

# 14 Years

By: Andrew Decoteau

Dedicated to:  
My Family

## Contents

4	Me
7	My Friends
10	One day as my pet
11	The Floor is Lava
13	Good Morning...
14	Happy
16	Scared
19	Why a Super Hero?
20	Sargent
23	Summer
26	How to Ride a Bike
29	35 years
29	An Adventure I Wouldn't Like to Have
32	Diversity
34	Why the Weekend?
36	Bad food
38	Writing on Writing
41	In the Courtroom
42	Mouse and Bird
44	WOW...This is Good
46	Creative Options
48	Color Pencil Fights
51	The Viking and The Knight
52	A Very Weird Dream

# ME

When looking into a mirror I see many things. Happy is one emotion that my face can express. Anger is one that I would not like to show to often. Sad is one that I try and keep to myself. Frustration is easily shown. Being surprised is one that I don't practice very much.

What I can physically see is brown hair and greenish eyes on a strawberry head. My hair rarely reaches longer than two inches. It is never messy, because it never is long enough to be messy. My eyebrows are neatly in place. Eye lashes are always neat as well. My ears are just the right size, with no deformities in them and definitely no piercing. The ear lobes hanging off of them are perfect the way they are. The nose on me is well proportioned, not big, and my mouth is the same general idea along with my lips. The teeth that are hidden behind them are somewhat crooked and my need a little straightening but they are ok for now.

My shoulders are broad and square. My arms are muscular but not thick. The hair on them is not long or messy, but always going in the same direction and mostly the same length, short. I do not try to have it neat and short but it just seems to grow that way. The hands that adorn them at the end are big. Sometimes they can be too big. The fingers are big and are hard to type with, but I cope. My knuckles are very large. I think my brother can give a testimony about how they feel if I swing at you. The palms of them are the biggest part of my hands. They are not clumsy looking, but big. My body could do some catching up with them, but they look ok. My torso is muscular and shaped like a Christmas tree flipped upside down. From the side I am not thick but I m not skinny or thin and I hope to keep it that way.

My gut does not hang out but you can't see my rib cage. Some might say that I have a flat and muscular stomach. I just don't want to sound full of myself by proclaiming that I have a great stomach that is rock hard. The waist that my upper body sits on is smaller in width than my shoulders. The legs that are the base of me are not long but they are a good length; the proportion of them is right on. I don't think I would like it they were too long. They too are muscular like the rest of my body. The hair on them is also

straight and neat. My feet are large but not goofy looking. Lengthwise they are not too long, but they are quite wide.

How I think and how I view things are very...different. Or at least I would hope no one sees the same things I do. Original is one word that I could associate my thinking with. Now I won't dive into what I think because that may be offensive to some people. Sometimes I even keep what I think to myself even when people ask. Not because I want to but because I don't like to. Now the reason I don't like to is because I do not like to show any emotion.

Don't get me wrong; it's not like I want to seem like a big heartless jerk. Even though it may seem like I am. The fact of the matter is I don't know how to. If I show how I feel then I may regret it latter. For example I do not like to show anger I may seem easy to reach the point where I am visibly angry, but I never shove, hit, or kick unless it is something that is reoccurring and I just can't stand it anymore. I am happy to lock what I feel away in a small dark corner of my mind.

What I like to do is not that eventful but enjoyable. I like to wrestle competitively and also play football competitively. When I can, I enjoy a little bit of TV or a video game. Eating is another pastime I indulge in along with loafing and complaining.

I have friends that I can chill with and sometimes joke with. In the summer I usually play full contact football with them. Sometimes I will do something stupid and not really mean to do it, but it happens.

Downtime with my dog (not the slang term but literal) is the favorite thing I do. Sometimes I like to sit with the family and just be a family. My mother is crazy and I don't think she would appreciate it if I told her age to anyone. My father is 45 and I think goes above and beyond (in a good way) with his fathering. My brother, Marc, is the middle child and closest to me in age. He is 16 and likes to do most of the things I do. I usually spend the most time with him. My sister Maddie is the oldest of the kids. She is 18 and is attending Campbell University with the ambition that she may work in the pharmacy business. I am 14 and the youngest. I hope that you may have an idea of who I am and what I look like.

## **My Friends**

My first real friend wasn't one that I met it was almost a forced relationship. It was before I was old enough to go to

school and my mother needed a break from my shenanigans. So she called up a lady that I was soon to become close to. The Bogle family was similar to mine with a few exceptions. The oldest was Mat same age as my sister, the second was Courtney closer to my age than my brother's, and the third was Patrick. My bond with this red headed boy grew and grew over the 3 years I knew him.

At first I was truly withdrawn when I was around him, because I knew nothing about him or what he liked to do. My mother knew that I would like him and I didn't trust her at all. All I wanted to do was spend my day at home like every day.

Then the day came I was off to spend a day with someone I didn't know and had nothing in common. I recognized the route that my mother was taking; it was the same way that my mom went to work everyday, until she turned off onto a dirt road I wasn't familiar with.

In my nervous state, I studied the way to the house because if I had to make a break for it I needed to know where I was going. Then we arrived; it was a short driveway that led up to a big house my mother stepped out of the car in unison with me and she held my hand as I walked into the belly of the beast. At the front door she knocked and I gripped tighter and tighter. So she looked down and smiled a smile that could make a man sky diving with no parachute



calm. The door opened to a red haired lady with glasses and a cheery voice.

“Hello, you must be Nancy. And this must be Andrew.” said the lady.

