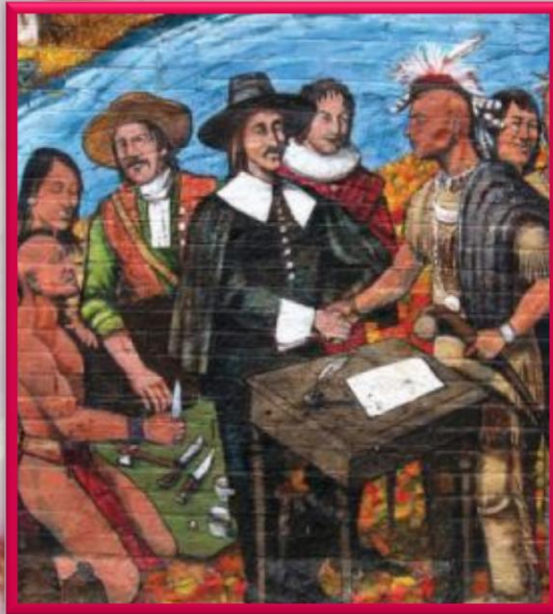


The Sagamore



**The Literary Magazine
of
Masconomet Regional
Middle School**

Boxford, Massachusetts

Spring, 2016

The theme of this issue of *The Sagamore* is kindness. Our school has dedicated itself to the mission of creating a culture of kindness, and with good reason: having this type of environment helps every single one of us. When we are kind to one another, we create a safe space in which to learn, grow, and stretch ourselves. It also helps each of us to gain empathy – the ability to put ourselves in other people’s shoes – and to help in raising each other up instead of pulling each other down.

In an article in the *Huffington Post*, Dr. Michael B. Brown wrote, “Movements of peace rarely begin in the halls of governments, but in the hearts of individuals. The same is true with kindness. It cannot be legislated, but it can be demonstrated, and when demonstrated authentically and sincerely, kindness becomes contagious... Express interest in others, and they will become more interested in you. Be patient with others, and they will extend greater patience to those within their circles of influence.”

That may prompt you to ask how we begin to create a culture of kindness. Dr. Brown has a list of suggestions:

- Treat others with courtesy.
- Listen with patience.
- Work diligently to find common ground with people, thus providing a safe and constructive foundation for conversation about interpersonal differences.
- Avoid stereotyping based on anything (gender, sexuality, race, interests, religion, politics, etc.).
- Think before you speak.
- Express affection for others. Then do something to show them that you meant what you said.
- Pay compliments.
- Celebrate other people's achievements without expecting them to acknowledge yours.
- Smile at people. Greet them with good wishes.
- Do not forget the power of phrases like "Thank you," or "I appreciate what you did for me."

Kindness is contagious, and it begins one person at a time. We can become the catalysts of a movement of kindness, and we have it within our power to contribute to a new culture which, over time, can become the prevailing culture.

(Taken from the January 12, 2016 HuffPost Religion section’s article “A Culture of Kindness” by Dr. Michael B. Brown)



Masconomet Middle School, 20 Endicott Road, Boxford, MA 01921

Greetings, Masco friends, and welcome to the fifth issue of *The Sagamore*, the literary magazine of Masconomet Regional Middle School. Winter is in the process of turning into spring, and just as the trees are using their stored up energy and nutrients to make buds on their branches, so are our students nurturing their writing and visual sides. You will see some of the products of their creative juices here on the pages of our magazine.


If you look at either mainstream or social media, you will see that creative writing, including poetry, short stories, and essays, is not a subject that gets a lot of attention, nor does artwork or photography, but we at Masco value those pursuits and are so proud to showcase the talents of our students and staff.


If you would like to submit entries for the next issue of *The Sagamore*, please contact Ms. Coburn at [jacoburn@masconomet.org](mailto:jcoburn@masconomet.org).


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Best Friend


Colton Davis 
The Biker

Lauren Dillon 
Skiing

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Tiger


Brooke Donahue 
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Dr. Flaherty 
Act of Kindness

Conor Fogarty 
Poems 1-4


Mrs. Fowler 
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Taylor Gagne 
Third Grade

Sebastian Gilligan 
Endless


Mr. Gray 
Ordinary

Kyra Gregorio 
Fish painting


Ashley Hamson 
Fish painting


Lauren Hanson 
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Ryan Kirchner 
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Mia Koutoulas 
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Jason Lee 
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Eric Malarczyk 
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Mr. Mazzaglia 
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Nicholas Mazzie 
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Fish painting


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Mr. Morris 
Kindness Poem


Sara Mouhawil 
Kindness Matters


Gracy Mowers 
The Pug

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Mrs. Noyes 
Act of Kindness

Nathaniel Noyes 
Kindness Matters


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Fish painting


Julianna Pascuccio 
Fish painting


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Fish painting


Madelyn Puglisi 
Good Citizens


Paige Richardson 
Fish painting

Max Rosenbaum 
The Lonely Rainbow

Joey Scarpa 
Making a Difference

Alessia Schiavuzzo 
Fish painting


Karleigh Schueller 
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Bethany Skinner 
That Summer Day


Faith Stanton 
Kindness Is

Katie Tilston 
Kindness

Sabrina Tirrusa 
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Henry Troake 
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Anthony Vozzella 
The Power of
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"Writing is the high alchemy of the soul that combines words and ideas to create magic."— Sharif Khan

KINDNESS

What is kindness? What forms does it take? Why is it important? How can you exhibit it? How has kindness have made a difference in your life?

