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YOUTH EDITION

Little Pine Tree

BY EMERSON BURDETTE

Once there was a Little Pine tree and a big Old Oak tree. One day Old Oak cast a giant shadow over Little Pine. That caused Little Pine to get no sun. Old Oak's shadow covers him like a blanket. One day some woodcutters came to the forrest. They needed wood so they cut down old oak. Little Pine finally got to feel the sun's rays. But that night a big storm hit. And Little Pine got tossed around. He tossed and turned all night. Finally he manages to grab onto a path of soil. Little Pine finally relizes he would be better off with Old Oak. You should always be greatful with what you have.

Edward Jones
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*Shane Hunt: 2025 Forbes Best-in-State Wealth Advisors in South Carolina, published April 2025, research by SHOOK Research LLC, data as of June 2024.Compensation provided for using, not obtaining, the rating. The rating is not based on quality of investment advice, investment performance or client feedback.

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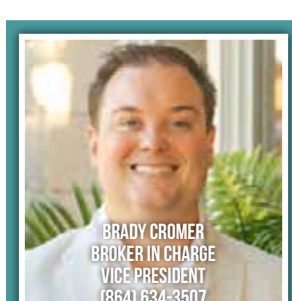

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Writerly Moves

BY ENGLISH II STUDENTS

Ky'Aija McKay
English II
Mentor Text: Scary Close: Donald Miller
Mrs. Lauren Hamby, Teacher

I am willing to love.
I am willing to cherish.
I am willing to speak.
I am willing to care.
I am willing to yearn.
I'm willing to be human.
I'm willing to be nice.
I'm willing to let the past be the past.
I'm perfectly willing to be the person I am supposed to be.

Kalana Donohue
English II Student
Mentor Text: Brendon Burchard - The Motivation Manifesto
Mrs. Lauren Hamby, Teacher

And when I decided that self-consciousness and fear of being judged were no longer going to be a part of my being. Fear is a state of mind. I decided to release it from my thoughts. We can choose self-love and confidence even amid our doubts.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING TO WEAR?

BY 4K CLASS

Jocelyn: My favorite thing to wear is a dress with flowers. It is yellow. I feel soft when I wear it.

Mia: I wear a princess dress when I dress up. My princess dress is yellow.

Ezra: I like to wear my Spiderman jacket. I like it because it is red like Spiderman.

Sadie: I like to wear my Minnie Mouse dress from the store. I wear dresses when it is not a school day. The dress is for special times.

Peyton: My piggy shirt. IT is a little bit brown and a little bit pink. It has a heart at the top and a tutu below. I got it from mama. I play dress up with that.

Kiara: A dress with a cupcake. It is like a rainbow. My mama buy it for me. I wear it at my house.

Eli: I love to wear my blue pajamas with dinosaurs. They keep me warm and comfy. My mom buyed it at Target.

Hamni: My favorite t-shirt. It is white, and it has princesses and one castle on it. I wear it when I go shopping sometimes.

Harper: My favorite is short sleeve shirts. I wear them when it's sunny and I play outside.

Harlan: My Sonic sweatshirt. It was a hoodie but my mom cut off the hoodie because I didnt want the hood. I just want it to be a shirt.

Lincoln: My pajamas. They are Sonic. My mama gave them to me. I like them because I like watching Sonic.

John: My dinosaur shirt. Momma buyed it at Target. Me dont remember what color it is.

Hayden: I like to wear black stuff because of Pokemon. My dad likes Pokemon and me.

I am Special

BY JAMES RYEA
2ND GRADE

Everybody is unique. There are many things that mak me special but the thing that's most special is that I have different voices. I have deep voices and high pitch voices. My deep voice gives me lots of power to my dogs and my high pitch voice makes my singing voice sound well. Some times when I get a part in a play and the act that I play has a funny voice, I am always great! Everyone is unique in there own way!

I am Unique

BY AIDEN CAPELL
2ND GRADE
CALHOUN

I am unique because I am brave. My brother taught me how to be brave.

I am brave when I kill a spider. Being brave does not meen I am not nervous.

Everyone should be brave when they try new thing.

Being brave makes me unique.

I am Lucky

BY JACK LAUGHRIDGE

I am lucky!
First I have a dog.
She likes to play with me outside.
She likes to breth.

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Please make sure photos include the date taken, location and names of people in the photos. If photos are submitted via email, make sure they are a minimum of 300 dpi and saved as a JPEG file. If photos are mailed, we cannot guarantee the photo will be returned. The editor of The Electric City News will make your article/story grammatically correct without altering its content. The publishers of The Electric City News reserve the right to withhold inappropriate content or photos.

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ACTIVITY BUS

BY PARKER FOLTZER
8TH GRADE

Come one, come all to the activity bus.

Full of joy, fun and air conditioners that can be quite sus.

We laugh till we cry as we prepare for our practices at Hanna.

However, sometimes it feels like we're riding in a mobile savanna.

From roasts and burns to joyful noise, all we do is play blasting rap and talking sports, for us is a normal Thursday, no matter how cliché.

Most kids ride all of the weekdays.

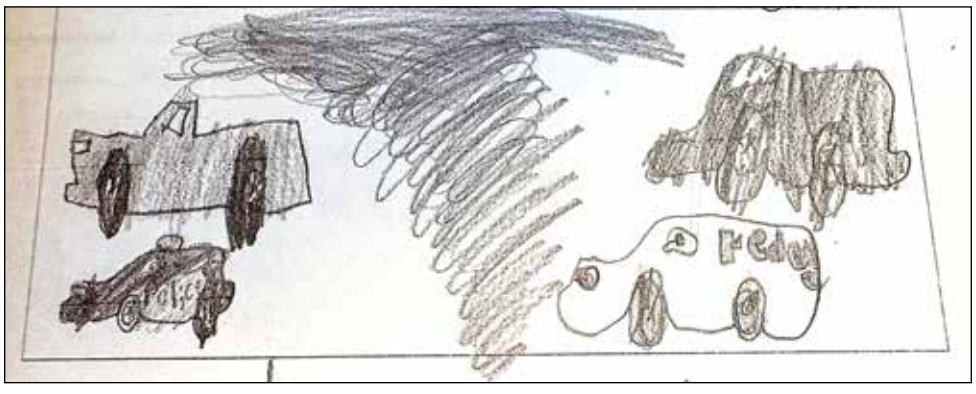
Activity bus. Chaos. Sheer chaos. That's what it is, every day. The air is thick and hot. Everyone squishes into the aisle, hoping the bus wouldn't run out of room before they get a seat. You look for your friend hoping they saved a seat for you. If you're lucky they did, if you're not then the bus filled up to fast and you're both forced to sit with someone you don't know. Today you're lucky and get to sit with your friend. You attempt to settle in to the seat beside them but its no use, you're not going to get comfortable. You and your friend are squished together like two peas in a pod. You look across the aisle, the kid on the other side immediately pulls out his phone, and puts on his headphones in an attempt to lock in for practice. You turn back to talk to your friend but the moment you open your mouth random rap music erupts from someone's phone on the bus. So, instead you pull out a snack, you'll need the energy for practice. After a long, hot and noisy 15 minutes, the bus finally arrives at T.L. Hanna. You try to stand up, like everyone else, but your bags get you stuck in between your seat and the one in front of you. You try again, this time you don't get stuck. You maneuver your way down the aisle, and off the bus, remembering to tell the bus driver "thank you", and you're off to practice. Finally!

Rocky River Nature Park

BY SCARLETT RODES

Rocky River Nature Park is a beautiful park to be at and there are lots of trails to explore. I love to see the green trees and one time I saw a beautiful bird called a heron. I bring my dog and she loves to smell everywhere. Me and my dog run down the boardwalk and it is fun to see everything. There are a lot of butterflies in the Spring. One time I found a snake skin on the trail. You might even find one too. And I even got to help a scientist at their Citizen Science Workshop day. I caught a fish. Everybody should go to Rocky River.