“Hello.” my mother chimed back. Then she spoke to me “Say hello, Andrew.”

“Hi”, I squeaked as the lady turned around and called for a boy named Patrick.

Then I heard footsteps coming close. I clenched on my mother’s hand and waited. then he appeared in the doorway. Pasty with flaming red hair and freckles he spoke;

“Hi, I’m Patrick”

“Hello.” I said back

Then Mrs. Bogle ushered us in. I was in and still scared. I let go of my mother’s hand and waited to see what would happen next. Mrs. Bogle said that Pat and I should go play. And we did. Up the stairs and into Pat’s room.

With a swarm of butterflies in my stomach I entered the room and I saw LEGOS, Cool Tools, Tonka Trucks and other toys. And I was then puzzled because I never thought that any other person could have the same interests as me.

That day I was a calm and quite boy that never spoke to Mrs. or Mr. Bogle directly. As time past I became closer to Pat, as he became closer with me and as we grew in age. I

attended school with him and everyday I would speak to him and then I would go home and speak of our adventures.

What we did was really quite fun; we would spend hours outside in the winter building forts and when we were satisfied, we created weapons of mass tastiness in the kitchen. I will never forget one minute of time we spent together. Some things are hard to explain, but others are plain as day and I am happy to hold onto the memories I have with that friend.

## One Day as My Pet

He is master. I wish it was the other way around but it is ever so that I will bow down upon his entrance to the room before his feet. I am saddened by him. On some occasions I am able to be treated as an equal. By this it makes the sting of being alone a lot less painful. He is not the only one that leaves me and he is not the only one I bow down to. He does not take out his aggression upon me but he comes as if I needed to comfort him when I need him more.

He has power over me and still tells me his hardships. I can't speak of mine for the fear they may be too mundane

and not as interesting as the ones his tiny mind imagines into existence.

He may be the one that has thumbs but I am the one that can sleep all day without being yelled at. I can use the rest room where I please. He is the one that has one small confined room.

I still look for protection from him even when I am the bigger one in the room. He makes me happy when he needs a boost of self confidence.

I can't say I love him, but I can say that he cares for me and I the same toward him.

# **The Floor is Lava**

To the people that are ignorant in this field I will explain how many of my childhood injuries were sustained. This one simple and dangerous game was the epitome of what my siblings and I did when the parents were not home.

The rules go like this; you can't touch the floor because it's lava, but you can touch the fireproof furniture. The object was to be the last one standing out of all the people playing. The exceptions were that you had to be constantly moving and other players could push pull and wrench you down to the ground.

Now to a group of kids spanning from the ages of 5 to 9 this seemed fun. To the parents of these kids it seemed like a big accident waiting to happen. And it was.

I can remember one time in particular; I was atop a couch making my way over to surrounding coffee tables, when a sneak attack from my much older and much larger (at the time) sister sent me flying into the hard surface known as "ground" thus causing me to attain a new level of pain along with 3 or 4 deep yellow and brown marks.

## Good Morning...

I wake up starring at a solid wall and roll over check the illuminated display across the room. Its four A.M. I don't say anything I just listen to the slow and constant ticking of the analog clock, not five feet away from where my digital clock is. The thump soothes me as it prepares me for a long day. I listen intently to feel the beat course through my ears. Thump...thump...thump...thump.

I listen for an hour and a half. 5:30 is when my parents rouse the family for the day. I hear the motions and groans. I can almost here their thoughts saying, "Why today? Its same thing every morning...let's hope the boys wake up well"

I here the squeak of my brother's door and a genital voice say to him "Marc...its time to wake up."

And his response "I'LL GET UP WHEN I FEEL LIKE IT...GO AWAY!"

I wait for my turn. My mother walks a few feet and says to me, "Andrew, it's time".

I grunt a response because I don't see it fit to break my silence with words just yet. When I feel the cool hard finished floor of my room is when my day begins. Before that is a time a focus and planning. This is the time I sort out my

problems and take a minute to let go before I walk into the hellfire of every day life.

And so I swing my legs over the side of the top bunk peer over to see my sister's scrunched up face and her little expression of anger that she has when she sleeps. Give one or two seconds more to thought, then I let gravity have its way with me and I land, sometimes in a silent dainty fashion, other times with a painful thud. I move to the counter for breakfast. I go threw the motions of eating talk to my mother then leave to prepare myself.

My brother showers and I wait and when it is my turn, I have the left over steam and heat of his shower. I massage the stick of deodorant under my arms, then brush my teeth, then I fully dress for the day. I pack a ragtag bunch of food items together and call it a lunch, place it in my bag, and wait for departure. I can already tell its going to be a long day.

## Happy

A happy moment in my life... This is the question Mr. Poole has posed to me. And I thought about it and I just

can't define one thing in the course of 14 years. I have had good and memorable moments, some funny ones. Happy ones are those that seem to escape my memory.

It really has to do with what one person might think of a happy moment. Happy to me is about just feeling anything except what you don't want to. I have countless times that this feeling was displayed and I do remember them, I just can't say what ones were the good ones and the great ones. But Mr. Poole is still going to make me share. No matter what I think.

A happy moment in my life may have been when I placed at States for wrestling. That was a good moment and a happy one showing me that hard work can pay off... but no, not that one. One may be when I went to Florida for spring vacation maybe... but not that one either. I think that a happy moment that I could write about is a simple one but was great fun... summer vacation 2006. That is a rag tag bunch of great memories. And I can tell you what happened with great detail.

