



# The Hiland Hall School NEWSLETTER

Fall 2021

Dear Friends,

There is a really nice tone in the classroom this fall. We have many new students and Quena and Brennan have led a wonderful series of discussions in how we want to be as a community of learners. The tone is positive and purposeful with returning students leading discussion on standards and why we have them and new students joining right in with insight and understanding of how this creates a safe, healthy and constructive classroom culture.

I'd like to share a short story from earlier this fall. We were in the back field just settling in for lunch as we always do, and a wind came up raining leaves across the field. One child began, then another and soon there was a field full of children chasing leaves with outstretched arms. "Catch a leaf, make a wish" was the cry. Normally, staff members would curb such an impulse in favor of a timely and calm lunch, but not this time. We sat in wonder at this seriously joyous sight. I want to be honest, it's still hard with covid, with the world at each other's throats, but this moment of magic gives me hope.

Here's to a hopeful, safe and happy upcoming holiday season to each of you.

- Meg Cottam, Director



Evening sky at our first Family Group meeting



Math mandala by Piper Grace, age 8

## Writing in response to Middle School reader, *Look Both Ways*, by Jason Reynolds

When you look at something or someone, the first thing that often pops into your head is what you'll think of them for a while. Usually, if your thought is bad that's what you end up believing. *"That's what it is. It can't be anything else."* But, that's only what you think not what the whole story is.

If you have ever heard the phrase "don't judge a book by its cover" you will know what I mean. As I mentioned before, the first thought that pops into your head is only **one** thing. But if your head were to think of **two** perspectives your life could be pretty different. I'm not saying better, just different. This is looking both ways.

(excerpt) by Sawyer, age 12

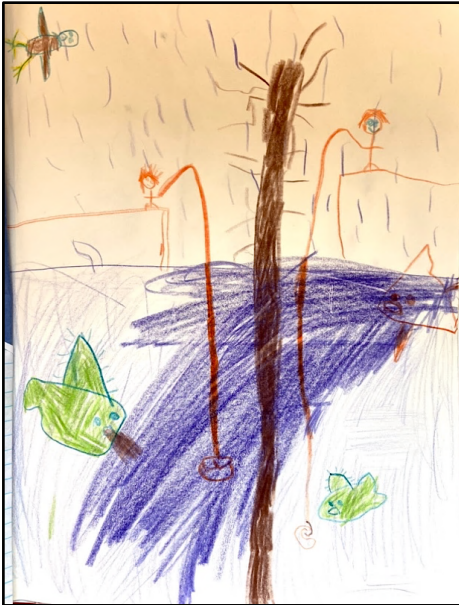


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## Classroom Activity

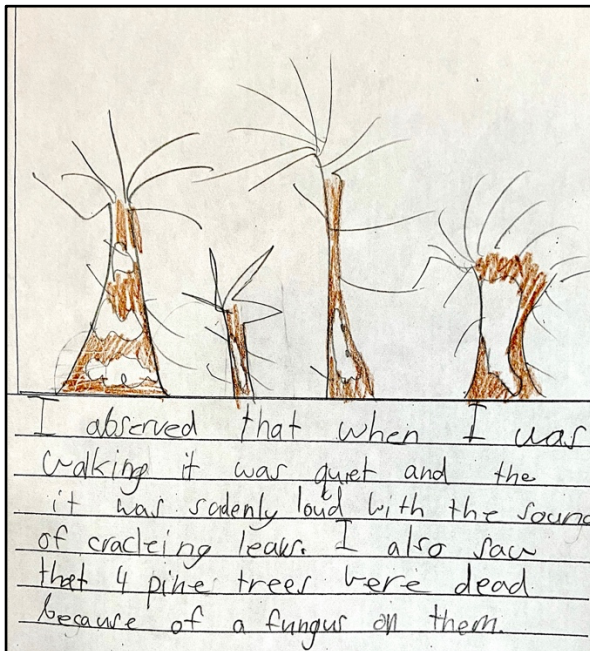
### Writing and Drawing



*"My Dad and I are fishing at our camp on Lake Bomoseen. I caught goggles and he caught a giant fish. We also saw an eagle."*

writing and drawing by Immen, age 7

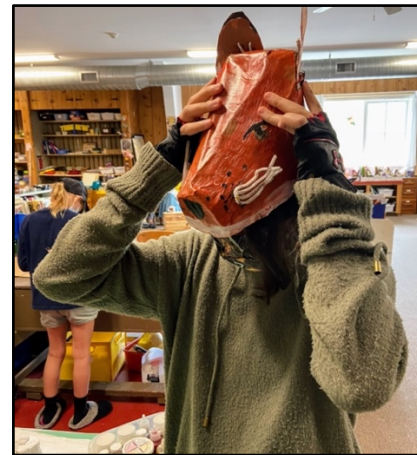
### Nature observation



by Calla, age, 10

### School Play: Coyote Stories

A series of Native American stories about the Trickster, Coyote. Coyote, in the mythology and folklore of the Native Americans, is the chief animal of the age before humans. He is known for his cunning, adaptability, craftiness, and ability to survive. A fitting character for our play after a year of adaptation, working together and keeping school going despite these unusual times! We performed the play outdoors in the back field with Jessica's pines as a backdrop. – Quena



