

OPUS

A Wayland Middle School Literary Magazine

2014-2015

INTRODUCTION

The writings within these pages aim to showcase the wonderful work that Wayland Middle School students craft on a daily basis, both in and out of the classroom. Whether these writers have penned a personal memory, granted concrete language and meaning to a creative vision, or honored with words something that has inspired them, each of them has put a great deal of thought into their pieces. We so appreciate their willingness to share them. We are honored that some of our visual artists here at WMS have graced the writings with illustrations. Thank you, artists.

We hope that you enjoy the sampling of writing presented in these pages. We are grateful that our student writers process their experiences, imaginings, and inspirations with the written word, and we encourage them to continue to do so.

Rachel Barker

Alayna Coates

Faculty Advisors, 2014-15



G. Cummings

At Heart- Clarissa Briasco-Stewart

His Friend- Julia Treese

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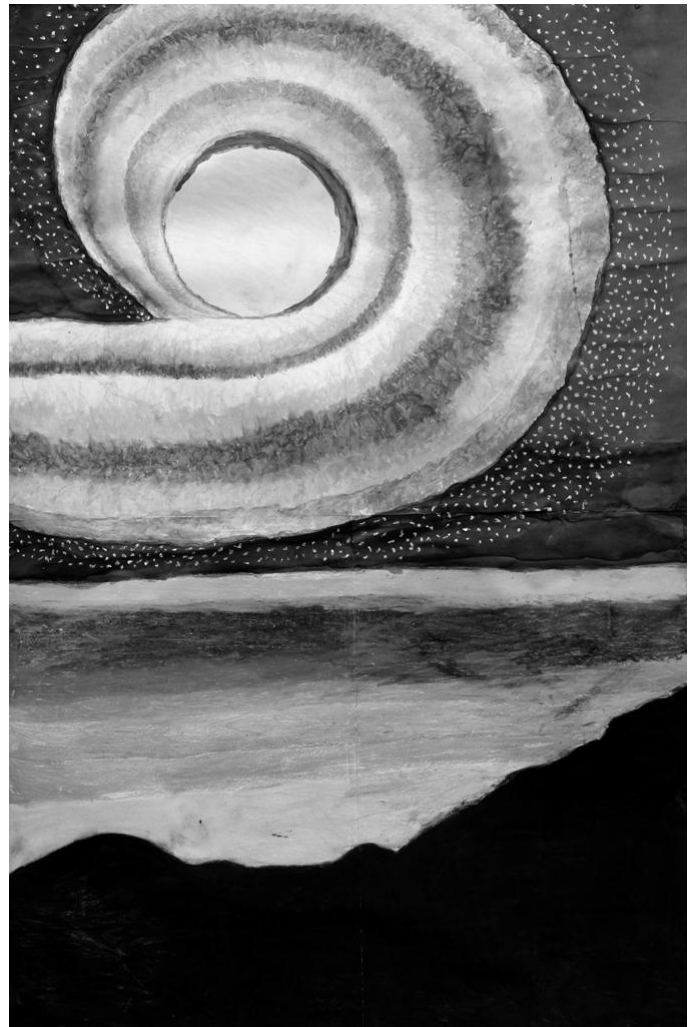
When Not to Drink- Porter Moody

Snow Fort in the Arctic- Adam Welcher

A Break with Charity Scene- Isoldi Rabii

The Creature- Katherine Deane

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S. Saju

Thanks to...

Ramah Hawley for her help, always.

The English department for supporting reading and writing, and for always keeping both joyful.

Huge thanks to...

Peter Curran, for his help bringing visuals to words.



D. Timperio



M. Baranovsky

At Heart

This place is, at heart, joyful.

Fountains
roar triumphantly,
echoes from V-J day
erupting
in jets of white water.

Ghosting
over the water in hushed shivers,
excitement casts
ripples
on the silky, silver surface.

This place is, at heart, solemn.

Golden
stars flash, blinding
in rays of new light, somehow
remaining
dull, muted medals.

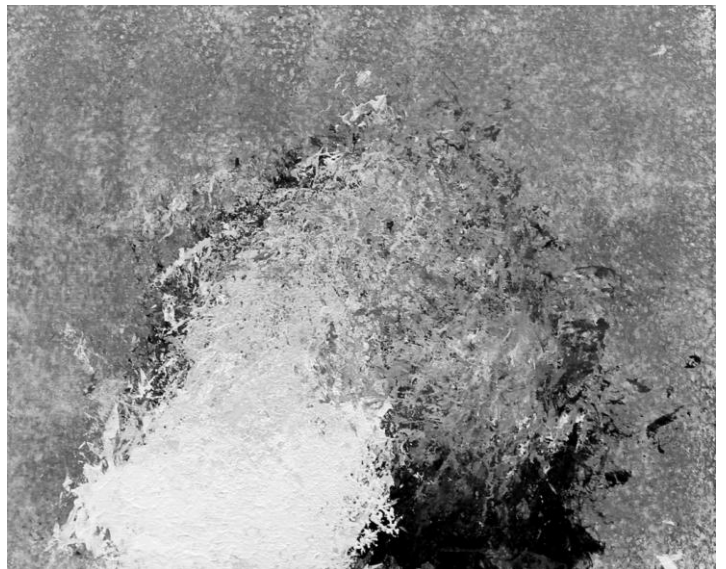
Reflections
fall into still liquid, carried upward
on hushed winds to gently
ruffle
striped, fluttering flags