One that sticks out in my mind is the football camp that I attended in the State of Rhode Island. This was great; I love to get a chance to hit people that I have no idea who they are, with the added bonus of meeting some cool people.

Others that I could share are just loafing around the Valley. Sometimes this can be the best medicine for a school sickness. Talking to people is good; joking with people is better. All in all it is a great thing to do.

These are the happy memories that I can remember the ones I can hardly remember are the better ones, like the simple feeling when getting a tackle in a game, or the realization of a good day that I may have had.

# Scared

The moment that the electronic monotone of that pager began up until the scream rang out clear like bells in the silent midnight sky to warn that someone, somewhere, was hurt, I was mad, the reason being the pager was a nuisance. Every time I wanted to watch a good program, the pager like a vexation that could not be stopped was throwing a fit as if it was a young child in desperate need of attention. I never



knew who was breaking a leg or hitting their head all the time. But this time was different. My dad with a sudden alarm, he seemingly flew down the stairs and in a semi calm fashion put on his jacket all the while telling me he thought Maddie was hurt. My jaw dropped.

The day, like any other winter break day, was filled with the sounds of cars making the mush in the road splatter about. The sky was wintry, cloudy, never showing the sun's bright smiling face. This was paired up with a cool temperature and crisp air. My sister was looking forward to a night filled of tobogganing and shenanigans followed by a party. She never made it to the party.

It was a clear night, a night that you could feel the air pounding on the insides of your nostrils. The kind when closing your eyes one can still see its dark and mysterious beauty. This was the night that some many things could go beautifully took a turn for the worse.

My brother and I were not taking any part of admiring this wondrous night, but we were in the living room in some seasonable clothes enjoying our time off. Maddie had bundled up in some goofy looking apparel that smelled as funny as it looked. Ready for a cold night of fun out on Snow's Mountain, she left, and I don't think I ever realized that she did. I was way too preoccupied staring numbly at the TV.

After about an hour of this, the pager shattered the silence and I thought to myself “Oh great, who gets to disturb me this time?” My father, in a way calmer fashion than my mother, allowed the great glob of a jacket to engulf him and went to see if what he thought was true. What he thought was Maddie was badly injured at Snow’s Mountain. That is when I snapped out of my TV coma and sprang into life once more.

The realization and information that my sister had compressed two of her vertebrae hit me like a bug hitting a windshield. I felt that I exploded on contact with this monstrosity going hundreds of miles an hour and on contact I felt nothing. I felt as if I had fallen to a great beast, hungry to see my pain, and I was not the only one that was slain by the great monster

When I made my way down the hallway and into the white room and saw her I cried on the inside. The darkness crept up me like a shadow crawling up a sky scraper at sun down and when it reached the top you could feel it. Every inch was covered in the seemingly pitch black despair; that is what took me over. This was the feeling that overwhelmed me and it wasn’t the kind of thing everyone needs to see. It wasn’t that she was misshapen or anything terrible; it was the fact that I look up to her and that can be a sad slap in the

face to be radically notified that the one you view as invincible can be hurt.

I showed some happiness to try and make her feel better because it looked like she needed it more than me.

## Why a Super Hero?

To tell the truth I would not be a super hero, but I would be a super villain. The reason for going to the dark side is because the villains always blow lots of stuff up. There is a lot less paper work and the hide outs are the coolest. Who I would be is one other than Dr. Doom because his real name (Victor Von Doom) is sick and he has really cool powers which include being able to trade minds with people.

Now someone may ask what about Superman he would just punch the lights out on this Doom guy. And I give them this answer. Superman couldn't touch Doom because he has a suit that is made of metal that has been treated by a cosmic storm, so if Superman even tried to punch him SNAP goes Superman's hand.

Don't see me in the wrong light. I'm not the kind of person that would go around trying to take over the world. I just think it would be more fun to take over the world. Of course there will be a huge flaw in my plan and some super hero like Wonderman would come and smash my face in. Now some super heroes I wouldn't mind seeing go to the dark side include The Beast (from the X-Men), Thor, Gambit (from the X-Men) and Iron Man, because I think team evil could use a little good on it.

## **Sargent**

Sargent Center... was a good trip. It was an awesome chance to come closer to the group and with my self and I am happy to have shared it with people I am already close to.

Some of what we did we really excelled in. No wait, we excelled in everything because we are already close and

sometimes I think too close. I can become sick with these people very, very fast. It's about the same as me living with them. It really creeps me out that I know what everyone does in the summer, how they looked 5 years ago and how I looked 5 years ago...I don't think it's all that fair to the counselors. I bet they were shocked by the fact of how small and efficient we were.

The food was what made the trip only an ok one. Everything I ate made my stomach turn and it wasn't too nice to the other people.

A high was I was able to apply things I already knew how to do in the field.

Now I am going to point out the highs and lows of my classmates,

- Bobby
  - High(s)
    - Was a team player in everything
    - Wasn't critical of anyone
    - Happy to be there
  - Low(s)
    - Not a morning person
- Adam
  - High(s)
    - Did what needed to be done
  - Low(s)

- His shenanigans
- Alice
  - High(s)
    - Happy to be there
    - Laughing about everything
  - Low(s)
    - Too happy
- Zim
  - High(s)
    - Didn't argue
    - Did what needed to be done
  - Low(s)
    - Breaths very loudly when he sleeps
- Mike
  - High(s)
    - Team player
    - Didn't argue during activities.
  - Low(s)
    - Argued about a lot of stuff
- Eliza
  - High(s)
    - When put into an awkward situation (for example when I walked out of the bathroom with nothing but a towel covering me.) did not crack.

