

STEPPING STONES

A Junior High Literary Art Magazine - 2017, Volume 32

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Stepping Stones Literary Art Magazine is an extracurricular student run publication that showcases the creative writing and artistic talents of a variety of Park Ridge Middle School students. The magazine is worked on throughout the entire school year by a group of students who signed up to be on the magazine staff at an interest meeting held at the beginning of the school year in September. There are two faculty advisors who facilitate and organize meetings and technical aspects of the magazine. Once completed, the magazine is published in June by an outside vendor and distributed to all middle school students, faculty, staff, and Administration.

Every student in grades 7 and 8 is offered the opportunity to submit original works of literature and art to the magazine staff until April of the publishing year. Their submissions may be generated from classroom assignments, or self motivated pieces written specifically for the magazine. The staff meets once a month and they spend their time reviewing submissions, taking magazine related photos, and brainstorming ideas for themes and layouts. This year we received an overwhelming response to participate in the creation of the magazine and an abundance of submissions. We were extremely pleased to see the students eagerness to continue the tradition of this yearly magazine.

We hope you enjoy this year's issue of Stepping Stones created by the Middle School students of Park Ridge Jr./Sr. High School.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Extended Metaphors

Page	Name	Title	Page	Name	Title
4	Ashley DeGeorge	"Life is Truly the Weather"	6	Shaina Whitehead	"Mornings are like a Swim Meet"
4	Seton Liu	"Life is Like Riding a Bicycle"	6	Sabrina Sheridan	"Life is a Tree"
5	Natalie Parker	"Life is Like the Weather"	6	Emma Agoos	"Life is a Pencil"
5	Isabel Carino	"Love is a Journey"	6	Matthew Trent	"Life is an Airplane"
5	Anthony Wagner	"Life is Like a Sidewalk"			
5	Odalys Guerrero	"Life is Like a Jigsaw Puzzle"			

Memes

Page	Name	
7	Theresa Craffey	-
7	Christine Lupardo	
7	Michael Gorrin	

6 Word Memoirs

Page	Name	Page	Name
8	Eli Engler	9	Pauline Liu
8	Elizabeth Paulino	9	Jenna Hill
8	Richard Weissenborn	9	Rico Alcazar
8	Liam Nocella	9	Jenny Ciccaglione
8	Cooper Corso	9	Eugene Shen
8	Dustin Stark	9	Nicholas Barros

Nature Poems

Page	Name	Title	Page	Name	Title
10	Kayleigh Bennett	"Leaves"	13	Lauren Kim	"Journey up the Mountain"
10	Daniel Maglio	"The Beauty of the Day"	14	Diego Lopez	"The Sky"
11	Elizabeth Paulino	"The Forest"	15	McKenna Holz	"Ocean"
11	Harrison DeMar	"Trees"	16	Alicia Healy	"Boat Ride"
11	Katherine Tudisco	"Tornado"	17	Taylor Whang	"The Deserted Mojave"
12	Matt Donnelly	"Nature"	18	Christopher Uva	"The Beauty of Hawaii"
13	Matthew Lister	"Ignite Sleep"	19	Olivia Walter	"It's a White Christmas"
13	Eugene Shen	"Loving Dove"	19	Ava Morgan	"Moonstruck"

Photography provided by: Caroline Wharton, Olivia Walter, Sarah Kim, Elyse von der Lieth, & Jessica Kurta

Drawings by: Ava Morgan

Emotional Poems

Page	Name	Title	Page	Name	Title
20	(Anonymous)	"The Boy with the Blue Eyes and the Fine Face"	24	Daniel Gutin	"As the Monsters Creep"
21	Elizabeth Paulino	"Friendship"	24	Abbie Molinari	"Insanity"
21	Katherine Tudisco	"Heartbreak"	29	Kayleigh Bennett	"Confused"
22	Annalise Acevedo	"Thorns"	29	Justin Huber	"Air"
23	Justin Huber	"Sad"	30	Nicholas Barros	"The Butterfly"
23	Daniel Gutin	"Hate"	31	Michael Kuron	"Where I Stand"
23	Mark Soulas	"Messing with Mad"	31	Esteban Leduc	"Paths"

7th Grade Art - Bad Hair Day

Page	Name
25	Alex Fineman
25	Claire Throne
25	Sarah Kim
25	Ayden Pavese
25	Reagan Scully

8th Grade Prism Art

Page	Name
26	Jack Disanza
26	Liam Mitchell
26	Madison Szabo
26	Kelsey Urmanowicz

8th Grade Ceramics

Page	Name	Page	Name
27	Brendan Hughes	28	Kelsey Mc Conville
27	Emily Otto	28	Aidan Giambelluca
27	Lauren Kim	28	Claudia Pulverenti
27	Robert Anzilotti		

Sports Poems

Page	Name	Title	Page	Name	Title
32	Kayleigh Bennett	"The Beginning"	34	Daniel Lio	"The Redemption Opportunity"
32	Brandon Wittrock	"The Soccer Game"	34	Dustin Stark	"The Goal"
33	Matt Donnelly	"The Game"			

Miscellaneous

Page	Name	Title	Page	Name	Title
35	Laurence Lu	"The Wanderer"	36	Justin Huber	"Life"
35	Jennifer	"Into the Book"	37	(Anonymous)	"Today's Society"
36	Manali Sanyal	"Tight"	37	Lucia Lofaro	"Lemonade"
36	Mark Soulas	"Drive By"	37	Nicholas Viscovic	"Gold Apple"

The Holocaust Museum & Center for Tolerance and Education - The Power of the Immigrant Story - Winners

Page	Name	Title	
40	Emily Otto	"The Broken Land"	First Place
41	Pauline Liu	"The Rotten Big Apple"	Third Place

Cross Word Puzzle - Pages 38 & 39

Staff Biographies

Page	Name
42	Sarah Kim, Caroline Wharton, Olivia Walter, Ava Morgan, Michael Gorrin, Seton Liu, and Sean Lee
43	Jessica Kurta, Isabel Carino, Sabrina Sheridan, Ellie Fisher, Ashley DeGeorge, Elyse von der Lieth, and Elizabeth Paulino

EXTENDED METAPHORS

Life is Truly the Weather **by Ashley DeGeorge**

Life is truly the weather. Uncontrollable, but you adapt to it. Sometimes it is warm and the sun is shining all day, and you have a wonderful day, but other times it is cold and rainy, and nothing good happens. No one can control the weather, just like there are some things in life that you can't control. There are times of extremes, such as blizzards, droughts, or hurricanes. Sometimes there's a natural disaster, changing your life forever, but it still goes on. At the end, you can hope that your life's work is still there and you made a lasting imprint that can't be washed, blown, or burnt away.

Life is Like Riding a Bicycle **by Seton Liu**

Life is like riding a bicycle. We all begin life like how we begin trying to ride a bike. When you first get on a bike, you need to use training wheels. Parents are like your training wheels, only they are for life. Of course, in life, you make mistakes. When you first try to ride a bike without the support of training wheels, you will fall. In life sometimes mistakes will be bigger than others, just like how some cuts may be more serious than others. However, an important part of life is learning lessons. You make mistakes when you are naive, but you learn from them. You fall when you are trying to ride a bike, but you soon will get a grasp on how to ride it correctly. When you are able to ride a bike correctly you are able to have a lot of fun. Life is enjoyable until something bad happens. This is when you fall off your bike. However, even if you do fall, you continue to ride your bike. The end of your life is like when you stop riding your bike a lot. During life, you depend on others at the start to get help. When you learn how to be independent, you enjoy it to the fullest. When you continue to live it, you learn lessons and fall less often.