This place is, at heart, grateful.

Plaques
of molded bronze, sculpted
into tableaus of old stories, march
upward
along weathered walls.

Words
from great leaders long gone,
saluting the deeds and
sacrifice
of selfless, steadfast soldiers.

This place remembers.



E. Vanslette

The Jump

I peeked over the limestone rock at the rushing river below. The 30 feet in the air turned into 80 in my head. A black pit formed in my stomach, but my head was filled with yellow excitement. Hot, humid, and sticky air hung in the atmosphere, and my skin was moist from sweat. Dark indigo water rolled on top of a wide creek at the base of an ash colored rock valley. My heart thumped in my ear to a beat of excitement. "3,2,1" was a match to set a fire of energy to bounce my body into crisp cold water. My toes were the last to leave the coarse, choppy rock.

My hands, tan from summer sunlight, flailed in small circles as if they were wings to slow down the moment. My ears were plugged with a whoosh, as if the air around me was screaming with excitement. My nose was full of fresh pine Vermont air, and my eyes got a glimpse of baby blue cloudless sky. My head was filled with rushing colors and one question in my head, "How cold is the water?" My face smiled an upbeat, lively grin that spread from each side of my face. My toes were teased by a trickle of cold water. It felt amazing. My body submerged into the water. There was an instant conversion from hot summery air to ice cold water that occurred in a glimpse of time. I swam to the top and bobbed in the coolness. Summer had begun.

Ciara Murphy



R.Lieb

His Friend

Endless neat rows
of white stone graves
circle the acres of pristine grass

Each one holds a soldier
a person
a friend

I stand beside one such grave
a bouquet of flowers lies in front

This fallen hero's friend
stands beside it too

Hands clasped
Head bowed
Tan trench coat
Neatly combed hair

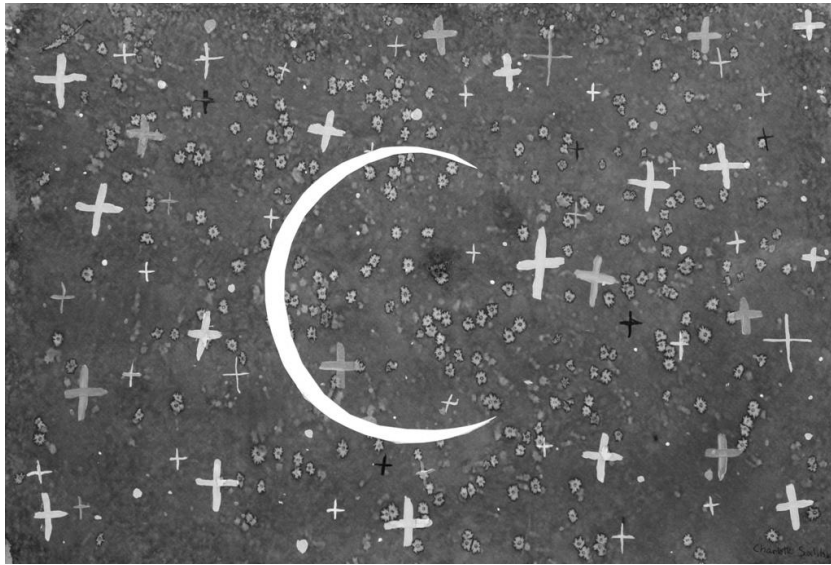
His memories
of the good times
tumble out
in a clear voice
describing Matt's humor, kindness, and bravery
then
the fatal day
when he watched his friend die
unable to save him

I slowly step forward
kneel on the wet grass
lay down the speckled, pale pink flower
rise to my feet
shake his hand
"Thank you"

I say
But it can't possibly express
what I'm thinking
or feeling
Overwhelming sadness
for a life lost so young
Overwhelming gratitude
for those who fight to protect us

Silently
we trudge away
each step weighed down
by a thick layer
of sadness
for the hundreds of thousands of people
each a precious life
lost in war.

