

STOWE KIDS REPORT

Free Stowe, Vermont A publication of Stowe Elementary School June 8, 2023 Volume 1, Number 1

VERMONT ROCKS!



PHOTO BY HARPER JONES

This rich purple mineral, known as a geode, is yet more proof that you can't judge something by how it looks on the outside. See more information about rocks and minerals found in Vermont on Page 34.

Beloved teacher retires after 34 years

LYRA MARTIN AND WINTER KUTI
GRADE 4

Pamela Raymond has been at Stowe Elementary School (SES) for 34 years — longer than any other teacher. She teaches second grade and is retiring this year. We had the opportunity to interview Mrs. Raymond about her experience at SES. She has made an impact on so many people's lives, and everyone will miss her very much.

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Pennsylvania, and then moved to Virginia at age 5. When I was 8 years old, I moved to Glover, Vermont.

Have you only taught second grade?

At first, I taught third grade. In 1994, we started teaching multi-age classrooms, so I taught two grades at once. When our school started to fall away from multi-age teaching, I began teaching second grade. I have taught every grade except kindergarten.

See 'Raymond' on Page 39

THE STOWE KIDS REPORT is a newspaper featuring the work of students who participated in a journalism after school enrichment program at Stowe Elementary School (SES). The spring 2023 issue includes interviews, essays, opinion pieces and stories that matter to children.

Our editorial team is made up of 10 students: Cate Copeland, Madison Dahl, Olivia Fletcher, Harper Jones, Winter Kuti, Gabriel Robert Letorney, Lyra Martin, Nora

Rogers, Josi Schloff and Zachary Sliwka.

Adriana Teresa Letorney and Molly Triffin, two journalists, friends and parents, developed the journalism program to offer young writers, photographers, storytellers and creatives a platform to share their voices. The children put a lot of effort into their articles, and we are very proud of each and every one of them.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for our young writers to

see their work published," principal Maura Wieler said.

We thank principal Wieler, enrichment coordinator Chantal Dubrey, and all the teachers and parents who supported the students during the six-week program. The entire SES community is very grateful to Gregory Popa, editor and publisher of the Stowe Reporter for including this issue in the June 8 publication.

— Molly Triffin and Adriana Letorney

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10 jaw-dropping facts about the 4th of July

GABRIEL LETORNEY

GRADE 3

1. The Declaration of Independence was signed on the 2nd of July and published on the 4th of July. Who knew?

2. A total of 150 million hotdogs are made, sold, and eaten on the 4th of July! Gulp.

3. All the fireworks on the 4th of July cost \$1 billion. Yikes!

4. A total of 56 people signed the Declaration of Independence. Only two people signed it on the 2nd of July; the rest of them signed it in the next month. Noted.

5. Most of the people who signed the Declaration of Independence lived only to the age of 45 years old. That doesn't sound old, but in 1776 the average lifespan was about 30 years.

6. President Calvin Coolidge was born on the 4th of July. OK!

7. The Declaration of Independence was written on a laptop—not on a modern one, of course. Back then, a laptop was a desk that sat on your lap and had no legs. Very interesting!

8. Thomas Jefferson, at the age of 82, and John Adams at the age of 90, both died on July 4, 1826. They died within five hours of each other on the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. How bizarre!

9. Fireworks were invented in 1777 and have been a hit ever since. Boom!

10. Fourteen thousand fireworks are displayed on the 4th of July each year. That's lit!

Source: Hocking College



COURTESY PHOTO

Fact: the higher you are, the better the fireworks look and sound. And nothing's higher than Vermont's highest peak, which provides a backdrop for Stowe Mountain Resort's annual Independence Day fireworks display.

SES band teacher takes us on his musical journey

MADISON DAHL

GRADE 5



Mr. Gagnon

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be in fifth grade and play an instrument of your choice? It is possible, thanks to Stowe Elementary School's Mr. Gagnon! We sat down with him to learn what inspired him to become a band teacher.

How long have you taught band?

I have been teaching music here in Stowe for eight years. Before that, I worked as a freelance percussion instructor starting when I was a senior in high school.

Do you have a favorite instrument to play?

My main instrument is the drum set, which I love playing. One of the fun things about being a band teacher is that you learn how to play all the different instruments. Playing each instrument is its own cool and unique experience.

How long have you been playing instruments?

I am told I had a Mickey Mouse drum set when I was three but I'm not sure if that counts! I played taiko drums in an after-school program in early elementary school. Then I joined the school band as a percussionist in late elementary school.