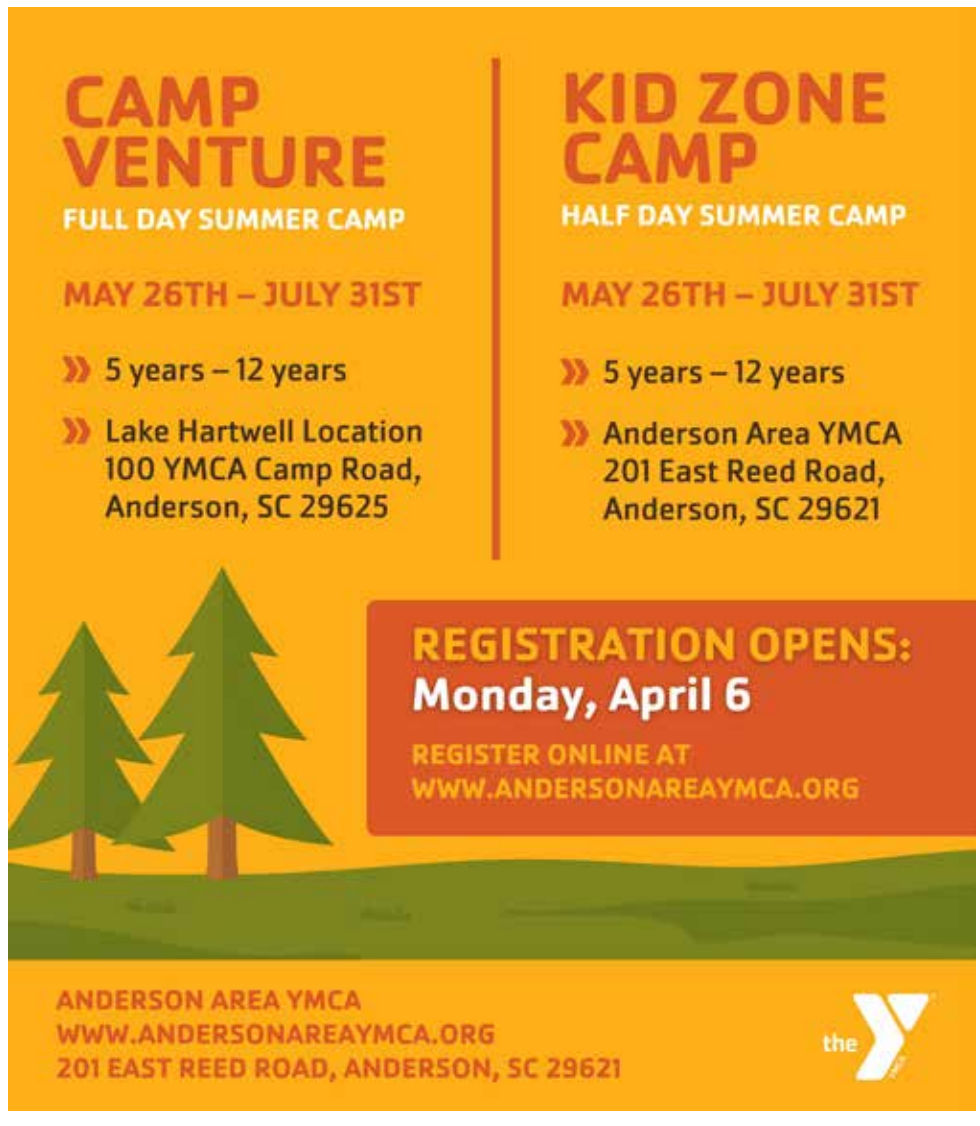
-for reference, Rocky River hosts several Citizens Science Workshops during the year. They advertise on social media. You just sign up and go. They provide all the equipment. It's pretty cool.



Tornados

BY CASTLE MACKEY
2ND GRADE

Tornados are cool.
Outside is very dark.
rain is very dark.
no one is outdoors.
always twisting.
doors are closed
outside during tornados are scary.
Sound very loud.



TENNIS

BY LAW CALDWELL

From playing tennis to teaching to competing for a state championship. For as long as I can remember, the courts wasn't just a place to play; it was my second home, my classroom, and the place where I bonded with my Dad.

My name is Law Caldwell, and my story doesn't just take place on the baseline – it lives in the space between being a student and becoming a leader.

Growing up, my dad was my coach. While other kids spent their weekends at the movies, we were at Cardinal racquet club under the hum of the overhead lights. He didn't just teach me the mechanics of a serve or the footwork of the directionals he taught me the philosophy of the game. "Tennis is 10% physical and 90% mental", he'd say during our water breaks. Being the coach's kid meant there was no getting around from the grind, but it also meant I had a front-row seat to his passion for the sport.

The real shift happened when I turned thirteen. That summer, the dynamic changed. Instead of just standing on the receiving end of the ball hopper, my dad invited me to stand beside him. I started teaching tennis alongside him.

At first, it was tough. I had to learn how to break down a swing that had become muscle memory for me and explain it to a six-year-old who never played tennis before. But watching my dad, I saw how he adjusted his tone for every student-firm but encouraging. Slowly, I found my own voice. I realized that teaching the game actually made me a better player. I had to understand the "why" behind every movement to help someone else master it.

Today, my life is a constant cycle of the sport I love. By day, I am a varsity high school tennis player, feeling the adrenaline of a tie-breaker and the pressure of representing my school. I've learned how to fight for every point and how to keep my composure when the stakes are high. But as soon as my own practice ends, the role shifts again.

I head over to Cardinal to teach. Seeing the game through the eyes of my students keeps me grounded. When I see a kid enjoy the art of tennis, I feel the same pride my dad must have felt watching me years ago.

Now, when I look across the courts and see my dad coaching a clinic while I teach beside him, I realize how much I have improved as a tennis player and a coach. I'm no longer just the kid chasing yellow balls; I'm a competitor and a mentor, carrying on the legacy he started. The court has given me more than just a home – it has given me a career, a connection to my dad, and a way to give back to the game that shaped me.

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THE GARDEN SHOP

Glochids and spines of prickly pear

Bombarded by boys

SUSAN TEMPLE
master gardener

Sometimes, it is simply happenstance that one gets to teach children about plants. I was cutting a prickly pear (*Opuntia*) a few months ago for a centerpiece for Anderson Arts Center's annual fundraiser. The theme was pop art, and it was quite a challenge to come up with centerpieces to fit that theme. While I was cutting a prickly pear growing on a vacant lot where I work, there were several boys playing across the street. One very outgoing, curious young fellow came to see what I was doing. If he wasn't chief of the neighborhood watch, he should be. He told me he had been stuck by the plant, what was going to happen to me for getting close to it, and asked how I was cutting it without getting stuck. Having learned the hard way myself, I told him it is not the big stickers that one needed to watch out for, but the little hairs. They get under your skin, but you can't see them to get them out. I explained that the fancy word for those hairs is glochids. He was not overly impressed. He was concerned about what to do if you couldn't see them to get them out. I did not have an easy answer for that and told him it may take scrubbing with a hard brush to get them out of your skin.

Within minutes, all his buddies came over to see what we were doing. Admittedly, being bombarded by five boys about 10 years old was unchartered territory for me. They all proceeded to tell their stories of being stuck by the cactus. Each of them was very curious as to what I meant by hairs. My new friend was proud to use the fancy word, and I was impressed that he remembered it. As I explained, they enthusiastically chimed in with their opinions of the situation. When I told them some people eat these pieces, called pads, there were boisterous reactions from each of them. The prickly pear wasn't blooming, but I told them to watch for the blooms and explained people eat those too. One boy asked for a cutting. I cautioned him again about the hairs and said maybe he should ask his mama. I struggled for a way out of giving him one, without success. I gave him a small one with the least amount of hairs. He seemed to understand all the cautions, and held it correctly at the cut end away from the glochids.

About that time, one of their mothers came to my rescue, or maybe her own rescue, as I'm sure that boy ended up with sticker glochids in his hands. I explained my position and apologized if later she would be dealing with a kid with cactus hairs in his hands. But she nicely said she understood. I told her I never had children and how the boys bombarded me, making fun of myself (and a case for myself). She simply laughed and walked away.

Celebrating Our Past, Igniting Our Future.

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GUESS WHAT, ANDERSON COUNTY?

The first Anderson County Courthouse was a small, square building constructed with logs. The first court was held in October of 1828.

March 17th at Noon - History of Agriculture in Anderson County with Clemson Extension Agents

Anderson County History Spotlight

A Colonel in the Army, General in the State Militia, and our county's namesake, Robert Anderson, fought at several key Revolutionary battles including King's Mountain, Cowpens, and Eutaw Springs, among others.