-Julia Treese



C. Salitsky

Step One

Abaigeal Donaldson

I giggled as I watched someone wipe out on the trampoline at my friends house. The sun was radiating heat and light over multiple sun kissed shoulders. The trees wouldn't begin their transition to rusty oranges and reds for another few weeks, and the evergreen leaves were astonishing. The sky looked bluer than it had ever been, with wisps of clouds painted thinly across the horizon. Soccer balls were ricocheting off the rock wall and basketballs were attempting to be tossed into a small, metal hoop. People were bouncing on the trampoline and flinging around frisbees; I was with the last group people who were longboarding down a short hill. I was the only one who had never tried riding a longboard before; I just couldn't imagine stepping on that small board and trusting myself not to fall off. But at the same time, it was something I'd always wanted to do. I dreamt of having a longboard, and being able to ride it. But I would never be able to do that if I didn't take the first step.

Someone hopped off of a longboard and ran off to intercept a frisbee, leaving no one to claim it. So I picked it up and placed it on flat ground, not trusting myself to take the first step... and tumble all the way down a hill. If I was going to fall, I wasn't going to stop, drop, and roll; I would fall, and stay in one place. I closed my eyes and breathed in the warm, calming air of summer. Laughter, games, and warmth; it all brought a smile to my face and determination to my heart. I placed a shaky foot on the board and steadied my arm against a nearby tree. I slowly placed my other foot on the board and let out a breath I didn't know I'd been holding in. Seconds passed. Then I pushed myself away from the tree; I was flying. My excitement lasted for countless seconds, confidence bubbling in my stomach, and I let out a whoop of laughter. Birds

were almost rejoicing. I could feel the rough pavement disappearing behind me as I rolled over countless bumps, but at least I hadn't fallen-yet. Soon enough, my excitement blinded me, and I collided with a stone. I lurched forward, off of the traveling board, and stumbled away a few steps. But nothing was damaged, neither me, the board, nor the grin plastered on my face.

Until the sun illustrated the skyline in crimsons, pinks, and oranges, I kept taking that one step, onto one longboard, that could bring me more than one mile. We all ended the tiring day by watching the stars outline pictures in the sky. I stared up at constellations and wondered if Orion ever had to take a leap of faith; maybe his leap brought him right up there, among countless other stories composed in the navy sky. I knew my leap earlier in the day didn't bring me to the stars, but I know I gained some height that I never had before.

The Place Where all the Magic Happens

The evening summer wind rushes through my hair and onto me, all decked out in the colors of England as I get out of the gray SUV. I finally see Wembley Stadium, arching, over everything. This is the place where the magic happens. London 2012, late July. Soccer game. Brazil vs. England. The players eventually going for the gold, the gold that happens every four years.

As I walk towards the stadium, I go into a trance. The streets, closed just for this, are loud, with cheering people. A group of fans with bright yellow and green jerseys on scurry across the street, to the stadium,

like a colony of ants, marching towards their hill. The butterflies in my gut that I was already feeling wrenches, and doubles, every step I take. Then, I hurry down the concrete stairs of the stadium. Then I emerge And gasp. The stadium is huge seating over 74,000 cheering people. The players, in their bright, colorful jerseys, shooting for the stars, and going for the gold, the gold that happens every four years, come out on the freshly mowed field. I snap out of my trance. "Yes," I whisper. "This is where the magic happens."

~Aarushi Aggarwal

The Bunny Hill

There beneath me
I noticed the 100 foot drop
my feet numb from the ice beneath me.
my hands pressed violently to my sides

I start a slow
 scary
 descent
My feet carefully turning side to side.
my whole body throbbing
 from the winter cold.
 only a couple more feet
my speed slowly disappeared with the feeling of my fingers.

I had reached the bottom of the hill

my family cheering in front of me
I had survived my first ski hill.
The bunny hill.

Taylor Travis



M.Ali

The Arctic

It was extremely freezing in my snow fort in the arctic! My breath comes out of my mouth like a puff of smoke in the air. I have three jackets, a pair of snow pants, three pairs of socks, and two pairs of pants on! I see bright orange flames surrounded by stones. Inside are burnt logs. It is so cold that even the fire can't keep us warm. Our walls are a round circle, and our fort is a giant cave. I hear the wind blowing outside the fort. Steven is my teammate. Our eight sled dogs are in the smaller snow fort near us. We cook steak on the campfire. It smells so good! Outside, the snow walls begin tumbling down, but nothing falls on us. Nothing else falls down. We go outside and get on our dogs' sleigh. Steven said, "Mush!" Our dog sled team went off into the cold wind.

By Adam Welcher



M. Mazokopos

A Break With Charity Scene

I looked around at the faces of the other innocent women, waiting for their lives to be taken. I looked, too, at the faces of those who watched as we awaited our gruesome fate. People of all ages gathered around, eager for us, the “witches” to be hung.