Life is Like the Weather **by Natalie Parker**

Life is like the weather. Everyday things are changing, and no matter how hard we try or what we do, no one can stop it, it just keeps coming. Day in and day out the weather alters, like we do. Sometimes when it's gloomy and raining outside, you hide inside, or sometimes when it's sunny and warm out, we get too caught up in everyday things, and don't get to stop and enjoy what the world has to offer. But, would you ever consider dancing in the rain? Or instead of hustling around on the sunny days, just stop and stare up at the sky, and point out different shapes you see in the clouds, not caring about how much time passes you by. In the end, you can only hope that there was a little rain along the way, because that's the only way you can get your rainbow.

Life is Like a Jigsaw Puzzle **by Odalys Guerrero**

Life is truly a Jigsaw puzzle that you don't have all the pieces to. Sometimes you're not even sure you've got all the pieces and then you start to go crazy. You get nervous or you panic when you don't do something right. You just have to take your time and then you'll get through it without a hitch or without any panic. Sometimes when things don't come out right it could be falling in the correct place. You get mad when you don't find the last piece. You just have to keep searching for the last piece, then it will be in your hand. Life is like a jigsaw puzzle, you just have to see the whole picture and you see you succeeded. Just take your time solving the puzzle because you have lots of time to achieve everything you want.

Life is Like a Sidewalk **by Anthony Wagner**

Life is like a sidewalk, its bumpy and smooth at the same time. At times you fall flat on your face but you don't roll over and die just yet. You kick the rocks aside, dust the dirt off, and keep going. And when you come upon a puddle or a crack in the side walk what do you do? Jump over it or stop there? And even when the sidewalk is paved it is never perfect, and when the side walk comes to an end you might want to look back on your life and ask yourself, would you have walked a different path?

Love is a Journey **by Isabel Carino**

Love is a journey. You encounter many pretty passages and storms along the way. When you decide to be in a relationship, that is when the true journey starts. As you make your way through the stages of love, you may want to turn around and forget, so you can go back to where you started. Other times, you keep going even though you may not know where you'll end up. But the most important thing to remember, is that even if you didn't make it through the journey, you can walk away knowing that you gave it your all.

Mornings are Like a Swim Meet **by Shaina Whitehead**

Mornings are like a swim meet; you don't always dive into the day the right way. Splash! One minute you're up on the block, the next you're in the pool, racing your way to school. You always have to make sure you are prepared for school too. Some days you may need a life jacket to help you. So, have your swim cap on, and your goggles ready to go. You may end up doing the relay, you never know.

Life is a Tree **by Sabrina Sheridan**

Life is a tree. The leaves twist and turn, forming beautifully, just like the confusing changes of life leave you with a beautiful outcome. As another year rolls around, life brings you a new chance to start over, just like the leaves fall off in Fall, and grow again with a new start. Life keeps going on, and trees continue to grow. A tree's branches grow up and reach to the sun, just as one looks up and reaches for their goals. A tree will catch the snow that falls from the sky, just as life catches us when we are at our worst. You can chop a tree, but more will continue to grow. One can come into another's life to ruin it, but won't do so much damage due to the fact we keep growing and changing. At the end of life, a tree may be old, but it's still beautiful and standing tall, wishing not to end up cut down and just a stump. In life we continue to have the strength to stand up tall and reveal our true beauty.

Life is a Pencil **by Emma Agoos**

Life is a pencil. As silly as it sounds, isn't it? Pencils make many mistakes when you are so focused on writing everything perfectly. We all make a lot of mistakes when we are concentrating so hard on being the perfect human in every way. But when you are writing, you erase your mistakes and start over. Your pencil marks are still there, but lightly. With a pencil, you can make anything imaginable. Hey, with one measly pencil that someone tossed into the garbage, you could make a new math theory with that one pencil. With that one pencil, you could discover proof for a case that the police couldn't solve. With that one pencil, you could design the tallest skyscraper in the world. Everyone has secrets, and technically, so does a pencil. You don't know what is brewing in the pencil's tip. What if something amazing comes out? What if something dastardly comes out? You have no clue to what's going to happen, just like in life. Life knows what it's doing... just like a pencil.. At the end of life you are stubby and short and you have made some amazing things. Just hope that you're pencil didn't snap in half.

Life is an Airplane **by Matthew Trent**

My life is an airplane, sometimes it slows down and sometimes it speeds. As long as you keep your hands on the controls and keep the engines running you will keep climbing higher and higher. Planes can be dangerous, but if you have good control you can keep it on course and out of harms way. At the end of the flight you have to remember there may have been some turbulence and you may have gotten sick but as long as you didn't crash, you succeeded.

MEMES



by Theresa Craffey



by Christine Lupardo



by Michael Gorin

6 WORD MEMOIRS

I frightenedly watched vigorous storms below
- Eli Engler

Taking the picture, perspective is key
- Elizabeth Paulino

Track encircles my attitude every "step."
- Richard Weissenborn

Running along the river, throwing rocks
- Liam Nocella

Early morning rush, forgot to study
- Cooper Corso

I won, I lost, I tried
- Dustin Stark

Photo by Caroline Wharton (iPhone 5s)

Giving until I can't give anymore
- Pauline Liu

Medals on necks, achievements in air
- Jenna Hill

You've got one shot, plenty opportunities
- Rico Alcazar

Sitting by the waterfalls, laughing joyfully
- Jenny Ciccaglione

Waiting For The Horn, Endless Possibilities
- Eugene Shen

Dribble down court, stop, pop, drop
- Nicholas Barros

Photo by Caroline Wharton (iPhone 5s)

NATURE POEMS



Photo by Olivia Walter (i-Phone 6)

“Leaves” by Kayleigh Bennett

The leaves all fall
And the flowers start to bloom
The squirrels filling their cheeks
The wind blowing in your hair
And all I do is sit and watch



Photo by Olivia Walter (i-Phone 6)

“The Beauty of the Day” by Daniel Maglio

The beauty of the sunset
Tells us how great the day is;
And that another day has ended.
The beauty of the sunrise
Tells us there’s a day waiting



Photo by Sarah Kim (Galaxy S7 Edge)

“The Forest” by Elizabeth Paulino

I'm in a deep, dark forest
 Water droplets on sugar cane leaves
 The stimulating scent of waterfalls seep in my brain
 The refreshing air fulfills me with delight
 No planes before me
 No trains rushing from town to town
 I see an alluring tree
 with little vibrant creatures
 they're nothing less than beauty
 Running up to the precious creatures

I hum along to the melody they preach
 What would they do?
 If they just knew, what they could do
 Make an individual feel apart from the chaotic world
 They make me feel one with the nature
 I wouldn't dare want to be elsewhere.

“Trees” by Harrison DeMar

Trees are an interesting part of nature.
 Trees cover the earth.
 Trees give to the world.
 Oxygen, home for animals.
 They have a cycle throughout the seasons.
 They lose leaves in the winter.
 Trees stand tall in the snow.
 They grow new leaves in the spring.
 And are full again in the summer.
 And once the hot temperatures of summer cool.
 The trees prepare for the fall.
 The winter's cold.
 And the happiness of spring and summer.
 Trees are truly beautiful.

“Tornado” by Katherine Tudisco

It rips though with no emotion,
 Tearing apart house by house,
 It picks up little by little memories,
 Does it have any idea what it's doing,
 What kind of damage it leaves behind...?



Photo by Elyse von der Lieth (iPhone 6s Plus)

“Nature” by Matt Donnelly

Life giving evergreen Trees in the winter.
Oh life giving evergreen Trees in the winter.
Beautiful life giving evergreen trees in the winter.
pretty life giving evergreen trees in the winter.
Wonderful evergreen trees in the winter.

