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TEEN COUNTYWIDE PUBLICATION  
FALL 2008 • VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 1



PINELLAS Public LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

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# MOSAIC

## TEEN COUNTYWIDE PUBLICATION

FALL 2008 • VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 1

A PUBLICATION OF



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# THE LAND WHERE DREAMS COME TRUE

Timothy Hatton, Ages 11-13, East Lake Community Library

Come with me to a fantastic world of mystery and wonder, a terrific land of majesty and awe. "Where is this place?" you ask. This is the extraordinary land where all dreams are made real. The possibilities in this place are endless, yet this is my view of what this land is like.

I found this surreal realm to be winterless, yet excessive heat never comes. There are vast grassy plains that border white sandy beaches. Crystal clear streams run past mammoth oak trees that are perfect for climbing. As I hang from the branches of one of these trees, I can see in the distance Mt. Moeilikk. It is in the center of the Onbereikbarr Mountains, which tower over the sun. To the right I see the Bay of Bateau. The water, always, is pure and clear. The fish are swimming freely and the dolphins are also making an appearance, creating a perfect backdrop for the day's sunset.

I share this sunset with my family at our mansion overlooking the water. It is a spacious house of considerable size. This idealized home is the prototype of green living. With food grown locally and heating both the home and the water with solar energy, it is possible to live in a way that is environmentally friendly.

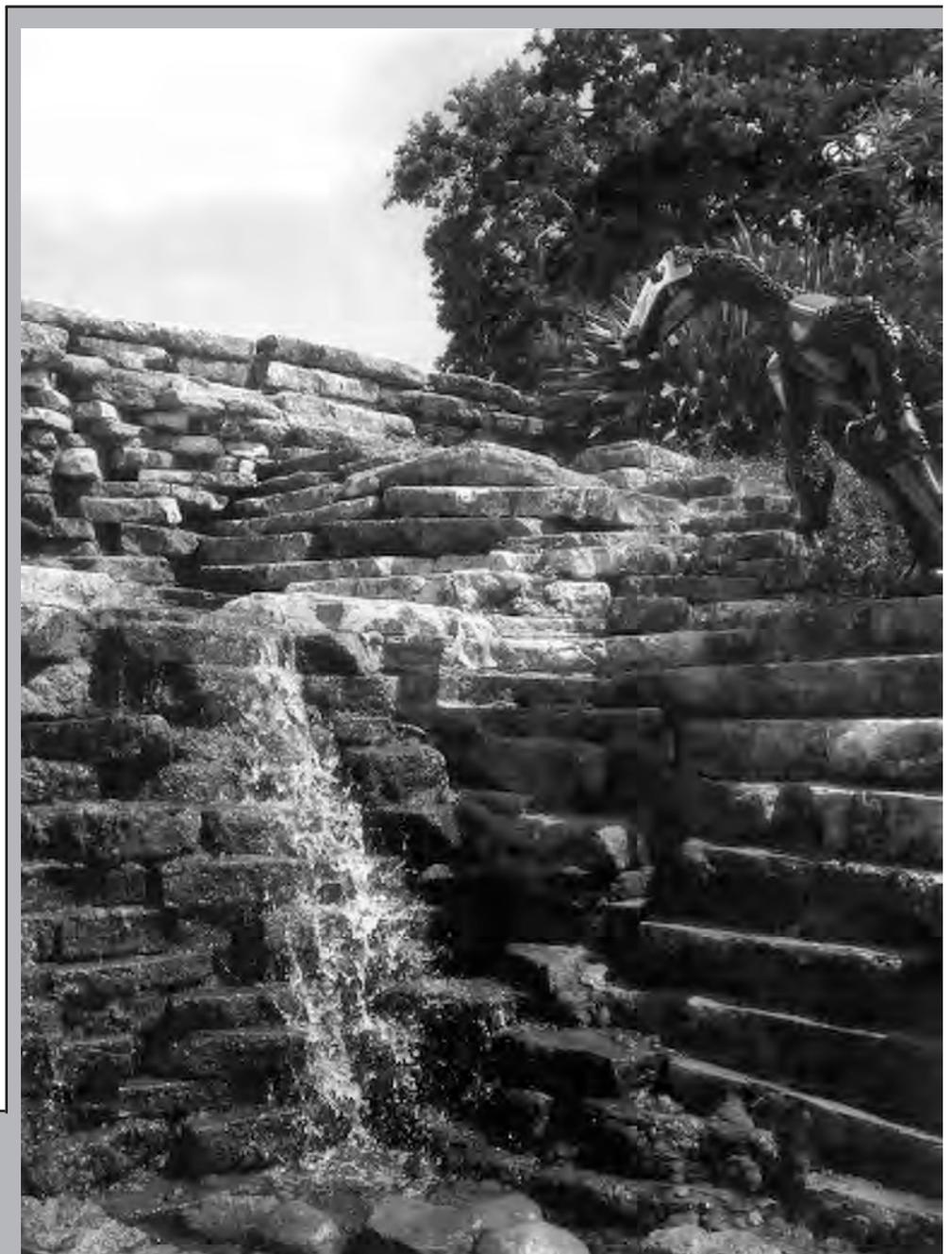
The people that I encounter in this dream world are friendly as well. There is my family, of course, who are always fun to be around. I also enjoy spending time with my friends playing football or having a water fight. Everything here is free, so no one is ever concerned about money. Nobody breaks the law, so no person is afraid of another. It is a very peaceful place to be.

However, the longer I spend in this land, I realize that things here might not be so perfect after all. Learning to be responsible for yourself of your

belongings is not valued as there is always an endless supply of your possessions. Valuable skills such as conflict resolution are not learned, as there are no conflicts here to resolve. Another shortcoming is that there is no budgeting of time or money, because both resources are unlimited. In addition you are never able to achieve the warm feeling inside after a job well done, because there are no

tasks to accomplish. And sadly, there is no appreciation for this wonderful land, for its inhabitants suffer from the delusion that it is all replaceable and it is all expendable.

So although it would be excellent to have every dream come true, if that really were the case you would never be thankful for them. I have learned that you must work for things to enjoy them. That truly is making dreams real.



PHOTO

*Untitled*

Marianne DeVocht, Age 13  
Clearwater Public Library System

# Ragworta

SHORT STORY

(A twist on the original fairy tale Rapunzel)

Savannah Nease, 16, Largo Public Library

Gale watched from her tin crow's nest the comings and goings of the Happily Ever After mobile home community. As she settled her large, grubby body into the foldable beach chair, her small beady eyes noticed several things. Andy McCraw's garbage collection was getting larger. Liza's five children were running around madly. Jerry and Cheryl, the young couple about to have their first child who lived next door were... What were they doing? Cheryl was crying loudly and slapping at the air. As if she wanted something desperately. Jerry looked hopeless and sad. Gale liked it when people looked like that. She opened the window, screamed something awful, and closed it. Then she watched gleefully as the people outside put on an appalled face and shook fists at her window.

Later that night, Gale put on her oldest, rattiest pink robe and settled in to a plaid recliner. She flipped on the television and turned it to her favorite show, What Not to Wear. She loved Clinton and Stacy! She also felt comfortable watching it because she knew that her impeccable good looks and style would never in a million years be chosen to be on this show. As she started to get comfortable, she heard something rustling outside. This was bad. Gale was very possessive, and if anyone tried to steal from her, she would rip their lower intestine out. Her dullish gray face crinkled into a snarl. She got out her pocket knife and shambled to the front door.