A sick feeling welled up inside me, a feeling of fear and anxiety. A feeling of dread, trying not to think about how little time I had to live.

“How did things come to this, Rebecca?” Sarah Wild whispered to me, and I teared up, knowing that the words we would exchange now would be our last.

“I know not. ‘Tis terrible that the false words of a few girls would be trusted over ours. We are good people, why would we be thought to have done such terrible things as *witchcraft*.” I spat out the last word, disgusted.

“Indeed, but there’s nothing we can do about it now,” Sarah Good added, sadly.

We silenced once we saw a hangman approach with five hoods and five ropes in his hand. One by one, hoods were put over our heads and ropes were tied around our necks. The hangman herded us one at a time to the tree. We struggled to walk, as our hands and feet were bound and we could not see because of the hoods.

Our ropes were tied to the tree and we each stood on stools that would soon be kicked away. I could hear one of the other women crying softly. I began to weep also.

In just a moment I heard a kick and a snap, resulting from the stool being kicked and a neck being snapped as one of the others fell. It happened four more times. That was the only sound I could hear, everything else sounded silent. *Kick - snap, kick - snap, kick - snap, kick - snap.*

Before I even realized, it was happening to me.

“How many more will end like this?” I whispered inaudibly. Then suddenly, *Kick - snap.* In an instant, there was nothing left for me in this world. My story had ended and I was gone.

Isoldi Rabii

The Creature

By Katherine Deane

I laugh with joy as I fly
up into the blue sky.
Flying like a bird, but then
gravity takes over
and
 I
 come
 crashing
 down
into the blue, salty, abyss.
I sink down,
the light fading.
Out of nowhere
powerful hands pull me
up to the surface
and the face of Jeremy, the family friend,
appears
lifting me up.
I glance to my mom who is reading on the
sand.
The process begins again.
Up and down,
Up and down I go.
When I come back up for the billionth
time
I notice something comes up with me,
I see its bluish - gray head,
glistening with sea water as the blue waves
rock around it.
Its whiskers twitching,
while its shiny, charcoal, eyes

look at me
with a hint of surprise,
It is
beautiful,
mysterious.

I stand there in shock,
my eyes wide,
my body still.

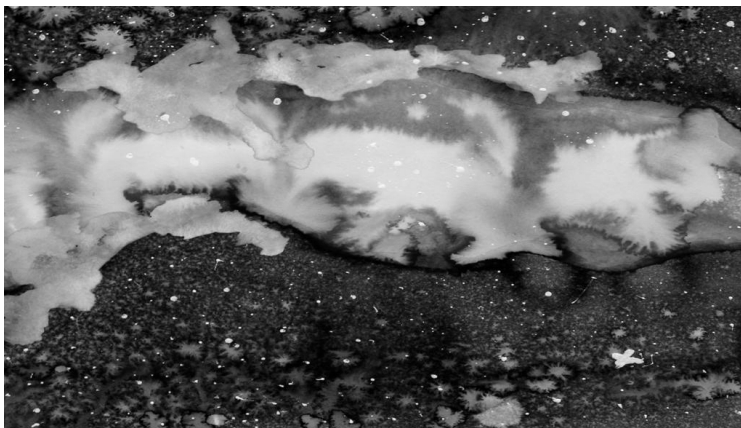
I can sense Jeremy feels the same.

The seal is as still as I am,
its stare still locked with mine.

I hold still
not wanting this beautiful creature
to leave
but then
it was gone.
It dived down
and swam away.

Jeremy and I just stood there in shock,
and then, calmly, walked out of the water.

When I was leaving,
holding hands with my mom,
I stopped and look back,
and for a moment I thought
I saw something.
But that
was probably just
my imagination.



Baltimore **by Frankie Gonzalez**

Violent acts of racism needs to stop, the violence of police, and rioters who constantly have acts in chaos, must come to a solution.

I have been watching the news about the riots in Baltimore. People have been rioting because Freddy Gray, a black American, was killed while being violently arrested by a number of Baltimore police officers, that were believed to be racist towards blacks. The people in Baltimore believe they are being threatened by the law, and they think a black mans death partly due to racism. They want to respond to the law with anarchy. They do not want to make a complaint or start a protest because that didn't lead to anything anywhere else. It is more intense because people keep dying. Although these people have been called thugs, they can't change what is going on because they do not have a voice. This is their way of communicating. The people feel they don't have a voice.

These riots have led me to feel strongly that racism must stop. It should stop because obviously it's not leading to good things. It hurts the small local businesses when they have to pay for property damage and loss. The people's loss was made by the rioters and the people who didn't care for other people's properties. Those people who've lost money for damages and burned down buildings, are also people who care.... probably. The question is, "What was their benefit?" People get angrier because they have no voice in what's happening in their community, so they take it out on the people; *their* businesses, and *their* local stores that aren't even part of the problem. What is the joke? The purpose? I think these rioters should have burned something else down, just not their own home for the elderly.