That Summer Day

It's a warm summer day sometime in June and there is a slight breeze blowing through the trees I am sitting in a hammock. The garden is beautiful with all different kinds of flowers, lilies, tulips, roses, and all of the other plants, tomatoes, mint, cucumbers and anything else you can imagine. There is a cup of iced tea in my hand and chocolate chip cookies on the small table. Next to me is my mom and we will be here for a while now that we our on our own in this little house in Rhode Island. Ding Dong. The doorbell rings. It was our neighbor from across the street. She brought us brownies and an invitation to her barbeque the next day (Saturday) and we went. That day there were hamburgers and hotdogs and we even brought our tea over. Everyone loved it. And the best part of all at the end we each got a lantern and lifted them up into the sky. It was beautiful, each one with its own special light. If all in the world was right even for just one second a day, wouldn't our world become a better place?

--Bethany Skinner

A Long Walk Home

A leash in my hand
A dog on the other end
Trees' in the distance
Sidewalk up close
Snowy winter day
Full of possibility
A quick trip to CVS
A long walk back
Wondering why I
Chose ice cream when it was
Negative 3 degrees
A man with a cane
Sits on the bench
As the man struggles to get up
I run over to help
My dog comes too
I grab his hand
And pull him to his feet
He says thank you
And goes about his day
A long walk home

--Lauren Hanson

Poem 1

Kindness Is Simple
Yet complex
It Is Small
Yet huge
It Can Be As Easy As
Holding The Door Open
Or As Hard As Saving A Life
But If It Is True
Then It will Be Forever
But Either Way
It Will Change
A Life

Poem 2

It Is True
But False
It Is Self Centered
Yet Selfless
It Is Hard
And Easy
There Are Many Words For It
But There Is One
It Is KINDNESS

Poem 3

Kindness Is Not An Object
Nor A Feeling
It Is Not One Act
But It Is Not Many
Kindness Is An Adjective
But It Is Not
It's Not What You Do
But Why You Do It
Kindness

Poem 4

Kindness
Why Is It Good
Why Is It Important
You've Already Answered
These Questions
But What is This
Why Is It There
Why Do We Have It

--Conor Fogarty

Zig-zagging through the crowd of people
Opening my locker I noticed a book
I looked down to find several more books
Then I saw a girl quickly trying to gather
her items

I kneeled down to assist her
She stopped and looked at me

We made eye contact

She smiled and looked down

I grabbed her book and handed it to her

She took it without looking up

She stood up and walked away

Through the crowd of people I saw her

She turned around and gave me a wink

I smiled and walked away

After that we never encountered each other
again

I had never seen her around school before

I got a weird feeling in my stomach

And I always will remember that moment

--Nicholas Mazzie

The Lonely Rainbow

Once upon a time, there was a rainbow name Jeff. Jeff was going to a new school for rainbows called West Color Sky. As soon as he walked into the school, all of the other rainbows noticed his flaws.

“Where did you get your colors, Walmart?” screamed, Albert the rainbow, laughing his stripes off. Jeff has a black stripe. Usually rainbows with black stripes don’t fit in anywhere. That is exactly what happened that school day.

The next day Jeff was walking down the hallway getting laughed at. Someone who wasn’t laughing stepped in front of him and stopped Jeff. It was a rather attractive rainbow.

“What’s your name?” Chloe the rainbow asked Jeff.

“Well umm,” Jeff mumbled.

“Don’t be shy. We’re all just fellow rainbows,” Chloe said.

“Well, umm, my name is Jeff,” Jeff replied awkwardly. Riiiiinnnnnnnnngggggggg! It was final bell.

“I’ll see you around, Jeff. Maybe we could hang out sometime.”

“Oooookk, bye.” They talked every day after that and lived happily ever after.

--Max Rosenbaum

Kindness

It happens daily,

It goes unnoticed.

When someone holds a door for you,

Or when they pick up a dropped item.

It happens.

When your sibling lets you eat the last cookie.

Or when someone simply just greets you.

It happens.

When your friend helps you,

Or when they cheer you up.

All over this world,

Daily,

Every second people do something,

Something to just help out a person.

A small task, it goes unnoticed,

But all of these small tasks add up,

And when you start to notice them,

You appreciate them.

And then you start doing them too.

--Anonymous

How does one express kindness?

Well one might take part in small acts

Like holding open a door or sharing a smile

Some others may do something huge

Like changing the world

Kindness does not care about size nor amount

How the recipient feels is where the reward is held

Pick up a dropped pencil or donate millions of dollars,
it’s all the same

Walk a dog

Smile at a stranger

Carry groceries

Donate a single penny or maybe even a hundred

It’s the thought that counts

Express your love for someone in a letter

Or even

Write a poem

--Grace Bernheart



Kindness

Kindness should fill us all

Kindness should fill us all with happiness

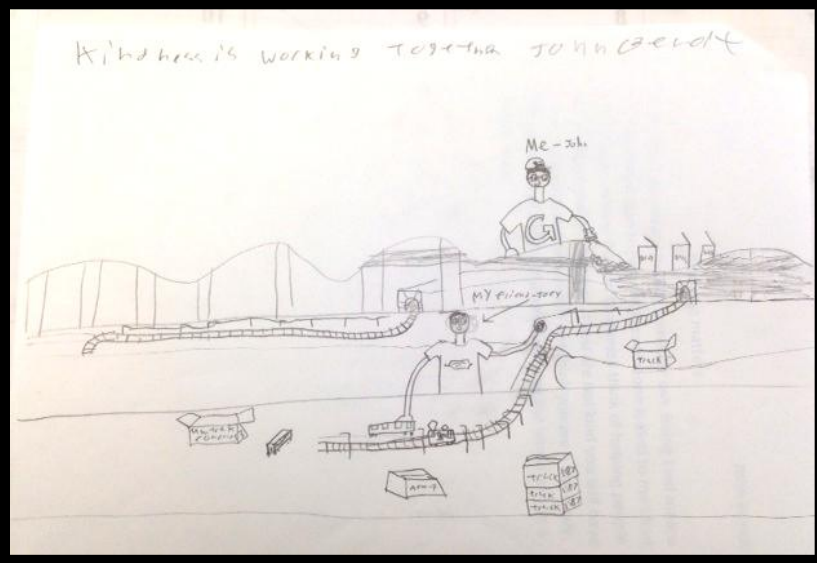
Kindness should fill us all with happiness and make us smile

