

Farming

Each year Young Writers Project asks students to write about farming and selects the very best among their submissions for cash prizes. Following is one of the many entries we received from Enosburg students last spring.

I hope we can last

By Devin Parent

Cold Hollow Career Center, Grade 9

People say farmers don't work a lot and have a lot of time off. Not true. You only have a limited amount of feed and you are lucky if you can sell any of it. The money milk brings in doesn't cover a lot of grain, farm mortgage, tractor parts and other stuff you need. Many people do something else because farming can't pay for it all unless the farm is big. My grandfather has farmed his whole life. He was born on the farm he still farms.

Everything I know about farming I have learned from my grandpa. I have learned how to drive a tractor, milk cows and a lot of different things, and I will keep learning for a long time. My grandpa has to keep doing maintenance on his farm and a lot of money goes into the farm, especially for diesel tractors and the grain bill that costs a lot of money. We go through lots of diesel even though we have a smaller farm than other people. A lot of people are going out of business. I hope my grandpa is not one of them.

I hope we can last through the year with \$11 milk.

Those evil, little bugs

By Nick Ashline

BFA Fairfax, Grade 7

"Oh gosh, they're back!" said Seth. "The evil mosquitoes are back. Why are they even alive? There are no benefits to having them alive. All they do is bite you and suck your blood. Then you itch for the rest of the day. I will run into the woods."

Seth ran into the woods. It was very dark. Most of the light was hidden by the trees. It was damp and cold. He ran to a tree as he caught his breath. He turned around and saw that a mosquito swarm was heading his way. "Oh gosh, they're back!!"

"Where did Seth go?" Brandon said. "I was supposed to meet him at the park. Maybe he is late or something. Oh well, I guess he's not here." Brandon decided to take the short cut through the woods. A couple of mosquitoes tried to land on him, but he was moving. He saw something move. Brandon went toward the moving object. "AAAHHHH!" both boys said as they saw each other. Seth was all bitten up by those terrible mosquitoes.

"Where were you Seth?" Brandon asked. "I was attacked by a swarm of mosquitoes," Seth replied.

Brandon was a little confused, but mosquitoes do follow you a lot. Brandon and Seth left the woods to go home and get their fishing gear and head down to the jetty.

"Stop scratching those bug bites," Brandon said.

"But you didn't get bitten up like me now, did you?" Seth said. They arrived at the jetty. There was no one else there. They got right to fishing.

After awhile, it was getting late so they decided to head home. The boys slowly turned around and there was a swarm of mosquitoes heading their way.

"Oh gosh, they're back!"

YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT

building a generation of better writers



BRIAN MELTZER, Essex High School

Meltzer writes about this photo of a hummingbird at the feeder: "The theme of this photograph is movement. I achieved a fast shutter speed by using natural lighting."

STUDENTS: Send us your photos; for more go to youngwritersproject.org

Welcome to the third weekly installment of great writing by area students as part of a partnership between the *St. Albans Messenger*, the Young Writers Project, area schools and the many talented young writers in our communities. Each week the *Messenger* will feature work from students in Franklin and Grand Isle counties.

Young Writers Project is a Vermont nonprofit dedicated to helping students improve their writing. Students submit work each week — responses to YWP prompts or general writing — and YWP selects the best for publication. YWP maintains a safe, civil Web site for students at youngwritersproject.org (where all work is submitted). And it creates Digital Writing Classrooms for schools to use as part of the curriculum. Thanks to support from FairPoint Communications, digital classrooms are operating at Enosburg Falls Middle School, St. Albans Town Educational Center and Grand Isle School.

Today's entries: Submissions in response to the prompt: "Oh gosh, they're back ..."

My paint job

By Ashley Sanders |BFA Fairfax, Grade 8

"Oh gosh she's back," I quickly dropped my paint brush, locked my door and started cleaning up as I heard the front door open. When my friends Andrea and Mariah finally realized why I was freaking out, they helped too.

My mom knocked on my bedroom door and said, "Ashley open your door." It was stupid for me to say "No," but I had to do some quick thinking. I ripped up the mats off my floor, closed paint buckets and decided to throw them out my window. I tried vacuuming and scrubbing paint splatters off my new carpet but they just wouldn't come off.

