

The Flood

Sweeping change

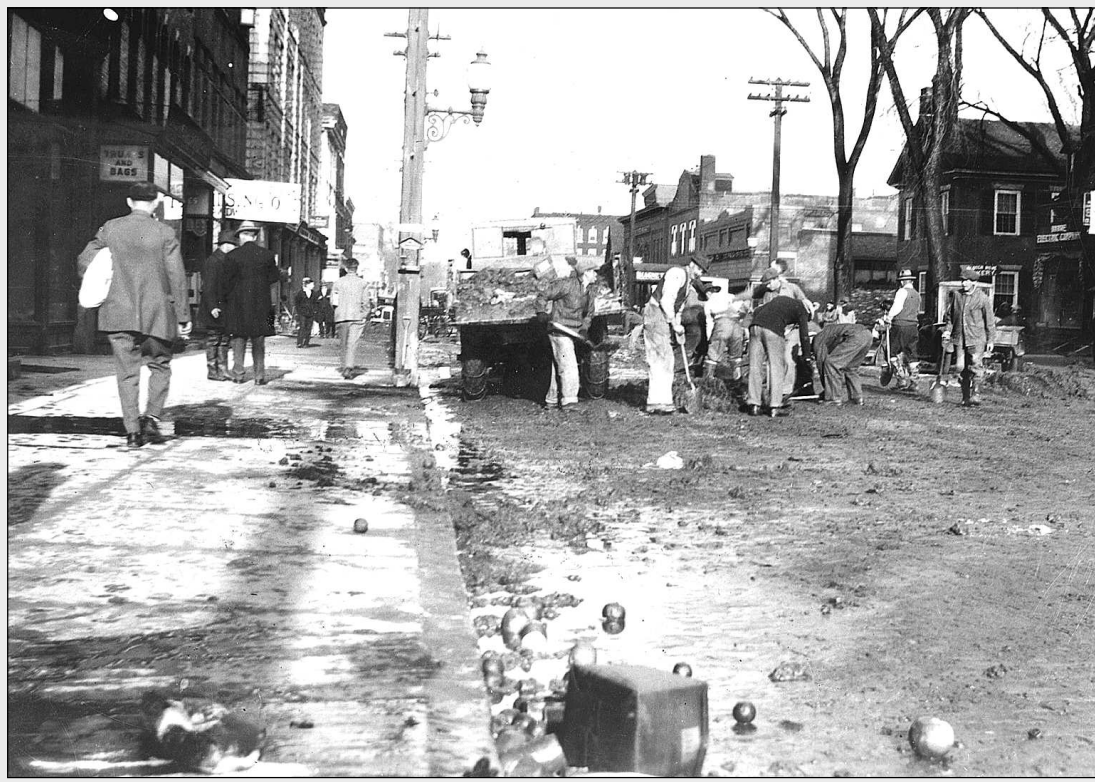
By Sean Bjornsson
Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

Mmm, rain
Soft, pleasant noise on the windows
Really raining hard now
It's warm and cozy in here
Wake up, sirens
What's going on?
Run downstairs
Water on the floor
"Get your shoes on!"
Out into the cold
Out into the wind
Wading through the water
Water everywhere
Someone in a canoe where the garden should be
Soaked through
No sleep
Living at grandma's house
The water's subsided
Time to go back
Through the door
Dirt, stuff everywhere
Everything soaked
Everything ruined
Nothing left undamaged
See the water line on the wall
Six feet
Let's get to work
Fix the house
Rip up the floor
Rip out the walls
Throw everything out
Dump overflowing
A lot more to do
Finally done
Months later
Back to normal
... I don't like the sound of rain anymore

Picture imperfect

By Mindy Yeung
Hartford Memorial Middle School, Grade 8

Click.
The camera flashes.
Through the lens you can see water surrounding buildings,
Like blue surrounding the stars on the American flag.
Such dread and dreariness fill the motionless picture.
The gloomy people walk through it all,
As if they don't care what happens to their unprotected earth.
The trees shiver their bare limbs,
All their red, orange and green leaves dissolve into the flooding earth.



Courtesy of the Vermont Historical Society

Cleaning up Barre after the 1927 Flood that devastated much of Vermont.