Kindness should fill us all with happiness and make us smile from ear to ear

Kindness should fill us all with happiness and make us smile from ear to ear spreading it

Kindness should fill us all with happiness and make us smile from ear to ear spreading it to . . .
everyone

--Abigail Moisan



Kindness Matters

To me, kindness means helping someone out. Being kind means you are always glad to help. When someone is kind to me, I feel really happy. When I think of kindness, I think of helping people out. Kindness matters because if you are not kind, you will have a bad reputation and people will not think you are a good guy. If everyone gave a little kindness every day, the world will be a better place.

--John Benoit

Kindness Matters

To me, kindness means being very nice, amazing and respectful. Being kind means you are always nice to others, and you want people to like you, not dislike you. When someone is kind to me, I feel like I'm a great person and I'm being respectful. When I think of kindness, I think of great friends and family that love me. Kindness matters because you don't want people to not like you. You want people to like you and think you're a good friend. If everyone did one act of kindness each day, the world would be HAPPY!

--Annie Begley



Kindness Matters

To me, kindness means being sweet. Being kind means you are always there for me. When someone is kind to me, I feel happy. When I think of kindness, I think of my mom being sweet to me by making cookies. Kindness matters because it makes me very happy. If everyone did one act of kindness each day, the world would be awesome.

--Sara Mouhawil

I went skiing over February Vacation in New Hampshire. I went on two days and to two different mountains. The first day I went to Ragged Mountain and the second day, I went to Attitash. Ragged had perfect conditions. There was no ice, no one was there, and the lifts were really quick. When I went to Attitash, the conditions were horrible. It was so icy and it was really crowded. Towards the end of the day, it got even icier. Snowboarders plow all of the snow out of the way, so you just fall and slide down the whole entire mountain. I was heading down with my dad and I spotted this kid sliding down the mountain. There was a GoPro sitting in the snow a couple of meters behind him. I grabbed the camera and skied down to him. I handed him the GoPro and helped him get up. When I continued skiing down the mountain, I had that feeling in my heart when you do something good. I love that feeling.

--Lauren Dillon

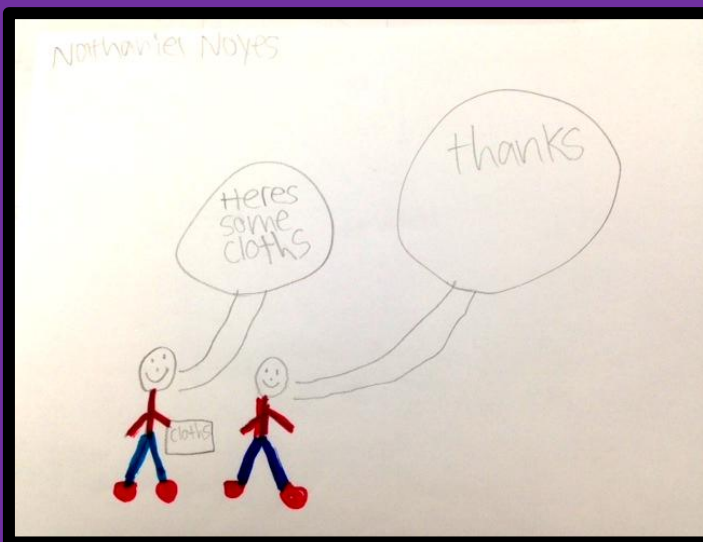
The Power of Kindness

One man's kindness can do many things.
It can be passed on from person to person, starting a chain.
It can inspire someone.
It can make someone do something great.

One person can start all these things by doing something kind.
Kindness can end depression.
Kindness can end world hunger.
Kindness can go as far as ending war.

Kindness is many things.
It's inspiring.
It's helpful.
It's powerful.
It's a light in the dark.

--Anthony Vozzella



Kindness Matters

To me, kindness means to be nice to people. Being kind means you are always trying to help others. When someone is kind to me, I feel happy. When I think of kindness, I think of helping people. Kindness matters because if you're not kind, no one will like you. If everyone did one act of kindness each day, the world would be the best place ever!

--Nathaniel Noyes

Staff Kindness

Our school promotes a culture of kindness, but that doesn't only apply to the students here; it applies to the faculty and staff, as well. Here are some recent examples of kindnesses that were extended among the adults in the building:

- We held a fundraiser to help out a teacher whose house burned down.
- We threw a baby shower for two people who are expecting babies shortly.
- We collected money which paid for 1,642 meals for children in Haiti.
- We sponsored a staff member who did the Polar Plunge to raise money for Special Olympics.





In the dictionary kindness is defined as the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate. But I think the dictionary should reconsider it. Three simple adjectives are not enough to describe the word kindness. Everyone in society has this sense of blindness.

Kindness is acknowledging someone, not pretending that they aren't there.
Kindness is playing nice and fair.
Kindness is making sure someone's okay even when they say they're not.
Kindness is making someone smile a lot.
Kindness is being a friend.
Kindness is never supposed to end
Kindness is making someone laugh so hard that they cry.
Kindness is making sure you never lie.
Kindness is giving a simple hello.
Kindness is something that you should never outgrow.
Kindness is replying to a text in an instant.
Kindness is something that now seems so distant
Kindness is letting someone know you care
It sucks when you know that kindness isn't there.
I wish I hadn't fell
For that "kind" someone who put me through hell.

