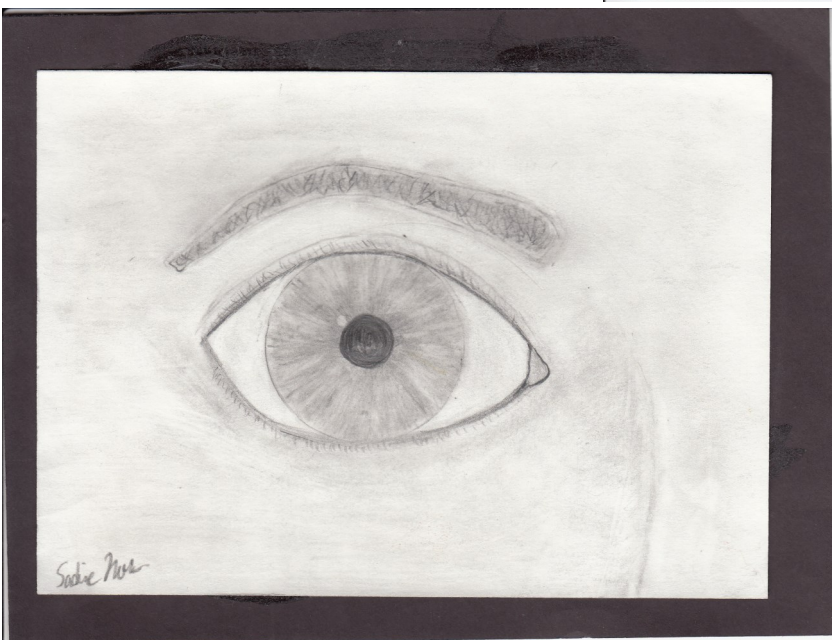


KAILEY DEGEORGE
7TH GRADE
PENCIL ON PAPER

**“EYES”
INSPIRED BY
M. C. ESCHER**



ALLY CIARLETTA
8TH GRADE
PENCIL ON PAPER



SADIE NOBLE
7TH GRADE
PENCIL ON PAPER

POINT GUARD

BY FRANKLYN FALBY '19

Never stop your dribble unless you know what you're doing,
Always keep your head up,
Don't dribble into the corners,
Never force a bad pass,
Always be moving without the ball,
Always call for the ball,
Remember, you are the coach on the court,
Know your team and who can do what,
Know your own shots and when to take them,
Never argue with the referees,
Run to open spots,
Pass to open teammates,
Always be cautious,
Always be talking,
Never put your hands down on defense,
Your goal is to get your teammates to score,
But if all else fails...
DRIVE!

SCHOOL

BY ADAM ANTAL '19

School
You love it you don't
I do
This might be surprising
But it's true
If it weren't for school you would be dumb
What, you probably thinking
Well its true
If you love school it
Loves you
Homework kills but it's worth a while
Gym class is active but
Sweaty a while
Like mile
The games of tag
Jump roping
The need for water
You might like the science room
With test tubes
Frogs
And more
You have Jimmy in the back
Carly in the front
And me in the middle right with the bunch
But algebra is ok
It has all these numbers and equations I don't understand
The teacher is mean
I don't even understand her
She has a problem with not speaking math to her
The writing room is like Shakespeare and Silverstien all over again
It has paragraphs and paragraphs all over again
Oh wait
I forgot to turn that paper in about the book
The lunchroom probably the wildest of them all
You might be surprised because the prices are very high
The gum under the tables
Stickiness on the top
The un-drunk soda spilt and sticky
The detention room is A102
The writing on the desks
The silences of hatred
The power of fear
Is all in the detention room
All of these features are all in my school
But the best is the teachers because they tamed a zoo
They were the ones who taught us
They were the branches of my and you
Knowledge tree
So that's my school how about
Yours.

THE HEART OF A CHAMPION

BY SAMANTHA GREEN '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

Outside training on a warm, sunny day...

F

Fa

Fas

Fast

Faste

Faster

Faster.

Mind says *run faster*

Body says otherwise

Pushing to limits

Thought she could never see

Training for one reason, and one reason only

To be the best

Its meet day...