To survive

By Moya Cavanagh
Browns River Middle School, Grade 8

It has been
Said,
All too often,
"When hell freezes over,"
What about
When hell runs in rivers
When it breaks the dams and brings avalanches
Of water in walls and blockades
With tearing, destructive power
Hurling the anchors of civilization
Away for something else.

But it still hasn't found what it's looking
For.
To survive the flood was to dive into
Hell
And break the surface unscathed.

To survive the flood was to
Walk among the splinters and ruins
Of a sand castle after a wave.

Windows
Doors
A scuffed leather shoe,
Skins of yarn,
Photographs,
Candlesticks,
Skeleton keys
A single glove,
The shattered porcelain face of a doll by
A child who cries,
For all that is,
And was,
And has died

Lives sent spinning,
Changed ruined
Opened
Broken

To survive the flood was to walk among the
Ghosts
Of those still half alive,

For to survive the flood
Was
To see such destruction of all that
You once knew,
Was to see your doom flash before your
Eyes
Even though you
Knew you'd survived.

To survive
Was to start anew
In the aftermath
Of hell's
Crushing tides
In the cold of November,
To salvage,
To recollect
To try and
Try,
To start again.
To cry,
To mourn for the silenced,
The 55 who had died.
And to wonder if you were worthy
To continue your life
As it was
As it now is.

The lost

By Tucker Stone
Hartford Memorial Middle School, Grade 8

I trudge down the street looking left and right, staring at my destroyed territory. My coat is caked with mud, sending a chill through my body every so often. I'm walking down the main road checking to see what streets have been decimated. Maple Street, gone; Mulberry Lane, gone; and Ash Avenue, gone. Destroyed, every one of them.

I've been held up under that bridge on the other side of town for a week, maybe two at the most. I have lost all sense of time. The sunsets weren't as delightful; I've lost interest in watching them. Sirens cloud the sounds of tranquility. Smoke in every corner of my sight. Splish, smuck, I step carelessly into the puddle not realizing that it would suck me down into the mud. I have lost all care for whether I will be stuck forever or break loose in mere seconds. I then ease myself out of the mud, continuing my sad slow march. Would my family give up on me? Their loving dog who sat by their side every night despite the bad times? Would they?

Surviving

By Oliver Manning
Fairfield Center School, Grade 8

Scrambling to get the cows out
Unbelievable flames, high and bright
Round the corner a line of fire trucks
Vein bulging when I heard the bellowing of trapped cows
Internally scarred, externally scarred
"Volunteer or paid, all came to try and save the day," my grandpa said about the fire-fighters
Intimidating flames
Nine casualties in all
Grey and black smoke billowing into the sky.

Still standing

By Hannah Domas
Rochester High School, Grade 9

People mill about,
in small clumps or pairs.
They look at their ruined town,
looking lost.
Their feet splash in puddles
that almost drown the street.
Some buildings still stand,
others are smashed,
their walls too weak.
Rubble lines the sidewalks,
pieces of once grand houses.
Limbs of trees have fallen,
proof of destroyed beauty.
Tears start to form on people's faces,
making the puddles grow bigger.
But after their misery
they group together
and become strong.
They begin to restore the old town,
working with each other
until the job is done.
They have survived the 1927 flood.

Three: The magic number

Why the number three?

By Celsey Lumbr Fairfield Center School, Grade 8

Why the number three in many fairytales?
Why three characters that always prevail?
Three little pigs, three houses were made,
Built of three things, one of which outweighed.
Next comes the three little bears who were robbed,
A girl, who was caught, cried and then sobbed.
She tried three porridges, three chairs and three beds,
My gosh, did this girl fall and bump her head?
Third comes the three Billy Goats Gruff,
Who crossed the bridge three times, sure enough.
They outsmarted the troll, tricked him three times,
Crossed to the other side, told him three tiny white lies.
We cannot forget the three blind mice,
Their three tails made a sacrifice,
The tails were chopped by a sharp carving knife,
That was held in the hand of the farmer's wife.
Why are these fairytales all based on three?
Why all other numbers do we always oversee?
I am so confused, why does three have special rights?
All the other numbers are shunned from the limelight.