Jerry clicked open the screen door to his house and set off into the night to get some ragwort for his wife's pregnancy cravings. It was pitiful to see her longing for something so badly. The only place to find the herb was at his formidable neighbor's home, Gale. She had the largest mobile home he had ever seen and an extensive, if disorganized, garden. He crept into the darkness.

He tiptoed around her latticework until he came to a gate. As he opened it, it creaked loudly. Jerry froze and listened. He heard a TV show in the background and relaxed. He then eyed the herb garden. He saw sage, thyme, parsley, dill, spearmint, and lemon verbena, but no ragwort. He continued to search.

There it was! The ragwort was in a place of special honor, or so it seemed. It was planted in a terracotta pot, which was seated in the middle of a plastic birdbath. Just as Jerry had grabbed a few rather large fistfuls of the stuff, roots and soil dangling from his finger, Gale lumbered angrily into her yard.

"Who ARE you?" she demanded. Her imposing figure hulked in her doorway, sending a large shadow across her yard. Jerry shuddered, and a crepe myrtle tree that was hovering above him shook, letting a spray of pink flowers fall to the ground. Jerry trembled and began to sweat. Her tiny eyes darted around quickly, and then she saw him.

"It's me, Jerry," he confessed in a meek, mousy voice. Gale took three steps across her yard and grabbed Jerry by the scruff of his neck.

"What're you doin' wit my preshuss RAGWORT!" she boomed. Jerry mumbled that his wife was having a terrible craving for it, and that they were having their first child. Gale stood still for a bit, comprehending and still holding a firm grasp on Jerry. His feet dusted the ground and the air felt oddly humid.

She pulled out her pocketknife and pointed it dangerously at Jerry. "I'll tell ya what. If you give me your baby, you can have as much ragwort as you please." She slit a hole in Jerry's only good nightshirt and threw him gruffly to the ground. Jerry stammered his agreement and scampered back to his home, for fear of his life.

The next morning, Cheryl made a salad with the ragwort and ate it ravenously. If fact, that's all she ate, each day, until two weeks later, when she went into labor. Little had she known that ragwort, when eaten in large quantities, is quite toxic.

Cheryl died that day. Jerry was so forlorn, that he didn't even notice when Gale crashed through the front door and made off with the baby girl, which she christened Ragworta.

## 16 YEARS LATER

Ragworta turned out to be the most beautiful child in the mobile home park. She even grew her blonde hair to a marvelous length. However, Gale kept her hidden from the world inside of her crow's nest, and only let her use the cheapest kind of shampoo. Ragworta was very unhappy. She was home schooled, so she never had any contact from the outside world. To keep herself busy, she learned to play a set of bagpipes that Gale had from high school. In fact, she was so good at the bagpipes, that Gale would even let her open the window sometimes so others could enjoy the cheerful Scottish tunes.

One day at around two o'clock in the afternoon, Ragworta opened her window and began to play a song called "Fish Feis." At that moment, a boy walking home

from school heard her performing and stopped to listen. He was from Scottish descent, and was very familiar with that song. He found a comfortable spot to sit down, and he continued to listen until she was done playing. At that point Gale walked out of the mobile home and yelled up at Ragworta's window.

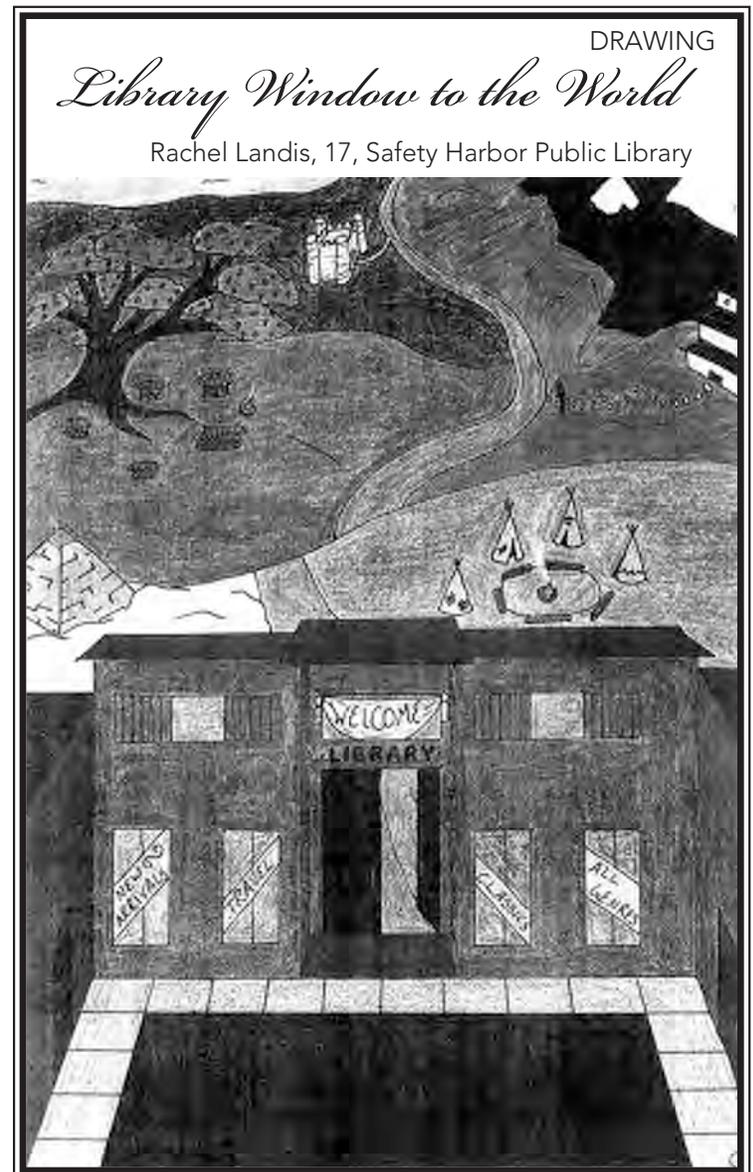
"Ragworta! Stick yer hair out the window so I can brush out the bottom of it!" she yelled. Ragworta complied, and Gale began to brush her hair roughly, making it bushy and weak at the end. The boy was very interested. So interested, that he came every day for the next week to watch this process.

Broderick, as the boy was called, finally decided he wanted to meet Ragworta, the puzzling girl who was so talented at the bagpipe. He yelled out the same phrase that Gale yelled every day, and he even tried to mimic her bad grammar. Ragworta threw her hair down. Broderick grasped the end of her hair and attempted to climb up the metal wall of the mobile home. Ragworta felt this pressure on her head and began to shriek. Her hair was weak from the cheap shampoo and rough brushing. Strands fell from her head into Broderick's hands. His hands began to sweat, and the hair slipped from his clenched fists. His feet lost their grip on the smooth aluminum. Broderick fell, pulling the remaining hair down with him, into Gale's rosebushes. His eyes were pierced out by the thorns, and Ragworta was screaming because her head was bald. The window slammed shut as the last of her hair gently fell to stick to his groaning, sweaty forehead. Broderick was a very stupid boy.