Explore our Revolutionary War Exhibit through June 2026.

In Our Revolutionary Era:

March 31st at 5:30 PM: Write like a Revolutionary: 18th Century Communication and Quill Writing with local history reenactor Bill Williamson.

ANDERSON COUNTY MUSEUM
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andersoncountymuseum.sc.gov

A FIELD GUIDE TO SCHOOL HALLWAYS

Today, we will observe the High School Freshman in its natural habitat. Notice the large backpack and the nervous way he walks close to the walls with his head down to avoid eye contact with seniors. He seeks out other large backpacks, hoping to find strength in numbers, but finds he has made a wrong turn and wandered into a part of the jungle where none are to be seen. He picks up the pace and quickly turns a corner, only to collide with the rock-hard belly of a giant with a jersey number.

Neal Parnell

He'd heard of these fully grown creatures with beards that have been in training since they were five and had their own car since turning twelve. He was frozen but somehow slowly looked up past the large jersey numbers and higher into the king-sized senior's eyes, where he saw that even the eyebrows had muscles. A crowd gathered, phones came out, and the fresh new meat took what he hoped would not be his last breath and said to the giant, "Physics, Huh?" The massive frame hunched forward, bearing down on the now measly mound of quivering mush, and said in a low, rumbling voice, "What?" The freshman inhaled what would surely be his last and said," You know, Unstoppable Force, Immovable Object." Cameras flashed as the Colossus roared with laughter, and by lunch, a new Meme titled "Freshman vs Football God" had more likes than the cafeterias pizza.Never underestimate the power of WORDS.

Miles a force on mat for Hanna

High school wrestling isn't for the faint-hearted.

A high-school wrestling match includes three two-minute rounds, as long as nobody gets pinned or tech-falled.

"Those are the longest six minutes of your life," said Hanna High School wrestling coach Lance Abernathy.

Brian Hodges

All of that is to appreciate Malachi Miles, the Hanna senior wrestler who was a force this season.

"The best thing I can say about Malachi is he is 'all-in,'" said Abernathy. "He's not the biggest guy (in the heavyweight division) but he gets after the other guy."

That's noteworthy in a sport that is so demanding. Grappling with an opponent isn't for the timid. And you have to keep pushing.

The sport is gritty, sweaty, and about gaining leverage on your opponent and trying to pin him. Conditioning is crucial.

"I'm very quick and good at gaining top control and keeping my opponent on the bottom." Miles said.

"I love it. And I don't get tired."

Miles had several achievements for Hanna this season. He's listed as 6-foot-0, 260 pounds and had a 52-3 record. He was named region wrestler of the year and finished as the state runner-up in the 285-pound class.

He was an All-State wrestler, the 5A Upper State individual champion and competed in the North/South All-Star event, where he won both of his matches.

He also excelled as a right tackle on Hanna's run-heavy football team. The Jackets finished the 2025 season at 10-2 but lost in the playoffs to Indian Land on Nov. 21.

That cleared the way for Miles to focus on wrestling. He said it's his first love.

Malachi Miles

"I couldn't wait to get started on conditioning," Miles said. "If we had kept winning in the football playoffs, we could have played until Dec. 5. That would have given one day of rest before turning to wrestling. But I would have done it."

Miles is leaning toward Newberry College as his next destination, but a final decision hasn't been made.

Abernathy said Miles' best attribute is his work ethic. "And he's very athletic and quick for a guy his size," Abernathy said.

Miles said his senior season was gratifying after his junior year was derailed by injury.

"Malachi suffered a concussion his junior season," Abernathy said. "He was ruled out of the in-state qualifying.

"We feel like he could have been a state placer that year," the coach said.

Miles began as a ninth-grader as he competed in six matches. His sophomore year, he competed in 24 matches and was growing in confidence.

"I knew I had a lot to learn, so I began going to the Palmetto State Wrestling Academy," he said. "I learned a lot. And Hanna assistant coach Chris Blake, who goes about 260 pounds, pushed me during my practice workouts. And teammate Riley Lewis was a big help."

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SUPPORTING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

MARY-CATHERINE McCLAIN RINER

Parents want their children to grow up healthy, confident, and prepared for challenges presented in life. Over the last decade, many families have observed how youth, teens, and young adults are carrying heavier emotional burdens compared to previous generations. Distress often stems from academic pressures, social media, and uncertainty about the future. It is a complex world and our youth deserve our attention. On the bright side, parents and individuals in the community play powerful roles in shaping and supporting the emotional well-being of our youth.

WHY YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Mental health challenges among young people are more common than you may realize. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in 5 children experience a mental health disorder in a given year. Surveys of teenagers have also found rising levels of persistent sadness and anxiety over the past decade.

SIGNS YOUR CHILD MAY BE STRUGGLING

Children and teens do not always directly share when something is wrong. However, they also give subtle cues and warning signs. Parents can watch specifically for the patterns below:

Withdrawal from friends or activities they used to enjoy

Increased irritability, sadness, or mood swings

Changes in sleep or appetite

Frequent physical complaints like headaches or stomachaches

Difficulty concentrating or changes in school performance

Talking about feeling hopeless or overwhelmed

It should be noted that not every single change signals a serious problem or concern, yet an opportunity to connect with your child/friend.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EVERYDAY CONNECTION

Research consistently shows that a strong, supportive relationship with a parent or caregiver is one of the biggest protective factors for youth mental health. Small, consistent moments—such as talking in the car, sharing a meal, or checking in before bed, help children feel safe, seen, heard, and understood overall.

When your child opens up, try to listen more than you talk. It can be tempting to jump into problem-solving, yet children often first need empathy. Simple responses like, "I'm really glad you told me," or "That sounds tough," can go a long way.

NAVIGATING STRESS IN A BUSY WORLD

The youth today often face packed schedules and constant digital input. Encouraging balance is essential. Make space for rest, unstructured time, physical activity, and offline connection. Modeling healthy boundaries with work and technology also sends a powerful message. One of my personal favorites is sleep (let me know if you need support sleep training your infants/toddlers/children). Sleep is especially important for supporting mood, learning, and emotional regulation overall.

REDUCING STIGMA AT HOME

How families talk about emotions shapes how children view mental health. Normalizing conversations about feelings, including your own, teaches kids that it is okay to ask for help. Avoiding shame or minimizing their experiences further encourages openness. For example, you might say, "Everyone has tough days," or "We can figure this out together."

REMINDERS FOR PARENTS

Parenting does not require perfection. What matters most is being present, curious, and willing to listen. Children are remarkably resilient when they feel loved and supported. By fostering open communication, modeling healthy coping, and seeking support when needed, parents can help their children build the emotional skills they need to thrive — not just today, but throughout their lives. There is significant benefit in simply providing a listening ear. Finally, remember, seeking help is not a sign of failure as a parent — it's an act of care, love, and kindness.

Mary-Catherine McClain Riner, Ph.D., Ed.S, M.S., is a Licensed Psychologist with Riner Counseling, LLC. Visit www.rinercounseling.com or call 864-608-0446.

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$649,000

On Lake Secession - 1.62 Acres. Dock in place. Home has an attractive 2 Story Foyer with approx. 3200 Sq Ft, 4 bdrms, 3 Full Ba. Primary Bedroom Suite is on the main level. Home also features a formal Dining Room, Office/Study, Bonus Room, and Sunroom along with a deck and patio. 11 Waterford Pt
$550,000

Builder's home in Waterford Place - a Lake Hartwell development Master Builder Robert Broome built this home for himself. All Brick, 3 bdrms, 3 full baths, Hardwood floors in most rooms. Kitchen has White Oak cabinets and granite counter tops. There is also a 24x30 detached workshop with ample storage and shelving. 101 Landy's Lane.
$459,500

On Broadway Lake-5 Bedrooms with a Beautiful View of the Lake from the 24x24 Great Room. Enjoy having an exercise room plus a bonus room along with the deck and covered patio great for summer time entertaining. Dock in place plus a Boathouse. 2213 Broadway Lake Rd.
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$339,900

Versatile Commercial Property with residential potential on 28 Bypass. Functional layout that works well as a Residence, Office Space, or Hybrid live-work setup. 3 Bedrooms, 1.5 Baths. Features include new HVAC installed in 2024, ample parking for multiple vehicles, and a spacious backyard with mature trees. 1400 Pearman Dairy Rd.
$235,000

OUR GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER, POP JOHNSTON

BY STELLA AND CORA LAUGHRIDGE

Our great great grandfather had many names. Pop Johnston, Bill, William Calhoun Johnston, Mr. Democrat, Mayor of Anderson, and the "man in the white hat", just to name a few.