What is your dream instrument set up?

Oooh, this is a tricky one! It depends on what kind of music I'm playing. I tend to like a minimal drum setup because I am usually the person who must pack it up and move it. I like well-made, reliable instruments that sound good in a variety of musical settings.

Why did you decide to be a band teacher?

I've always loved music and been drawn to endeavors that help my fellow humans. When I was young, I was lucky to have many wonderful music teachers that helped me develop positive habits, taught me how to respect myself and others, and modeled how to be a positive force in the world. I was and still am thankful for those early life lessons and working as a music teacher gave me a chance to pass those lessons on to the next generation.

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Vermont rocks!

HARPER JONES

GRADE 3

Look for these crystals and minerals on your next hike and see what else you discover.

Pyrite looks like a piece of shiny gold. You might think it's valuable, but it's not nearly as valuable as you think. It is made of sulfur and iron. Sometimes the crystals in pyrite form a raspberry shape if there is more sulfur than usual.

Quartz is a very common mineral. It can come in many beautiful colors and forms. A few types of quartz include smoky quartz, rose quartz, amethyst, and citrine.

Tourmaline is found near granite. One type is called "watermelon tourmaline" because it is green on the outside and pink on the inside. But it breaks easily so be careful.

Marble is a mineral that is made of limestone but much stronger. It can be cut into slabs that are sturdy enough to build with. In the 17th century, toy marbles were made of marble.

Remember, you too can research what crystals are found where you live. Who knows what you will find? Feel free to share your information with us.

Source: *My Book of Rocks and Minerals* by Dr. Devin Dennie



SPORTS

Girls' lacrosse: the hottest sport in town

JOSI SCHLOFF
GRADE 4

Spring is time to wear t-shirts, go swimming in lakes, and...play lacrosse! The best part about playing Stowe girls' lacrosse (also called lax) is that you can be who you are. You can be as loud as you want, everybody is sweet, and the coaches are fun. Some of the coaches have been teaching for years. "I enjoy watching the players learn new skills, progress, and have fun," says coach Kim Leslie. As of publication, the team has an undefeated season, with six wins so far.

Must-haves

You will need a lacrosse stick, goggles, a mouthguard, and a ball. A lacrosse stick is a metal stick with a netted top. This is probably the most important piece of equipment you will need.

Then there is protective equipment. Goggles protect your face from an injury if a ball comes at you. The mouthguard protects your teeth from getting knocked out—for instance, if a ball hits you in the mouth.

Lastly, there is the lax ball, which is passed down the field and shot at the goal.

Playful practice drills

The Stowe girls normally start off by stretching in a big circle around the field. The coaches put on fun pop music and we sing along. We take turns leading a stretch in the middle of the circle for everyone else to copy.

Next, we do two laps around the field cradling a ball. Cradling is a swift movement with the lacrosse stick in front of the face moving side to side.

After laps, we do a ground ball drill (otherwise known as scooping). When you are scooping the ball, you want to get low and lunge down—your knuckles should touch the ground. We also pass the lacrosse ball in groups of three or two. If you don't catch the ball, everybody says, it's okay. If you do catch it, everybody says, nice job.

If you are not having fun, you can ask a coach to do something else that you might enjoy more and choose a few friends to join you.

Steal the bacon

Right before the end of practice we play "Steal the Bacon." In this game, people are divided into groups of eight to 10. Each person is given a number to remember, and the teams lie down across from each other. The coach then says a number, and the people who were given that number go and fight for the ball. Then we say a cheer and go home.

Fun fact

Most of us have nicknames based on how we play. For example, "Water Bug" is tiny and fast like a water bug. My lacrosse nickname is Jo because it is short for Josi and Josephine.



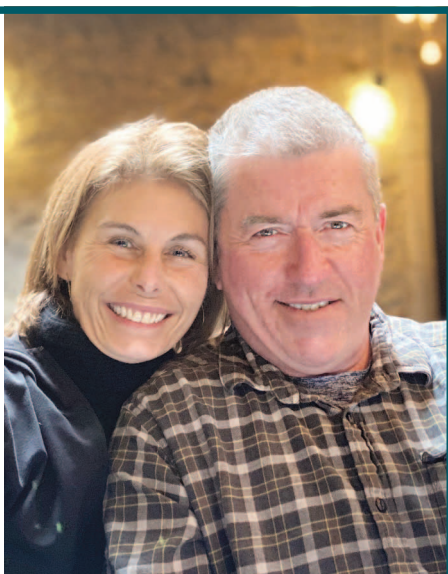
The Stowe girls' lacrosse team.