After that day, Ragworta was very frightened of ever opening her window again, and she went into a deep depression over the loss of her hair, which was her prized possession. She stayed in Gale's crow's nest for the rest of her short life, and took to knitting very long scarves that she liked to drape over her head.

As for Broderick, he spent the rest of his days trying to regain his sight, and after many years he found the cure to blindness. He died a very rich and successful man.

THE END



# Dreams of a Better Tomorrow

Jordan Luther, Ages 14-18, East Lake Community Library

Everyone has dreams of a better day when faced with difficult circumstances. For some, the circumstances aren't too severe and the dreams are quickly realized. For others, the combination of health, finances and other problems create a set of circumstances that a person can't "ream his way out of." My dream is to reach out and help those people who are faced with these situations and to give them hope to dream again.

Many people talk about big dreams but do nothing to make their dreams come true. I have already taken action to make my dream become a reality. I started when I was younger by growing my hair out for Locks of Love. As a child there isn't much that you can do to make a difference in someone's life, but when my Girl Scout leader introduced me to Locks of Love, I knew it was something that I wanted to pursue. I grew my hair out long enough to cut off and donate twelve and a half inches. One of my elementary teachers recognized me for donating my hair. The recognition was nice – but knowing I had helped a child with no hair receive a wig was more rewarding than the recognition. As I got older and more community service opportunities presented themselves, I realized I could continue to grow my hair for this association during the time I am working for other organizations.

One of the things that I most enjoy doing is helping out at The Hospice. It's a group that is dedicated to helping people in need, a group that helped my own family when I was young. Volunteering for them now is a way I can give back, but also a way to fulfill my dream of making a difference for others. The

Hospice was my original motivation for helping others in any way I could. They helped my family care for my grandfather at the end of his battle with cancer. The fact that someone would donate their time to a dying man they didn't even know was confusing to me as a child. When I got older, I started to see how helping someone else makes me feel. I began to understand why the volunteers from The Hospice had helped my Grandpa. I also realized that it is something I want to do. It may or may not be my career one day – but helping others will always be a part of my life because I find it is truly humbling and highly rewarding.

Helping people out is something that anyone can do. One of the really small things that I have done is to buy a pair of shoes. I know what you're thinking, "Oh, she buys herself a pair of shoes to help others? That doesn't make sense." One of my favorite organizations is called "TOMS SHOES" and what I love about it is how simple this group has made it to change someone's life. All you do is you buy a pair of shoes. Your purchase actually provides a second pair of shoes for a child that has never had shoes before. As, I have been able to buy water that will go to people who don't have clean water to drink. When I have done this it hasn't been a large amount, just a few bottles here and there. But to me knowing that I supplied someone with water or a pair of shoes makes me feel like I am slowly helping to change the world to a better place, and I am living my dream, one step at a time.

The shoes and water were provided to people in other countries, but there are also things that I have done here in the United States. There are so many opportunities to help people, and be able to make a difference in somebody's life in the US. One of the experiences I was able to take part in is the TOPS program. This is a program that allows kids who are mentally or physically handicapped to participate in soccer. This program has probably been one of the greatest joys to work with, because the kids are just happy to have people to play with, and to be able to run around and play with kids their age. They didn't care that they weren't the best at soccer, they were just glad to be out there. This event has taught me a lot and given me experiences I will never forget. For instance, I was helping out a little girl who wasn't able to walk very well, but in working with her I helped her to score a goal. When she did, her face lit up for the first time all night! It is moments like that which make me feel like I'm making my dream real.

A couple other programs that I am in at school have given me the chance to give back as well. The National Honor Society does a blood drive every few months. This is something that I have taken part in on a regular basis since I was old enough to give blood. Though it isn't much I try to tell myself that going through a slight discomfort for a few minutes might make me able to save someone's life. Another program that I've been in at my school is the Teen Angel program. This is a program that assists in online safety awareness. Our goal is to talk to parents and children about dangers that are awaiting them on the Internet.

All of us have dreams, but not everyone's dream comes true. For some people, dreams don't become a reality because they aren't willing to work hard enough to achieve them. Antoine de Saint-Exupery, the French author of *The Little Prince*, once said, "A goal without a plan is just a wish." I believe my dreams are my goals in life – and I do have a plan to see them through. My goal is to make the world a better place. I think we have to be willing to work for something if we want to see it happen. My dream is to make the world a better place in every way I can. To me, each time I do something that can change just one person's life, I am living my dream. My plan is to always look for ways to help other people. I can help others as a volunteer right now and as part of a career one day. I'm just beginning to expose college majors and career opportunities. I don't know yet what my career will be one day – but I know it will allow me to live my dream. And while I'm making my dream real, I'll be helping dreams become real for other people too.

PENCIL DRAWING

## Butterfly Fish

Carol Taylor, Grade 12, Largo Public Library



POEM

# THAT GOLDEN STRIPED FIRE

Hannah Oberlin, 11  
Tarpon Springs Public Library

A golden striped head,  
Dashes through the forest,  
That's the tiger, swift and strong,  
We cannot let that fire die,  
We cannot "just try",  
If that golden fire  
Is to live.  
The golden striped fire waits,  
For who'er comes to see,  
But maybe in the future,  
There's no fire 'mong the trees.  
One person can tip the scale,  
One person just like you,  
And maybe it is you,  
And maybe it is me.