After these riots, I have been thinking a lot about violence - both the violent reactions of the rioters and the violence of the police towards the people that got arrested from neighborhoods like downtown Baltimore. Baltimore is only one of the many problems that has led to protesters. This problem, a lot of this violence been going on and a lot of people have been protesting around the country. Ohio, Tamir Rice was shot and killed in a park by police who thought Tamir was carrying a pistol in a park, but it turned out to be a BB gun. Saddest part, he was just a kid. He didn't even point it at anyone. Eric Garner was resisting arrest when he was caught illegally selling cigarettes in New York. During the arrest, a New York officer gripped a hold of the man, strangling him to the floor in a choke hold. The man couldn't breath and repeatedly asked the officer to stop, but he continued to strangle him. That man eventually suffocated and died. Police should arrest suspects and take them into custody, but they need to make sure that these suspects are alive.

If the acts of violent racism continues, there will be more protests, which means more curfews. Then there will be *protest* for no curfews, and announcements from the White House, and then eventually the Purge is gonna happen.



J. Wong

Wedding Tears

I come back from school my mother screams my name. I run to see if anything is the matter; my mom is tearing up as she tells me that my cousin Colleen has a boyfriend named Joe.

Later in the year I met him and found out some cool things about him, like he is a trainer for the New England Patriots! Then on Thanksgiving I got to wear his Super Bowl ring! I liked the guy he was good enough as guys go.

Then I came from a normal day at school and found out. That they got engaged! I saw a picture my mom showed me of Colleen's first reaction. I examined the photo and saw he was on his knees as is tradition, my cousin was laughing and crying at the same time. I was happy for her but that came at a price. Every time I saw my family before the wedding all I could hear was the word "Wedding" that word circles around my head, penetrates my dreams. Then I found out I was the alterserver. I had done that before but not at a wedding. I was nervous but over time I got over it.

Finally the day of the wedding arrived. We went to the rehearsal dinner the night before the wedding. Then we went back to the hotel and right to bed, we had a big day tomorrow.

The morning of the wedding, we get picked up by limos and thirty minutes later we were at the church. It was St. Cecilia's Church in Boston. The church looks like it was

handcrafted by God himself. It has a bunch of well-painted murals on the dome of the ceiling. There was a really long aisle from the back of the church to the altar. The seats along the aisle had flowers with ribbons. Near the altar, was very tall candle for the bride and groom to light later.

The wedding starts but before then my hands start sweating and then my toes start wiggling. Then, I stand up straight with the priest and the groom at the front of the altar waiting for the bride. My face was stern. So many thoughts were running through my head I was worried. What if I did something wrong and ruined the wedding? All I could hear were whispers from the stands and tons of relatives they were all waving at me. I was worried.

My cousin walks down the aisle with the biggest smile on her face, my uncle tearing up every step he takes as he walks down the aisle with his first child everyone could see his pain. But he knew that she was going into the right hands. The groom Joe looked happy too as she got closer the happier he got. They finally arrived to the altar, he gives her a kiss and sits down. I give them both a wink and the wedding begins.

I was right in front of where the action was happening. I brought the Bible and other items up and down to the priest. My family makes speeches and everyone of the people in the stands were tearing up everywhere. Later on Joe and Colleen say their "I do's" and walk down the aisle. Then after the wedding in the back the priest gave me twenty dollars for helping him! I thanked him.

Now it's time to party! We all go in the room at the hotel and there are HUGE flowers on each table. We sit down and the DJ introduces the whole wedding family into the room. Everyone starts screaming as my cousin Sean got brought in while two girls were caring him in, it was funny then the rest of the wedding party got introduced and then Colleen and Joe came in Everyone Screams their name. We sat down to eat when I turn to the side and see my mom is looking left to right thinking about what this day meant. Then she started tearing up again once more.

By Luca Trentini



J. d J. de los Reyes

Tuba **by McKenna Kelemanik**

I seldom find a person who has not heard of the tuba. Everyone seems to be familiar with it, but there are few people who actually *know* about the tuba. Surprisingly, that big gold thing in the back row of the band or that huge tall bell poking up out of the back of a marching band holds a lot of importance. The tuba is an instrument that requires a humble player and a fair amount of skill. It is a misunderstood instrument.

When I started playing the tuba I had to get used to not having any glory. Tuba never has solos or melodies; it plays the base line. In Encanto - a song we are playing in band - the trumpet, flute, and alto sax have a solo. Plus the clarinets have a huge melody. The tuba however has nothing but the base line. What does that mean? It means that it is the timekeeper and that bottom of all the chords. People like to hear higher sounding instruments playing melodies and solos. However lower instruments are needed to play the boring parts and make the band sound more full. In most cases it would sound odd if the low instruments had the melody and the higher instruments had the baseline (There are a few exceptions). I had to learn to be humble to play the tuba.