PHOTO BY JOSH KAPLAN

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GOOD NEWS

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



PHOTO BY JOSI SCHLOFF

Siberian Bugloss (Jack Frost)—a herbaceous perennial with large heart-shaped basal leaves and pretty sprays of small bright blue flowers in spring.

Enter spring with a laugh!

GABRIEL LETORNEY AND
ZACHARY SLIWKA
GRADE 3

1. What is brown and sticky?
A stick.
2. What did the sushi say to the bee?
Wasabi!
3. I did not like facial hair but...
it's starting to grow on me.
4. How do trees get online?
They log in.
5. Did you hear about the kidnapping at school?
It's OK, he woke up.
6. What do you call a cow with no legs?
Ground beef.
7. How does a log say it needs help in math?
I'm stumped.

Dear Fifth Grader

Dear Fifth Grader,

Sometimes other students are being distracting in class and it's hard for me to focus. What can I do?
Sincerely,
— Frustrated First Grader

Dear First Grader,

I understand why you might feel frustrated. This has happened to me before and is usually something you can handle yourself. Here are a few strategies that could work for you.
First, stop and take deep breaths. This will help you get centered.
If the kids are being loud, you can politely ask them, "Can you please lower your voices?" Asking them what you would like them to do

rather than what not to do puts a more positive twist on your request.
Explain that you are trying to listen to the lesson, take a test, or finish a project and need to concentrate. This can help them put themselves in your shoes.

If solving it yourself does not work—for example, if you are taking a test and other kids are goofing around—ask a teacher for help. Perhaps you can go to another quiet room to finish your work.

Remember, whatever you choose to do, go about it in a kind manner.
Hope this helps! Feel free to come and find me in the hallway.
See you around!
— Cate Copeland

The Big Question

WINTER KUTI
GRADE 4

What helps when I'm having a bad day?

Nine S.E.S. students share what makes them happy when they're feeling bummed.

"Talking to someone I trust."
— Madison Dahl, grade 5

"I eat junk food!"
— Lyra Martin, grade 4

"Meditation and taking a break."
— Cate Copeland, grade 5

"I usually ask my dad if I can play a game with him so I can get the bad thing off my mind."
— Harper Jones, grade 3

"Sometimes being alone helps; while other times being with my friends is good because they help me."
— Gabriel Letorney, grade 3

"Go outside and have a snack like a popsicle or a smoothie."
— Nora Rogers, grade 3

"I draw because it calms me down."
— Olivia Fletcher, grade 3

"Lying in my bed."
— Josie Schloff, grade 4

"I talk about it with my mom."
— Winter Kuti, grade 4

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HAPPY SCHOOL DAYS!

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OPINION

☆ The Power of WE ☆

CATE COPELAND
GRADE 5

“WE” IS THE ACT OF collaboration, which (in school) is an opportunity for students in a classroom to work together and be treated equally and fairly. The definition of collaboration is the act of working together with someone to produce or create something. It is a helpful skill to carry in your mental toolbox because you will need to use it at one point in your life. It is the key to success for many people, and it can be that way for you, too!

Although working as a team has many benefits, it does have its challenges.

For instance, if a teacher assigns you to work in a group with people that are not your best friends, you might feel bummed. But one of the great things about successful collaboration is that you do not necessarily have to be best friends with your teammates. When collaborating, all you need is a good mindset and a clear goal to finish the project successfully.

Here is a helpful way to approach collaborating with your classmates.

Although you have ideas, it’s also good to listen to others and see what and how they want to contribute. Ashley Finlen Copeland, a project leader at the Duke Clinical Research Institute, reminds us that everybody on a team has a voice, whether they express it as much or not. “Introverts may do their best collaboration outside of the group,” she says. “Though initially appearing quiet, they are listening and processing and will often return to the team with insightful ideas.” So, even if you are a quiet person, that’s fine!

Bill Copeland, a professor of psychology at the University of Vermont, reiterates the importance of listening. “We spend a lot of our time talking to other people, so we need to spend a bit of our time practicing intentional listening skills.”

Different perspectives and ideas always create a better outcome in the end. Teamwork is very beneficial for everyone. “Collaboration is a superpower,” Professor Copeland says. “It allows us to do the things we can’t do by ourselves.”

Teamwork makes the dream work!