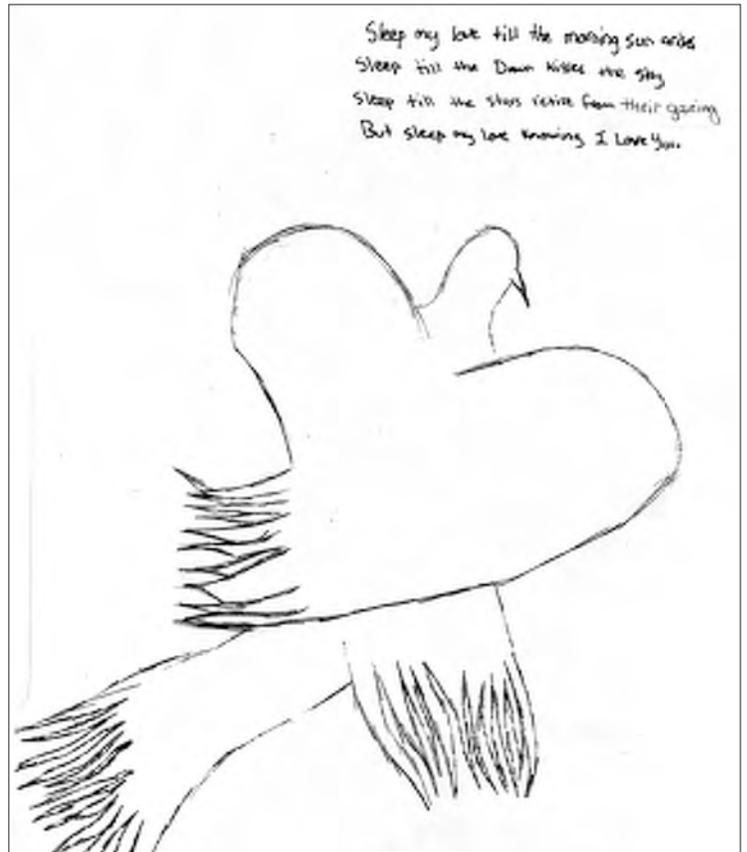
PENCIL  
DRAWING

# Sleep My Love

Corey Panabaker

Age 16

Pinellas Park  
Public Library



POEM

# Mal Pais Nut Overlooks Pacific

Quinn Gazlay, 16, Safety Harbor Public Library



PHOTO

# I Won't

Stephanie Richards, 13  
Tarpon Springs Public Library

**I won't change  
Because you tell me to  
Because you ask me to  
Because you command me to.**

**I won't grow up  
Because you want me to  
Because you desire me to  
Because you wish me to.**

**I won't give up  
Because I think I can  
Because I know I can  
Because I don't want to**

**I won't  
I won't**

**I won't  
I won't**

**I won't do this  
I won't do that  
I won't do tit for tat**

**I won't  
So there  
Get it out of your hair**

**I won't  
I won't  
I won't**

INK DRAWING

# MUSHROOM

Jessica Eaves, 16, Seminole Community Library



GRAPHIC

# Decora Allen

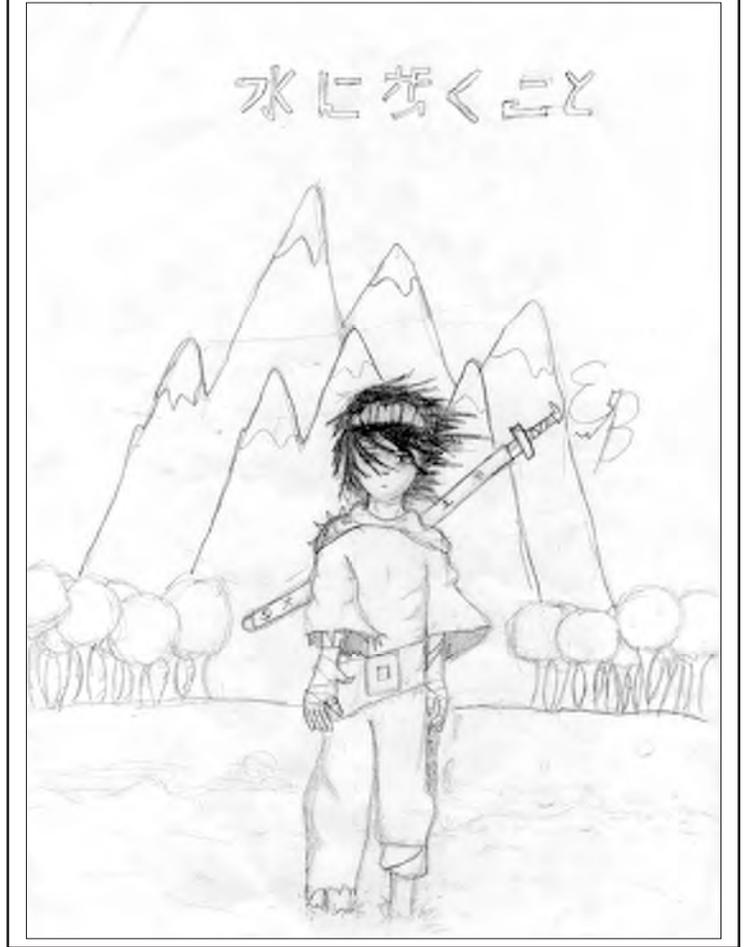
Carol Taylor, Grade 12, Largo Public Library



PENCIL DRAWING

# Walking on the Water

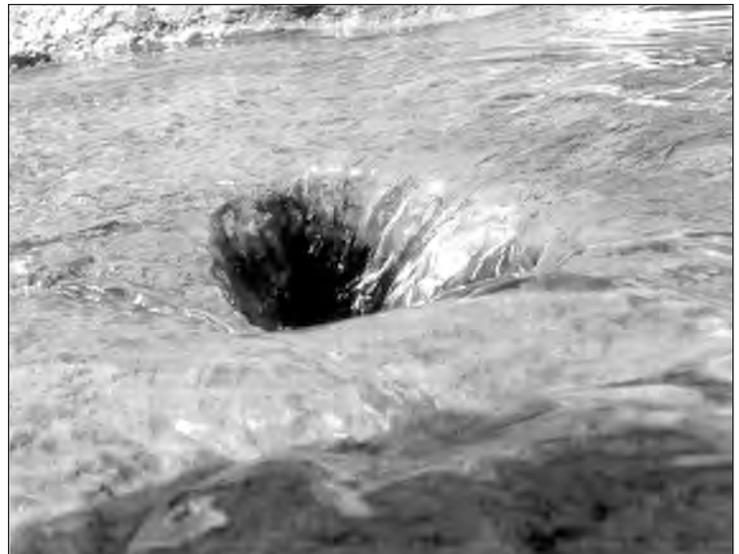
Edward Barros, 10, Dunedin Public Library



PHOTO

# Untitled

Kaley DeVocht, Age 15, Clearwater Public Library System



# My Baseball Dream

Christopher Noble, Ages 11-13, East Lake Community Library

Ever since I can remember I always wanted to play Major League Baseball (MLB). My mom even has notes that I wrote when I was very little saying I wanted to play for the St. Louis Cardinals while growing up in Chesterfield, a suburb of St. Louis. I started out playing at my daycare when I was five. Then I got into a machine pitch league for Pond Athletic Association when I was seven and played until I was eight and we moved to where we live now in East Lake, Florida in 2004.

This is a great area of Florida to live in as a baseball fan because there are so many minor league teams around like the Dunedin Blue Jays, Clearwater Threshers, Tampa Yankees, and Sarasota Reds that I like to go and watch. There are much smaller crowds so it is easier to see that the guys on the team are a lot like me just bigger. The past six times I have gone to the games I have either gotten a bat or ball so that makes it even more fun.

I even like to read books about baseball like Jackie & Me, Honus & Me, Babe & Me, Joe & Me by Dan Guttman and watch movies about baseball greats like Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, Joe DiMaggio, Jackie Robinson, and Babe Ruth. I have also read about lots of Cardinals like Ozzie Smith, Albert Pujols, Jim Edmonds, and Rick Ankiel. I also like the movie, The Rookie which is a true story about an older high school baseball coach that got a second chance to make his dream real by pitching in his debut for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays vs. the Texas Rangers in his Texas hometown.

I just got a book for my 12th birthday that has real astro turf on the cover of it that is pretty cool and I am looking forward to reading it from cover to cover. This year I also got a new Cardinals jersey of Rick Ankiel to add to my collection of others I like to wear like Albert Pujols. I also collect baseball items like baseballs, bats, cards and especially autographs. My favorite autograph from the Minor Leagues is Shannan Stewart who is in rehab from the MLB team the Toronto Blue Jays and my favorite from the Major Leagues is Ozzie Smith the great shortstop from the St. Louis Cardinals that before every game would do a spectacular backflip when he ran to his position.

Back in 2005, I played at East Lake Little League Minors for the

A's. That year I got only one hit because I had never played when a kid pitched to us before. I felt down about the season and in the off-season I got lots of practice and felt much better and gained a lot more confidence.