Black birch trees in the summer that give life.
Pretty black birch trees in the summer that give life.
Gorgeous black birch trees in the summer that give life.
Wonderful black birch trees in the summer that give life.
Fun black birch trees in the summer that give life.

Apple trees in the spring that give life.
Nice apple trees in the spring that give life.
Friendly apple trees in the spring that give life.
Apple trees in the spring that give life.
Apple trees in the spring that give life.

Life giving white ash trees
Friendly Life giving white ash trees.
Fun Life giving white ash trees.
Beautiful Life giving white ash trees.
Savage Life giving white ash trees.

“Ignite Sleep” by Matthew Lister

I wake up
Sky is all I see
Confused, but relaxed
The wind blows
Through my hair
The bird chirps
The sound bounces
Through my eardrums

It starts
To rain
I still lay there
Enjoying the rain
A bunny walks by

It was beautiful
It made me happy
I go to sleep
But then I
Wake up to
The same
It happens again
And goes on forever

“Loving Dove” by Eugene Shen

If you show love to a dove
It will treat you right
Just before night
Don't make it mad
Or you will be sad
Cause it will fly away
And make your heart grey

“Journey up the Mountain” by Lauren Kim

Immense trees tower over me
Wind churns swiftly, gently touching my skin
I manage to grasp sounds of harmonious waterfalls
My parched tongue begs for me to quench its intolerable
thirst
I feel fatigue rapidly advancing through my body
Beads of sweat condense and form a thick mask
The illusion of the top floods my mind
Finally, it comes
A stunning landscape
Assorted colors strike my eyes
Magnificent



“The Sky” by Diego Lopez

**How clear the world above looks.
The bright blue of the ocean and the
twinkle of the stars
The shapes of objects that we see
above
But look further
you will see the boundless vault
The mystery and awe
Of endless galaxies,
Of endless possibilities.**

Photo by Caroline Wharton (iPhone 5s)

“Ocean” by McKenna Holz

it's calming
smooth
wet
vast
Thunderous
soft
a Perfect Blue

the ocean
compelling, unexplored
a Dream that can turn into a Nightmare
as quick as lightning
can strike
like the troubled person
who just needs to be heard

but the Ocean must have a language
when sailors abide the ocean law,
Or when people
care for its beaches
it thanks them in its own way

the blue body of water is still
when i'm in it
its arms around me like a border
comforting me when i'm lonely
my only good friend



Photo by Caroline Wharton (iPhone 5s)

“Boat Ride” by Alicia Healy

White speedboat, day is expiring
Cool and comfortable
Summer salutations, Fire Island
Minute, yet full... of
 Wonder,
 Exhilaration,
 Beauty,

Boat slithers up, on melted glass
Smothered in supremacy, i
t’s magnificence pricking out
Surreal, a dream
 Silence,
 Soothing,
 Splendor,

Worries had subsided to nonentity Sunset
The colors intertwine with fantasy and majesty
 Pastels,
 Pinks,
 Purples,
 Periwinkle,

Bay air escalates into my nose
Wind thrashes my face
I am flying, airborne
 And at once, in a snap, in a flicker, the
 Seamless,
 Faultless,
 Illusion,
 Is wiped away, I arise into reality

Rejoicing in recollection and contemplation Lived the
moment, savored blissful harmony

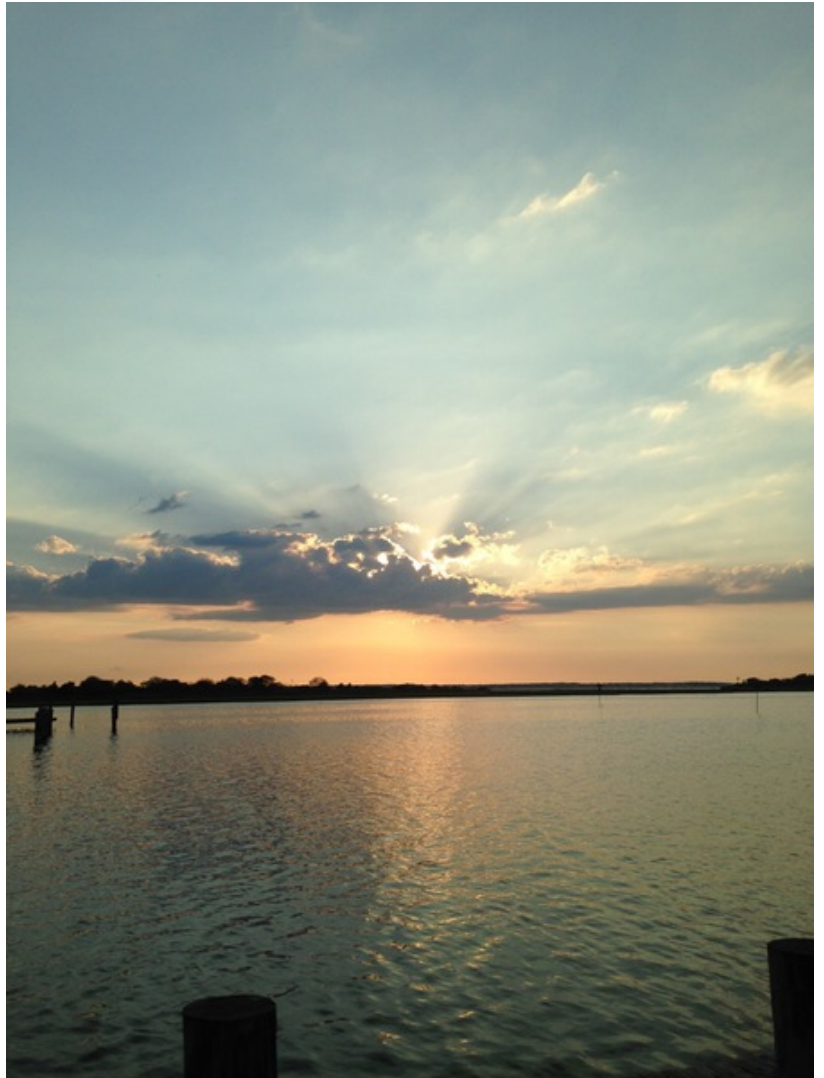


Photo by Olivia Walter (iPhone 6s)

“The Deserted Mojave” by Taylor Whang

As I walk out of the van that took me to the desert with my cousins, brother, and I,
We are in the middle of nowhere.
The desert is quiet.
The breeze is relieving because it is 110° outside.
The smell of sunscreen and fresh air is around me.
I never expected to be in the middle of a desert.
It is beautiful, peaceful, and quiet.
You could see canyons in the horizon and a faint view of the lively city, Las Vegas.
A trailer was up ahead of me with gear,
There are dirt-bikes and RZR's parked perfectly aligned in the orange, beachy sand.
The lot is just as big as a football field.
As I hop in the RZR, my helmet compresses my head tightly,
I put on my goggles and look at my cousin.
Click.
My seat belt is fastened tightly.
Boom...
The door shuts.
My stomach drops and a lump in my throat is created as I swallow,
it's time.
Vroom!
The engine starts and the strong smell of gasoline slowly fades away as the wind whooshes.
My cousin steps on the gas without hesitation and we are moving,
Dust immediately flows into the air like a dust cloud.
Starting at 50 mph the speed gradually but quickly escalates, 60, 70, 80, 90!
The Nevada bright, bold sun rays burn my skin,
after all we are in the heart of the Mojave Desert.
I look to the right and see the rocky terrain along with green, pointy cacti and lightly dusted boulders,
While driving the bumps are unexpected like a roller-coaster.
One wrong turn --falling 60 feet to the ground of dust or a field of cacti.
The orange and mustard color yellow dust is everywhere, all over the RZR, my clothes, and my skin.
The wind blows in my dusty hair.
As we take a break on a mountain you could see the California border.
I take off my helmet and can taste the dust on my face.
Water.
I missed the cold and refreshing taste that I had wanted for thirty minutes already.
“1,2,3 smile!”
I lean against a boulder and smile along side my cousins and pose for the camera so I could keep this
memory with me forever,
In the dust.