How Gorilla Tag changed my life

ZACHARY SLIWKA
GRADE 3

GORILLA TAG IS AN online game about gorillas fooling around and tagging people. The game is free for everybody. You can play on Oculus. It is a game where you can go wherever you want, whenever you want. This game teaches you to persevere and you can make millions of friends.

Making friends

First, you reach out to a player and ask if they want to be friends or join a private lobby to play the game. If the player agrees, you go to your home screen, type in your username, and add them as a friend. Once you become friends, you can play any time. There is so much you can do together.

For example, you can teach each other tricks like how to jook (or trick) a player. A more skilled player can teach the basics of the game to a new player. After the

new player learns the game, they can play with more skill and new players, making even more friends.

Perseverance

Gorilla Tag has taught me to persevere. The key to the game is to keep going. When you are running, you do not stop. Instead, you keep going until you need a break or get caught.

For example, if I get tagged in the middle of a chase, I do not give up. Instead, when the game resets, I start running again. Rather than ending the game, I would say “Ah man, you got me! Maybe next time!” And start playing again.

Things to remember

Don’t get mad! The point of this game is to have fun with your friends and others. It’s not about winning!

Instead of using legs, remember to use your arms to run and

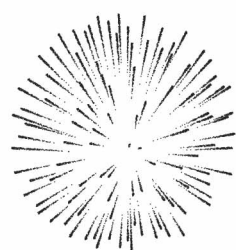
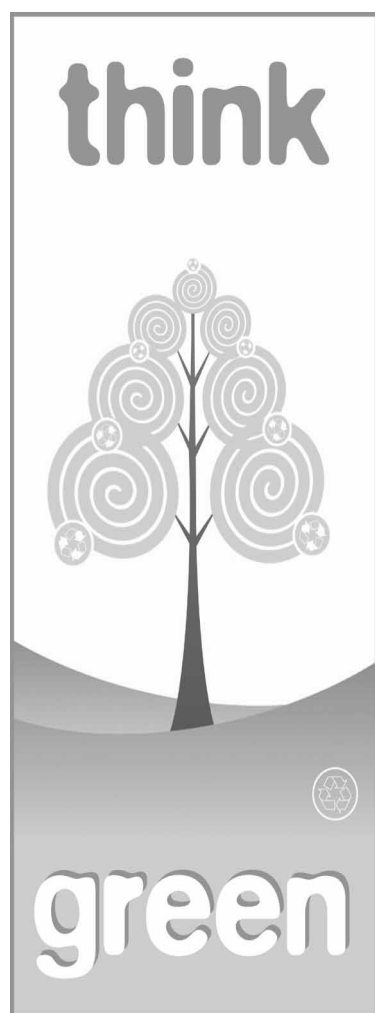
walk. It might feel a little bit weird at first but you will get used to it. One thing that helps is to pretend you have invisible arms. Then, your real arms can be your legs!

Cosmetics - to come later!

Cosmetics are things like hats, shirts, and badges that you can put on your character to make them look better. You buy cosmetics with shiny rocks, which is the same as money. A player will get 100 shiny rocks every day. This adds up, so eventually you will get to buy those cool cosmetics!

Colors make you unique. You start out with random colors. The common colors are brown, blue, green, or maybe orange. You can always change your color at the computer, and there are many different colors to choose from.

I hope you learned a lot about the game and how it can help you make lots of friends! Be-ware—I might tag you!



Celebrate Smart

GRADUATION

Congratulations Graduates! A well earned time to celebrate!
Treat yourself and your friends safely, and with respect.

1/3 of youth drunk driving fatalities happen this time of year.

Those aren’t just statistics - they’re young people who had bright futures ahead of them.
You can choose to celebrate without alcohol or cannabis. Here are things you can do to stay safe:



Think about your choices ahead of time, know the signs of too much alcohol or cannabis use and how to help a friend in need. Call 911.



Never drive under the influence or get into a car with someone that’s been drinking or using cannabis.



Text for a ride if you don’t feel safe. Come up with a code phrase to signal you want to be picked up right away.



Share your location with someone you trust.