--Anonymous

Rivals

It was the first round of the playoffs and we won the first game. We were playing our rivals, Beverly, who just lost a game and will be out of the playoffs if they lost again. My friend was on that team that I played AAU with. We put our reserves in and sat back because we were favored to win. We underestimated them and now they had a 10 point lead in the fourth quarter. Throughout the fourth quarter we fought back to within one point. It all came down to this play. There were ten seconds left and we had the ball – 5...4...3... I pulled up on a deep three pointer 2...1... Bang! It went in. The other team's fans let out a collective gasp. I hit the shot near the other team's bench where my friend was sitting. He had 20 points and they probably would have won the game if he didn't foul out. Right as I hit that shot, he got up patted me on the back and congratulated me. If that happened to my team, I would've never been that nice. I realized in that moment that I had great supportive friends that will always be there.

--Ryan Kirchner

Over the summer of 2015 I was with my cousins Alexis and Gianna and that morning we went to my grandmother's house for breakfast. My cousin Alexis and I noticed that there are so many homeless people around East Boston, Chelsea and Revere that may need something to eat. So we went home and thought of some food we can make for the homeless.

We finally came to the decision of making some peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. So, we went out and got all the supplies we needed. Then I gave my aunt the idea of getting something for them to drink. So we got water and some brownies for a little treat afterwards. We then purchased the supplies and headed home.

When we got home we had a routine. We had my aunt and uncle put the peanut butter on each slice of bread and then gave them to the kids. We then put jelly on the other side and closed the sandwich. We then put them all into zip-lock bags. We made over 80 sandwiches.

We took out brown paper bags and put the water in then the sandwich. Then we put 2 brownies in each bag and then put the bag of brownies in the brown paper bag. My aunt then noticed the lollipops she had in the cabinet and thought it would be a good idea to put a lollipop in each bag. Then we put the bags into each box and put them in the trunk of the car and headed back to East Boston.

Once we got there we know a bridge near my grandmother that a lot of homeless people would go so we went there and gave about half the sandwiches away! Then we headed for Chelsea and Revere and sold about 10 to each city. Once we noticed the time we didn't know what to do with the rest of them so my cousin ate one and then we delivered the rest to the police station in all 3 cities.

Then we went home and felt so good about ourselves and realized that money doesn't buy us happiness, doing something for others and not getting anything in return feels just as good.

--Sabrina Tirrusa

Kindness

People try to put it in words
But there is no way to explain it
The moment has more meaning than the definition
It's like a small fire everyone has inside,
An eternal flame burning, though bigger and brighter in others
And when you have the chance, you give a small flame to another
And when you give out that flame
It's gives a certain feeling that makes you fly
That makes your lips play a smile and your heart leap so high,
So that you feel lighter like a feather
The feeling of warmth that embraces you in a soft blanket
That moment when you feel you'll burst
Contentment and Satisfaction
Just from helping one person
It's a gift that can't be repaid by any sentence or letter or expensive object
But only the feeling of doing something good for the other
And knowing that you have done it for heart and not from selfish ideas
--Anonymous



Kindness

Cars zooming past, never
stopping,
Until one car halts, risking the
loud honking that ensues,
To let me go.
--Henry Troake



School (Fictional)

The bell rang
I walked down the hallway
The place was filled with kids
I carried all my books
My load was starting to get
heavy
I kept trudging along
Then I started to tip
Boom! Crash!
Everything hit the ground
I felt so ashamed
All my materials, scattered
Everyone's eyes, looking at
me
I rushed to pick up my books
and folders
They were so far away
Then, a kid placed his books
down
He started picking up my
materials
Then another kid did the same
Soon, there were five kids
helping me out
They helped me gather my
things
I thanked them
I then felt less embarrassed
As I walked to my next class
Another kid had done the
same
I rushed over and helped
The kid got back on his feet
He left for his next class
I did the same and just in time
too
I sat down
The bell rang
--Eric Malarczyk

I was walking down the street in Boston with my sisters and my mom. We were just walking around because it was a nice day, but we did stop to eat and we went into a couple of stores. But the kind part of this trip was at the end of the day. The sun was going down, so we started getting ready to go home. Our car was a far walk from where we were, so it would take a little while, but it was a warm night with bright stars and a perfect crescent moon. One after another, the bright colorful lights in every store lined up on both sides of the street started to go out. It made it darker walking to the car, but we still had the streetlights and the stars to light up the street and help us see. There were a couple of other people on the road in front of us. There was a mom and her maybe four year old son walking beside her. As we were walking, up further ahead there was a box and a red ripped up blanket. I directed my gaze towards the little kid in front of us. He was doing something, but I didn't know what. His mom was on the phone getting mad because he kept pulling her purse. When he got the purse to slide down to his mom's wrist, he looked in it and took out a twenty dollar bill. No one knew why – not me, my sisters, or my mom. Even his mom didn't know what he was doing. He ran over to the box and knocked on it. I couldn't believe my eyes when an old man put his head out of the box. The little kid gave him the twenty dollar bill and ran back to his mom. The old man was homeless in a box. "God bless you," he said to the little kid. Everyone who witnessed this was in tears because of how kind that little kid was. No matter what age you are, you can make a difference. It didn't affect anyone's life who was watching, but I bet it changed that man's life and he will always remember that little kid.
--Joey Scarpa

Third Grade

Third grade. My best friend Maggie was being made fun of. She didn't know what to do. The bullies wouldn't stop. Every day during lunch she was afraid to eat her lunch. She would run to the bathroom and cry her eyes out. I was the only one that was there for her. I helped her through it all. Eventually she couldn't take it anymore. She wasn't in school for a week. I found out she had stopped eating, so she was rushed to the hospital. She was there for a week. She finally came back. Everyone stared at her when she sat down next to me at the lunch table. The bullies were back.