“The Beauty of Hawaii” by Christopher Uva

Rain drops gliding down the rafters on the porch.
Getting ready to make memories
Flowers blooming and sprouting
Frogs and lizards digging into the screen
surrounding the porch
Rainbows glittering in the sun
Hiking through the wet, swampy jungle; taking in
the century old sights
Laughing as you soak yourself.
Nature; untouched by man;
All natural.
Free of stress and anger
Making memories for the rest of your life
As you climb the rocky slopes;
You stare in awe at the mango- purple sky
Soaking it all in- before you have to go back to
reality
Scampering back to your tiny hut
Putting your feet up; nobody's there to stop you
Peaceful isolation



Photo by Caroline Wharton (iPhone 5s)

“It’s a White Christmas” by Olivia Walter

I was waking
Up and it was
Snowy and white,
It looked so pretty,

But when I walked outside
It looked like Christmas and
It was amazing,

I ran inside to
Get my snow clothes
On and then ran
Outside and
Built a snowman,

Then I went back inside and
Drank hot cocoa with marshmallows
I smelt it from the door

HAPPY WINTER!!!

“Moonstruck Sun” by Ava Morgan

Yellow eyes bright
Red ears down
Me and this fox are the only ones around
He stops
He does not growl
But emerges into sight
Moonlight hits his silky red coat
Causing it to glow a bright red
He is majestic
Glorious!
Then he dashes off
Leaving nothing
But showing someone
His beauty
And grace



Drawing by Ava Morgan (Colored Pencils and Crayons)

EMOTIONAL POEMS

“The Boy with the Blue Eyes and the Fine Face” by Anonymous

The crack of his drum determines the beat of my heart,
Stolen glances and hidden desires,
Although, i know his rhythm beats for
someone else,
I relish the three seconds he glances at me,
In his eyes i see the warm and sweet history
we’ve had,
The “invisible” tears i cry for him are
unnoticed

What goes on in his brain i can’t ever tell,
his astute blue eyes make mine look like
hell,
His smile makes me melt with confusion,
His frown leaves me at the brink of crying,
He doesn’t know this but every time i say
goodbye,
A little piece of me dies inside

Smart, sweet, shy and gentle,
With his intimidating stare fixated on me,
I feel a blush spread to my cheeks,
But all i know is to keep myself quiet,
So the words that i wish to speak,
won’t come out not even a peep

I stare at him too much thinking
the thoughts that i think
he looks back at me with a smile
and pearly white teeth



Photo by Elyse von der Lieth (iPhone 6s Plus)

“Friendship” by Elizabeth Paulino

When you're with them you get a natural high
Memories floating in your head
You always hate to say goodbye
Might as well rip it all to shreds

Can't keep the laughter inside
You try to keep yourself contained but
Inside jokes are your kryptonite
And now everything is “doughnut”

On those study days and study nights
They're always there for you
Every day, the highlights
She's your personal angel of view

The past you can't forget or deny
Like the friendship you've bred
The future is nothing to testify
And the love will never be misled

You never cheated you never lied
Never told them to keep their mouth shut
Never told them to go away and hide
She's your devotion, your little coconut

“Heartbreak” by Katherine Tudisco

You have never felt pain like I have,
The pain that comes from a heartbreak is
truly devastating,
When you lose the person that was once your
everything,
It's like you've been torn completely in half,
Go in my shoes for a second and feel the
pain.



Photo by Elyse von der Lieth (iPhone 6s Plus)

“Thorns” by Annalise Acevedo

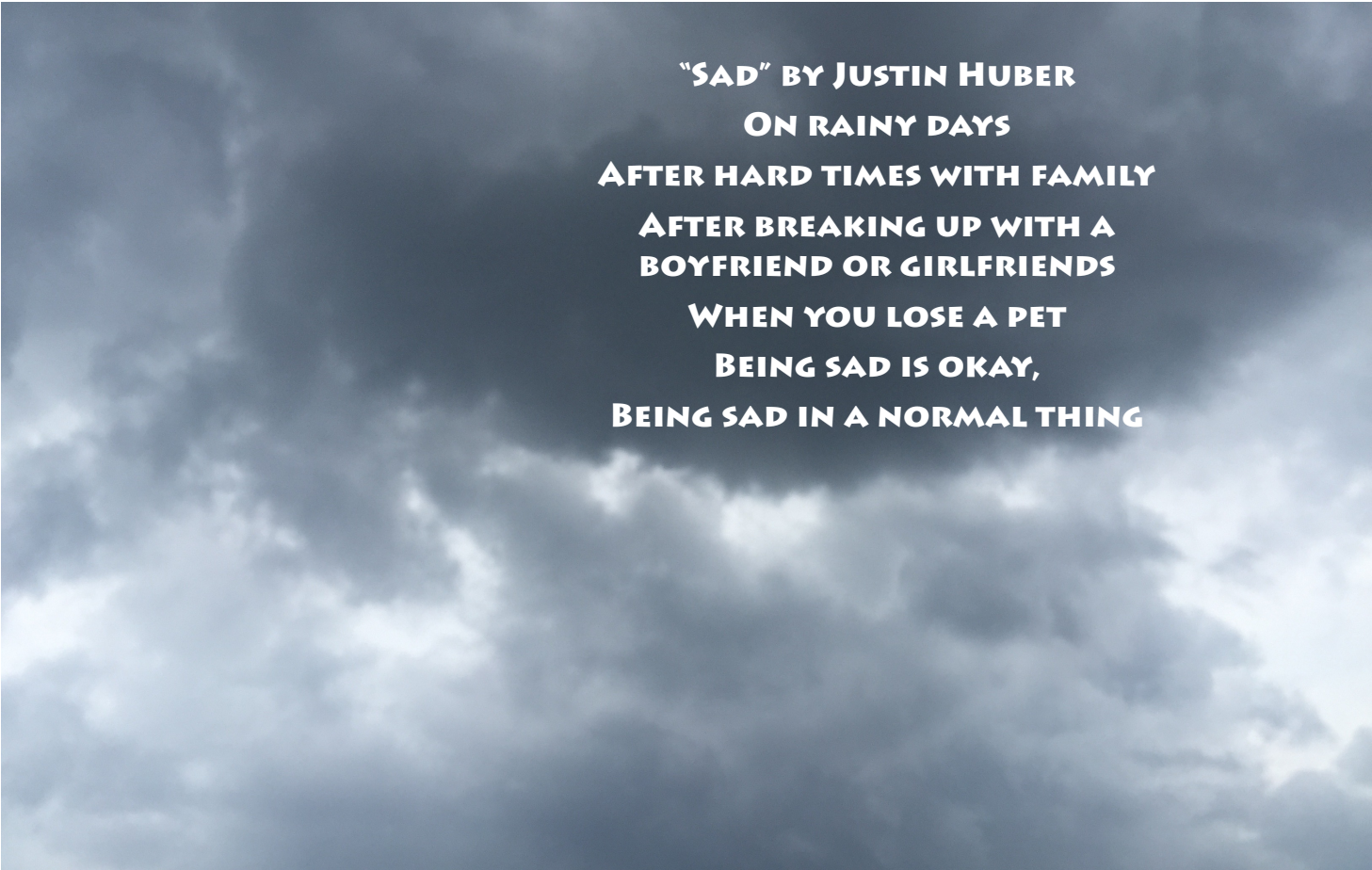
It was a beautiful day and it was also a very special day.
A boy gave me a beautiful flower.
This boy gets me happier than I do on payday.
Months after that day, he started to act like a Venus flytrap, like he had all the power.
I wondered to myself why he acted this way.