The next year, 2006, I didn't play because of my commitment to playing traveling ice hockey. In 2007 I stayed in Minors and played for the Cardinals. I got lots of hits that were mostly inside the park home-runs, triples and some doubles. That year I was much better than I was in 2005 and so I was very excited on my success. That season, I was selected as one of the twelve 9-10 year olds to represent the East Lake All-Stars team.

Throughout the tournament I was getting hits that helped our team including a RBI (Runs Batted In) double against the Holiday All-Stars team. It was even reported in the newspaper the next day! I was very excited about being in the newspaper and my granny gave me the newspaper clipping for my scrapbook! In the first of three tournaments we came in 3rd losing to West Pasco All-Stars by a score of 6-5. Everyone was down and very sad including the parents and our coaches. The good thing was that I made lots of new friends who like sports as much as I do and we had a lot of fun together.

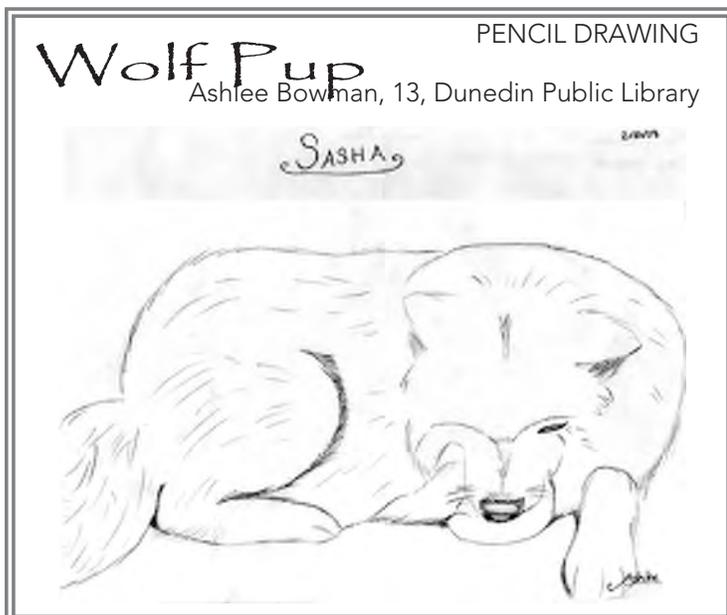
This year 2008, I played for the Red Sox and did okay while moving up a level to the Majors where the average pitch speed is 50-55 mph. It was fast and the pitch speed made it even more challenging to try and hit the ball. I played catcher for my team during one game as our team ran out of catchers because they went in to pitch. That night in my catching debut in the Majors I caught three out of six kids on the base path.

From then on I was the starting catcher for my team. I was very excited at the new position that suits me really well and so I became very good at it by learning more about the position in every game. I was very excited to use my honor roll money I earned to pay for my own set of catchers gear. I tried out for the 10-11 year old East Lake Little League All-Stars and was sad to learn that they didn't have enough players available to make up a team. So I had to give it a shot and sign up to play for the next level of 11-12 year olds. I knew it was a long shot and although I was sad to learn that I didn't make it I decided to practice even more to be good enough to make it next year.

On the night of my birthday July 28, 2008, my Dad got an email from my previous Majors Coach Condren saying that the Tampa Terror which is an AAU (Amateur Athletic Union founded in 1888) U12 baseball team needed a catcher. My previous coach thought that I was the one for the job and so the two coaches of the Terror team which are Coach Sharts and Coach Carney said that they would love to have me on the team.

So I am going to have the practice, Friday August 1st at 6 p.m to try out if all of the afternoon rain doesn't cause it to be rained out. I have put the rain out number in my phone and will keep my fingers crossed when I call it later. I'm so excited to play for the National Champions in AAU baseball and hopefully I will help them go back there and defend the championship! This opportunity will be just one more step for me to work towards my goal to improve my game as I really hope to play in high school for East Lake and college for Mizzou and dream of the MLB's historic franchise the St. Louis Cardinals. I am also entering this writing contest with hopes of winning one of the cash prizes so that I can help pay for the baseball registration fee for the Tampa Bay Terror as I know it costs a lot.

With my continued hard work and practice maybe with all of the minor league teams around a scout will be at one of my games and have me tryout for them to make my dream real!



# THE STEEL MAN

Jeffrey Brown, 13, Tarpon Springs Public Library

There once was a small village, in the middle of a large desert, that was made up of several herders and hunters. They lived out their lives peacefully, never coming into contact with any other humans other than themselves, for a while. The few outsiders they did come across would tell tales from the outer desert, about raiders slaughtering entire villages or carrying them off to be sold as slaves. So, the villagers were glad that they lived in the inner desert where they were safe from these horrors. But there were also tales of great giant men, made of steel, who roamed the desert. These giant men talked to the leaders of the tribes and villages about a great meeting near the great sea. The villagers thought this to be just some fairy tale and so they would thank the outsiders for their stories and would send them on their way. Life would go on in the village, until one day, when life in the village would change forever.

It was a normal day in the village when the sun would hang in the sky, staying in one position for hours on end. Those who weren't herders were either inside the cool tents or drinking from the oasis. There was one young herder, who was the son of the village leader and about 16 years of age, herding cattle when he saw something large out in the distance. The object started coming closer towards the boy, who realized that the object had legs and was standing. Eventually, the thing was standing right in front of him. It had the structure of a man, arms and legs and a torso and a face, but all of these were made of a clear metal. The boy didn't know if it was a man in a suit of armor or if it was actual skin. The thing approached the boy with ease and looked down at him, the massive hulking figure asked in a large booming voice, "I must see the leader of this village immediately." Not wanting to anger this steel man, the boy led the visitor to his father's tent. The boy walked inside and said in a trembling voice, "Father, we... we have a guest". The steel man entered the tent at that point and the leader stared up at the juggernaut that stood before him. The leader could only say, in a trembling voice much like his son's was, "Hello." The steel man looked down at the leader and said in his booming voice, "I must speak with you alone to discuss a pressing matter." So, the boy left the tent,

outside the entire village had gathered around the tent, there were murmurs and whispers. The villagers asked one another, "Who was that man". "What could they be talking about"; "Could that be the steel man the outsiders were talking about"? It was not until sunset that the steel man and the leader emerged from the tent, they both shook hands and the steel man walked out of the village and into the desert again.

All of the villagers gathered around the leader and asked him questions like, "What did he want" or "What did he tell you"? They asked so many questions that he eventually held up his hands and said, "Enough!" Everyone fell silent and listened. "The steel man told me that he and several others like him have been delivering a message to the tribes and villages of the desert. The leader of each tribe and village is to bring his eldest son and his most trusted friends and their eldest sons to where the desert meets the ocean and where the black road lies. We are to leave tomorrow at dawn so Luke, Philip, and Paul gather your sons and rifles and bring as many supplies as your mules can carry, it will be a long journey." The three men nodded and headed off to their tents. The leader turned to his son and said, "Sam, go and get the rifle, the mule, and supplies." Sam nodded and ran off to his father's tent.