They said, "Where did all your weight go? Oh never mind, now there's more." She sat there in silence.

I stood up and said to them, "Back off. She has done nothing to you and all you do is hate on her and call her fat." They walked away and never said anything to her again.

The sound of her crying still haunts me all the time.

--Taylor Gagne

It was a nice breezy day, one of the nicest days of the year. Everyone was out biking, even me. I was riding to my friend's house to go downtown. The ride was nice – no cars and the sun on my neck felt soothing. I was halfway there when I saw a biker going really fast down a hill. He tried to turn, but he still went into the ditch, I could see up ahead that he wasn't moving. I whipped out my phone, almost dropping it. I called 911 and told them what had happened. When I hung up, I immediately went to see if he was okay. He moaned like a hungry stomach. I helped him to the side of the road. His leg was bent weird and his bike was trashed. I waited a few minutes. Still no sirens. I gave him some water and my phone to tell his wife what had happened. We talked about sports. Then he asked me what my favorite sport was – the usual questions when you talk to a stranger. I heard sirens and he did, too. He smiled and when the ambulance and police cruiser pulled up on the scene, I was relieved. They questioned me and then I realized that I knew the officer from D.A.R.E at school. The biker thanked me. It turned out he had broken several bones and sprained many things, but he was all right in the end. I got a ride home from the sergeant. He told me that I had done a good thing helping out. I thought that it was what anyone would have done, but I realized not all people are nice in the world.

--Colton Davis

It was a nice, but cold winter day in December. The skies were blue, but the air was brisk. My mom and I were heading into Boston to see my aunt and cousin for lunch. Everything was going normally. I was on my phone, listening to music, and my mom was driving and focusing on the road. All of a sudden, I heard my mom screech, terrified, and then I heard a crash. A tire had hit the front of our car. I didn't realize it was that bad until I looked out my window. Several different cars stopped to make sure we were okay. Since my mom and I had never been in this bad of a car accident, we were really in shock. One person realized we didn't know what to do since we couldn't drive our car. He told us to get out of our car because smoke was coming out of it. He really helped us out and told us what to do. The fact that he got out of his car just to help us and stopped going to where he needed to be was very kind. This really helped me realize that not everyone is bad in this world and many people will go out of their way to help you, even if you don't know them.

--Madelyn Puglisi

It was one warm, summer day in Middleton, Massachusetts. My family and I were about to leave on a shopping trip, I believe. We were in our silver Honda Pilot when we noticed something a bit strange. A little tan pug with a fat belly was walking around in our front yard. My parents told me it should find its way home, but I didn't want to take a risk. I begged them to stay with it until an owner came looking for it, so we hopped out of the car and took care of the pup for an hour or so. I wanted to keep the adorable pug, but that would be rude, so I just pet it and gave it some water. After that hour with the lonely pug, we heard a lady hollering a name. It turned out it was the owner. She came running over to the dog carrying yet another pug! She thanked us and apologized. She didn't need to apologize, though. I had fun with the dog and I felt really generous for watching it. I am glad it is safe at home, though!

--Gracy Mowers

My best friend is the best example of kindness I could ever even imagine. Some people don't think that the little things matter, but they do. From picking up my pencil when it falls to commenting something sweet on my Instagram photo, it's all kindness. She makes me laugh when I'm not too happy, and she tells me when I get hurt it's not allowed. She always knows what to do when I'm annoying her, and always knows how to solve a problem between us. She helps me in math when I'm confused. She tries to make me happy and I need someone like that in my life!

--Payton Coleman

Kindness comes in every shape and size, from the tiniest animal on earth to the biggest! Even the smallest things count. Whether you're picking up someone's pencil or saving lives, your act matters.

--Katie Tilston

The Cold Elder

We were in New Bedford,
On a cold December afternoon.
There she sat,
On a squeaky old wheelchair.
Her wrinkles like a used candy wrapper,
Her eyes sparkled like a glistening lake.
She gave me a look
That said one thousand different things
In just one facial expression.
She sat by a door,
Wanting to enter.
I walked over to the door.
It felt like I was lifting
The heaviest man in the world.
Then her wheels squeaked
Like a mouse. The whole town could hear it.
Once again she gave me a look,
Another look that said one thousand things,
Without saying one word.
She then went through the door,
That squeaky cold elder.

--Jason Lee

Kindness

The ultimate act of kindness is a smile,
No matter who the person is, what they look like, if you
know them or not
just look at them and smile,
You never know who they are or what has happened to them,
But a smile will go a mile.
And it will make a difference,
Your smile is contagious, so smile at someone for even just a
second,
And *that* could have been the best second of their day.
--Samantha Meehan

Endless

Kindness comes in twos or threes or fours or ten millions but never ones	But kindness can be shrouded hidden changed or destroyed
Kindness in shared from person to person and back again to you	For hatred flies farther faster stronger and is given more attention
A piece a shard a particle of kindness can go far	But only for a time
Kindness goes farther than an airplane than a race car than a space ship or anything physical	Kindness is forever is a footprint in cement is a star in the sky kindness is endless --Sebastian Gilligan

Kindness is...
Kindness is giving your last piece of candy to a friend
Kindness is dropping a quarter in the cup of the needy
Kindness is holding the door open for the elderly
Kindness is turning someone's tears into smiles
Kindness is lending your pencil to a classmate
Kindness is looking down and holding out a hand
Kindness is telling someone always looking at their shoes
that they look nice today
Kindness is guiding the puzzled
Kindness is scooping up scattered items
Kindness is being told that your favorite toddler is dying to
see you again
Kindness is overlooked and underused

--Faith Stanton

“Ordinary” by Mr. William Gray

It’s called an “adaptive stroller.” It’s basically a baby stroller for big people: reinforced composite gray pipes crisscross, accented with dull black grips and straps. A royal blue canvas holds the entire industrial monstrosity together. When our son Jacob first takes his seat, he looks the perfect part of a Bond super villain, especially as he wraps his tiny fingers around the black foam armrests and crosses his legs. A gleam is in his eye and the corner of his mouth slightly turns up.

