

## Duncan

By **Karlie Kauffeld**

*Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 12*  
 Duncan is not my best friend.  
 All the lovely quotes about dogs being man's best friend are wrong.  
 All the greeting cards, children's stories and classic movies deceive.  
 Sometimes something comes in between.  
 Sometimes a dog forgets who feeds him.  
 He forgets who scratches his belly.  
 He forgets who catches his paws and dances with him around a room.  
 A chicken can change the world.  
 A chicken can come between a girl and her dog.  
 A tiny rubber chicken, whose legs were bitten off upon first encounter.  
 A tiny rubber chicken stole the love of my doo-fus dog.  
 Duncan brings his squeaky, legless chicken everywhere,  
 and forgets to bring me.

## Spring!

By **Tori Svec**

*Dummerston Elementary School, Grade 6*  
 The late afternoon sun is bright in the never-ending blue sky as I listen to the chickadees and crows call to one another like old friends.  
 The sprouts in the garden are already in bloom.  
 The afternoon heat has disappeared, making me pull on a sweater and hug my knees close for warmth. Soon the nights will be just as warm as the days, the days that make you want to never go to sleep.  
 The days of summer.

## Girl, 15, charming but insane

By **Jessica Young**

*Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 9*  
 I sit on the mattress at the foot of my bed.  
 I lean against my bed.  
 My guitar leans against my chair,  
 waiting patiently to be picked up.  
 "The Titanic" sits upon the 1989 SHARP TV  
 which sits upon a box of summer clothes.  
 My blinds are all flipped down  
 so the world stays out.  
 My iPod plays quietly, just for me.  
 My hairbrush lies on the glass on my dressing table.  
 Faces of the past look up through the glass.  
 Nicole, Adrienne, James, Kevin, me.  
 Cheryl Maas watches me from my door.  
 The bottom edge of the curtains sit, collecting dust.  
 Old school work and notes scatter themselves across the floor.  
 My bed is unmade.  
 Ghost stories sleep on my bed today.  
 So does a girl,  
 15,  
 Charming,  
 but insane.

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## Summer

By **Eden Hubert**

*Dover Elementary, Grade 6*  
 Summer.  
 The best season of the year.  
 I don't know if it's the running around in sandals,  
 The feel of the wind when you run fast, really fast,  
 Or the feeling of doing just whatever you want,  
 But there is something about summer that always makes you want more.

## Two-tone poem

By **Jessica Ann Davis**

*Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 9*  
 When I'm outside I am brown  
 I get dirt on my shirt and pants  
 I listen to country music  
 I am calm  
 when I'm at school I am red  
 I have energy for playing basketball  
 If there is some energy left  
 I use it for writing  
 When I'm red I never get mad

## My colors

By **Eleanor Lasch**

*Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 9*  
 Part of me is green,  
 careful to recycle,  
 thinking of the world,  
 of pollution and of nature,  
 going green,  
 part of me is black,  
 a dark smog from cars,  
 tossing bottles in the trash,  
 eating foods packaged in plastic,  
 welcoming global warming,  
 black is guilt.

## I'm tired

By **Jenna Rickson** | *Essex High School, Grade 11*

Why can't my mind wrap around that it's not her,  
 but a demon hidden somewhere deep?  
 I know she can't help it when her fists begin to fly or when you become the target in the battle of battles,  
 one you can never win,  
 a battle that leaves bruises on my skin and gashes in my heart.  
 And though I want to believe that things will get better once she's gone,  
 I can't imagine a world without her in it,  
 blue eyes that sparkle in the sun and a fiery temper that unleashes on the people around her.  
 I'm getting tired —  
 tired of getting punched,  
 tired of the rude nothings that roll so easily off her tongue.  
 But I'm especially tired for my mother who does it day in and day out,  
 dealing with the seat cushion still wet with yesterday's urine,  
 a zombie that won't go to school and in turn makes her late for work — a job we need desperately to survive.  
 What will it take for her to realize that maybe it's getting too much for us all to handle and that maybe it's time to move on,

start life anew and shake away the ghost of yesterday?  
 Mum's getting older and I am concerned for her health,  
 and she's the only one who can present some type of authority to a creature not of this world.  
 She takes most of the beating, the anger that flows over the brim of the cup that is my sister's life.  
 My sister —  
 my cocky 'joybringer,' laced in confusion and helplessness,  
 has an iron hand no blacksmith could get the kinks out of,  
 a pain no amount of anti-depressants will reverse  
 and a defiance that not even the world's best drill sergeant could beat out of her.  
 Maybe someday life will be normal  
 a place where I don't have to keep looking over my shoulder,  
 feeling unsafe in my own house,  
 fearing teeth, nails and brass knuckles that draw blood instantly upon contact.  
 Maybe someday we can get through this chaos enough to see that we are people, actual living beings,  
 deserving of a happy 'normal' life, one without the agony of another confusing meltdown,  
 overstimulation  
 poking impatience.  
 I guess I'll need to plead extra hard with God to keep me safe, bring some tranquillity in this chaos,  
 because I'm really, really tired and I'm not sure how much longer I can survive.

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because strong writing skills are essential for success. We run a safe Web site for students — [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) — that is a vibrant, supportive community. YWP also builds and supports *online classrooms* used by schools and after-school programs; trains college mentors to provide feedback; and helps teachers integrate technology in their classrooms and through workshops and a growing library of best practices on [ywpvt.net](http://ywpvt.net).



### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### VERMONT WRITES DAY III MAY 5, 2009

Students, teachers, staff write for 7 minutes about FARMING for more:  
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**POETRY SLAM!**  
 Tuesday, May 12, 7:00 p.m.  
 YWP Offices