In the very beginning he made my heart so strong, yet so weak and warm.
Days and months flew by, he treated me like I was nothing.
My heart went from being so warm and loved to a huge storm.
This boy used to make my heart sing.
Now he makes it sting.
How can someone so amazing, treat someone so poorly.

Every second of every day I thought it was my fault.
But I soon realized it was his.
He went from being sugar to salt.
And tested my heart like a quiz.
Then I closed my heart like a vault. I noticed that beautiful things can hurt and be ugly too.
That flower he gave me..
Had thorns..
I was too stupid to realize

I held that flower against my warm heart.
Sooner or later it got hurt and bled out.
I was too focused on the beauty, and not the flaws of the flower.

Horrible things can be disguised as something beautiful.
Just like that boy.
Just like that flower.



**"SAD" BY JUSTIN HUBER
ON RAINY DAYS
AFTER HARD TIMES WITH FAMILY
AFTER BREAKING UP WITH A
BOYFRIEND OR GIRLFRIENDS
WHEN YOU LOSE A PET
BEING SAD IS OKAY,
BEING SAD IN A NORMAL THING**

Photo by Jessica Kurta (iphone 6)

"Hate" by Daniel Gutin

Hate is a strong word
Hate can cause lots of pain
Hate can also make you more confident
Hate is a thing that can not be stopped
Hate will be used everyday
Let's stop the hating and start the loving

"Messing with Mad" by Mark Soulas

Mess with someone mad
You will be sad
People don't know when to stop
They just don't understand
People can have mixed emotions
They can change on a dime

“As the Monsters Creep” by Daniel Gutin

Is the sun so bright
My skin glows?
In the early light
The wind blows

The room is cold
And I am scared
Come if you're bold
Or if you're dared

I'm now in doubt
I want to sleep,
But when the moon is out
The monsters still creep

In the moon at night
The water slows,
But I've been given a fright
As the star arose

The orb full of gold
And they are spared
Tomorrow I will be old,
I will still be scared.

“Insanity” by Abbie Molinari

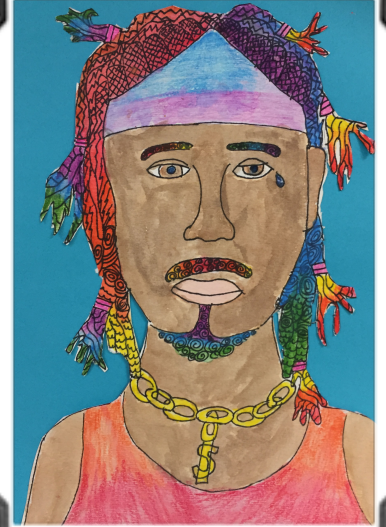
Overthinking all of my problems
Caused this sort of dilemma.
My head would pound,
Body would ache,
And create an instant heartache.
I sat in silence.
My eyes seeing blurred images,
Because they are filled with tears.

These thoughts emerged into my brain,
Making me just want to go insane.
My lungs would fill, and then deflate,
All I wanted was something great.
At this point, I have no fate.
Waste of time
Waste of tears
For all of these senseless years
Why me?
Why this constant anxiety?
I screamed for help
Nothing came out;
My lungs had no air.
But no one was there,
There to care.
I was in denial,
thus appeared this fake smile.

7th Grade Bad Hair Day



by Alex Fineman



by Ayden Pavese



by Sarah Kim



by Claire Throne



by Reagan Scully

8th Grade Prism Art



by Jack Disanza



by Madison Szabo



by Liam Mitchell



by Kelsey Urmanowicz

8th Grade Ceramics

by Brendan Hughes



by Lauren Kim



by Emily Otto



by Robert Anzilotti



by Kelsey Mc Conville



by Aidan Giambelluca



by Claudia Pulverenti



“Confused” by Kayleigh Bennett

I feel confused
All dazed and used
Why is life like a roller coaster
He is plastered on a poster
Why do I feel like a toaster

“Air” by Justin Huber

This is some stale air
It tasted so bad
I want to scream and blare
The way this air tastes makes me mad

The people wanted to start a protest
But they were not able to
They were starting to get stressed
They felt so blue

The man sat with a frown
He thought that was a disaster
His company was going down
He couldn't think of a plan any faster

All the people started to stare
They thought how the air was bad
One group of people had to clean up in pair
They stood very mad

The man was very well dressed
The man started to come into
view
He told the people that they
were a pest
And he told them to shoo



Photo by Caroline Wharton iPhone 5s

“The Butterfly” by Nicholas Barros

There’s something in my stomach that’s not supposed to be there
 Going around and around before I step out to play.
 It always comes back before the game then leaves during it.
 The butterfly, the butterfly that’s trapped, searching endlessly for an
 exit, a way out.
 A deep breath is taken to try and push the butterfly out.
 But it will not be pushed out, not yet.
 The butterfly takes over the mind and stiffens the body
 Every minute that passes by, the butterfly grows bigger.
 Nearing the time, the butterfly grows as big as a human to an ant.
 I step out on to the court and grab the ball.
 The time finally arrives, the game starts,
 and the butterfly gets smaller.
 It no longer has complete control of the
 mind.
 Growing smaller as the time ticks away.
 Now nearly almost gone, but still lingers.
 All throughout the game, the butterfly
 tries to grow and consume the mind once
 again.
 But the mind has no time to think when
 it’s playing.
 Now the game nears its end.
 A deep breath is taken but does the
 opposite of what it once wanted to do,
 letting the body relax, and think
 The butterfly has returned, taking over the
 mind and the body once again.
 The butterfly, not as big as before, but still
 makes a difference.
 Time running down, the butterfly stays
 As the shot goes up, the buzzer sounds,
 the butterfly flees.
 The butterfly will return again but for now
 as been pushed out.
 The game has been won and the butterfly
 is gone.