We have always heard stories here and there about Pop Johnston, but it wasn't until we started collecting old newspaper articles about him that we really learned about his amazing life.

It was interesting to learn that he was born in Honea Path, South Carolina to tenant farmers. He went to school, but he and his brother Olin were only allowed to go to school for one week and then had to work the next week. They followed this pattern of work and school through elementary, middle and high school. He was later married to Sarah Louise ("Mama Sarah") and had three daughters – Nancy, Ann (our great grandmother), and Peggy.

He was the mayor in Anderson for 14 years. He served seven 2-year terms and represented the longest tenure of any person who previously served as mayor of the city.

While he was mayor, he made some remarkable accomplishments. More than 100 miles of city streets were paved, the city's recreation center was built, and the workers compensation program was created. It was said that during his administration, he changed the image of a city mayor. He's meet anyone, anytime, anywhere to discuss even the most trivial issue because he believed that to the person presenting the complaint it was to them a legitimate issue. It was said that he was always willing to listen and everyone's voice mattered.

When he left public office, he had a desire to devote more time to their family furniture business, Johnston Furniture, that was founded by his father. People who loved and knew him said that he enjoyed sitting in a rocking chair on the front porch of the store on Whitner Street greeting those who walked by.

He will be remembered for the family and business man he was.

People often called him a "bridge builder", making a way for younger people to follow in his path. A local attorney says that Bill will always be remembered for his Christian character.

Bill Johnston was an incredible man who changed the ways of Anderson and paved a way for the future generations. He will be forever loved and cherished, not only by our family but the people of Anderson.

From left, Peggy, Nancy, Bill, Ann and Mama Sarah

RAINBOW SKYS

BY LAYLON II CAMPBELL

Watery skys going away, rainbow skys coming today, birds singing, birds chirping watery rooftops drifting firmly.

Water dripping on to my coat, water dripping on my head, people cooking on the grill outside instead.

Rainbow skys here today, grab a coat and lets play, let's look at the clouds, imagine a cat think of this and think of that.

Why all books should star animals

For this special Youth Edition of The Electric City News, I had the pleasure of partnering with my middle niece Macey. Reading is a big deal in my family (I know, shocking).

Sara Leady

My brother is always reading something, or at least making his way through a podcast. When I called to ask about getting the Niece Beasts to help me with this column, I was a bit surprised to hear that two of three aren't big readers.

The eldest, Noelle, might pick up something that's focused on soccer tactics or physical training, but she otherwise begrudgingly reads what she's assigned at school. The youngest Brayleigh reads here and there, but Brayleigh is the one to tell the story (likely on stage), so she doesn't need books. Then there's Macey. Macey LOVES to read.

Macey is in fourth grade and goes to Vestal Elementary all the way across the country in Portland, Oregon. We sat down on Facetime and I interviewed her about what she liked to read and what piques her interest when she's picking out a book. The most common theme of Macey's reading is the presence of animals (if playing for the Portland Thorns soccer team doesn't pan out, she wants to be a veterinarian). Macey also prefers funny books and loves if sports are included.

Macey's current favorite book is Marshmallow & Jordan by Alina Chau. She describes it as "a girl with a disability and how the elephant helps her learn to play basketball and swim again." She flashed me the cover and I assumed it was your typical middle grade novel, but it's in fact a graphic novel! The illustrations are delightful and whimsical while fully encapsulating what it means to have a disability or an injury (in the elephant's case), and how you learn to keep doing the things you love.

Macey and family have also been making their way through the new Harry Potter audiobooks that have full sound effects and cast. She said "they're a lot more interesting than some of the other books we've listened to." I laughed at this knowing my brother tends to listen to classics, political/history stuff, and podcasts – though I doubt he's having the family suffer through these. She said she's a Gryffindor, which I believe since she's absolutely fearless and fierce. But I also told her I wondered if her love of animals might sway her to her aunt's (my) house, Hufflepuff.

Another series she's really enjoyed is the CatStronauts in Space series by Drew Brockington. This is another graphic novel series that (you might have guessed) features cats who are astronauts. She's also really

enjoyed the Manga Bounce Back series by Misako Rocks, which follows Lilico as she moves from Japan to NYC. It talks about how that can be hard adjustment, but with the help of her trusty cat she learns to navigate her new country, bullies, and the pressures of a new school.

Noticing a common theme of books featuring kids who are dealing with some serious challenges and overcoming them, I asked why those types of stories resonated with her. My brilliant niece responded with, "It's nice to know you're not alone when it comes to being bullied or struggling with other stuff." Macey also spoke to how reading can let you learn a lot and experience new things just engaging with the story. Y'all, I wish I was as introspective and thoughtful as this kid when I was in college, let alone in elementary school.

She also added the books Catching Thoughts by Bonnie Clark and The Curious Why by Angela DiTerlizzi. Clark's book focuses on building the habit of catching the "positive thoughts" and letting go of the bad ones. DiTerlizzi's speaks to overcoming your fears and learning to live life curiously because life can be so much more fun that way. Catching Thoughts is a book Macey thinks everyone, including adults like me, should read.

My only contribution was the suggestion of Flora & Ulysses by Kate DiCamillo. I'm planning to send it to her as a thanks for sharing her favorite books and great insight into the importance of reading and diverse stories with me.

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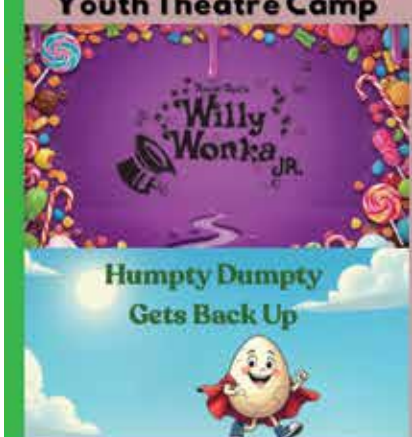

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SKIN'S: A FAMILY TRADITION

Rollins Guffee (right), Asher Guffee (left), and Grandpa Matt Thrasher

BY ROLLINS GUFFEE

I have been going to Skin's my whole life. My great-granddad, Skin, started Skin's hot dogs in 1946. That wasnt his real name, but one time he got a bad hair cut and everyone called him Skin and it stuck. I never Skin, but his legacy through my grand dad, Matt Thrasher, and my great uncles, Mike Thrasher and Wayne Harbin. We are on the 4th generation of family members who work at Skin's and are carrying on the family legacy. One of my favorite memories growing up is going to Skin's' office and getting to eat spoonfuls of chocolate icing that they used to put on the home made chocolate cakes. It's so delicious. Another favorite memory is riding around in the Skin's' truck to deliver cakes to all the stores with my Popi, Matt Thrasher. Skin's is a special part of my life and I am proud it is my family. Here is my order at Skin's' - 2 all the way with mayonnaise on top, orange crush in a can, and Miss Vickie's BBQ chips.

Local Famous Person

BY KINDERGARTENER COLLINS RASH

MY MEME

My MeMe cuke gud. I luve her mashd potatoze. She lovze me. She is famis.

United Way's Weekend SnackPack program

BY RICH OTTER

Most of us are fortunate enough to have proper nourishment for our children. We think of nourishment challenges occurring in distant places like Africa. But it happens right here in Anderson County. There are children who, without help, will suffer physical health problems and cognitive delays, including learning and memory impairment along with poor academic performance, without adequate nourishment.

Federal programs provide meals during the week at school, but not on weekends. The United Way of Anderson County, through contributions from individuals, grants, Second Harvest of the Metrolina, local churches, faith organizations, businesses and civic organizations are the weekend warriors against malnourishment. They furnish financial support and manpower to keep a vital program functioning.

That help is coming through a program sponsored by the United Way. It is a supplement to lunch assistance provided through schools and is known as the Weekend SnackPack program. Approximately 850 SnackPacks are currently delivered by volunteers for school children requiring assistance each week. They give the children a boost in life otherwise not available. Each weekend throughout the school year children are provided a SnackPack that will provide supplemental food to help a family get by during the weekend.