When Mom wouldn't stop pounding on my door I finally, shakily, let her in, closing my eyes, expecting to be screamed at. Of course I eventually was yelled at after she realized I painted my room green, orange, purple and pink. She was so mad because when I had first asked her if I could paint my room she had said no. So I think she was madder at the fact that I went ahead and did it, especially when she wasn't home. I also got paint all over my new carpet. She looked at the walls, looked at the carpet, looked at me, looked at each of my friends and said, "Ashley, WHAT DID YOU DO?"

That's when I sarcastically said, "Surprise." She did not like that at all. That's when she exploded. The whole ride to the hardware store to get paint all I heard was, "What were you thinking? I told you no. That was a brand new carpet. It was a waste of paint." From that day on I realized if you're going to do something bad you should make sure that you have a spare pair of earplugs first.

When we got home someone just had to be waiting at the door. It was my landlord. Mom had told me that the reason she said no to painting my room was because my landlord said that he did not want us to paint. My mouth dropped when she said I had to tell my landlord that I had painted my room four different colors, and on top of that there was paint all over the carpet. And, oh, I forgot to mention that it was not a very good paint job.

After I told him that I had painted my room his face looked so scary I wanted to run. He said, "May I see this paint job you have done?"

I tried to make an excuse like, "Oh it's not finished and my room is really dirty," but, of course, he insisted on coming in. When he walked in my bedroom door he got so mad he told my mom that she had to do it over again and had to buy a whole new carpet for the room.

"Can this day get any worse?" I thought. It did. When I walked onto my back porch I realized that when we had thrown the paint buckets out the window they opened when they landed on the porch. So now my porch was four different colors that wouldn't wash off. By the end of the day, I had finally finished repainting and scrubbing the carpets. Then I sat down and rested.

Now I look back on this story and smile because it actually could have been a lot worse. Thanks, Mom, for not grounding me.

"Oh, gosh, they're back!"

By Zachary Roy
BFA Fairfax, Grade 8

One night when the moon was as hidden as a bear in the tall thick ferns, a police officer named Sargeant Roy was patrolling the roads of Wasilla, Alaska. He was driving down the road when his radio went off. "Armed Robbery. White male, 21, Alaska Road," said the dispatcher.

Sargeant Roy slowed his car down and thought to himself, "Oh, gosh, they're back. That must be the same robbers as the last five robberies in town. They always seem to get away."

Next thing he knew, Sgt. Roy was speeding down the road with his blue lights on. The blue lights seemed to be as bright as a night game at Fenway Park. He did not turn on his sirens for fear that the robber would hear him coming and flee the scene.

As Sargeant Roy got to the scene he heard gunfire bursting the back window of his police car. He ducked and frantically called on the radio for help. "I need back-up. Shots fired. I repeat, shots fired."

Luckily back-up got to the scene within a minute, only to find that the robber was shooting from the bank. Both officers got out of their cars, using their doors as shields. Just then the SWAT team arrived and jumped out of its van. Some were armed with shotguns and some with M16 assault rifles. One SWAT officer threw a tear gas canister into the bank at the robber. The bank filled with tear gas, leaving the robber's eyes burning. This was their chance to get the robber. The whole SWAT team started walking over to the bank, guns drawn. Sargeant Roy walked over too, with his shotgun drawn.

Sargeant Roy yelled at the robber, "Police! Drop your weapon." The robber did. "Put your hands on your head and take three steps toward me." The robber put his hands on his head, trying not to rub his eyes. He took three steps toward Sargeant Roy, who then put handcuffs on him. He also patted him down to see if he had any other weapons.

The robber said to Sargeant Roy, "I was going to be rich if you guys had not caught me." Sargeant Roy walked the robber over to his police car and put him inside and shut the door. Then he walked over the SWAT team. On his way over, he heard the robber saying, "Man that guy has no fear."

Sargeant Roy said to the SWAT team, "Thank you for the back-up."

"No problem, that is our job," one replied.

Sgt. Roy walked back to his car, thinking to himself how lucky he was to still be alive.

UPCOMING PROMPTS

Franklin County students: Send us your best writing! We are looking for more great general writing or responses to our prompts (go to: youngwritersproject.org). Here are the next two prompts:

The kitchen table. What happens at your kitchen table? Tell a story. Or make one up. *Alternate: Door.* Use these words in a story or poem: "I reached the door and knocked loudly ..."
Due Friday.

General. Submit your best non-prompt general writing. This call for general entries is repeated each month and you can use the same "general" term when submitting each time. *Alternate: Hunting.* Share your favorite hunting stories, or tell us how you feel about hunting. **Deadline Oct. 30.**

Submit work by going to our Web site:

youngwritersproject.org