By three

By Jessy Davenport
Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

Three
Third time's a charm
Good things come in threes
Two's company, but three's a crowd
A third wheel
An odd number
Awkward, uncomfortable, left out, embarrassed
Insecure, self-conscious, singled out, alone
Nothing comes in packs of three, or makes room for that extra person
Three can be as bad as one
Just as lonely
Just as silent
Worse, by yourself there is no uneasiness
On your own you don't wonder what to do next
When part of a group of two, everything is uncomplicated
Splitting things in half is simple
Easy to share, less competition,
Relaxed, at ease, content, happy
Three strikes you're out
Uneven, dissatisfied, complex
In a group of three there is always that extra person
One who knows they are the outcast
Insecure, self-conscious, singled out, alone
Awkward, uncomfortable, left out, embarrassment
An odd number
A third wheel
Two's company, but three's a crowd
Good things come in threes
Third time's a charm
Three

Three of us

By Bailey Walker
Derby, home-schooled, Grade 8

Three, standing.
Three, laughing.
Three, crying.
Three of us,
United by bonds
Of Sisterhood.
Together, we
Support each other
With love.
Three.
A triangle,
A perfect
Shape.
We are
Bonded,
Forever,
Through anything.
Three, joking.
Three, playing.

Three, hugging.
We are
Connected in
Such a way
That no matter
How hard our
Lives get,
Or what
Tomorrow brings,
We live
Today,
Together.

Three, standing,
laughing, crying,
Joking,
Playing, hugging,
Loving one another.
Three

Three haiku

By Allison Getz
Oxbow High School, Grade 10

Nature:
It is winter now
It is getting much colder
Soon, the world will rest

School:
Noisy, loud, boring
Noisy is the loudness that
bores me to my death

Vermont:
Beautiful nature
Green mountains high above us
Alone in the world

Three, three, three

By Kacie Collins
Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

Three rings of the school bell
Three o'clock in the afternoon
Three minutes to run to the bus
Three, Three, Three
And then I am free.



YWP is a grassroots nonprofit that helps students write and gain an audience for their best work. YWP offers writing ideas or prompts, special projects and a safe Web site, www.youngwritersproject.org, where students share their writing, comment on each other's work, participate in group discussions and work on projects. YWP is indebted to the generosity of the Vermont Business Roundtable which is funding the YWP's core work for the second year.



Three deer

By Mariah Hill
Charlotte Central School, Grade 8

Three golden deer stand in the fog, pawing at the ground restlessly. Their snouts are bound with plaid muzzles in order for them to remain perfectly silent. Cherry-red leather saddles sit polished and new upon each of their backs. As they wait, snow begins to fall lightly. It gives their saddles a pleasant shine as it melts away on contact.

A few small people carrying tote bags emerge from the cloudiness after about 30 minutes or so. They all wear knit leg warmers in various colors: turquoise, maroon and white. They mount the deer and ride back the way they have come, disappearing through the fog. It is almost as if they were never there, except for the small hoof prints that have melted through the paper-thin snow coating the ground that leads away from where the deer were tethered; a vague glistening outline of three deer and their riders is visible on the hazy horizon.

Triplet mood

By Molly Pekarik
Mount Mansfield Union High School, Grade 11

tired perhaps
but satisfied
dwelling in the past

there is no moon outside
yet I see a light
your face reflected in the glass

a moment passed
someone's life just changed
I wonder if it's mine

Right time

By Kasia Wright
Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

When I think of the number three I think of 3 in the afternoon when the sun is shining, and I'm not in school. The sun's warmth is starting to cool down, but not enough to make you cold. The sun's light is a little duller, and the sky is vivid and pretty; the trees are hit with a sparkling shimmer and the air is fresh and cool. When I think of 3 o'clock I also think of snack time, cookies, ice cream, cereal, the before-dinner-keep-me-from-starving snack. When I think of 3 o'clock I think of sports practices and meeting up with friends. Three o'clock is my favorite time because one thing ends and another always begins.

A look ahead

YWP will be off until Jan. 8. Here's a sample of what we'll have for you when we return:

Peace

By Samantha Rose Newell
Brattleboro Union High School, Grade 10

I am only human,
Mistakes are sure to be made,
It's not like I'm going somewhere,
Or I'm going to fade.
I'm going to live my life,
With people that I love,
And the people that I don't,
I just won't think of.
My heart is set for love,
And my mind is set for life,
No need for weapons,
Such as, guns and knives.
I don't ask for much,
Just some peace on earth,
We only get one life,
Live it like its worth.