Teachers and guidance counselors work together to determine which students are food insecure. One in five children are reported to be living in homes where help is needed. The United Way program serves all five school districts. The program has been operating since 2012.

Volunteers from various organizations compile "kid-friendly, ready-to-eat food items" that are delivered to Anderson County elementary schools and slipped into student book bags for participating students to take home to assure they will have proper sustenance available over the weekend. The program operates throughout the school year.

The provided bag includes two milks, two juice and two cereals to cover breakfast. Two canned meals like chicken and rice stew, beef and spaghetti Os are for lunch, along with a snack and a yogurt pouch. Volunteers also include a note of encouragement in each pack.

Second Harvest acquires the food at wholesale prices and provides a pantry warehouse space to pack the meals. SnapPack Coordinator Becky MacDonald secures volunteers to pack and distribute the pallets of SnackPacks to the schools. School personnel then see to the distribution to those needing assistance.

Pantry volunteers

Ms. MacDonald said during the summer there are other county programs that provide assistance.

There is year-round concern in Anderson County to meet the need.

Community help can be given through a Buy-A-Box program through the United Way. Contributions of $50 buy a box to provide a weekend meal for eight children; $300 supports 6 boxes to help 48 children; half a pallet for $900 helps 144 children and $1,800 provides for a full pallet to help 288 children. That is equivalent to $1.57 a meal plus a great deal of volunteer help.

The United Way of Anderson County is involved in non-profit programs to increase healthy lifestyles, inspire a county health environment, decrease the number of children abused and neglected, and increase access to health resources. Its concentration granting nourishment to elementary school children throughout the Anderson County school districts has been and continues to be an enormous step forward.

Most amazing, has been the utilization of Anderson residents who have risen to volunteer their services and financial support through the United Way of Anderson County to provide a much-needed program. The partnership between the United Way of Anderson County and Second Harvest make it possible.

Every Voice Matters

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and New Foundations Home for Children is proud to partner with Children's Trust of South Carolina to bring awareness, hope, and action to our community. This year, our theme, Every Voice Matters, is a reminder that protecting children is not the responsibility of a single person or organization. It is a shared commitment that belongs to all of us. When every voice speaks up, every child has a better chance at a safe and thriving life.

This month, you may notice Prevent Child Abuse signs and pinwheels appearing in yards, offices, and public spaces. The pinwheel, the national symbol for Child Abuse Prevention Month, carries deep meaning. Sue Williams, CEO of Children's Trust of South Carolina, describes the pinwheel as representing the family at the center, surrounded by all the systems, resources, training, education, community supports, and therapeutic services that work together to help any family flourish. It is a powerful image — a simple, spinning symbol of what is possible when communities come together around their most vulnerable members.

At New Foundations, our work is rooted in helping children and families thrive. Every day, our team works with a therapeutic commitment to build stability, safety, and hope for those who need it most. We believe that children deserve to grow up in environments where they feel secure, loved, and empowered, and we know that achieving that takes all of us. Our collective responsibility does not end at our doors; it extends into every neighborhood, school, and home in Anderson County.

On April 7th, Anderson County Council will formally proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month across the county. This is a meaningful recognition that prevention is a community-wide priority. We invite every resident of Anderson County to join us in honoring this month, whether by displaying a pinwheel, having a conversation, or simply choosing to show up for the children and families around you. Every voice truly does matter, and yours is one we need.

To learn more or get involved, contact Julie Tovey at jtovey@newfoundationschildren.com or 864-260-4705, or visit scchildren.org.

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The 2026 Artfields Festival takes place in Lake City, S.C. from April 10 to May 2nd showcasing hundreds of artists across the Southeast. April 10 – May 2, 2026.

RAISING A TRENDSETTER

I have a son who just turned eighteen, and he's extremely into fashion—just like me. My son River has cultivated quite the wardrobe for a teen, mostly with his own hard-earned money, I must say. If I'm being honest, it took me a little while to get used to his baggy jean trend, but now I've grown to like it… as long as I can see his shoes, of course.

Kristine March

In case you didn't know, the '90s and Y2K fads are back in full throttle. I swear all the guys I went to school with wore some of the same pieces River has recently acquired when I was his age. It's like I've stepped back into a Delia's catalog! The cool kids these days are wearing everything from oversized crewneck striped T-shirts and flannels to chokers, slip dresses, clunky black platform peep-toe slides, and chunky Y2K shoulder bags. Oh my!

It's so interesting to see the return of similar styles, hairstyles, and glitter makeup. Metallic snap clip barrettes are making a comeback, along with rhinestones. Seeing all the girls looking like they're on the cover of Seventeen magazine from that era is quite charming—just adorable, in my opinion. They're even listening to the same kind of music we loved, like Radiohead, Jeff Buckley, and PM Dawn. River and all his friends are really into collecting vinyl records, which I think is super cool.

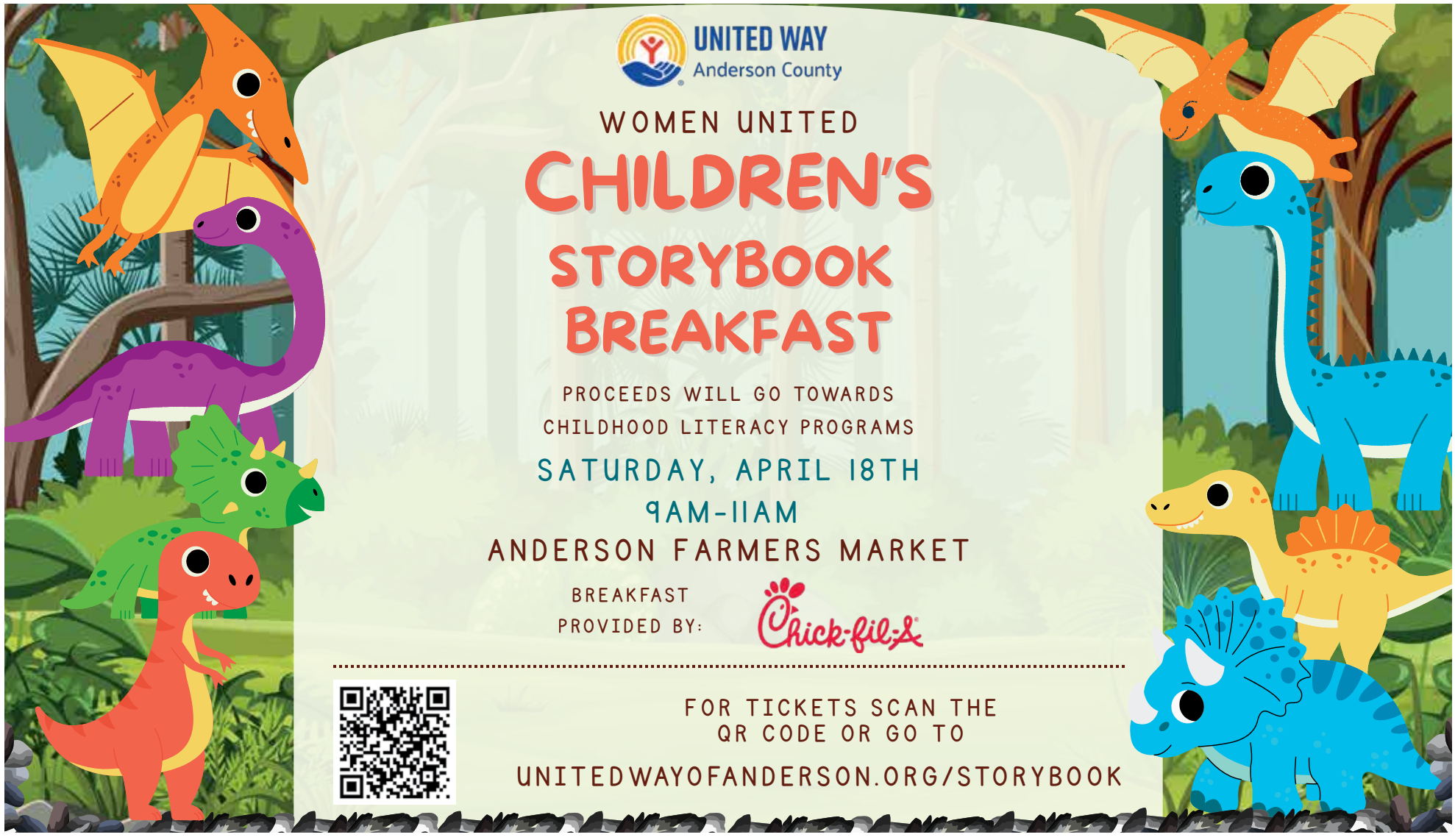
The only thing I don't always understand is their terminology. Their catchphrases can go right over my head—but I'm learning! Words and slang like "no cap" (no lie), "cooked" (in trouble or out of luck), and "drip" (a stylish outfit). It's like they have their own language, and honestly, it's really fascinating.