The next morning at dawn, all four men were there with their sons and all four of them had mules with supplies on their backs. The leader looked at the men and then looked at his son and looked at the rising sun looming over the eastern desert; he turned towards the western desert and said, "Let's go."

For the first two days, the only thing the party could see was sand, sand and more sand; luckily they had plenty of food and water with them. On the third day they came across a small oasis, so they replenished their water, and on the fourth day the sand seemed to run out and was replaced by a flat, rock surface. At the end of that day, they came across a large hole in the ground, it was long, deep and narrow; Luke said he knew what it was. He said a trader had told him about it, and that it was called a canyon. So, that night, they slept outside

the canyon, and the next morning they found a narrow pathway that went down the canyon, and by midday they were at the base. They were walking towards the other side, when suddenly they heard a loud crack! Philip seemed to jolt, he then looked down at his chest and his garments were soaked with blood. "I'm shot", he screamed. His eyes rolled back and he collapsed to the ground. Luke shouted, "Raiders! Take cover". They all hunkered over some large boulders.

After a few minutes, several men with rifles came out of the shadows, the leader came out of cover for a few seconds to fire a shot. A raider's neck jerked back and he fell to the ground. Luke's son stepped to fire as well but was shot in the shoulder. "Ahhhhh", he cried out. Luke pulled him back in. Paul fired a shot and a raider collapsed, he tried to shoot again but a bullet hit him in the thigh; he crawled back into cover. Philip's son shot an entire clip in the direction of the raiders, two were wounded but one of the two remaining raiders shot a round right into Philip's son's heart. Luke shot the raider, the last one started to retreat but Sam shot him. The leader ran over to the raider's position, they were all dead.

After the wounded were patched up, they buried Philip and his son and they each took up watch that night. The next morning they climbed out of the canyon and walked many miles in silence, till finally they found a great black road that the steel man had talked about. They followed this road for many miles until they saw something very strange. They saw things that were as tall as mountains and had vegetation growing on them, but they weren't shaped like mountains, they instead had a rectangular shape to them. The party kept walking, but kept staring at the rectangles until Sam stepped on something that bent under his foot. He looked down and saw something that was a greenish color, but it was mostly covered in dirt so he wiped away the debris with his hand. His father looked back at him and said, "Sam, what is it?"

Sam said, "It's a sign."

"What does it say?"

"It says 'Welcome to Los Angeles'."

# I CAN'T UNDERSTAND . . .

Joshua Christensen, 15, Dunedin Public Library

I can't understand why the room falls silent  
when you're around.

I can't understand why you always have your  
hair in your face.

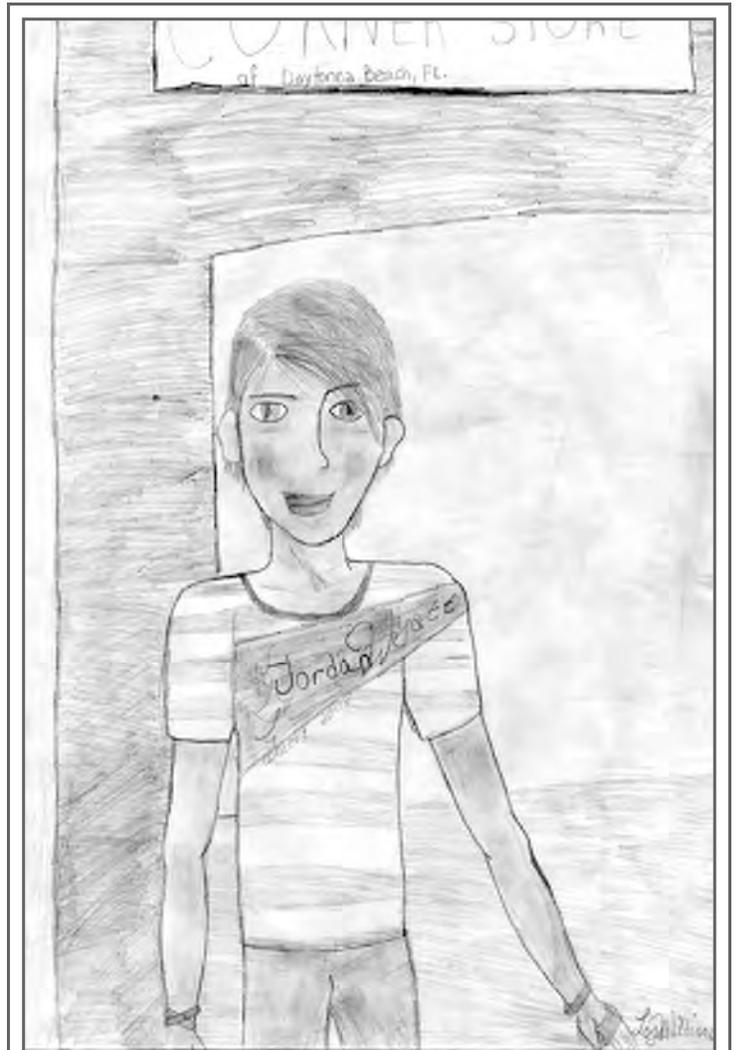
I can't understand why the mere utterance  
of your name makes everyone stop and  
stare.

I can't understand the nasty stares you give  
onlookers with your bright blue eyes.

I can't understand why you hate most  
everyone.

I can't understand why you paint your nails  
a solid black.

Most of all I can't understand why I love  
you.



PENCIL DRAWING

# BOY

Veronica D'Addio, 13, Tarpon Springs Public Library

SHORT STORY

# SHE IS GONE

Jessica Eaves, 16, Seminole Community Library

At a party, in a crowd, standing in a corner, she feels so alone. So many people around her, yet they cease to exist. Outcasted from her own friends, all she wants to do is scream. Fall to her knees and scream her heart out. For years she's bottled up her feelings. Her whole life outside her room was an act. The smiles, they were fake. The laughs inside she was screaming. Her eyes even. The didn't truly sparkle crystal clear blue. The crystal clear blue like a diamond or gem. She made them. Her true eye color was stone cold grey. The kind of grey the sky is on a depressing rainy day. And her skin. Her face was tan from her compact and her makeup. When she washed her face every night, after all the parties and hanging out, it turned out to be pale, slightly darker around her eyes. Skin, like the skin of a corpse, almost an hour after its soul left it. No. She wasn't herself outside her room at all. It was all an act. An act to please everyone around her. At a party, in a crowd of people who cease to exist, she falls to her knees screaming her heart out, and pulls the trigger. She's gone.

# Uruhara

DRAWING

Carol Taylor, Grade 12, Largo Public Library



# Ode to a Rose

Kevyn T. Andrews, Age 16  
Pinellas Park Public Library

*Look at the rose*

*It stands, so tall*

*Watching really shows*

*The world's not so bad*

*There's still good left,*

*On this planet we live on*

*Not full of hate*

*The kindness not all gone*

*That it will end one day,*

*All the war*

*People will be nice and,*

*The safest place won't be the core*

*I hope I get to see*

*That one day*

*And silence, warmth, and kindness*

*I will dare to say*

*This is it*

*This is the place,*

*Where I choose to forever sit*

*And join that beautiful rose*

# SHIP OF SLAVES

POEM

Markos Carter, 15, Tarpon Springs Public Library

I am a boy from the jungles of Africa.  
I wonder if these white skinned devils are going to devour me.  
I hear my people weeping and screaming for death to take them.  
I see aught but the wood that is around me.  
I desire nothing but for death to take me away to sweet eternal sleep.  
I am an African child aboard the Middle Passage.