Stomach is churning and shakes nervously

Stepping to the line

Bang! Roars the gunshot.

A split second later

Off like a cheetah chasing its prey

Crowd is calling her name

Adrenaline is high

Tries to catch her breath

Now is the final bell lap

In the final straightaway

Legs ready to collapse

Her inner champion says...

KEEP GOING

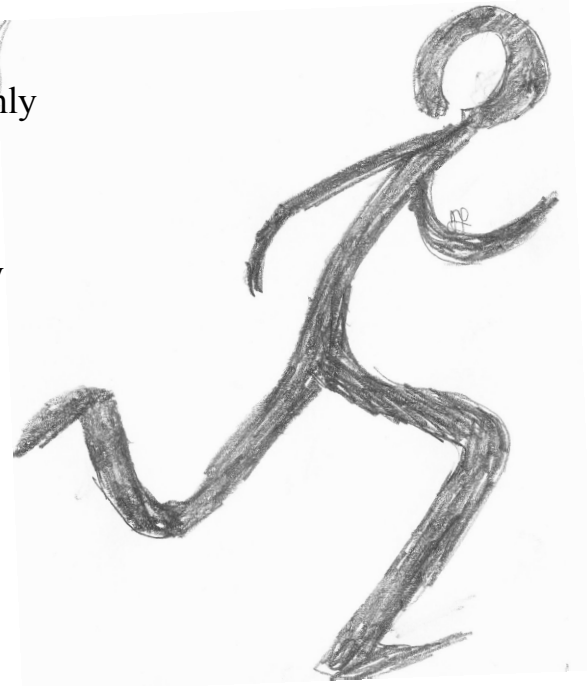
Crosses the finish line

Her face

It's beaming with joy

Just ran her best time yet

THE HEART OF A CHAMPION



OCEAN LIGHTS

BY ANOUSHKA RAMKUMAR '19

Night crept its way around the island,
Tiptoeing around the misty beach,
Cloaking everything with darkness.
Patiently seating ourselves in wooden rafts,
Awaiting the upcoming exhilaration.
Slowly, we rowed,
 Rowed,
 And rowed.
Until being met with a groggy marsh.
Rafts in hands,
Trudging through mud-spattered, strewn leaves.
Up until being welcomed by a dark lagoon.
Paddling all the way into the gloomy-looking heart of the lagoon.
Noticing the water replying to our constant motion.
Glowing a faint blue, followed by a
Bright white,
Fascinating all.
Hands eagerly diving into the water;
Gamboling around.
Water illuminating and waltzing around my fingers;
As though the stars were in the palms of my hands.
Splashing the majestic water on my fabric of my dress,
Discovering the miniscule, shimmering creatures constructing an illusion,
As though they were leaping onto
every
 edge
of
 my
 body.
Stunning.
The bay filling to its brim with endless
Gasps of ecstasy.
Time came around to depart.
Sad to go, yet still dazed by nature's creation.
Beginning to row,
 And row,
 And row.
Until arrival back to reality.

THE MALL

BY CARLY WITTENBERG '20

CLACK... The automatic door pushes itself open
So many smells slap me in the face, all at once
Thousands of feet hit the slippery, newly washed floor.... **STOMP**
Loud screams of children fill my ears
Squeaky shoes scratch the floors beneath my feet
The warm air sheds onto my skin
Holiday music plays loudly
Cinnamon pretzels fill my mouth with sundry, sweet and sugary tastes
Sour lemonade makes my mouth pucker and cringe
Cinnamon crumbs stick to my hands,
Like snow sticking to the ground
Plastic bags crinkle in the palm of my sweaty hand
Crowds of people surround me
Claustrophobic thoughts fill my head,
So many different people
Having so many different conversations...
Each store that I see blasts me in the face with a million colors
Neon Colors...
Black and White Colors...
Red and Orange Colors...
Blue and Green Colors...
Pink and Purple Colors...
I drift from left to right, which store to choose?
So many colors, so many choices
The cinnamon crumbs have left my hands, leaving them sticky
The lemonade makes my hands freeze
The plastic bags are heavier and my hands are sweatier
My feet bring me back to the automatic door as it pushes itself open... **CLACK!**
The smells have all left my nose
The screams of children have left my ears
The drift of cold air begins to shed onto my skin,
As I bring myself outside, onto the hard concrete
My feet scratch the ground... **SCRATCH, SCRATCH**
My eyes follow the rows of cars
Until they are finished searching
My feet lead me into the long parking lot
CLICK! I step into the warm car,
Staring back at the
Claustrophobic...
Colorful...
Loud...
Wonderful...
Mall.