RESOURCES EVERY TEEN SHOULD HAVE:

Mental Health Crisis Line
Text “VT” to 741741

Suicide Hotline
Dial 9-8-8

VT Helplink
802-565-LINK (5465)
VTHelplink.org

Sexual Violence Hotline
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Youth Resources



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DEDALUS	COFFEE, PASTRIES & MEALS TO-GO	B, L, D	MODERATE	585-7717
EDSON HILL	AMERICAN CUISINE	D	\$12.00 - \$40.00	253-7371
KIRKWOOD'S PUB	PUB FOOD, CRAFT BEER	L	\$9.00 - \$20.00	760-4056
MAXI'S	AMERICAN	B, L	\$8.00 - \$13.00	244-0910
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TRAPP FAMILY LODGE	FARM-TO-TABLE	B, L, D	MODERATE	253-8511
TWO SONS BAKEHOUSE	FARM-TO-TABLE, BAKERY, COFFEE	B, L, D, WB	\$3.00 - \$30.00	851-8414
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KEY: (B) BREAKFAST • (L) LUNCH • (SB) SUNDAY BRUNCH • (WB) WEEKEND BRUNCH • (D) DINNER • (LN) LATE NIGHT

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ART & LITERATURE

SES book club

Recommends summer reads

"Leeva at Last," by Sara Penny-packer

A girl named Leeva Spayce Thornblossom has terrible parents who control the town and don't let her outside of the house. But when she discovers the beautiful outside world, she decides to run away. It's an encouraging book with an unexpected ending.

—Lyra Martin, grade 4

"The Troubled Girls of Dragomer Academy," by Anne Ursu

A kingdom plagued by monsters, a mysterious school, and a girl caught in between them—this exciting book is full of twists and turns.

—Cate Copeland, grade 5

"The Poe Estate," by Polly Shulman

In this adventurous book, a girl named Sukie's sister dies and comes back as a ghost. Sukie's family moves into a haunted mansion belonging to her elderly cousin because they can't afford to stay in their old home.

—Madison Dahl, grade 5

"The Land of Stories," by Chris Colfer

Two 12-year-olds fall through a portal into the mysterious Fairy-Tale World, where they have to overcome great challenges to get a special potion called the Wishing Spell. This book has lots of humor and magic.

—Josi Schloff, grade 4

"Forest of the Pygmies," by Isabel Allende

The last volume in a trilogy. It is about two best friends who go on an adventure in Africa. I love this book! The story is filled with fun and magic. This book is about the meaning of friendship.

—Gabriel R. Letorney, grade 5

"Diary of a Pug," by Kyla May

This book about a dog that does not like water will make you laugh!

—Harper Jones, grade 3

"Captain Underpants," by Dav Pilkey

It's funny, weird, silly, interesting—and there is a guy in his underpants!

—Zack Sliwka, grade 3

The Horse Who Met the Chicken

OLIVIA FLETCHER AND
NORA ROGERS

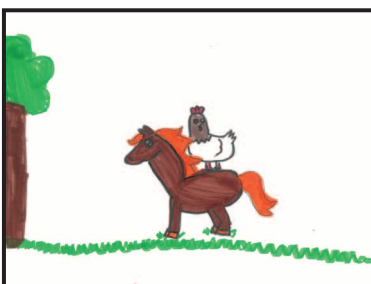
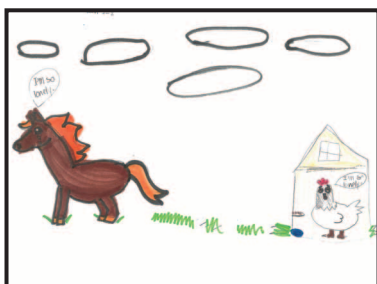
GRADE 3

An illustrated tale about friendship and kindness

[Panel 1] Once upon a time, there was a brown horse with a beige mane who was very kind. She was also very lonely. Her name was Nina and she lived on a farm where kids could go on trail rides. One day while at the farm, Nina saw a white chicken standing all by herself in the chicken coop. She too was very lonely. The chicken's name was Luna.

[Panel 2] Nina said "Hello." Luna replied, "Do you want to be friends? Do you want to go camping with me tonight?" "Sure," said Nina. "Hop on my back!" Together they walked to the beautiful valley, where they were going to camp out.

[Panel 3] They worked to set up their camp site. First, they set up the tent. Second, they made a campfire. Third, they cooked and ate dinner. Luna and Nina were really happy to



have met and gone camping together. Later that evening, they went to bed.

[Panel 4] The next morning, when they woke up, they were very hungry. So, they made breakfast and took a walk around the mead-

ows. Camping made them become close friends. They were no longer lonely. That afternoon, they returned to the farm. They were so happy! From that day on, Luna and Nina were best friends forever. The end.

RAYMOND

Continued from Page 33

What is your favorite subject to teach?

I really enjoy all that I teach, and I hope my kids agree!

Was there a particular year that stood out in all your years of teaching?

It would have to be the year we went remote, in March 2020.

In what surprising ways has Stowe Elementary School changed over the years?