- Low(s)
  - Can be very grumpy
- Olivia
  - High(s)
    - Happy to be there
  - Low(s)
    - Didn't open up as much as other people

# Summer

Every year upon returning to school a student is told to write about what he or she did in the 3 month span that is known as summer vacation. Some students may have some exaggeration on what they did, such as ruining their Uncle Bob's stamp collection, because they bet their sibling \$20 that they couldn't lick the entire 389,401 stamps without succumbing to glue poisoning. Other kids could write about tanning on their roof and falling asleep while they were preciously perched and end up having the tar melt them onto the roof.

My summer vacation highlight is not as cool as that stuff but it is cooler than the kid that ate too many prunes at grandma's house and had bowel disruption for a few weeks.

What I did was stay in an airport for 12 hours. To explain why I was down there has nothing to do with me but my sister. I had to tag along to go and see what she was doing for college all the way down in North Carolina. My mother didn't want to leave me by myself for four days in a house that could hold some sweet parties (I have no idea why she didn't want me stay home).

At the end of our stay in North Carolina we had to head out to the airport and that is when we got the call that our flight was bumped up in time. Because of this we couldn't stop for ice cream and of course this was no ordinary ice cream but really good ice cream, so good that you had to sign a release waver to try their jalapeño flavored ice cream.

This may have put some in a bad mood but it didn't put me down I knew that things were going to get better because I was going home. Boy was I wrong. The situation just kept becoming worse and worse.



The true horror began when our plane never took off from the tarmac. In the end we sat on the plane, not moving for 4 hours. I didn't really care I just didn't want to fall victim to the mental killer of boredom. My physical state at the time was a little worn down, but it was not as bad as some of the other passengers on the plane. From the looks of it, the wide range of people on the aircraft included pregnant women and some hobo-esque travelers.

When the plane finally came back to the terminal it was too late to call and ask for a room at a lavish Motel Six or use the highly praised facilities of a Days Inn. In the end we decided to sleep in the air port and of course with every great idea value meal is a side order of harsh realization. My sis, mom and I didn't get a chance to eat dinner. Lucky for us there was a vending machine near where we had picked to sleep. All that was in the old fashion monstrosity was the equivalent of eating card board or high in sugars.

So at 2:00 am in the morning I was hungry and bought some cookies and an ice cold Coke. If ever in my life I will have a worse moment of poor judgment I will either end up living on the street or married to an Alpaca named Harvey in Los Vegas.

After the caffeine filled dinner I saw a wheel chair, so I had another moment of poor judgment and I ended up mastering the art of wheeling around sharp corners and stopping.

When I finally came down from my sugar high I ended up with 6 hours of sleep. And a very memorable night spent in an airport.

## How to Ride a Bike

Blood and tears is how I learned to ride a bike.

It was the middle of the summer. My father worked everyday; my mother stayed home and fed my siblings and I. It was shaping up to be a normal summer, until it was time for me to ride my bicycle on only two wheels. When news reach my ears that on that fateful summer day I would learn to ride a small black, gray and green Huffy bicycle, excitement coursed through my veins with a fury like none other, and so it began.

A normal child learning to ride a bike would have elbow pads, knee pads, an athletic supporter, (for the guys) and a helmet. All I was given was the helmet, strapped up and wrenched to a state of near suffocation. I was ready.

The training wheels were off and I mounted my stead for a long day. But before I put my lead foot down I observed

my surroundings, now the drive way was about a good 25-35 feet wide and around 60-70 feet long. The ground was unpaved and peppered with rocks... hard sharp rocks. On the far end from where I was starting a huge ditch about three feet deep. If this wouldn't stop me nothing would.

The lesson began. My mother, holding the back part of the bike right under the seat, began to nudge me just so much; my balance was far from perfect and I fell less than 10 feet from where I started. So I smiled and pulled the bike up so I could have another go. Same thing happened and happened. But I could prolong the fall each time this improve my balance.

So my mother said in a sweet voice "I think its time for me to get u started and then let go"

"Ok" I replied.

So my mother would hold on to me and let go ever so much and when she did I fell, even if she let the smallest of fingers go, it was like someone would push me down every time. By this time my brother had become bored with inside activities and came to show off and tease me saying things like "Na Na Na Na Bo Bo!". So he began the endless circles around the tiny frame of me and my bike. Saying childish things provoking me, this only made me try harder. My mother could se in my eyes that I was going to do so she started me and let go I drifted for about 10 seconds and bam

I went sprawling on the ground scraping my knee and then I felt a warm thick liquid running slowly down my leg and then my eyes began to puff up and I felt another liquid form this one was light and salty.

After a kiss from my mother and a big bandage I was ready. Unfortunately my luck decided to stay inside. Thus the afternoon began with gallons of tears running and purple yellow splotches appearing on my skin. But I never gave up I was going to make my brother eat his words.

By this time my sister had decided to help me and my mother sense a 9 year old girl knows everything. She gave my mother a break from starting me and I was falling and falling and falling. At one point I was so fed up with the little bike I threw it into the bushes in a fit of rage. But as soon as I calmed down I was on the stupid thing pedaling for my life. After a few more temper tantrums my father appeared from work and he was the last to come out to see me work my butt off the sun was setting and I had mastered the assisted start now it was on to starting on my own.