RUBY

BY ISABELLA WISE '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

May 12, 2014 was the day
She was all wrinkly and soft
Copper in color
A vizsla puppy
5 months old today
Crazy as if she ate a bowl of candy
The middle of the night
Barks her head off
So Lonely and cold
Sprints like a deer running from a lion
A crazy ball of fire
With her, my heart is complete
I will love her forever and always



MEXICO

BY ANALLELI CARINO '19

Mexico.
It was
Cold,
Chilly,
And the winds were biting my cheeks
Making them rosy
The day I left

It was the beginning of an adventure
New family members
Meeting my grandma,
Aunts, Uncles,
And
Cousin

And a new location
Hot steaming in the country
But,
Frigid in the morning in the city

What would they think of me?
Will they like me?
Would I stumble when I spoke Spanish?
Would I like being there?
Many of these questions
Streaming
Through my brain

Finally I was there
And I saw them
Waiting for my arrival
They were welcoming

Two weeks had flashed by
It was the end
Of an adventure
That will always be in my heart

BOOKS

BY JENNIFER KURTA '19

ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

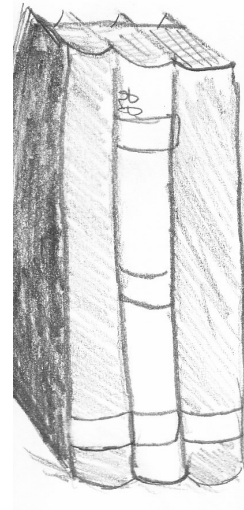
Books are an adventure
Taking you off the page
Leading you to magical places
And other worlds

Whether it's a school of magic
A house full of superheroes
Or the coolest summer camp ever
Books can take you there

Everything is in a story
There's a story in everything
Fictional or not
It is enjoyable to read
Especially because
You experience different things
That you definitely wouldn't have
Been able to otherwise

The end of the story is both the
Best and the worst
It wraps up the plot
With fluffy wrapping paper
But you're left wanting more

(That's what sequels are for)



ART

BY TARYN WOODLEY '19

ILLUSTRATION BY CAILY HUNT '20

In the deepest, inkiest, places
Embody the spirit
Release what you've been holding onto
Anguish, grief
Cheerfulness, lightheartedness
Freedom
Force out bliss
The birth of a blank canvas
Unique blended hues
Bounces of chroma
Now something new has been born
Luminous, fluorescent swirls
Glistening vivid works
Or a shadowy somber feeling
Crepuscular and opaque
A lurid obscured view of the world
However
Have peace of mind
That surge of comfort
Announced within
No art no symphonies
In sync with you're mentalities
Flowing in and out of your soul
Hearing your canvas whisper those words
That stop time



DARK INSPIRATION

BY CARNIG SHAKARJIAN III '19

Creativity in this world
Is limitless
No bounds, no limitations
Nothing but endless possibilities

The destination
Isn't of importance
The journey is
The key to what you find to be motivation

No matter how dark
Or foreboding
At least one
Will use it as inspiration

To think of what can be imaginable
No matter how daunting
All you can see is hidden beauty
Waiting to be found from within the deepest of cracks

No matter how vile
Or abysmal
Beauty is inside all
That dwell the Earth and all above.

THE COIN TOSS

BY JOSEPH DERIENZO '19

The captains go out for the coin toss and meet the ref and the other team
on the center of the field
All the others are waiting to see if we are kicking or receiving
Everybody is nervous
If we receive we will go on offence
If we kick we will go on defense
The ref asks the visiting team heads or tails
You can defer or kick
Then all the captains shake hands and run to the huddle
Two of the captains do the game time chant and then were off!