The gym used to be the dining room, so the PE teacher could not teach when meals were happening. Plus, the literacy room used to be the front office. The current Spanish room and further down was not there. In addition, the kindergarten and pre-K were not even connected to the main building. When they were adding on to the building, I was in a mobile

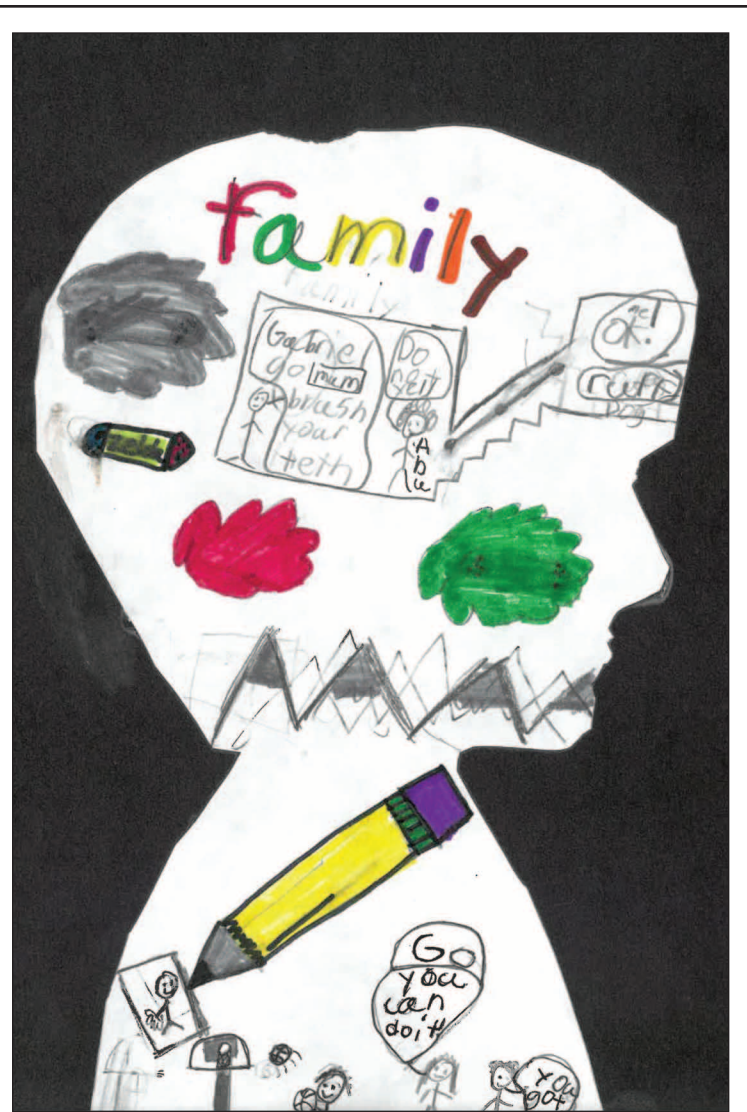
classroom between the school and The Current.

What was the playground like back then?

It was completely made of wood. The students, teachers, and community members helped build the playground from the children's designs.

What is one of the joys of teaching?

My students (gestures toward children)!



COURTESY PHOTO

Self portrait by Gabriel Robert Letorney.

Where I'm From

GABRIEL ROBERT LETORNEY

GRADE 3

I am from the barking of my dog when I got him.

I am from the pasta bolognese my mom makes.

I am from the sad feeling when my Great Nana died.

I am from the loud bang from the sea crashing onto the shore.

I am from the freshly baked cookies on Christmas Eve.

I am from the scar on my head from when I fell down the staircase and hit a pot.

I am from the sweet smell of a homemade smoothie.

I am from the smell of fresh cut grass. I am from when it rains and there is a thick and moist feeling on me.

I am from the sad moment when my fish died and my heart broke into a million pieces.

I am from the sand in between my toes. I am from the sweet apple pie my Abu makes.

I am from the hot chocolate that warms my heart.

I am from a bonfire at night that blasts heat in my face.

I am from my sore fingers after playing The Legend of Zelda, Breath of the Wild.

I am from the gooey, delicious smores on cold Christmas nights.

I am from the cheers from my mom and dad when I swish the basketball into the hoop.

I am from the delicious brownies that I dip in a glass of warm milk on a cold day.

I am from the fast wind in my face when I go sledding behind my house.

I am from the nice feeling when I grab my snowboard in the park.

I am from my loud, busy, loving family.