But the moment is short-lived. Jacob grabs his “stuffie,” a small stuffed character we have deemed appropriate for him to have during social gatherings, and begins twirling it back and forth in front of his nose. The motion calms him, as does the sensation of the fabric as it gently, most times at least, hits his chin and lower lip. A liberal application of medicated lip ointment is always needed; especially during the winter months, as this sensation he desires so much tends to dry his lower lip to the point of cracking and bleeding. It’s a challenge, but we have learned to pick our battles. The “stuffie” is better than, say, teeth grinding or screaming. Screaming is really fun in a crowd.

Jacob has Down syndrome and Autism.

We are at a local comic convention. As I stand with my son in his stroller, waiting for my wife, a young lady dressed in Middle Earth Elvin approaches and talks to Jacob.

“Hi! What’s your name?” Jacob tenses his entire body at the attention. His arms pull up, crossing at his neck, and he squeals.

“This is Jacob,” I answer for him. She smiles and puts out her hand. Jacob relaxes a bit and gives her a gentle five.

“Are you having fun, Jacob?” she asks.

“He is, thank you,” I return, and then continue, feeling the need to explain. “He’s non-verbal.”

“Have you gotten to meet anyone today?” She is still talking with Jacob who is moaning and rocking now, but every so often shooting her some eye contact as if he is giving her a suspicious once-over.

“We have,” I answered. “We were hoping to meet Patrick Stewart.”

The young lady begins sifting through her elfin bag as though she were looking for a misplaced magic wand. Instead, she pulls out a small card and hands it to me. It was stamped with black ink in a few places, but much of it was still clean.

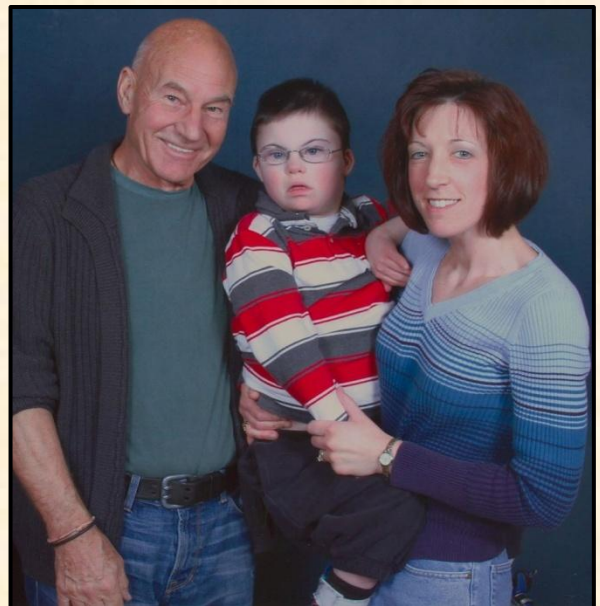
“I got to meet him and a few others already,” she pointed to the open slots on the card, “but you can see there are plenty of spots left. Show this card to the people at his table and you’ll go right to the front.”

I look back and forth from the card and her. This is a VIP Pass, and it cost her more than a few silver coins from Gondor, I am sure. She is now playing with Jacob, who is feeling much more comfortable with her. Our eyes meet, and we share a brief moment of silent connection.

She get’s it! I think as I smile. Her perfect response without saying a word, *Of course I do.*

“Thank you so much,” I say, finally breaking the silence between us.

“Enjoy,” she answers. She gives Jacob another five and melts away into the crowd.



Patrick Stewart, Jacob, and Mrs. Gray

As she leaves, I look around the arena. Beside me is a rather rotund man wearing a blond wig and wielding Thor's Hammer. He squeezes past a Robin from the DC Comics universe, except she wears her costume and green tights expertly, better than poor Burt Ward ever did in that low-budget



Jacob and R2D2 having a chat

1960's Batman series. We dodge a Gandalf wielding his cardboard wizard staff, who is desperately trying to avoid a life-sized remote-controlled R2D2. Mr. Spock is conversing, rather logically I am sure, with Captain America and a member of a Kiss cover band.

This is far from what many may consider ordinary, but at this moment, I recognize what is remarkable about this community.

Imagine, for your whole life, you have been set apart from the mainstream. You have been banished to the fringe of society's pecking order. You have been castigated and cast down for being weird or odd, a geek and a nerd, simply for celebrating what you enjoy.

So when folks like these have the opportunity to meet Jacob, a heart shines through spandex suits and plastic body armor. Compassion reaches out behind masks and make-up. They do not see weird or odd. They do not see different. Simply put, Jacob is one of them. And in the greatest way possible, Jacob or I are not made to feel "special" or "unique." Here we are "ordinary."

And here, being "ordinary" is the greatest feeling in the world.