THE CHASE

BY PATRICIA CHRISTENSEN '19

Storm stands
Ready at any moment, poised
Staring at her enemy
A single red dot positioned on the floor
It glows, mocking her
The hound leaps and pounces
But the dot slips from her grasp
Placing itself, yet again, in a different position

Her legs mill under her
Sprinting during a task she could never complete

The dot, projected from a flashlight
Controlled by human hands
Never allowing Storm to reach her target
Fruitless attempts
However she does not understand
She continues to race

TRAVEL

BY KATRINA ROCKFOL '19

ILLUSTRATION BY CAILY HUNT '20

A way to meet new people
A way to express yourself
A way to explore new cultures
A journey taken to learn

An experience of a lifetime
An exploration of life
An interesting new beginning
And a way to become someone else

You can travel near or far
To places around the globe
You can go with all your family
Or explore on your own

I always remember these trips
Meeting the people of different cultures
Some I could relate to
Most were new to me

I knew it would be exciting
I absorbed every second
Making sure to document it all
Keeping a clear vision

From beginning to end
Stepping onto the plane in New York
And stepping off into what seems to be a whole new world
The different sites amaze me

The different foods
The new customs
Immediately I am transported
Into a new atmosphere

A new life

Travel is made for anyone
No difference rich or poor
The options are limitless

It's your decision
Enjoy it.



ALMOST MADE IT

BY PHIONA TOBIA '19

I walk onto the deck
The cold tiles make my toes shiver
Seeing the crystal blue water sent a feeling of anxiousness
now my spine
The scent of chlorine hits me like a brick wall
Causing my nose to burn and eyes to water
The feeling of fear with a trace of excitement washed over
me like a tsunami of emotion
This was my last shot

0.3 seconds
Everything I ever wanted
Junior Olympics
8 years of dedication
Countless days and nights obsessing over stroke technique
and the tiniest of flaws
Long hours that felt like years just swimming
Back and forth
Back and forth
“Swimmer take your mark”

I used everything I had in the race
My heart still pounding LOUD
Almost as LOUD enough for everyone in the pool to hear
Yet still not enough
I looked up at the board
My heart dropped to the pit of my stomach and slowly and
painfully began to break
I had failed
But somehow won
Even if you do everything right...
Doesn't mean you get what you want

THE LAKE

BY GRACE MADDEN '20

Words of overheard conversations

Chattering kids

Children running

Scattered flip-flops

Gravel under my toes

A test of water

A dash to the pier

1...

2...

3...

Jump!

Splash!

I am the only one left

“Jump, Grace!”

I will not jump

The water stares at me

The rock's jagged ends want to eat me

“I will meet you at the other end”

Running to the other side

The water is too cold

The water is ice

But the air is fire

Ice is better than fire

I wade in

Shivering

I become brave

And swim

A big drink of salty water

Choking

Then breathing

My feet grope for the ground

There is none

A swim to the pier

I want to climb up the slimy steps

Cont'd next page

THE LAKE

But the water slaps me
It screams
I defeat it
Up the stairs
The air has turned cold
I shiver
My arms fly up and cross
I am on top of the pier
I get a view of the endless lake
The shimmering blue catches my eye
The blue-gray sky
And then
The rocks
Something to avoid
“Jump Grace!”
I will jump
1...
2...
3...
I jump.
The water’s open arms catch me
I sink down
And come up
Water clogs my throat
I can’t smell
I take a big breath
And swim again to the steps
To jump again
In the lake
In Galway
In Ireland

LIFE IS A FASTBALL
BY JUSTIN WAGNER '20
ILLUSTRATION BY JANICE FINEMAN '20

My life is a fastball.
Coach says, "Get out there, do your best, try your hardest,"
with a slap on the back.
A flick of the wrist and the curve comes.
Adjustments are made in the grip,
holding on too tight or releasing too early,
unexpected things happen.
Knuckles align, everything stops, its' just the ball and me.
Don't swing too early, but don't swing too late.
The ball and the bat meet.
Timing is everything.



MY LIFE IS A KITCHEN

BY SUSIE RUBENSTEIN '20

My life is a kitchen...