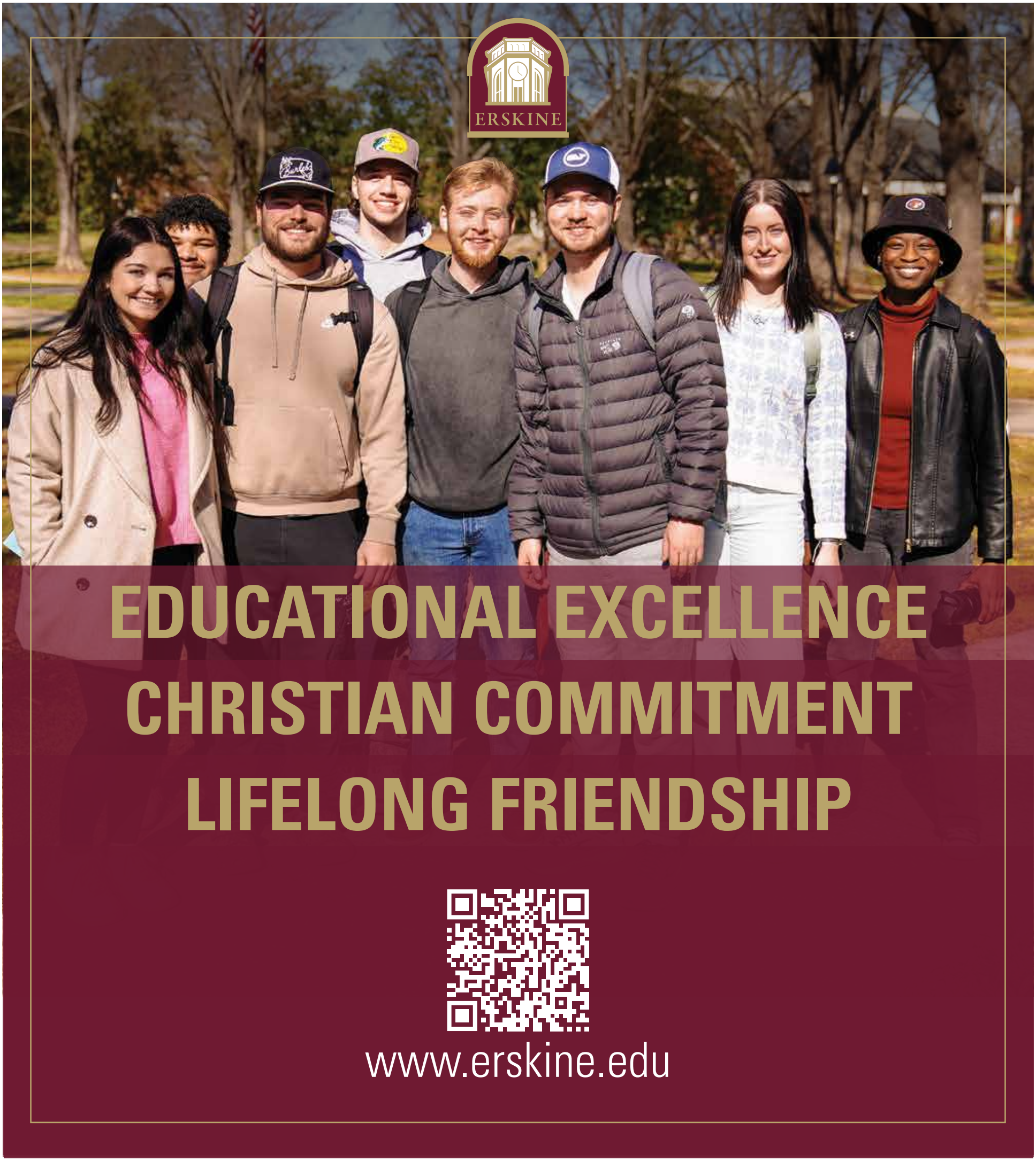
Another cool concept this generation has embraced is thriftiness. They love going to "the bins," huge warehouse-style spaces filled with previously worn clothes that they sift through. At first, I was a bit apprehensive—I thought he was bringing home mostly junk—but he's found so many designer sweaters. Plus, it's taught him to appreciate every aspect of shopping. Thrifting is great for both the wallet and the planet.

This new generation could teach us a thing or two. The vast majority seem to have old souls and a strong sense of integrity. I'm a proud mom! I truly think this generation is going to make our future a better place, and we're going to learn a lot from these beautiful young people. That's definitely something to look forward to.

So try to make it a point to have a good one-on-one conversation with your nieces, nephews, grandchildren, or your own teens. See what you can learn from them and gain some understanding. They're full of information you may have never even heard of. Like I said, you might just learn something new and valuable.

So remember: make the sidewalk your runway, kindness always matters, and—like they say now—stay frosty. Also known as "stay cool!" Lol. Laugh out loud, y'all.

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A LETTER ABOUT MY DAD

BY CHRIS WILLIAMS

My name is Chris, and I am an 8th grader at McCants Middle School. I was asked to highlight a coach who has impacted me and the first person who came to mind was Coach Jimmie Williams, the Head Men's Basketball Coach at Anderson University. Not just because I've seen him win everywhere he's coached, but mainly because Coach Williams is the best dad! And happens to be my dad.

When I was a new born, my dad was an Assistant Coach at North Greenville University in 2011-2015 where he helped North Greenville University win their first-ever Conference Carolinas Conference Tournament Championship in school history.

Coach Williams and son, Chris

Next, our family moved back to Kansas City and took the Assistant Coaching job at William Jewell College. In the 2017-2018 season, my dad was able to not only bring the Cardinals to their first winning season since 2010-2011, but he was also able to bring them 20 wins and were ranked in the NABC Coaches Top 25. Our family started homeschooling and as a five year old, I started making it to every practice. I would rebound the balls, cheer for the guys, or just watch practice even when they played past 10pm. My dad loved when I made it to practice. Though we thought we'd stay in Kansas City, my parents felt the Lord wanted us back in South Carolina.

So my dad took an Assistant Coaching job working with his friend, Bob Richey, at Furman University. Just like the other two schools mentioned, the third school my dad worked at (2018-2019) happened to also have one of the best seasons in Furman Basketball history. The team was ranked in the AP Top 25, upsetting teams like Villanova and Loyola Chicago who were in the Final 4 the year before. The next three years were more of the same record breaking seasons. We loved our time at Furman and we built strong relationships with the staff and players during our time.

In 2022, my dad took his first Head Coaching job at Anderson University and we just experienced our best season yet! We finished #5 in the national ranking and were the South Atlantic Conference Regular Season and Tournament Champions. And my dad was named SAC Coach of the Year!

I tell you all of this to show you how much of a winner my dad is. However, he is more than just a phenomenal coach. He is a loving, caring, and an amazing servant to our family. He loves Jesus, my mom, my three siblings, and me—with all his heart and would do anything for us. Our players are family! We make our team, our family! When my father is not working, he is spending countless hours with us and lets us join him in all that he does. I know my dad got coach of the year this year, but Dad more importantly you deserve—Dad of the Year. Thank you and I love you.

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Local Sports Ilostrated

BY MAX WHITE
3RD GRADE

My team was local lower league winner. It was our first time playing 10U we put so much time and effort into that soccer season. Also, I think a majority of kids should play sports because it teaches you teamwork. My football team won my last game the final score was 34-6 and I got a pick six and seven flag pulls. On Tuesday TL Hanna had a JV baseball game and varsity had games. TL Hanna is also having girl and boys' soccer practice, and my sister is on the team and they start games in a little bit. I think we should make an Anderson wrestling league so people can get into self-defense, and I want to also wrestle like my dad did. There is now also a lacrosse league, and I wish we had a hockey league.