3 feet BAM, 4 feet BAM nothing I tried seemed to work. My mother's patients was wearing thin the same goes for my sister and as the headed for the door I tried it for the last time. With tears in my eyes and pain in my legs I did it as I yelled

"Look! Look! I'm doing it! I'm riding a bike"

## **35 Years**

I think that I will be a normal person in 35 years. I hope that I can be a good role model if I have kids. I can't really say if I want to get married. I would hope that I could find a girl capable of handling the Andrew Decoteau experience. I can't say that I am one to hope for a great paying job but I would like to live in the manner I have become accustomed to. Money wouldn't be a problem, but I wouldn't have expensive things throughout my house. But I would be able to have money to throw around.

I was planning on becoming a doctor or even a drill sergeant. I would hope that if I had a family, I could spend time with them and my job wasn't the most important thing. Nothing special, all I want is a nice peaceful life.

**An Adventure that I Wouldn't Like  
to Have**

My adventure begins with me rising with the Australian sun, and being shot at by a band of android ninjas. I quickly jump onto my robotic lama and ride away from the evil ninjas.

That is the dream I have before I begin my trek to the lost temple of the Giant Earlobe people.

I am on this quest from one reason...money. If I can find a lost temple that has ear related treasure beyond all comprehension I would be a very, very, very, rich man. This is the reason I am doing it alone.

The place is the deep dark jungles of the Amazon. The time is June 34, 3350. I am about half a day's walk from the suspected dig sight. I go over the aged piece of paper one more time. I look at the land mark I stopped at for camp in comparison to the fading picture. It is two pillars of solid rock, one with the face of a man, and one with the face of a jaguar. This is the last stop before I become a millionaire. So I check the bearings one more time and begin my hike.

The time blows past me slowly. Four hours into the hike rest. And look at the paper once more to be sure I am still on course. With water in me and a replenished strength I tread the last 2 hours.

I have the map out and am studying it slowly when I stumble on something and goofily pop out into a clearing.

There is a waterfall and an open field no more than half a football field in length and with.

Then I start to look at the map for the last time. The waterfall is clearly marked on it, so I stroll over to it and take a closer look. It appears to be a normal waterfall until I think why would a normal waterfall be on a map to a lost civilization? I doubt that I could pass threw it without being crushed by the force of the water coming down. I decide to try anyway.

The water looks about four feet deep at the lowest and I'm defiantly not going to swim under the falls, so I look for a tall tree and a study vine. After finding it I gear up for the swing. 3...2...1... and I'm off. I hit the water and the vine snaps like a string. The shear weight of the water feels as if I am trying to lift a skyscraper. I fall into the pool and I begin to be tossed about, I'm taking in way too much water. If I don't get my head above water I will drown. My head throbs and my vision goes black as a hand reaches in and wrenches me from the icy water. I stumble onto a cold hard smooth surface and start to cough I feel the air return to my lungs and force the water out. Then as I start to look at my savior's face a large blunt object hits me in the face.

Next thing I know I'm in a small mud hut with a fire going in the middle. The smoke makes me eyes start to water but are quickly relieved when a tall man flings open

the hut door, and pulls me from the bed throwing me onto the ground outside, saying something that sounded hostile all the while in an aggressive stance. I stood up and readied myself. He came full force at me, but I quickly dodged to the right and pulled out my trusty trail knife and pierced the side of his body and let the air out of his lungs. Blood trickles from his mouth and the wound and he keels over dead.

Now that I have the chance to take in my surroundings I observe the huge city not 50 yards from where I stand for the most part it looked to be half empty and over grown with plants. That's when I herd a loud bang and a tight pulling in my back. Then for the last time I blacked out never to wake up again.

## Diversity

On January 11, 2006 the Waterville Valley Middle School attended a conference at the Waterville Valley Conference Center on the topic of diversity. When we arrived we first headed up the spiral stairs and entered a



large room. There were many tables scattered throughout the room and two tables that held numerous food items. We did not all sit at the same table. Some sat far away from the door and others did not. After finding people to sit with, I personally did not eat because I was not very hungry. But some students did head up to the table and ate until their hunger was vanquished from the pits of their stomachs.

Later when the last school finally made their appearance the entire assemble watched a video about a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher that performed an experiment that showed the kids what diversity really meant. The reason for doing this experiment was the pervious day was the day that Marten Luther King Jr. had died. What I thought of the movie was it looked a little hard core and drastic to use on little 3<sup>rd</sup> graders because it had a deep impact on everything.

My impression of this conference at first was no big deal I have been to these kinds of things before. Why should this be any different? The ones I have been to were very fun and I met many “cool cats”. Later on, when we scattered into smaller groups, my opinion changed. Some of the kids were nice and I could relate to them, but there were some loud and obnoxious people.

In my group we played a game of human bingo. I found not many people enjoy the same things as me. One thing that bothered me was one or two of the people in the group

refused to pay any attention or give the counselors any acknowledgment that they existed. They kind of were trying to be classified as weird. One of them even took a nibble out of a raw potato. That's when I was ready to explode not in anger or rage or any bad emotion, but in a feeling of frustration.

Personally the entire experience was "OK". It had some ups and downs. All in all, I liked it and I anticipate the next time we attend.

## Why the Weekend?

The weekend... This is the holy grail of the week to everyone young and old. The one thought that every one holds onto during the week is the sound of the school bell or the sound of the work whistle at the end of a long Friday.

Upon the release of children from their school all hell breaks loose. Nothing will stand in the way of a child and the fact that it is time to have fun and do homework at the last possible second. Work people come out of their shells to ride the mechanical bull after a few too many.