My life is a kitchen it is crazy, active and very different every day.

You go in every day and it is a different schedule.

You're always running around and going crazy.

Sometimes you have a good recipe and sometimes you don't have ones; they don't always workout.

You can argue with chefs about a meal and you can also get along with them.

You can have fun times and also times that are stressing.

My life is a kitchen

MY LIFE IS WEATHER

BY PIERSON TOBIA '20

weather; sometimes the weather is sunny, and very bright. The perfect amount of breeze on your face is just the right temperature to cool you down. The next thing you know the clouds start pouring in and you can't do anything but watch. Weather makes sudden changes that no one can expect, weather can make people feel many different emotions, happy, sad, mad, confused, and many more. The most important thing about weather is that you can never truly predict it.

MY LIFE IS...
BY THOMAS THOMASIAN '20

When I put on my gear I prepare on what's going to happen. When I step on the ice and I get ready for the puck drop. Once the puck drops the game begins. I can be the one that could be hit or I could hit somebody. When I get the puck I have chance to score or to assist it. If no ones open I will try to shoot like what the great Wayne Gretzky said "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take." - Wayne Gretzky. So if you never shoot you'll never score and reach your dreams.

LIFE IS A PUZZLE
BY CARLY WITTENBERG '20

Life is a puzzle. Every piece of the puzzle is different and each piece fits into the puzzle in its **own way**. But the truth is, sometimes it will be a struggle to get the pieces to **fit...** and there are different roads that you will have to take get those pieces together. Along that road, you will encounter **rough** pieces. You will also encounter pieces that **fit right in** with no struggle. But really, you have to work with whatever piece comes your way because life is a puzzle.

A BOX OF CRAYONS

BY PETER MCNAMARA '20

My life is a box crayons.
Some crayons are the sweet bright yellow color of the sun.
Some crayons are blue, like the color of the deep sea.
Some crayons are gray with fear and confusion.
Some crayons are red with fire and heat.
Some crayons are broken and can't be fixed for
another drawing.
Some crayons are used and are dull; they've lost their sharp tip.
When they're all broken and finished...
get a new box of crayons.

**LIFE IS ONE
BIG DRAWING.**

MY LIFE AS A BOX OF CRAYONS

BY SADIE NOBLE '20

My life is a box of crayons. It draws amazing artwork and represents beautiful ideas. It creates wonderful pieces of art and bursts creativity. Sometimes though, kids break the crayons on purpose or use them so hard they become dull. They chip, break, rip, and stab the crayons. But then all of the crayons remember how unique they are. They are each individual crayons playing their part to create one big picture. Soon they learn to stick together, do their part, and form to be one big box of crayons together.

People laugh at my horrible singing.

~ *Phiona Tobia '19*

Computer Programming

“It would be easy,” they said

~ *Anoushka Ramkumar '19*

Frolicking around puddles while getting soaked.

~ *Agustin Velasco '19*

6 Word Memoirs

Cheer

Flipping, flying—Sticking the landing

~ *Mary Lisa '19*

Fresh powder, skidding edges, accelerating down

~ *Sarah Vicari – '19*

Dancing Girl

Dancing since three years, never Stopping

~ *Isabella Wise '19*

Friends Forever

Many are loyal, some helpful, laughs--

~ *Lewis Grosso '19*

Confident, on the field. Playing Hard.

~ *Alex Matuson '19*

Love= Tennis

Sorry Ladies, Tennis stole my heart

~ *Thomas Whang '19*

The Last Act

Performance; No backstory or introduction required

~ *Jane Lim '19*

6 Word Memoirs

Making videos

Green Screen, Final Cut, Camera, Check.

~ *Anoushka Ramkumar*

Baseball Champions

3 outs-we won-champions now!!!!