I pretend the devils will forget that I exist, and forget to feed me so  
I can die.

I feel the stagnant air and rotting wood beneath me.  
I touch the rail of the ship as I attempt to jump off.  
I worry that the devils will cut me up and boil me.  
I cry for my mother and father as I am beaten.  
I am an African child on the Middle Passage.

I understand that my mother will never hold me again.  
I try to communicate with the other slaves, but they ignore me.  
I try to fight the devils with the Fan knife I find.  
I beg the devils to end my life.  
I am an African child on the Middle Passage.



**Untitled**

PHOTO  
Marco Pacheco, Age 14, Clearwater Public Library System

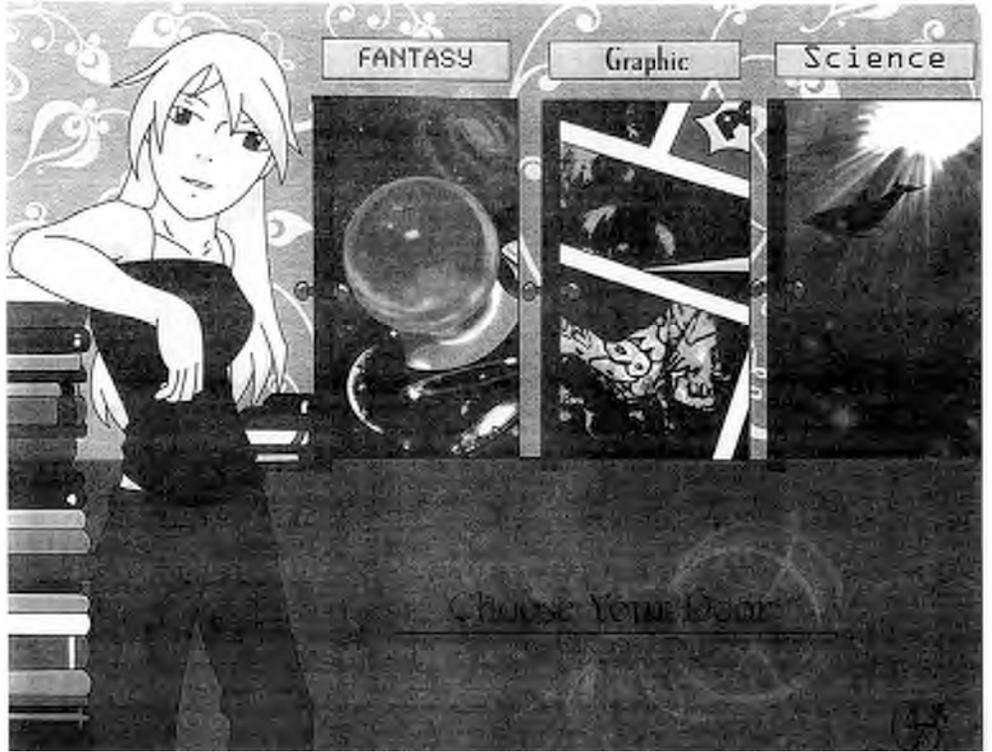
# Perfection

SHORT STORY  
Jessica Eaves, 16  
Seminole Community Library

*Golden locks fall around her face. Her blue eyes shimmer in the moonlight. Her soft lips curve into a smile. The perfect photo. She's head cheerleader, has popular friends and a quarterback boyfriend. Perfect life. Right? Wrong. She's not perfect. She has flaws. Her flaw is striving for perfection. But not in all things. Her striving for perfection is through getting the perfect body. Her way of doing this is through starving her self, purging after the only small meal she eats. Anorexia. And she won't stop till she gets what she wants, which ends in a perfect headstone.*

# Library Window to the World

Chelsea Sarbach, 15, Safety Harbor Public Library

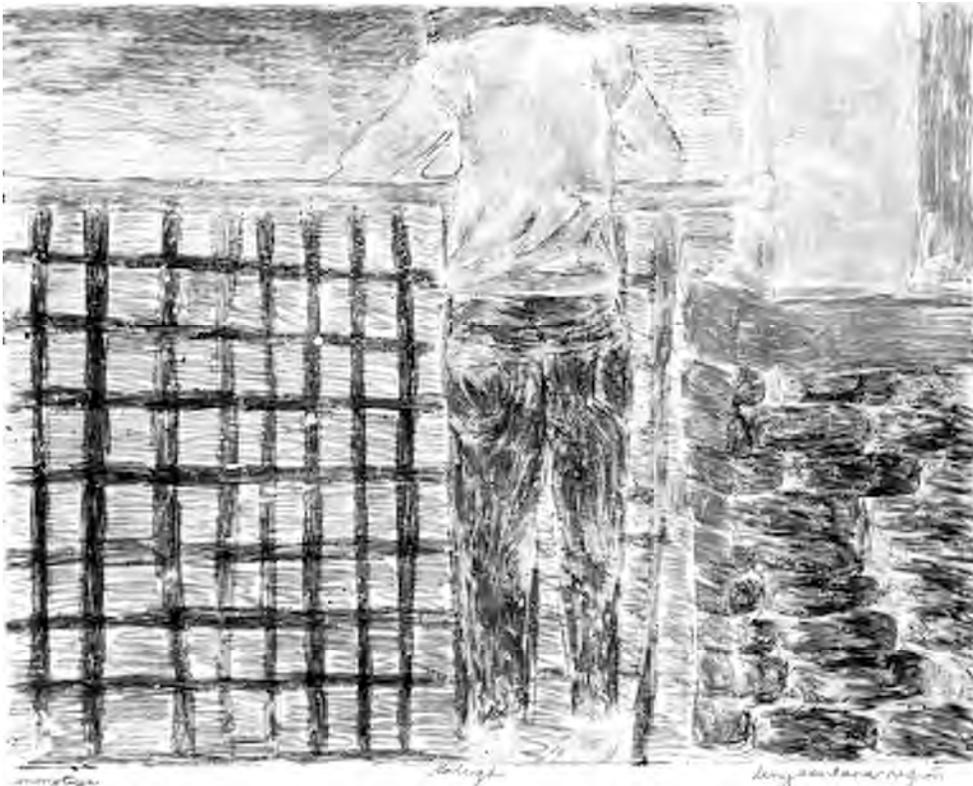


# Kaleigh

MONOTYPE PRINT

POEM

Leny M. Santana-Negrón, 14, Pinellas Park Public Library



# A Wish for Peace

Isaac Wilks, 12  
Tarpon Springs Public Library

Peace on Earth is what I see,  
What a priority this should be!  
The sign is the winged dove.  
Peace to me is care and love.

No more fighting, ugly words or  
pranks,  
No more high jacking or stealing  
from banks.  
If we all strive to make Earth a  
better place,  
We will discover brotherhood in  
the human race.

# Our Story

## SHORT STORY

Katie Duffy, 14, Clearwater Public Library System

This boy was different. He was new. He was more than just a conquest. He was more than just a next in line kind of boy. He was the one. Too bad, though... she wasn't.

