

## Gone

By Haley Aylward

Crossett Brook Middle School, Grade 8

I couldn't help but listen in. I just knew something was wrong. I crept down the stairs and peeked through the railing. I was extra quiet so I wouldn't get caught sneaking out of my room at bedtime. I could hear my mom's voice echoing from the kitchen. All of a sudden, a loud gasp. My jaw dropped even though I was clueless about what they were talking about.

"Is she alright?" my mom asked in fear. That's when my heart started beating faster and faster. I could hear my head throbbing, and sweat dripped down my face.

"I can't believe she's gone." I could see my mom's head drop to the counter from where I was standing. At that point I stopped my fussing about whom I had lost.

I quietly made my way up the staircase, and to my bed. I didn't need it in words to know someone I loved was gone. I would figure it out soon anyway. That night I stayed up wondering who it could have been. I couldn't help but cry every time I thought about it.

A few days later I found myself sitting on a church bench at my best friend's funeral. I couldn't believe four days ago we had been sitting in the old oak tree in the backyard, reminding each other we would always be there for one another. As I walked out the church doors I looked up at the sky. It started to pour. I know she is still here for me, and reminds me to live everyday like it's my last.

## Vocal spikes

By Megan Perry

Crossett Brook Middle School, Grade 8

"Look at her."

"She's so fat."

"Funny to watch in P.E."

The comments I hear that I know are about me have usually been like these. People mock and insult me when they think I can't hear.

Snide comments come from behind your back and not to your face. If you say something, others repeat it in a mocking voice. Any action you make is monitored just so someone can make their friends laugh.

The words and comments linger in your head for hours, days, weeks or even years. They are so harsh that people start to doubt themselves, pity themselves and even kill themselves or others. It's all because of these hurtful, not-so-silent killers.

I know that I will try to stop back-stabbing and insulting people when I think they can't hear. At least I'll try to stop killing with vocal spikes.

## 10-year-old in coma after climbing steep incline

By Jordan Cannon | *The Schoolhouse, Grade 6*

Joan Carter, a young resident of Dover, set out Tuesday evening on her bike, totally unsuspecting of what lay ahead of her. Parents Mary and John Carter went with her, and the family enjoyed a lovely picnic near a covered bridge. As it was getting dark, Joan was very anxious to leave. She went across the few rocks to the muddy and steep incline, leaving John and Mary to savor the last minutes before the sun plunged behind the Adirondack Mountains.

As the sun slipped away Joan was experiencing quite a fair amount of distress. She was desperately trying to scramble up the path while wheeling her bike beside her. Slipping on comfrey leaves and mud Joan fell, ending up with her bike on top of her. The blow forced Joan backwards and onto a rock, where she struck her head and tumbled into the roaring water.

Mary and John, who had been slowly ambling their way across the rocks to the path, saw their daughter disappear into the angry water. Quickly, slipping and sliding, they hurried across the rocks to their flailing daughter who was pinned between two jagged rocks. Whipping out his newly acquired cell phone, John tried to call 911, but to his

dismay he discovered there was no reception. Scrambling up the slippery path which had brought such a terrible fate upon his daughter, he ran pell-mell in every direction, searching desperately for reception.

At last, finding it on the roof of the bridge, he stood perched precariously, gasping the course of events into the phone. When he was through he wondered how to get down. In his haste, he slipped and fell into the gurgling water, but was quickly pulled out by the rescue team that had just arrived.

He was laid down and comforted by Mary while Joan was un-stuck from the jagged rocks. The family was brought to the hospital immediately. Mr. Carter received only a major shock and a number of bruises, but his daughter is still in a coma and has a broken arm and leg, not to mention an unaccountable number of bruises. It is said by the best doctors that Joan will likely wake up in the near future, her bones will heal and John will recover soon enough. As for Mary, she hovers around the hospital like a shadow, and has made it clear that she does not plan on going near the covered bridge for quite a while.

## New species found!

By Nina Cavender

Crossett Brook Middle School, Grade 8

Scientists have recently discovered a new species of chicken. They were hiking up a mountain in the Amazon when they came across an animal. The animal was a purplish-blue iridescent color and had the body of a chicken. But the scientists noticed that it was a carnivore. It would use its long tongue, like a frog, to catch bugs and even small rodents!

A scientist studying the creature said that when they were hiding behind a tree studying the animal, it gave off a mating call they had never heard before. They described the sound as resembling a cow's moo, mixed in with a dog's bark." Barooooo!!!" The scientists have decided to call this new chicken species, "Randomcis Weirdilis."

## Local boy wins contest

By Lane Clark

Crossett Brook Middle School, Grade 8

Billy Jones won the local hotdog eating contest at the Rail County fair. He out-ate his competitors — all men over 20 years old — by eating 63 hot dogs in 10 minutes. As he neared the end the whole crowd shouted, "Go Billy!"

Billy is only 11 years old. His mother says that he has always been quite the eater, but this is something she never thought he would do.

Billy will compete for the national title next month against champion Chet Brownings, whose world record is 70 hot dogs in 10 minutes.

### Next Prompt

**Object.** Write about one object that defines you — or someone you know. Tell a story about why it is important to you (or them). **Alternate: The bus.** Write a story that takes place on a bus. **Due Friday.**

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## What are they saying?

By Lauren Alexander

Crossett Brook Middle School, Grade 8

By the locker

stands the heartbreaking boy and the crushed, naive girl.

She has that look on her face, like she just wants to run away and hide forever. "I'm sorry but, uh, I think we should just be friends," he says coldly.

At the middle table in the cafeteria sit the gossiping girls

doing what they do best:

Flipping their hair

and applying that bright, pink lip gloss that makes them feel so cool.

"Oh my gosh! I know right?"

She is so annoying.

And by the way, have you seen her shirt?"

Ha! why would anyone wear that?"

On the field of soccer goals

are the dedicated players.

"C'mon turn and shoot! Shoot!!!!"

Running,

beads of sweat forming on their noses.

That anxious feeling in their stomachs

as they put everything they have left in them into scoring that winning goal.

And in the hallway

are all the friends,

talking as fast as they can before class.

"Yeah I know,

I miss summer too,

but it's over

and school is here."

"What did you get for problem 7?"

"I think I lost my homework."

"We had homework?"

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