The average weekend lasts 2 days; some are the coveted 3 day weekend. What must be done is not make it a 3 day week end every week, but a few hours shaved off the school and work day are necessary to improve everyone's lives.

The reason that I say this is because the last few hours of the work day are not spent really working but daydreaming about what is planed for the weekend. By eliminating the last few hours of a school day some people may ask if the fact that the daydreaming will still take place. The fact of the matter is time management. By moving the lunch/break hour back by just a few minuets would be the difference between all the daydreaming eating up important class/work time.

The overall plan of moving the lunch hour back is a simple one. Instead of children being released at 2:45, they will be released at 12:45 lunch begins at 12:35 instead of 12:00 and the lunch break recess is eliminated. This may give students a little better prospective on the fact that they need to have their work completed. One course of action that may be emplaced is having children stay after if they are found daydreaming or off task. This I know would give me motivation to work harder. Another plan that could be carried out is putting specials that require a lot of energy (gym, music, ect.) at the end of the day. The accomplishment of

work may increase or it may slip. Only time would tell if the plan that I have devised would work.

## Bad Food

The worst food I have ever eaten had to be the diabolical concoction known as a veggie burger.

I can remember one time I encountered this putrid dish. It was a summer night. My mother was cooking as the sun slowly brushed the tree tops before it sank into the stomach of the forest. My father seemed to be glued to the couch in a deep slumber that could only be broken if he was called for food. Marc and I had been scurrying about the yard looking for something to do. My sister was doing girly things. "Dinner!" the voice of my mother sang out. The sound of that one word always tickled and teased my thoughts. When that word finally hit me, it came to my ears as a bee comes to honey.

This is when all the possibilities of food race into my mind's eye. Maybe it was pancakes, ham, steak, spaghetti, hamburgers and the slight hope that my parents had temporarily lost their minds and made cake for dinner!

The smell of a used grill crept into my nostrils; this made the cake hope vanish. But I knew that hamburgers are the one thing that the smell meant. I entered the kitchen; there sat all the condiments for the food. My brother and I took our designated seats and prepared for the best.

My mother served me a hamburger and did the same for the rest of the kids. We said a prayer and everyone began to dig in, except for me. I sat and watched it. A few minutes passed before I put my nose to it and smelled it a little. It did have the aroma I remembered. I took the top part of the bun that held the burger, looked at it; it didn't seem to have the bark brown color to it. So I picked up the patty the weight was off; it seemed to be lighter than it looked. I asked my mother what was different about the food. She said nothing was different and used the classic line of "Eat up. Your food is getting cold" I refused to think much could be different about my food that I kept inquiring that it was not what she told me.

So I went with out a bit of nourishment for half of the meal. To begin with, I was hungry and wanted food and the fact of having it right in front of me made it worse. It made it so unbearable.

I asked one more time if that something was different. Then the truth came out; it wasn't a hamburger, it was a

veggie burger. It was then removed from my plate and I had what I wanted a real hamburger.

## My Writing about Writing

The piece I chose to right about is the letter that I wrote to the little kids about Santa.

To tell the truth I wasn't happy with the first sentence of the paper. It was a question and for some reason I can't open a letter without one and every time I think I feel a little more stupid saying "How are you?" I never think that I could use a better sentence like hello. I just can't help it; I just do it.

The qualities of this paper are very strange because I never thought that I could make up a fantasy land where an elf eats pickled candy canes. Personally, I did love righting this paper for some reason. It may have been the fact that I never got to believe that there was a Santa. I never took the time to believe. My family just didn't lie to me about it. it also could have been the fact that Mr. Poole let us put it into our own hands instead of righting it in a cretin way of making it

so we had to be a perfect elf. if we were it would seem to be way to utopian and no one at any age group can believe that. So I do thank Mr. Poole for allowing me to give my pint sized friend some defects. Making it more real was key in this paper.

There were some guidelines in the paper. None I disagreed with because the people that we wrote to are young, not only physically but mentally too and they can figure out that some things are meant for childhood and some are not until later on in life.

1, Candy Way Lane  
North Pole, North Pole  
99705

Dear Jack,



How are you? My name is Habakkuk the elf. I am sorry that Santa himself could not write to you. As you know he is very busy and does not have much time to do anything around the holiday time. He is always looking for new ways to process the many toys. In the North Pole we take pride in the way we make our toys. In fact our saying is, "If you are not satisfied for any reason, we will make you happy".

Now to answer your questions; the first thing you asked was if we were all doing good. To tell the truth, Santa is a little pressured for time, but he always gets the right toy to the right person. Not many kids asked how all the penguins are doing; usually all people ask about is the reindeer. The answer to the question is the penguins are wonderful. I like them a lot and I love how they walk. What they eat is of course fish. They usually live at the South Pole but Santa has brought a few to live here also.

Now I am going to tell you about the North Pole. As I told you before I like to play candy land and harmless pranks. Most of the elves know that I am just playing around, but a few think I am a little strange.

What I do most of the time is write letters to children that Santa can not write to himself. The other part of my time I spend in my candy cottage sitting by the fire and eating pickled candy canes while enjoying a



fine picture book, or working with Ms. Claus making cookies for all the other elves. She is very nice and likes living up here. I am a very good toy maker too, I like making toy boats the best. They are the most fun to paint and wrap. Other things that I make are race cars, little dolls and wooden houses. Those are just a few of the things I make. In fact you may get a toy made by me this year.



One of the things we elves do in our off season is play sports like football with the polar bears and the penguins. It is so much fun that it does not matter who wins.