~ *Vincent Ippolito '19*

Diploma of Graduation

Hair: Done

Diploma: Received

Goodbye, Eastbrook

~ *Terri-Jeanne Liu '19*

Climbing Sand Mountain-falling back down

~ *Sandra Schneider '19*

THE LITTLE THINGS AND THE BIG THINGS

BY LILLY LAROCCA '20

It is interesting that some things are so small but change your life so greatly, and others are big and don't change your life at all. I think it depends on the person and their attitude. My experience was the moment four simple, but powerful, words came out of my doctor's mouth, "you have focal epilepsy." My heart sunk. The only thing I was able to say was, "what does this mean now?" one hundred thoughts swirled through my mind after that moment. Then one pretty upsetting answer was given, "You will have it for your entire life".

As I sat in my mom's car and we drove to the neurologist, we conversed about our hopes of the epilepsy having gone away and maybe the EEG had come back clear, but all that was about to be shattered as I entered the cold hospital. Many happy thoughts of an epilepsy-free life swirled through my mind, but nothing could prepare me for what I was about to hear. As I sat on the examination table and the regular routine of taking my blood pressure, weight, and reflexes. I noticed there was an odd silence like the one there is right before you find out the place you are in during a competition. 1st place would mean I was epilepsy free and last place meaning I had focal epilepsy. Boy did I want to be in first, but similar to the saying, "you can't always get what you want", I ended up in last place with those 4, short, life-defining words. They were so little yet so powerful. In an unsure tone the neurologist said, "Your EEG came back as abnormal, and there is a reason to believe your epilepsy is now focal. This means *you have Focal Epilepsy*". My life came crashing down. It felt like at that moment I was labeled as defective, broken, odd. All those happy thoughts destroyed. It felt like someone hit me in the throat I couldn't talk, I felt like I couldn't breathe. It just felt like all I could do was think. About a minute later I replied with "what does this mean now?" As she defined my epilepsy with having it my entire life, the greater risk of having a horrible seizure, and the medicine I would have to be put on; my life felt like it had stopped.

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THE LITTLE THINGS AND THE BIG THINGS

At this moment, I realized that I needed to be strong and push forward. About a few weeks after, I started to make YouTube videos about my situation in hopes of answering questions some else who was just diagnosed had. My mom saw it and said that I should be an epilepsy advocate. So I started off by making purple ribbons on the day for epilepsy awareness. I handed them out to my grade and teachers. I also told my CCD class about it and how I have it. They were very understanding and they had questions, which I gladly answered.

My goal this year is to join at least two groups, which I have (marching band and theater) and participate in a walk and with the help of a new found friend with the same situation I am planning on participating in the glow walk. The only advice I could give to someone is bad things happen, but you just have to push forward, forgive and forget. Everyone has flaws. One thing I learned was that this made me mentally stronger. It brought me new ideas about life and caused me to have an open mind. Some people say having the courage to make those videos and reach out to others makes me a strong person and it has. Something everyone should be is open-minded. That's the only way you will ever make friends because no one is exactly alike. From our personalities, to lives, to race, to hair color and eye color, our height is different too. As a child I never thought my life would be this diverse. I thought it would be happy and healthy.

THE GIRL IN THE MIRROR

BY GRACE MADDEN '20

(A FICTIONAL STORY)

With a twenty-dollar bill clasped in my hand, I point to the tomatoes. I don't even know if my mom likes tomatoes, but she was the one who told me to walk to **Subway** and buy two \$5 foot-longs. I don't like **Subway**, but my mom wouldn't know that. She never pays enough attention to me to know what I like and don't like. She's too busy with her own problems. I've gotten used to being independent since my dad left 3 years ago, on my 10th birthday.

When I get home, I toss my sandwich and hers on the kitchen counter and go upstairs to my room. The first thing I see is my full-length mirror I've since I was eight. It's old and has My Little Pony and One Direction stickers on it, things I don't care about anymore. But this time when I look into it, I don't **see** me, a short 13 year old with brown curly hair who shines with insecurity. I **see** a pretty girl with a sparkling **sea foam green** dress. She doesn't radiate insecurity, she radiates beauty and confidence. But then I notice something. She moves the same way I do. She has my small nose and the same facial features as me. She's me!

I hear my mother's **stilettoes** click-clacking on the floor as she enters the house. I almost call out to her but I want to make sure what I'm seeing is real. I still wear my sweatshirt and jeans but the mirror says otherwise. I reach my hand out to touch the mirror, but it falls through! I quickly pull my hand out. Warily, I decide to take a step inside, but my whole body falls in!