Everyday for nine years it was the same. Wake up, get on the ugly uniform, go to school, come home, go to rehearsals, text Anne and Christine, go back home, cram for some test the next day until ten o'clock or so, think about Jeffery, and bed. Then repeat.

Being on the student council was okay. Nothing too special, so she thought.

A sixth grader named James was nothing too unusual. He was a nobody, a first-time middle schooler. An all around good, God loving boy wasn't much of anything to her... so she thought.

Everyday during the morning announcements in the office, where all the leaders of the school got to go, James and this seventh grade girl, Jane, who at the time, was on top of the world, started talking.

James was medium height, semi-tan, loved basketball, and strong, very strong. He was single, devoted to God, and was this all around good-boy. Not popular, no girlfriend, had some friends, and mostly kept to himself, hated rap, never cussed and didn't try anything too risky... for the most part.

Jane... Jane was the whole package. Loud, everyone loved her, skinny, pale, popular, was going out with this doll named Jeffery, and always had somewhere to go, someone to see, and something to do. She spent some time in prayer. She acted like she loved rap, and cussed here or there, and always knew everything about everyone!

One of the worst days, in Jane's life, was the day Jeffery dumped her out of the blue... for no real reason... by note!

James, office boy, was right beside her with funny, kind, and sweet texts, hugs and late night "Hello" type phone calls.

They went to the mall one time and \*BOOM\* James had fallen hard for Jane. Jane was told by everyone that James had a thing for her, and she kept asking and he kept denying.

They became best friends despite all the rumors. The closer they became the less and less popular Jane became. Her life was slowly fading. The glamour filled life she once had was slipping through the cracks. She wanted to stop it, she wanted it all back.

To get everything back, all she had to do was apologize to Christine and Anne for talking to James and everything would be perfect yet again. She wasn't sure if she could lose James though. She decided she'd rather have Anne and Christine than some sixth grader- so she thought!

A few hours before telling Anne and Christine that she was "sorry", Jane started talking to a girl named Victoria who was a smart girl. Tan, weird, a nobody, loser, with NO experience on anything that wasn't in a book. Very out of the loop.

Hey, opposites attract, right? They became best friends.

Christine and Anne became best friends with the rival clique and Jane's life became hell

because of them.

Victoria didn't care, she still doesn't, about what other people think or say about her. She lives her life for her and if that isn't good enough for you she'll go tell you off and go back to whatever she was doing. That may have been the reason no one had yet asked her out, but she didn't care.

Victoria was hard to get- in EVERY possible way. They were meant to be best friends- they couldn't have been more different!

But, let's face it, popularity is all about drama and caring too much about what others say and do.

Jane became a loser, because she was trying not to care. No guy would even look at her. No guy texted her, no guy in her class.

James was still admiring from afar.

When summer broke, Victoria and Jane only grew closer.

James and Jane only grew farther apart.

Jane got sick at the end of summer, right after school started.

Instead of running the other way, James was right by her side as if they had been that close all summer long. He just wanted to get her better.

After a long week of missing school, Jane returned to find that nothing had changed for the better - things had just gotten worse! She was still a loser. No one liked her. And that rumors had, for the first time, surfaced about her!

Victoria didn't see what the big deal was about being friends with the "pops".

Jane realized that life as she had known it last year, was gone. She wasn't anything special. She wasn't the hot blonde anymore. Her confidence slipped away. She stopped eating normal sized meals. She worked out more than ever. She drank vitamin water and ate a little bit of peanut butter in place of each meal.

Victoria became very worried. This anorexic behavior, on top of Jane's sickness, had caused her best friend to lose 10 pounds!

After many fights and threats, Jane began to eat FULL meals again... for a while that is.

Jane realized as the year went on that she was falling hard for James. Not just because of his hair or the way he laughed, it was more. This was deeper than anything with Jeffery.

Right when Jane had the courage to tell James

everything, James started going out with Victoria's sister.

Jane was devastated and resorted back to her theory that she was fat and ugly- and stopped with the normal meals. Why wouldn't she think that? All the guys in the class said it on a daily basis.

She began to cry every night because she was hungry but couldn't bring herself around to eating because she wanted to be beautiful again. She was snapping at her family and her family didn't know what was wrong!

Even after James and Victoria's sister's break-up, Jane wasn't eating normally. Victoria was about to tell Jane's mother. So, Jane ate a LOT for the first time in weeks one night at Victoria's house. This was good, because Jane's family was getting fed up with her vicious mood swings!

When Jane and Victoria left the school after their eighth grade year, Victoria was happy as could be to get out of there, and Jane couldn't bear to leave James behind. She had finally 100% fallen for him.

She asked how he felt, and he said she was out of his system, and he did not care anymore.

Jane was devastated. They were always flirting. He was always picking Jane up and hugging her and calling her pretty and texting her things like, "I love you."

How could he not like her?

To this day, Jane thinks she likes James. Whether or not he feels the same is a mystery... but they are still really close. We just need to see if that stands true for THIS summer.

Victoria is still Jane's best friend- and, yes, they are still losers.

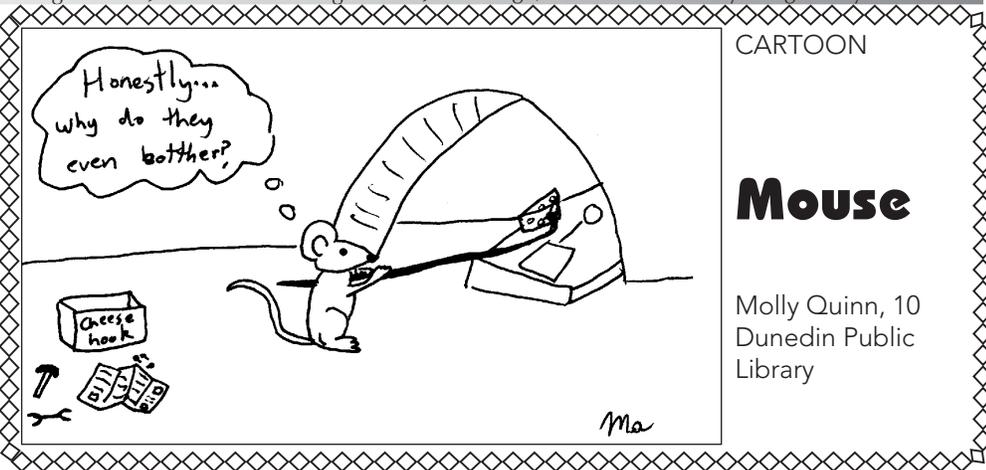
Victoria still doesn't care one way or the other about being popular or what people say or think, but she has changed what she wears, how she talks, and her social status has grown slightly because of Jane's friendship.

Jane would still like to be popular. And Victoria has still been the best friend in her life and Jane still believes that without Victoria she would still be struggling to be liked by the wrong crowd. She now believes that she is not fat or ugly.

They are going to different high schools. But after all that has happened to them the past two years, how could THEY not always be in love with each other?

They will always be in love, because they are true (best friend) soul mates!

James will come and go, Victoria will never go, she will be the only thing to stay!



# MOSAIC

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## PPLC

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