Your friend,  
Habakkuk the elf



## In The Courtroom

The mock trial is and forever will be renowned in the land of the little red school house.

Every year the upper grades participate with a vigor and enthusiasm like none other. I personally have taken part in 4 trials, each unique and moving in its own way. Participation from every student is great and that's one of the things I love about it. For example, the first year I was a lawyer and loved every minute of it. More so I loved being a witness.

This is something of great meaning to me I love the feeling when you know you drove a point or you sold

yourself to the entirety of the court. Being complimented by judges that only know you by your performance and how you spoke is also a huge part of the experience.

When I first began I was not all happy and excited; I was thinking how lame and time consuming it was going to be. Then I received the material and wow, I was never sucked into something that quickly before. The rush of just making the argument and proving how powerful words can be is a great feeling.

The memories that I take with me to far off lands of who knows where will forever be a part of me.

## Mouse and Bird

By: Decoteau

**Upon the table garnished with food,  
Into the basket old and broken,**

Behind the warm and dark wall,  
In the big and squeaky house,  
In the mouse's eye is what you see.  
On the table once bright with food,  
Upon the discarded basket,  
Through the once wondrous walls,  
Above the black burnt house  
In the bird's eye is what you see.

Curled up warm and secure  
In the wall hidden from sight,  
Hearing the family with great delight,  
Upon the great oak floors,  
The mouse's eye is what you see.  
Sitting in the warm nest protecting her young,  
In the air peeking away at the once astounding walls,  
Singing to the ashes remembering the people,  
On the soot covered floors once glimmering and  
shimmering in the light,  
In the bird's eye is what you see.

Sneaking and peeking around the walls,  
Down a dark lifeless hall,  
Past the sleeping people,  
Toward the cold food,

**In the mouse's eye is what you see.  
Fluttering and bumbling down to the ground,  
Up to the cold and whispering wind,  
With the many creatures that call this place home,  
After her slippery food,  
In the bird's eye is what you see.**

**WOW... This is Good!**

Spinach, I love this food.

To tell you about this food, of the heavens all I need to say is, "Look what it does for Popeye the sailor man!" To tell the truth, Popeye is the reason I love spinach so much. Every time I saw Popeye take that can of spinach and crunch it open right into his mouth and suddenly he would

have amazing strength, I would think to myself “I wonder if it really does that?” I later found out that it didn’t but it sure helped my mother when we had it for dinner one night.

If I recall correctly my mother sat next to me at the dinner table. The meal was coming to a close and all I had on my plate was a glob of spinach. There it sat bubbling and smoldering, just sitting there almost as if it were mocking me. It looked at me and I looked at it ... this was the climax of the night. Me vs. a big green glob of spinach. This impending event was going to be bigger than Mohamed Ail against Gorge Foremen in rumble in the jungle.

I was never a person who would try new foods. One night my mother gave me a veggie burger instead of a normal hamburger. It really didn’t go well. She put it in front of me with love and care, but I being the stubborn kid that I was, all I needed was a quick smell of it. After that I made up my mind I wasn’t going to touch it, yet alone eat the abomination. Apparently my mother sensed these events were going to take place again, like it was my destiny to never eat the spinach let alone ever look at it without a funny face.

After a few seconds of looking at the steaming pile of “wholesome goodness”, I daringly took up my fork and piledrived it into my good green friend. Then without the slightest gesture of disbelief that the so called abomination

of the earth (according to all kids under the age of seven) would taste like it had been through a dog's digestive track many times, or a sign of caution, I flung the slippery slime into my mouth! Then with a look of shock on my face I said to my mother, "I love it!" She was just as surprised as me!

## Creative Options

During my creative options experience I have learned only a small piece of what a Town Manager does in a normal day at work. I will try to give an overview of what I have learned.

### **Town Law**

This topic was easier to grasp than I thought it would be. I came into Mr. Decoteau's office thinking that I would have to read books upon books of law related material. Somehow I lucked out and there was only a small piece that I needed to understand, its called "Home Rule State." What it means to be a Home Rule State is (to put in very simple terms) if the law says that you can't do it, you can't do it. If

the law says nothing about you not being able to do it than you can do it. Our state is not a “Home Rule State” so different rules apply to the municipal governments of towns. The great state of New Hampshire is quite the opposite of Maine (home rule state.). Our state follows the rules of you can only do it if the law says you can. Now, I received this information within a few minuets, so I was pretty confused.

The set of rules that apply to our state also have an effect on how a town can approve a budget. In “Home Rule States” a town meeting can be called at any time, unlike non home rule states where a town meeting can only be called once a year; so one can imagine how much time and effort is put into a town meeting when you have to cover the entire budget for the up coming year. Every little thing has to be factored in. Even if one penny is out of place a town manager can be out of a job. Topics that need voting upon are voted upon, plans that may or may not take place are presented to the town and the school budget is also presented. How the town manager plays into all of this is in kind of an editor way. He has the department heads make the numbers and he checks them over and puts the entire budget into one document.

### **The Town Budget**

In the process of learning about the town budget I became highly confused. I never realized that there was so

much involvement in a small town like this. It takes about three months to complete a budget for the town of Waterville Valley.

Every year the department heads complete their respective budgets and they are then handed into my father to be checked over and then put together.

In conclusion...with all that I learned from my father I know can relate a little bit better when he rants about his job. In all that I learned there was times where I spent over an hour on one simple topic and sometimes I would breeze through the topic. But like any job there is a break time and that was probably the best time.

## Color Pencil Fights

The morning air woke me when it slowly passed over my face. I knew it was time for breakfast and time to play.