The tuba is not as easy as it seems. I had to learn to have control over muscles I wouldn't normally have control over. I had to learn to control my diaphragm and tightness of my lips. The tuba takes a lot of air and I change the pitch primarily by tightening my lips. When I want to play lower notes I have to buzz my lips more loosely. If I want to play a higher note I have to tighten my lips as I buzz them. The tuba also has to be in tune. Rebecca Wellons -the band director at Wayland Middle School- says "it takes the most dedicated and solid person to play tuba because the tuba is the harmonic foundation of the band. If the tuba plays out of tune, the whole band will be out of tune." This is because the tuba plays the bottom of the chords in most songs; if the tuba were to be out of tune the notes played by other instruments that are higher in pitch would not sound right. For example, if there is a table with un-sturdy legs the table itself will not stand up right. It would be unable to support any weight; it would be pretty useless. The same kind of thing happens when the tuba is out of tune. The tuba is actually a rather hard instrument.

The tuba is a very misunderstood instrument. Many people do not understand how difficult it is and its importance in a band. Ms. Duesterberg says "I just have always associated the tuba with people who can't play anything else". Lorraine Horgan says "I

thought that the tuba was not a very important instrument in a band, I thought that it was just big and loud.” These could not be more wrong. As I said before, even though the parts the tuba plays are often boring, they are incredibly important in helping the band stay in pitch and in time. There are few people who really understand the tuba.

One day I hope that everybody can join me in loving tubas; and understanding their importance. Maybe tuba players will be given a bit more glory and attention for what they do for the band as a whole. Tubas are beautiful instruments that require a special person to play.



M. Wong

Baseball

When I was in fifth grade, I was playing a baseball game at Cochituate field. I was playing second base. So far I had not made any plays that inning but that was going to change. The batter walked over to home plate and set his feet on it. He was ready to hit the ball. The pitcher swung his hand and the ball shot down to home plate. The batter swung and made contact with the ball. A huge crack exploded through the air while the ball kicked up the dirt. I sprinted to the left towards the first baseman. The ball was rolling and bouncing up in the air. I reached out my arm as far as I could. The ball had bounced up and hit my glove. I caught the ball backhanded, which is hard to do because this way of catching turns your glove upside down. I felt the ball in my hand and took it from my glove as fast as I could. I made the throw to first base to get the batter out. Ever since that happened everyone on my team called me "Jake the Snake".

From this experience, baseball has become more exciting and important to me, and it's the best sport ever. I think baseball is the best sport because it is fun and engaging, it makes me work as a team, to communicate, and to practice my skills.

Baseball is a good sport because its fun and engaging. Anyone can make good memories while playing it or watching it. When I hit a home run it is a special moment and it is exciting. Last year I was playing in a game at the Town Building field. The pitcher was throwing fastballs. There were two outs and there was a runner on second. I went up to the plate and took a couple practice swings. I got ready to swing as hard as I could. There were two outs so if I got out in anyway, than the inning would end and my team would take the field. The pitcher threw the ball; I swung but missed. Strike one. The pitcher got ready to pitch from the wind up again. He threw. The ball was spinning and was low. It hit the center of home plate. Ball one. I stepped out of the batters box and took a couple practice swings. I stepped back and got ready. The pitcher was getting ready to pitch again. The ball left his hand. I could hear the whistle of the ball hurtling toward me. I stepped forward and with all my strength swung. Instantly the ball shot up. It was a mixture of a pop fly and a line drive. I sprinted to first watching the ball. The ball hit the net in right field. I started to jog to second, than third, then home. My team lined up at home plate all giving high fives and congratulating me. I had hit a home run! Baseball can also be fun and engaging if someone on your team hits a home run; it keeps people engaged because they are doing well. The fans watch their team win and cheer them on.

Baseball players need to work as a team to be successful. It's important to work as one team instead of each person doing there own thing. Doing a double play during a game requires communication and trust. For example, it was the second day of tryouts. I was playing first base and everyone else was either on second or shortstop. The coach wanted us to practice our double plays. The coach was hitting hard grounders to either shortstop or second base. My job was to catch the ball after they got the force out. I held out my hand and caught the ball. My hand shot back from the force of the throw. Double plays are actually pretty simple. You have three people that are involved. First baseman, Second baseman, and Shortstop. The shortstop is to the left of second base (which is the base in the middle) and the second baseman is to the right of second base. The first base man is to the right of the second baseman. If the ball is hit to shortstop the second baseman will run over to the base and the shortstop will throw the ball to the second baseman. Once the second baseman has gotten the force out the second baseman will throw the ball to the first baseman. The first baseman will catch the ball before the runner gets to first. This whole process takes about three seconds. Another important part of being on a team is not showing off, and having sportsmanship; it shows that me and my team are working together. As a baseball player, one needs to know what your teammates are trying

to tell you through the hand signals. Having communication with your team makes your team successful.