In February, Masconomet Regional High School math teacher Mrs. Andrea Alexis organized a staff fundraiser to benefit the students of Grace Evangelical School in Canaan, Haiti. Seen here are students holding a sign to thank the Masco teachers for their donations. The staff's kind support and generosity really make a huge difference in the lives of these children.

tiger
by Erika Ding



*before all this chaos
we would have dinner
and watch t.v. together
we would share fart jokes
and say that you were just like your chinese zodiac,
the tiger,
which is true,
too true*

*just like the tiger,
you were born in the snowy mountains
of jilin, china
just like the tiger,
you ventured into the unknown
and left your hometown*

*just like the tiger
you were
a born leader,
a student council representative,
a solo violinist,
athletically talented
you had a comfortable life in china
yet you pursued a ph.d in physics
in america*

*just like the tiger
you worked from sunrise to sunset,
from universities to companies
you spent every ounce of energy
working day and night
traveling the world
so our family could have a stable income
and your daughters could pursue higher education*

*you didn't know how to ski,
but just like the tiger,
you learned on your own
just because you wanted to ski with your daughters
you
tripped,
fell,
and got bruised
many times,
but you fought through
to be with your daughters,
your family*



*cancer is a parasite
that latched itself onto you
your first encounter with cancer
was nine years ago
your daughters were nine and three*

*but just like the tiger,
you still went on business trips,
still stayed up late working,
still woke up early to send your daughters to school
you refused to tell others about this "handicap"*

*just like the tiger,
you decided to participate in a cancer-curing
experiment
out of the 1,000 participants
you were the sole survivor*

*but cancer is a parasite
just like the parasite,
it grew itself back from its severed head
and brought the worst out of you*

*just like the tiger,
you roared your anger
at dinner
you picked out flaws
while watching t.v.
you scowled
at our old jokes*

*august 2015
you're packing up for our family trip to china
your abdominal pains are worsening
your wife is telling you to see the doctor,
but you brush it off with "it's just a fever"
you didn't want to disappoint your children
after all, it's been three years
since we've been there together
as a family*

*your last trip to china
you still agreed to your oldest daughter's request
to travel to see the terra cotta soldiers,
even though you have already seen them
you pushed yourself
to keep bringing us out to eat,
to keep visiting tourist attractions,*

to keep walking
until the end of our two-week "vacation"
until you couldn't walk anymore
that was the first time i saw you in a wheelchair

"daddy has liver cancer for the third time"
my mom gathered my older sister and me to talk
your inability to walk,
your thin arms wrapped around your abdomen,
your pained expression
was more than enough evidence to figure that out

but you are the tiger
you were given chemotherapy,
painkillers,
and countless medications
you routinely walked around the hospital
even though the nurse told you not to
you kept fighting,
fighting,
fighting,
despite the inevitable end

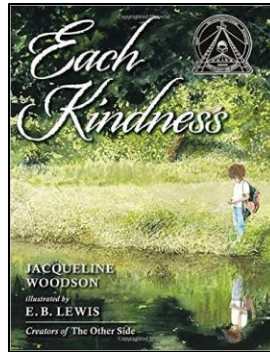
on sleepless nights
my mind plays around with reincarnation
i dream
you are a white tiger
shimmering, snow white pelt that ruffles in the
harsh gale of the snowy mountainside
similar to your homeland
sharp eyes the color of the atlantic ocean,
rich of life, yet so little had been explored



In loving memory of
Dr. Ji Ding
Nov. 27, 1962 – Oct. 17, 2015

If you are a big brother or big sister, or if you babysit, these are some great books that you can read to younger children. As a role model, you have the power to truly influence the minds and attitudes of youngsters around you, so teach them what kindness is all about.

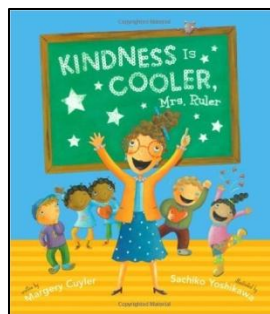
Each Kindness by Jacqueline Woodson



Chloe and her friends won't play with the new girl, Maya. Every time Maya tries to join Chloe and her friends, they reject her. Eventually Maya stops coming to school. When Chloe's teacher gives a lesson about how even small acts of kindness can

change the world, Chloe is stung by the lost opportunity for friendship, and thinks about how much better it could have been if she'd shown a little kindness toward Maya.

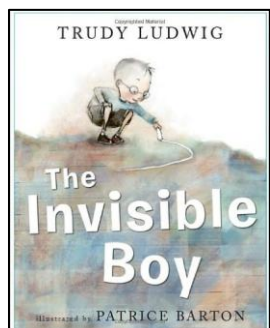
Kindness is Cooler, Mrs. Ruler by Margery Cuyler



When Mrs. Ruler asks five of her kindergarteners to miss recess, she's got a special plan up her sleeve. She's about to teach a new golden rule: kindness is cool! Soon the entire class is doing so many good deeds that their kindness

bulletin board barely fits their classroom! From clearing the table after dinner, to helping the elderly, one kindergarten class is proving that kids really can make a difference.

The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig



Meet Brian, the invisible boy. Nobody ever seems to notice him or think to include him in their group, game, or birthday party . . . until, that is, a new kid comes to class. When Justin, the new boy, arrives, Brian is the first to make him feel welcome. And when Brian

and Justin team up to work on a class project together, Brian finds a way to shine.