Fox trying on their mask



Scene change





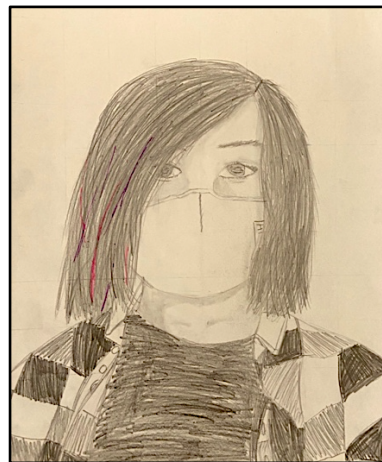
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## Middle School hiking and camping trip



On the Robert Frost Trail bridge on the way to Lake Paran



self-portrait by Seraphia, age 12



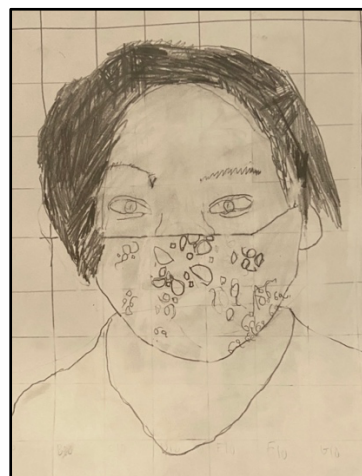
self-portrait by Alayna, age 10

## Self Portraits

These treasured drawings are one of my favorite school customs. I love when Middle School Seniors take their many years' worth of self-portraits, line them up in May, and reflect on how they've changed over the years. One difference between the age groups is that the Elementary Group uses color and mirrors, while Middle School uses pencil and a gridded photograph. – Brennan



self-portrait by Paxton, age 10



self-portrait by Camden, age 11





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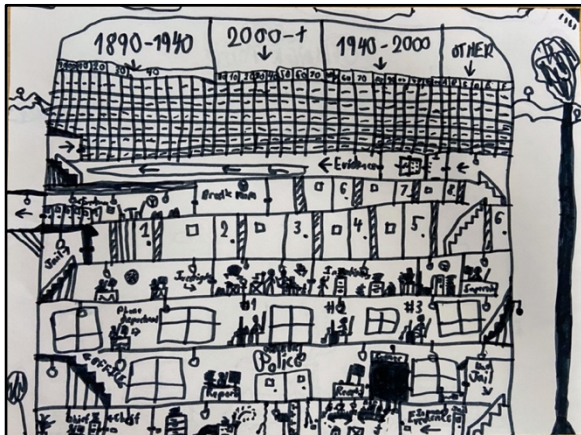
## More School News

Yes! The Outdoor Classroom is just about complete. We have passed inspection and expect a certificate of occupancy shortly. So many thanks are due. First and foremost, to our project leader, Quena, to her trusty colleague, Brennan, to our school's marvelous and skilled facilities committee, to all of the great volunteers who lent their time and energy and a special thanks to all who made generous donations to help get this project off the ground and complete. We plan to have our new learning space in full use by Thanksgiving!



Getting the roof on - September 2021

## And, a little more student work...



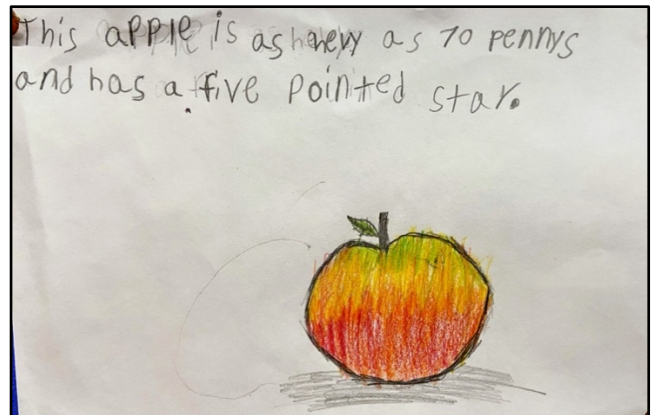
Drawing of the interior of a police station by Eli, age 8

## Bear House Renovation



Our beloved bear house, inherited from the Prospect School, was in need of some renovation. One of our Middle School students spent a number of Activity Times sprucing it up. She glued down siding, painted interiors, repaired some essential props and after 50 or more years, it is ready again for children to imagine and explore.

Special thanks to Weslyn, age 11



Number description of an apple by Piper Rose, age 9