Max and Kyle White

LOCAL HERO

BY CLARK TURNER
DAD MATT TURNER FIRE STATION
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My dad is a fire fitere. He puts fires out. He has five rateeoz. When my dadys stashen calls it makes a buzzing nois. He jumps al of bed and runs alt the door. His truck souds like this dddnn wnnn one time on the 4th of july. He had two fire calls. One was a back yard on fire. Tow I think a fins was on fire. My dad is usistint cheef at the fire departmet. He has a lot of plats for his helmet. He is very very brave and he is the best dad!

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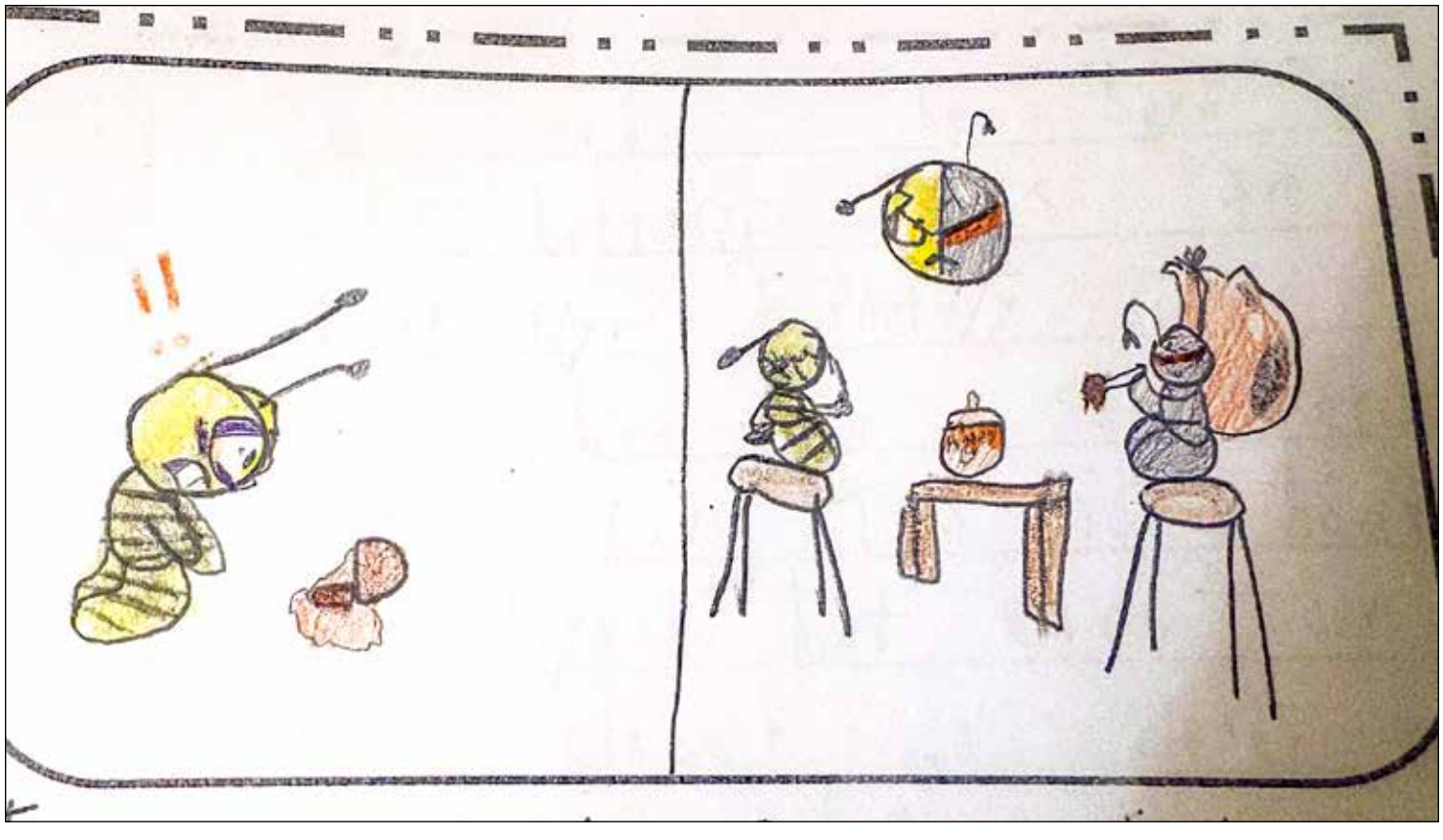
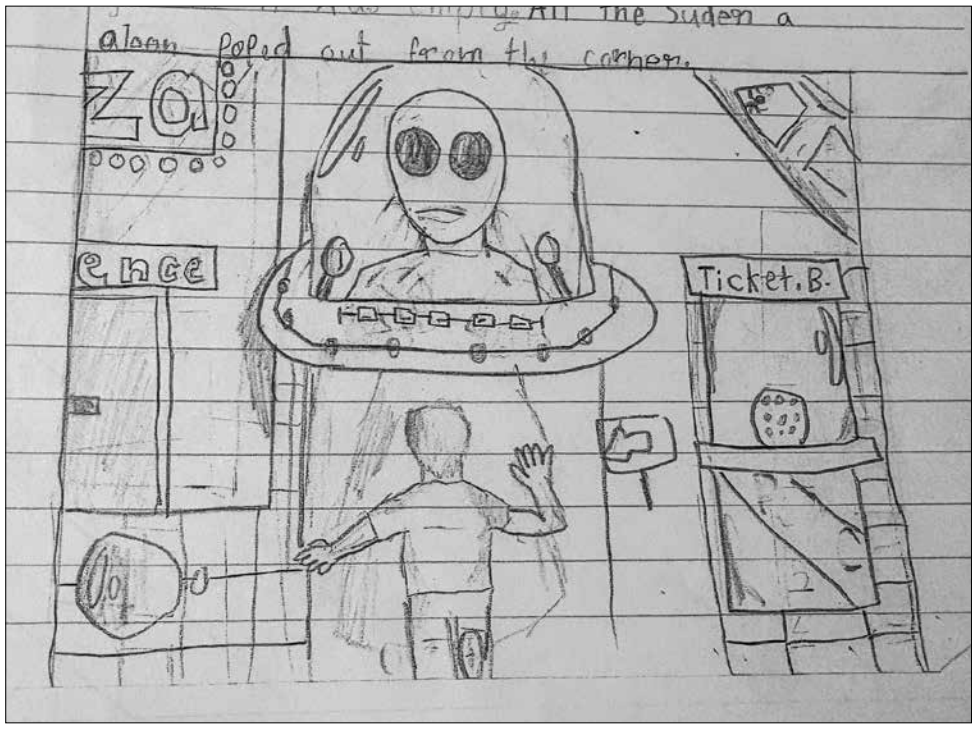
The Mean Bee

BY DELILAH BAGWELL
GRADE 2

The mean bee. Once there was a mean bee. He stole some honey from other bees.

Then he would giggle then fly away. But he spilled his honey on accident! He was worried. One bee says "Do you need help"? But the mean bee says "No" and scrambles off. But then a butterfly came she says "Hello". The mean bee says "Who are you?" Butterfly says "I'm miss butterfly" Butterfly is where mean bee cant see her. Mean bee says "This is bee vill not butterfly vill". But each day they got closer and closer until they became friends! They liked to collect honey together. They just sat on the chairs together and ate some honey. Bee good!





CHAPTER ONE THE PUDEL

BY WALKER HOFSTADTER
3RD GRADE

Once opon a time there was a little boy. He hated school. But one day wen he was at school there was a storm. His teacher let her kids out for five minuets. All the other kids were playing while he was staring at a weird pudel. When he looked in it he sall a hole new world.

After a little bit he dicided to step into it. He got sucked in! When he got in it was empty. All the suden a alean poped out from the corner.

HARPER ISLAND

BY CECE FINKE
2ND GRADE

Have you been to Harper Island? Let me tell you why you should go visit. First you can smell the ocean and the crisp sand in Harper Island. Next you can see palm trees that are fresh with good coconut water. Last you can hear the ocean and lots of noisy voices.