Some people think that baseball is easy but baseball takes skill and is hard to master. Baseball takes practice to become good at it. Hitting takes practice because you need to know the options of where you can hit it to get the best play. Pitching takes accuracy because you need to know how to hold the ball in order to get a strike. For example, My brother took me outside to teach me how to pitch one day. I remember he had me throw the ball at a trash can to improve my accuracy. Once I was accurate enough, he had me throw it to his glove. Finally, catching the ball takes practice, therefore one needs to know where to direct the glove to catch the ball. Practice makes perfect in order to do well in baseball.

Baseball can be really exciting during a game. Weather its the playoffs, the World Series, or a regular game. There are some epic moments that I can't forget. Even though I have been only been playing baseball for about five years now, I hope to play in college as a pitcher. If I'm lucky maybe the Major Leagues after. I don't know when or if I will stop playing baseball. I highly recommend anyone who hasn't played baseball to give it a shot. When I started playing, I would stare up and watch a cloud roll by for an hour. But now that I am older I can really get into the game and make some good plays. I remember my coach once told me "offense wins games and defense wins championships". So next time anyone is looking for a new sport to play, baseball might become a new hobby, or something fun to do during free time, or even a career. Baseball cannot just be picked up in a day; it takes practice and skill. Baseball players need to work as a team so the game is fun for everyone.



J. Schwartz

Whistler Mountain

Nathan Zhao

“The capacity to learn is a gift, The ability to learn is a skill, The willingness to learn is a choice.” — Brian Herbert

Ugh. Another fall. I slowly pushed myself up and made my way to the Magic Carpet Lift. I looked up, and saw the snow-capped peak of Whistler shining bright in the afternoon sun to my left, and a storm cloud brewing to my right. Uh-oh. That wouldn't be good. I shrugged my nine-year-old shoulders, and when I got to the hill, tried hard to bend my legs into a pizza cut, and once again, tasted snow.

I was on Whistler, the famed mountain of the 2010 Winter Olympics, to visit my cousins, sure, but mostly to ski. The problem was hadn't even learned how to after countless times on the Magic Carpet. But my dad was optimistic. He decided that I had to learn it the hard way, and took me up on the 30-minute gondola to the summit, the 7,350 ft peak of Whistler Mountain. What he didn't know is how hard the “hard way” really turned out to be.

The view from the top of the peak was amazing. The Eastern Canadian Rockies were right there before my eyes in all directions. Sun reflecting off the snow blinded my eyes, but I didn't mind. The buildings of Whistler Village looked like the size of peas. The massive Lost Lake looked like a small pond. The 3 “lion-faced” peaks of Tremor Mountain were right in front of my eyes. We made our way over to the green trail (the easiest) that went all the way down the mountain. It was way more than my dad and I had ever skied before.

“Are you ready?” my dad asked.

I took a deep breath, not minding the frigid wintry air, and replied. “Yes.” We took one last look at the stunning view, and pushed off the mountain onto the slopes, leaving the peak behind us. I kept repeating the same words to myself in my head: “Don't fall, turn in an s shape, don't fall.” And as I got the hang of it, I began to move quicker and quicker, the snow beneath my feet moving past me like a river flowing down a mountain. But still, every single person coming down passed us, and we had barely made it anywhere down the mountain.

But soon, the clouds moved in from the West almost like a child chasing after a toy and darkened the skies. No people seeming to be coming down behind us.

Uh-Oh. This wouldn't be good. We had heard earlier in the day that storm clouds were going to roll in and snow was going to be heavy, but that wasn't supposed to be until 5 PM! We had left the peak at 3! So, my dad checked his watch in the midst of the starting snowfall, and made out 3 bare numbers: 5:35. We had spent over 2 hours on the mountain, were now caught in the midst of a snowstorm, the sun was setting, and we had barely made any progress down the

mountain— it was my first time skiing! So I had to focus on the technique, and quicken up my skiing — fast.

And so stroke by stroke, pole dip by pole dip, we slowly made it down the mountain, my dad always there for me every time I fell, never stopping to help me. At times the snow blinded our faces and we couldn't see our gloves, but we kept on going, turn by turn, towards the lights. The bright and beautiful lights of Whistler Village.

It was almost 6:20 when we made it to the base of the peak. My dad and I put our frostbitten hands in the air, took our skis off our benumbed feet, propped them onto our exasperated shoulders, and headed into the comfort of Whistler Village.