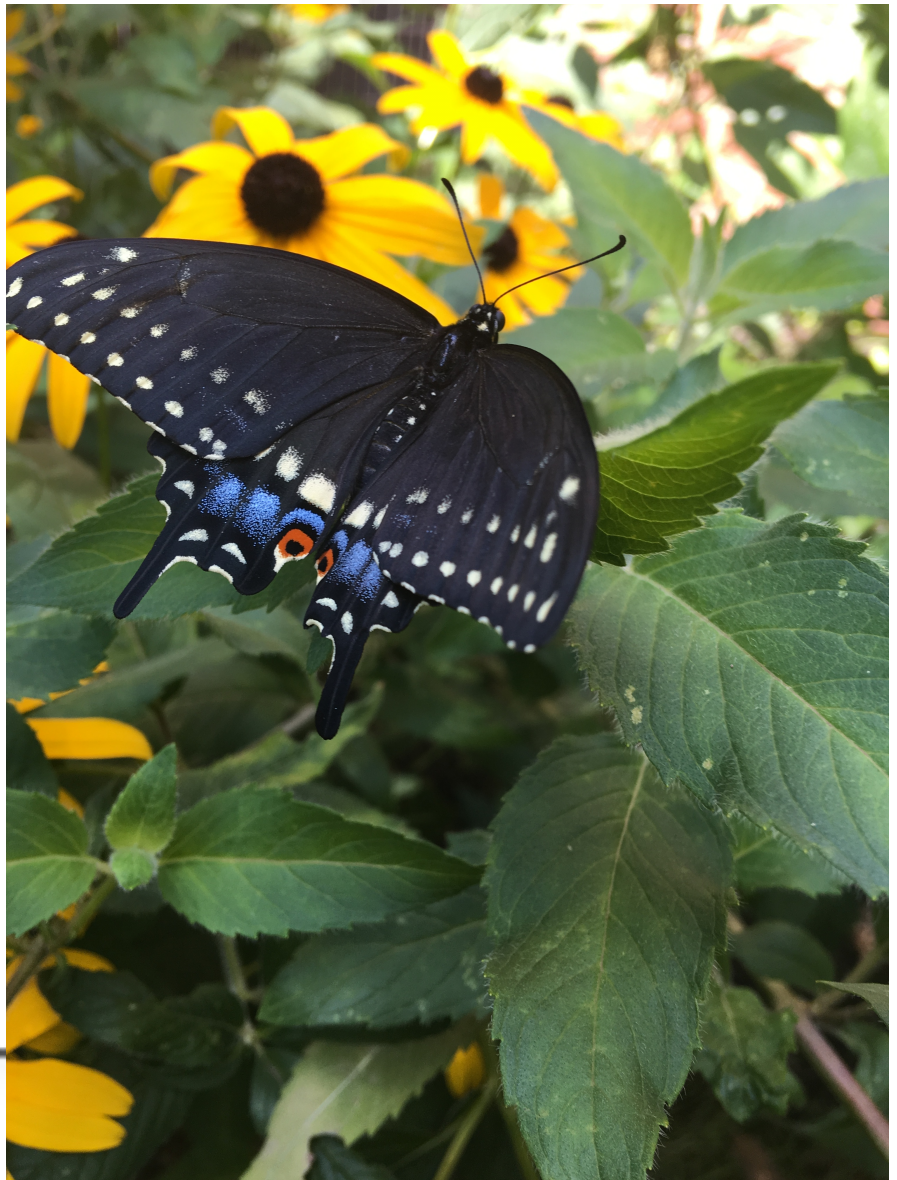


Photo by Elyse von der Lieth (iPhone 6s Plus)

“Where I Stand” by Michael Kuron

The light gleams at me
 Its supremacy shines
 The guarantee of a new day
 Suppresses my sorrows
 The absence of my freedom
 Condemned to oblivion
 Uprooted by society
 Yet
 I question myself

I think about the words
 Of those
 Unaware of their impunity
 They tell me what I should be
 Their voices captivate me
 Willing me to change
 Yet
 I question myself

The deafening screams of the
 damned
 Pull me closer
 Closer
 Temptation strikes me between the
 ribs
 Yet
 I question myself

But as I stand here
 These colors remind me
 That I did not let
 My values be consigned to the
 faults of my competence
 And
 I do not question myself.

“Paths” by Esteban Leduc

There are always paths in life,
 but there are some that will always be stuck in there,
 and those are the happy ones,
 like the first time you got a gift,
 when you laugh so hard that milk comes out your nose,
 your first friends.

But then,
 there is that dark, scary, and sad path,
 like when you lose someone in your family,
 or when you hurt yourself,
 or if you are being bullied,
 or accused of something.
 But always, stick with the happy ones!



Drawing by Ava Morgan (Colored Pencils)

SPORTS POEMS

“The Beginning” by Kayleigh Bennett

With the ball soaring
And the air just right
Everyone’s roaring
Then it all went white

Where I am, I do not know
The lights are bright
It’s such a glow
I’m feeling light

Too light to move
Too light to care
I have to improve
I need some air

I’m now feeling like snoring
I now see a flashlight
There is some restoring
And I’m becoming alright

I now can go
I’m fine and can play with might
I’m going to move slow
And now I’m feeling quite bright

“The Soccer Game” by Brandon Wittrock

I feel
the
Air
against my face
as I am sprinting.
The ball slithering itself
Around my feet like a snake
The pattern hypnotizes me
I look away to see that there is
No one near
I run faster than a loping gazelle
The distinct shouts of
my teammates and coach
repeat themselves in my head
Pass! Over Here!
But one is more intense
Shoot!
I slam the ball with all the force possible
The ball goes flying
I see the widening eyes of the goalie.
I see him make an attempt to stop it,
but it is useless
The shot goes right past him and into the goal
1-0
We have succeeded.

“The Game” by Matt Donnelly

It was a do or die game.
The loser went home a loser.
The pitcher was starting to aim.
Down by three, but it wasn't a snoozer.

CRACK! The high ball was going deep like it was a board game.
Here came the left fielder, hit the fence; it was a bruiser.
It was coming down and couldn't become tame.
There was a moment of suspense because he couldn't be a chooser.

The ball was caught, and he put the last batter to sleep with shame.
The next inning went quick like a user.
The fielding team shut down the other team with fame.
They were starting to click; they were no abuser.
'The team will win!' I said with a claim.

The underdogs had a come back, and it amused her.
Down by one was close; now, it would lead to fame
The next batter hit the ball with a SMACK! Yes, sir.
The hit would make someone bow in shame.

'It's back, way back. It's gone,' said the announcer.
Game tied, they needed one more run, and the pitcher was to blame.
The next batter came up, the ball hit the bat, and flew, like it was out of a gun in a lure.
Way back again, 'Oh, my God, it's back to back,' said the announcer in shame.
The game was all over; they won by a run and nothing more.

“The Redemption Opportunity” by Daniel Lio

Feet planted on the free throw line
There is no time left
A tie game
It's the finals
I dribble the ball on the ground
Silence
A chance for victory
The ball flies out of my hand
Rotation is off
Jumping over the line...
The ball doesn't go in the hoop
Mistakes, mistakes, mistakes
I have to concentrate
It's now silent as a test room
I pound the ball
Fortunate for another chance at redemption
Nervous
Focused
Tension on the court
I know that the whole team is counting on me
The ball leaves my hands
Everything feels perfect
From the spirals of the ball,
To the form of the shot
The ball approaches the rim
All eyes are on the ball
And ball swishes in!
Yes, victory is ours!
Redemption taken

“The Goal” by Dustin Stark

SLAP!
As the puck dances
across the ice
leaving an ever so
this streak behind it

The contender emerges
From the bright field of ice
in pursuit of the speedy puck
getting closer with every stride

The participant lifts up his stick
it soars into the air and
back down in one swift, clean
movement like a strong wind
slammed
it back to Earth

The puck jolts up with protest
like a jet lifting into the air
And off the ground

GOAL!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

“The Wanderer” by Laurence Lu

Where the first print lay,
The next barely behind trailing to and fro
Marred between each image,
Curving like a flag
The desert lay ahead of him,
A featureless, stark plane.
Behind stood a green figure
Unforgiving to embrace
Overhead raged a sun
Relentless in its vanquishment
Not what he sought,
While trekking alone

The vagabond,
hardy no more, puts his head down to rest,
Not just a moment,
But for all moments
Darkness sweeps in
Darkness that clouds his eyes and his mind.
One could sensibly maintain that he is dead.

The dead, however, are aroused by bells.

The boy settles in his seat,
rustling about with the sounds of his classmates,
the room alive with the gleeful expectations
of the upcoming day.

The teacher speaks -Children,
She declares,
Today, there is a busy day ahead of you!