When I stand up, I come to a shocking revelation; I am the girl in the mirror! I look down at the **sea foam green** dress and **see** wood boards. In front of me is a curtain. Before I can gasp; a small man comes up to me.

"Come! Come!" he says, "Your kingdom is waiting for you! I am **Shawn**. I am your servant. You are the queen!"

"Wait, what?" I yelp, confused. "I'm not a queen. I'm **Scarlett** Phelps!"

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THE GIRL IN THE MIRROR

“Mmm...yes...Queen **Scarlett**...lovely...Come! Come! Give the people what the people want!” He pulls back the curtain and pushes me out, with surprising strength for a little man.

I first **see** a bright light. It blinds me for a second. A sickly sweet scent races to my nose. Is that cotton candy? Little pricks of color scream my name and surround the stage that I find myself on. Their people! The people’s yelling makes me feel good. It’s a great feeling to be wanted.

Shawn runs out behind me and yells,

“Ladies and gentleman, your new queen, **Scarlett!**”

“I’m not the queen!” I say, but the crowd doesn’t care! Their roar is louder than 50 loins. Can this kingdom really be mine? I refuse to believe it.

Men bring out a **seal** on a roller. **Shawn** spreads his arms out and yells,

“Ladies and gentleman, our queen will turn this cursed seal back into the boy he once was!”

The crowd’s roar becomes deafening.

“No! I can’t!” I say to Shawn. “I’m not a queen! I can’t turn a **seal** into a boy!”

Shawn turns to me and tries to look me in the eye, though it is hard for him.

“Thy who falls in the mirror is queen. You can do it. We need you to.”

That stops me. I have never been needed so urgently before. I have never felt needed at all.

“Alright,” I say, “What should I do?”

With a smile on his face, **Shawn** tells me to wave my hand over the seal. I close my eyes and stick out my hand. I wave it.

When I open my eyes, I don’t **see** a seal. I **see** a boy who looks about my age.

“Oh poor me! Poor, poor me! I’ve nothing to eat except for **sardines** the past year! Poor me!” he wails.

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THE GIRL IN THE MIRROR

Though I don't like the **self-absorbed** boy, I feel pride in what I did. The ability to do something good, to have others depend on you to do it, is great.

"Can I stay here forever?" I say to **Shawn**. He gives me a sad smile.

"You may feel as though nobody needs you where you live, but they do. We also need you. You are wanted and needed everywhere; it's just a little hard to see sometimes. The question is, who needs you more?" he points to a mirror I hadn't seen before. "It's your decision."

I guess I was needed back home. I just had been a little blind.

I wave before I take the step that will decide everything. The last thing I see is the roaring crowd before I fall into the mirror.

COLOPHON

Stepping Stones is a literary magazine that features written and visual art from middle school students in grades 7 and 8. All 7th & 8th grade students are offered the opportunity to submit written and visual works of art, either through classroom assignments or voluntary contributions. Submissions are emailed with name, grade and permission slip to the Stepping Stones advisors and are accepted from September through April. The magazine is published once a school year in the month of June.

Microsoft publisher 2010 was used for the layout and design. Printing was done by a professional outside source, Ridgewood Press in Ridgewood, NJ. 60lb paper was used for the content and 100lb glossy paper was used for the cover. The font Trajan Pro was used for all submission titles, footers and page numbers. The font Century Schoolbook was used for the title page and table of contents. There were approximately 300 copies produced and distributed, free of charge, to all 7th and 8th grade students, as well as to all faculty, staff and administrators.

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The artwork was created by hand in pencil and the cover is an original photograph.



Photo taken by Spencer Ghiraldini '20
Using an I-Phone 6

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE 2015 EDITION OF
STEPPING STONES

WE LOOK FORWARD TO OUR YOUNG, TALENTED ARTISTS
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ING FOR FUTURE PUBLICATIONS BOTH IN AND OUT OF
SCHOOL.

**“YOUR VALUE DOESN’T DECREASE BASED ON SOMEONE’S
INABILITY TO SEE YOUR WORTH.”**

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