A. McGah

Dumplings

by Jasper Hsu

*I want to eat a dumpling,
I imagine it,
steaming,
an ocean of juice,
so tempting,
I snatch it out of my cloud of imagination,
I take a bite out of it's soft stomach,
it's juicy blood pours out,
but my taste buds go crazy,
then I stabbed two wooden blades into it's body,
the dumpling cries in pain,
more blood pours out,
all over the china spoon,
it begs me to end it's suffering,
to ends it life,
so I do,
I gobble it down,
whole,
the dumpling is gone,
the dumpling is dead*

When not to drink

By: Porter Moody

I was just standing up at the end of
lunchtime,
getting ready to sprint outside
into the freedom of recess.
But one of us decided to take a sip of
his milk.
As he tilted his head back
someone told a joke.
I watched as the muscles in his face
tensed
Straining to gulp down
the gigantic drink he must have
regretted taking.

Soon I could see a glimmer of reflection,
peeking out of his nose,
Which grew into a drop
That was fighting the gravity
Until it broke free.
It was followed by more, gushing out.
But before it hit the ground
the milk was intercepted
by an unlucky passerby.
With a small yelp
and a jump,
the unfortunate person ran away,
leaving me in hysterics.

“Me, Myself and My Hair”

“I love my curly hair,” “I hate it ,” “Is it real,” “Can I touch it? ,” “Oh no my comb is stuck.” These comments are frequently said and asked. People have many opinions on their hair, and so I went online and saw that most of them have mixed opinions. On some occasions people love it, but sometimes people might not. I went on the internet to see what other girls thought about their curly or wavy hair. Some people said “I love curly hair” and “I think it’s beautiful;” other people thought it was a pain to handle like how their conditioner always runs out before their shampoo, or they lose enough hair for 5 people every day. Others said that when they untangle their hair and some of it falls on the floor and they forget to pick it up then the next day they think its a spider and start spraying it with raid, and whatever they try to do to make it better just makes it worse or it never cooperates. Most of the time I dislike my hair because I struggle with it, but I have some days that I will absolutely love it because it defines who I am as a person.

I found the things that other people were saying about their hair intriguing because I have curly hair and could relate to the struggles too, but I love having my hair curly when it’s out (sometimes) or in a bun sometimes. Most people that like curly hair don’t have it, and ones that do like it have it and are tired of having to do many things to have it the way they like it. But having black hair is beautiful but hard to manage. Over all I think people have mixed feelings about it. With my curly hair I take hours and sometimes break a few things in the process of trying to get it up in a perfect bun or even having my hair down, but then trying to catch the bus in the morning is a pain. I have to put a ton of products in my hair in my daily routine like conditioner, moisturizer, curl unleashed, gel, grease, oil shine, curl enhancing gel, cream, many different texture brushes, different combs with different teeth, and many more. I get up in the morning and put all these chemicals in my head and then see my hand full of hair or my fingers full of products. Sometimes I don’t get the results that I want but other times I do. Most of the times I leave the house with one hairstyle then come back with another.

One thing I’ve learned from my hair is that hair makes me who I am and describes who I am personally. Having curly hair says a lot about you like people may think that you as outgoing and bold, or happy and free from any and everything, another way people can see you as lazy out of your mind. One time I had my hair out curly and a kid had said to me your hair looks “crusty and dry”. Another time was when this adult with her kid came up to me and said “Your hair's really pretty you should were all natural again it complements your personality and pretty face” for the first one honestly I think that little girl was mad because she couldn’t do it herself.

I may love it I may hate it but at the end of the day it’s your best position and no one can change that. But I will say once again that having black hair is beautiful but hard to manage. People may say things like “I like it” or “I don’t like it” but my hair makes me, and I’m very happy and blessed with that.

**By,
Allyson Christian**

Robotics Competition

Jet Chung

Blood rising to my cheeks,
face reddening like a beet,
flushed with fear.
Heart pounding,
Thumping in my chest.
Feet locked inside the tape square on
the wood floor.
Waiting.
When would the judge announce
the start of
the next round?

Heart pounding,
Thumping in my chest.
I walked out to
the competition table.
Waiting.
When would the judge announce
the start of the match?

10...
The countdown begins.
9...8...7...6...
Is the robot positioned right?
5...4...3...2...1...
I pressed the starter button.
Waiting.
Would the robot complete its mission?

10...
Countdown to the end.
9...8...
The robot was halfway to the finish line.
7..6..5..
No time to wait!
4,3,2...
The robot was positioned to take the shot.
1! The robot shot!
SCORE.

Heart pounding,
Thumping in my chest.
I walked away from the competition table
back to my old friend, the square of tape.
Blood rising to my cheeks,
face reddening like a beet,
flushed with pride.



B. Clifford