He sighs
Work is little solace
To him all a waste of time
Turning his head, he sees -
He sees his company toiling.
Opening his mouth,
he could only say,
“Is it really only 8?”

“Into the Book” by Jennifer Ciccaglione

She grazed along the books,
Each more alluring than the last.
As she opened the chosen book,
She fell into the
Beginning.

She watched
Chapters collapse into cathedrals
Printed palaces

She gazed as the words bloomed
Written roses and,
Worded woods
Blossomed into existence.
Starry nights showered with origami galaxies
An inked utopia
Climax.

Delicate paper flowers
Melt into
Fire.

Cathedrals of chapters shattered into
nothingness,
Palaces into oblivion,
Erupting
Blue skies turned to smoke
Heat surrounded her,
The cracks of fire ringing in her ears
She ran, and ran, and ran
Until she could no longer run from the
Blazing landscape
Falling.

Palaces reconstructed,
Flowers unfolded,
Smoke scattered as
Rain fell.

Scorching woods were no more,
All was well.

The End.

“Tight” by Manali Sanyal

I hold it as if it were already mine
Before I walk
We talk for a while
Just it and me
All I am wondering is how could it be
Something so beautiful
Something so musical
I feel the six strings with the tips of my hands
I feel like I'm auditioning for one of the greatest
bands
When it reality
Its just like others
Just a simple guitar
Belonging to girl
When it could belong to another
But its just how I want
The way that is
The way that it feels
What brings is certainly unreal
All I know is one simple
I'm holding it tight
I don't care who is around
I don't care who sees
Its just me and my guitar
My guitar and me

“Drive By” by Mark Soulas

Flying by
Fast and low
No one can keep up
Engine revving
They don't have a chance
Spinning the tires with a tap of the pedal
Brakes stopping with no trouble
Lights turn green
Burning rubber and flames from the exhaust
Smoke everywhere and no car in site
You can her the car from a distance
Shifting up and down through every gear

“Life” by Justin Huber

Life is a precious thing
There are so many things to do in life
Every day could be your last
Every day that we are alive is a gift
We should treat life with respect

“Today's Society” by Anonymous

People are paralyzed by society
Every day is another barrier
You either walk through or bump into it
There's no way around, no shortcuts none at all
Your life is a whole note not a half note, play it long
There's more echoes than voices
Society's a flat screen T.V
Where there's a season that never ends.
Each day another episode
A screen of propaganda
Don't look down or you'll fall into the miserable depths of
reality
People fly and they don't notice,
Descending deeper into torture everything is more complicated
What was talking is now texting
What was feelings is now your social media bio
It may seem like life but what you see is death
Souls black and blind everything is dark inside
Get out before the next generation gets trapped
inside of what we ourselves have truly created

“Lemonade” by Lucia Lofaro

It was so translucent
I could see right to
The yellow lemon water
I slowly poured It into
My glass I felt my hand
Get colder as it rushed
To the top of the glass

The condensation around
The cup made my hand
Wet I brought the cup
Up to my lip It was so
Refreshing

I lay back on my chair as I
Relaxed drinking my lemonade
This was the life a hot summer
Day with a most refreshing drink.

“Gold Apple” by Nicholas Viscovic

The apple was made with the finest
buttons, finest Silver, and finest display.

You can swipe, 3D Touch display, and it can control everything in your home.

Apple Presents
iPhone 8 Gold

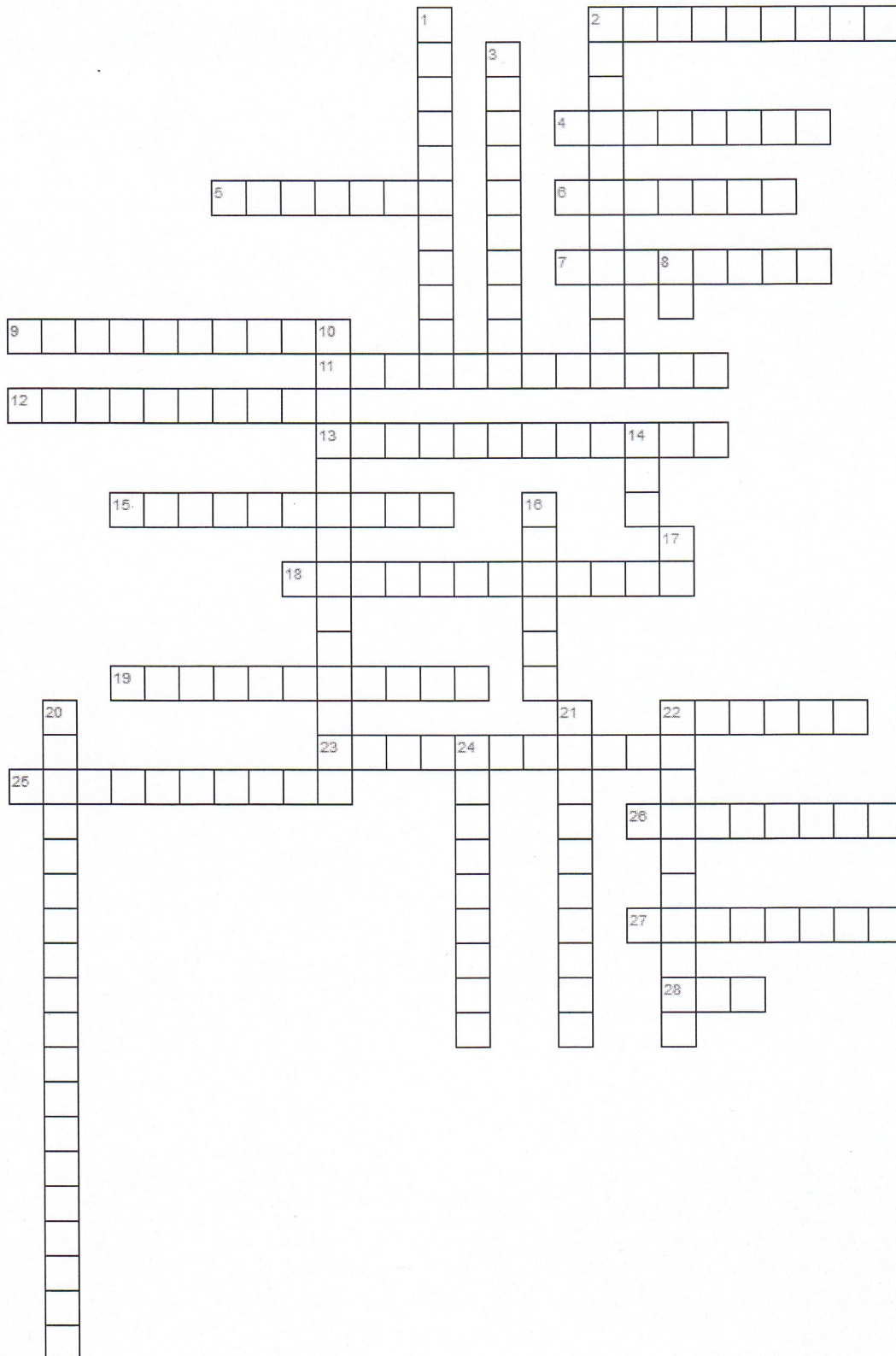
Across

- 2 Eighth Grade Math Teacher
- 4 A place to keep cool during the summer.
- 5 Seventh grade science teacher
- 6 High School Talent Show
- 7 Another word for friendliness and caring
- 9 School Nurse
- 11 Eighth Grade Trip
- 12 Eighth grade English teacher
- 13 Another word for intellect
- 15 Where you could be crowned king.
- 18 A contest of knowledge of the world.
- 19 Seventh grade Math teacher
- 22 School mascot
- 23 Problem Solving Teacher
- 25 Assistant Principal
- 26 Seventh grade Social Studies teacher
- 27 one of the musical theater teachers (for vocals)
- 28 Park Ridge Mascot