Summer vacation for my brother and sister always meant that. But today was special; the summer was drawing to a close and that meant new school supplies for my siblings. My brother was very proud because this year my mother indulged in a giant pack of colored pencils, with 50 in the entire box. My brother beamed with the light of 50 suns.

Today I was planning on doing something outside and contemplated this over breakfast. A mushy sensation of peaches and cream really helps the thinking parts. But I was disappointed in the fact that the weather had a change of heart and made the three of us stuck inside. So we began our day of TV and board games. I partook in these activities for about 4 hours, then became bored. The time was around 4'oclock and I decided to go to my room and play with the small army I had amassed of small plastic action figures through Christmas and my birthdays.

I came into the room to see my brother and all his new supplies sprawled out on his bed and the first thing I noticed was the pack of colored pencils. And without a word, my brother put away all but the pencils and then he opened them; they were sharp and brilliant. And it began...

He counted out 25 and handed them to me then pointed to the corner of the room and I knew that we were gearing up for battle. I prepared my position and then the pencils flew. Reds, blues, purples and all different colored

pencils were in the air hitting the fortification that I was behind. I waited until the first few shots were fired before returning. Then a strategy was conceived and I dropped a few of the sharpened weapons. Then the hellfire began, pencil after pencil flying at my brother hitting his partly exposed body. I knew he would be waiting for me to run out of ammunition and I was hoping he would charge. When my burst of fire ceased he had a lot of ammo and started the counter attack...exactly what I wanted. I sprung the trap and unleashed my reserve. The pencils sliced through the air like throwing knives. And my last shot I knew had to count. I gave it everything I had drew back and let it fly. The countless front flips it did in the air were graceful and powerful and it was heading for its target. There was a problem with the pencil; I threw it too hard and it darted, missing my brother's head by mere millimeters. After the close call, the pencil kept traveling into the drywall near by.

Then my mother entered the room after hearing the commotion. The first thing she saw was not our laughter, but the fact that the entire room was covered in pencil marks and one was jutting out of the wall. Needless to say we didn't have fun for the rest of the day.

## The Viking and the Knight

Christmas morning...this year would be very dangerous.

My brother and I woke up to the smell of muffins baking and gifts freshly placed under the tree. We ran down at the appropriate time and saw the multi-colored packages addressed to us. But first we had to sit through the rituals of Christmas, my father reading the Christmas story out of the impractically large copy of the Bible. Then breakfast and first presents.

It was about 8'o'clock when we began the present opening. My brother and I were very anxious for the new toys. And my mother had the heart to give us the first presents to open. She handed us identical boxes and said, "For my warriors." I slashed through the paper and saw what was inside. It was everything a real Viking would need: battle ax, sword, helmet, chest armor and shield. What my brother received was everything a real Knight would need: helmet, sword, shield, and dagger and chest armor. My mother said something that had to do with safety but neither of us listened. We opened the package that our weapons were in, suited up and were ready. But the rest of the presents needed to be opened.

The whole family was done around 12'o'clock and then the real fun began. I was in full armor and drew my sword.

My brother did the same and the duel was on. Violent swings at the face and other vital places were being taken high pitch battle cries pierced the calm house and we battled until our last breath was expelled.

In time the swords broke and the equipment was smashed. But by that time we were much too large to fit into the armor or helmets.

## A very weird dream

It was a quiet summer day and I was in a field. It sounded as if there were firecrackers going off nearby. They seemed to become louder and louder; it turned from fire crackers to whipping and zing noises. Pieces of dirt were kicking up all around me. I didn't move. I began to see men come from the woods holding oddly shaped tools. As they came closer I recognized them to be guns. And the men didn't look friendly. I tried to plead for my life but it was no good. Closer and closer they crept. Then the fire died down and the men moved low and fast. I still could not move. This is when I began to notice the surroundings the field was filled with a tall green plant about 4-5 feet tall and about 3-4

inches thick. I seemed to be taller than it all and my feet were dangling for some reason. I didn't feel quite right. I felt light and when the wind blew, I feared that I would take off. I looked down and saw I had no feet, but hay was jutting out of my ankles, barley held in by ropes fastened tightly around them. The next thing I noticed is my clothes were tarnished and old. And the smell was the worst of all, the smell of wet dog and mold.

After taking this in I begin to see the men again and hear more gunfire. This time the men didn't fire back, but seem to drop one by one. Unaffected I wanted a way onto a hard piece of ground. Then I felt a release in my arms almost as it I was let go by a grater force. I plopped to the ground forgetting I have no feet I am in a heap with nothing I can do about it until I feel something; it's the hay moving and turning shaping hands and feet. Then I feel more twisting and turning on the inside giving me strength.

So I stand I am a complete 5 and a half feet tall with no mouth to talk form and brand new hands and feet. So I begin to think abut this more and more and I start to run.

Seemingly no purpose is behind my running I just run and stop at one of the dead men and search him for a knife.

Once I find it I slash open a mouth shaped hole and try to take air into me when I realize I can't, I can't speak either. then I begin to run again. I bolt to the edge of the field and

look around. I see more men heading into the field. They look different than the other men they are wearing gray and speak in a way I do not understand. I decide to run back into the field and wait.

A new terror grips me from the inside, holding tight, not wanting to let go. I fear that I will die. Then like the running I can not control my motions. I see a man not 3 feet away and I attack with strength I had never felt before. Powerfully and silently I end his life and take his knife. I see another and lunge.

Then my mother wakes me saying it is time for school.