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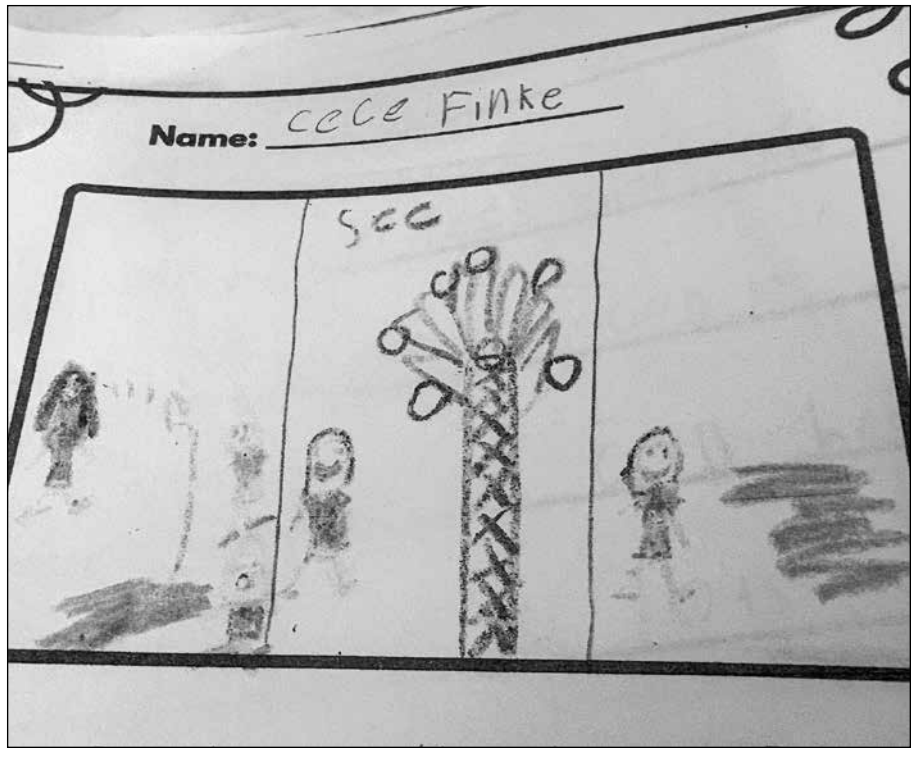

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A GIRL MILLY

BY AUBREE DAVIDSON
2ND GRADE

There once was a girl named Milly! She was a pretty girl. But she did not have any friends.

She was lonly She also had an annoying brother. She lived in Kansas. She wanted to play softball but there wasnt a soft ball feld. So she could not play so she felt blue. Her brother would say, "you cant play softball." She had a softball but she would not beaval to catch it.

So her brother would make fun of her. Also she had a puppy. She would always throw it to her puppy. One day she lost her soft ball. So she cried and cried. She loved her soft ball. She was roowend. Then her puppy came to her with the softball and finily was happy again. There was a big storm coming. So they disited to move to south carolina. It took them 1 day to get there. When they got there Milly said "hey look there's a soft ball field" She was so happy. So she finily got to play soft ball. Her brother wouldnt make fun of her any more. She also made a lot of friends. She was happy as a mouse. The end.

The Runaway Lizard

BY ZOE HENDERSON
5TH GRADE

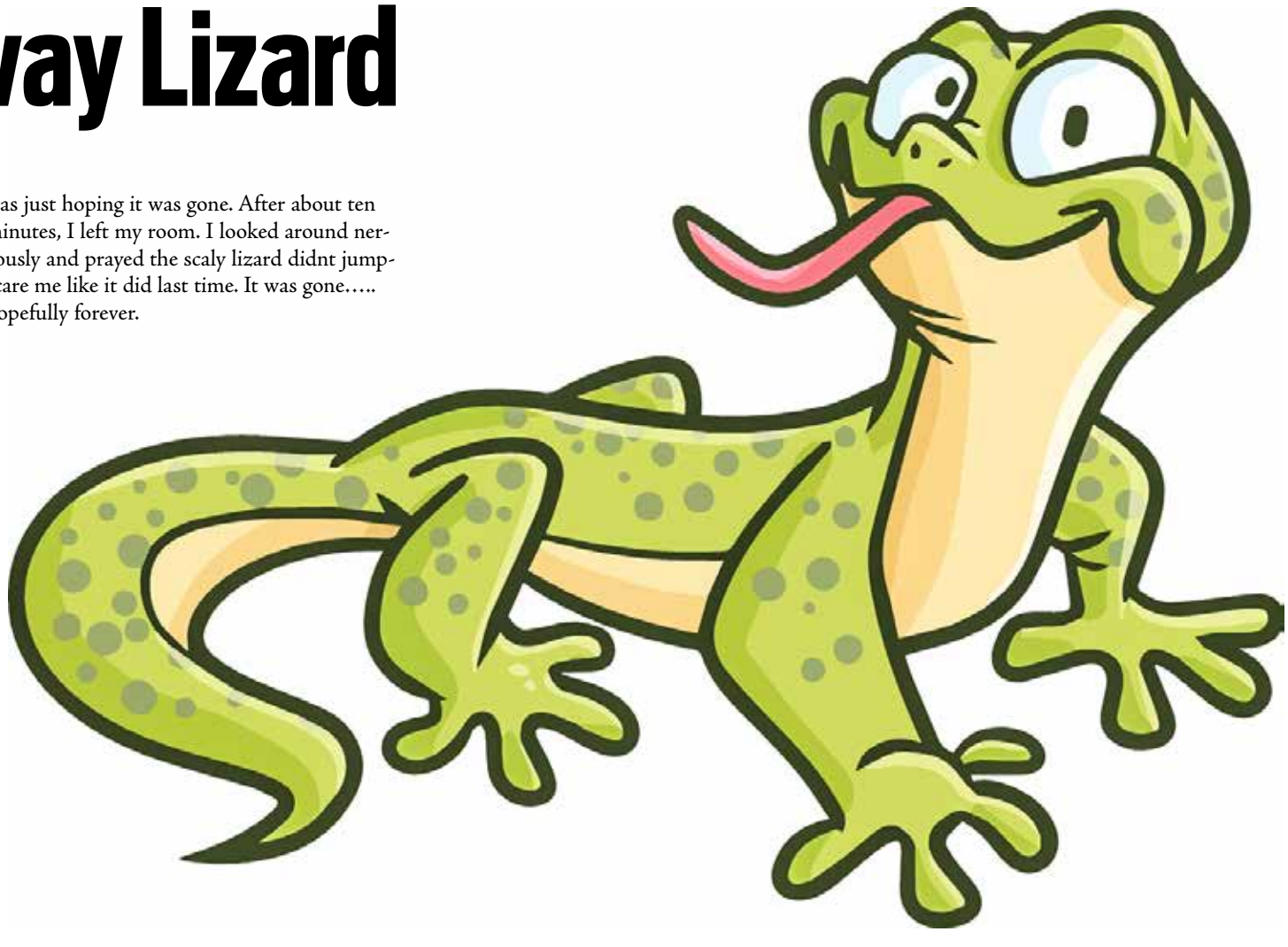
One hot day at home, chilling in my living room, just sitting on the couch, relaxing with my mom, we heard an aggressively loud noise and BOOM! A lizard popped up out of nowhere! My mom got up from the couch, dashed to the kitchen and ran up the stairs because she is afraid of lizards.

Then there I was, FACE TO FACE WITH A LITERAL LIZARD! I never knew this would ever happen to me….EVER! I just knew I had to act fast.

The first thing I could think of was to race to the kitchen and grab the broom, so that's what I did.

I scurried to the kitchen, grabbed the broom, and sprinted back to the living room as fast as I could. I whacked the lizard as hard as I possibly could. Then it disappeared.

I looked around, wondering where it could have gone. I kept looking, even peeking around corners to find it, but then…..ahhhh! The lizard ran up the wall out of nowhere, but this time I didn't think twice. I sprinted up the stairs to my room and didnt look back. I was just hoping it was gone. After about ten minutes, I left my room. I looked around nervously and prayed the scaly lizard didnt jumpscare me like it did last time. It was gone….. hopefully forever.



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