Down

- 1 Seventh grade English teacher
- 2 Band Teacher
- 3 The Principal
- 8 Initials of an ice cream place in town.
- 10 Middle School Play
- 14 Big Apple
- 16 Musical Theater spring concert theme
- 17 Subject with physical activity (abbreviation)
- 20 School Name
- 21 Eighth grade science teacher
- 22 Marching Band Theme
- 24 Where you can order a grande mocha chai

Park Ridge Pride



Students from Mrs. McClair's English 8 class entered the Siegelbaum Literary and Visual Arts Competition set through The Holocaust Museum & Center for Tolerance and Education. The theme for this school year's competition was: ***The Power of The Immigrant Story***. The objectives of the competition were to foster an awareness of the Holocaust, to provide students with an opportunity to consider the ways one person can make an impact on the world and to promote dialogue and respect among all people. Emily Otto won first place and Pauline Liu won third place.

"The Broken Road" by Emily Otto
- FIRST PLACE -

I look ahead
 And all I see
 Is a broken road
 In front of me
 I see no end
 No soul before me
 And if I walk
 Upon this road
 My journey will remain untold
 A broken road
 That is my own
 A home at the end
 I have been told
 That I may soon reach
 A home that could be my own
 If I just fixed this broken road

This road has many cracks
 And pavement missing
 Showing bare ground
 There are some obstacles
 Like roadblocks
 If only I could never stop
 Walking upon this road before me
 Not becoming tired or dreary
 I must pursue through my pain
 Try to find the house
 Where I may find peace
 Or stop my journey there
 To find a way
 To fix this broken road
 For other travelers coming

From far away
 To find this house
 And be safe

I try to fix it as I go
 Make it clear for others
 Try to make the roadblocks give way
 And make a pass for more
 I am trying to fix it as I go
 But it remains a broken road

Now here I am
 A whole new world
 I am trying to find my place
 But it seems too different
 Than my old home
 I find a place to work and sleep
 And think about my old home
 I cannot go back
 There is no way
 People have been watching that old broken road
 They haven't let anyone cross
 That is what I have been told
 They cannot get to me
 I cannot get to them
 I cannot find my way back home
 Without that broken road

“The Rotten Big Apple” by Pauline Liu
- THIRD PLACE -

She wanders the streets of New York,
 Telling herself, “not all those who wander are lost.”
 But she is lost;
 So impossibly lost in this huge, unwelcoming city.
 Persistent pedestrians pursue her,
 Yelling expletives and insults,
 Saying “knee-how” to her and laughing.
 She is pick-pocketed,
 Disrespected,
 Hurt,
 And no one will help her.
 Their sneering, selfish selves see suffering and stay silent.
 She doesn’t speak their language,
 But she understands them perfectly.
 She is not wanted.
 They identify something different about her;
 They see her eyes,
 Hear her heavily accented words,
 Notice how uncomfortable she seems,
 And immediately reject her.
 She is full of hatred and determined to prove them wrong.
 She learns the mere 26 characters and the meanings they
 form,
 She leaves her country, her heritage behind,
 She gets married, not for love, but to present a more
 acceptable image,
 And when she has children she does not teach them of their
 past.
 They grow up as Americans,
 Unable to understand their relatives.
 Their grandmother dies without ever having a
 conversation with them.
 They are put under unbelievable pressure;
 Their mother cannot ever be humiliated again.
 But they do not turn into diamonds.
 They shatter.
 And yet, she still does not see the error of her ways.
 She was ruined by her time in New York.

The jeers, the looks, the judgment,
 They hardened her.
 Turned her into an unfeeling, uncaring atrocity,
 Bitter and broken,
 Who only does things to assimilate into society.
 There is nothing that can help her now.
 But if she was accepted?
 If she had been met with open arms in America?
 That would have changed everything.

STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Sarah Kim is a 7th grader at PRMS. Her reason for joining Stepping Stones was for the love of photography and drawing. Her favorite subject is science and she enjoys listening to music. She enjoys the opportunity to be creative, which Stepping Stones has given.

Caroline Wharton is a 7th grader at PRMS. Her favorite subject is Speech and Drama. In her free time she enjoys playing soccer. She loves that you get to express yourself through art and bond with friends as a member of the Stepping Stones club. Look for her photography inside the magazine. In the future she wishes to become an engineer or designer.

Olivia Walter is a 7th grader at PRMS. Her favorite subject is science and she enjoys drawing in her free time. She plays basketball and volleyball. She thinks anyone interested in art should join the club. She would like to be a teacher. Look for Olivia's photography in the magazine.

Ava Morgan is a 7th grader at PRMS. Her favorite subject is science. She pictures herself as an artist or biologist in the future. When she is not caring for her bearded dragon, she likes to play outdoors, and draw. She appreciates that Stepping Stones allows her classmates to express their talents and share their creation of unique poetry and artwork.

Michael Gorrin is a 7th grader at PRMS. His favorite subject is Math and in his free time he enjoys learning about videography, hiking and visiting trains. He is happy to be apart of Stepping Stones because it gives him and his classmates the chance to show their artwork. In the future he hopes to be an Eagle Scout and drive trains.

Seton Liu is a 7th grader at PRMS. His favorite subject is science and he enjoys reading and writing during his free time. He believes the club allows members to express themselves through writing and creating artwork. He would like to be a scientist in the future.

Sean Lee is a 7th grader at PRMS. He enjoys writing, drawing and reading in his free time and his favorite subject is science. He aspires to be a writer and he writes about things that are familiar to him. He encourages his classmates to join Stepping Stones if they too enjoy the arts.

STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Jessica Kurta is an 8th grader. She listens to progressive rock and plays both the flute and the bass guitar. In her free time, you can find her working on a new piece of music, or reading while listening to her favorite bands. She also draws and writes creative stories. She is interested in pursuing a career in graphic design as well as engineering.

Isabel Carino is a 7th grader. During her free time she watches TV shows, listens to music, writes poetry and fiction, takes pictures, and enjoys reading about royalty.

Sabrina Sheridan is a 7th grader. Sports play a big role in her life. She has a love of drawing and writing, which includes poems, stories, and even essays. I chose to take part in the Stepping Stones magazine, because this way I could share my writing, drawings, photography, and creativity, in general, with other people.

Ellie Fisher is a 7th grader at PRMS. Her favorite subject is science. In her free time she enjoys playing with her cat, playing video games, and texting friends. She joined because she enjoys reading stories, writing creatively, and creating artwork. In the future she sees herself as a doctor, biologist, or astronaut.

Ashley DeGeorge is a 7th grader at PRMS. She likes Musical Theatre, dachshunds, and reading. She participated in the middle school play this year. She likes the fact that as a Stepping Stones member, she has a say in what goes into the magazine. She enjoys reading stories, writing creatively, and photography. She would like to study abroad in London and become a lawyer.

Elyse von der Lieth is a 7th grader at PRMS. Her favorite subject is English. In her free time she enjoys playing sports. She believes Stepping Stones is a great club to join because it allows you to create and publish your work. She has contributed photography to this year's edition. In the future she would like to become a veterinarian.

Elizabeth Paulino is an 8th grader at PRMS. She loves art class and enjoys writing in her free time. She also believes that Stepping Stones gives people the opportunity to express themselves. She wants to continue writing. Look for her poetry in this year's edition.