Alessia Schiavuzzo



Taevin Trodella



Gillian Brown



Sean Michael

*Mrs.
Amstler's
classes'
paintings*



Luigi Nuzzolo

Sarah Aylwin

Mia Koutoulas

Ashley Hamson





Karleigh Schueller



Zeel Patel



Kyra Gregorio

"I dream my painting and then I paint my dream."
--Vincent Van Gogh



Vincent Cloutier

"Every artist was first an amateur."
--Ralph Waldo Emerson



Julianna Pascuccio



Tara Bhatt

Paige Richardson



Brooke Donahue



Random Acts of Kindness

The whole idea of doing random (occurring without a pattern) acts of kindness (something to help someone else or make the person feel good, but without being asked) began when Anne Herbert wrote the phrase "Practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty" on a placemat in Sausalito, California in 1982. People saw it, and from there, it spread to bumper stickers, t-shirts, and buttons with the powerful momentum of something important calling us to lives of caring and compassion. The book, *Random Acts of Kindness*, a collection of true stories of acts of kindness, was published in February, 1993 and set off a chain reaction. Articles appeared in nearly every newspaper in the U.S., and hundreds of radio stations devoted airtime to the cause. The concept continues to spread, and we hope it will carry on until the beauty of simple kindness touches – and changes – us all. How great is it that our random acts of kindness and good deeds can make someone else's entire day?

Information taken from www.makeadiff.wordpress.com

My 11 year old daughter randomly entered the room I was in, give me some chocolate with a hug and a smile, and didn't look for anything in return. That was great.

--Mr. Monagle

I had a detailed conversation with a student at lunch about our favorite part of salads and I think it made both of our days.

--Mr. Mazzaglia

I was designing programs for my lacrosse team and trying to find a good price for printing them because we didn't want to spend a lot of money. When the printer delivered the programs he said they were free and wished my team good luck. I am very grateful to him.

--Mr. Boepple

When I was a kid, I remember my mother walking up to an old woman in our grocery store. The woman looked like she'd seen better times, and my mom bent down next to her and said, "I believe you dropped this," as she held out a folded \$20 bill. The woman insisted she didn't drop it, but my mom made it clear it was now hers. It made the woman's day, I'm sure, but it also made ours. (And this was back in the 1970s when twenty dollars was a big deal!)

--Mrs. Walker

One morning this past November, I looked out the window to see a beautiful floral arrangement being delivered. I thought someone is very luck today; turned out that someone was me! I returned to work after being out for several days with a significant injury. The staff sent me a Welcome Back arrangement that was gorgeous and filled with all my favorite flowers in colors of yellow and pick. It made my day!

--Dr. Flaherty

I recently became a long-term sub here at the middle school, and since I travel around to different classes and teams throughout the day, it's hard for me to get to know the students. I was only here for a short while when two students made me feel very welcome. One student always gave me a big smile when I saw him in the hallway. The other student greeted me with a big "Hi, Mrs. Noyes!" each day. Each of these students made me, a new teacher, feel so welcome. I really appreciate their kindness!

--Ms. Noyes

When my daughter was in first grade, a little girl came in to school in the morning and told the class that her family's condo had been destroyed in a fire the previous night. I volunteered at the school at the time, so I saw everything that went on that morning. Once the principal and teachers heard what happened, a whirlwind of activity occurred. Within four hours, the staff and a few parents who knew about the tragedy put together a start-up wardrobe of clothes for the girl and her little brother, purchased toys for them because that evening was the first night of Chanukah which they celebrated, purchased over \$400 in gift cards to Walmart, Target, and the grocery store, and put together a list of volunteers to drive the kids to their activities so that the parents could concentrate on getting back on their feet. I was so impressed by the generosity of the school community, and that family still talks about it.

--Ms. Coburn

Student Council's Acts of Kindness

"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."

--Desmond Tutu

"IF YOU CAN'T FEED A HUNDRED PEOPLE, THEN FEED JUST ONE."

--MOTHER TERESA

Cradles to Crayons

is an organization that provides children from birth to age twelve, living in low-income and homeless situations, with essential items they need to thrive – at home, at school, and at play. They supply these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities that HAVE with communities that NEED.

Thank you for your generosity.

Keep your ears open for announcements about opportunities to do good deeds for animals and for people with disabilities. Student Council will be sending home information in May. In the meantime, if you know of a need for some acts of kindness, let your representatives know, and they'll see what they can do.

Your kindness can change lives.



Each year, the middle school's Student Council organizes a food drive. You may remember being asked to bring in non-perishable food items and toiletries last fall. It was an amazing success, but the need for food and personal items exists all year long for many people, not just at the beginning of a new school year or right before the winter holidays.

Donating **non-perishable food** (e.g. things that stay fresh without refrigeration such as canned tuna and soups, jarred sauces and condiments, and boxed pasta and crackers), **household items** (e.g. things to help keep a house running such as paper towels, spray cleaners, or cups), and **personal necessities** (e.g. items related to hygiene and health such as shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, and diapers) is an easy way to help others. Your generosity and kindness can make an enormous difference in a family's life. If you would like to donate items to local groups which help people right here in your own community, the **food pantries in Boxford, Topsfield, and Middleton**, as well as **ACORD in Hamilton** (which serves the entire North Shore) and Haven from Hunger in Peabody, would happily accept whatever you bring.

Kindness

Your smile lights up the room when you enter,
Your nod in the hallway makes my spirit soar.

Kindness takes a minute and lasts the day long.

The "Hey, how ya' doing?" draws me up out of
my quiet self, especially when it comes from
the heart, or with a warming smile.

School hallways can sometimes be crazy, but
when you meet a knowing grin, your day
changes in an instant, and your heart warms a
bit.

Kindness takes a second, and isn't hard to do,
so take an instant, and share a smile or two.

--Mrs. Fowler

Go,
Masco!



- Cheer on your friends when they compete.
- Thank your teachers after each class.
- Let your parents know how much you appreciate everything they do for you.

I AM

*I am a farmer, not a harmer
I wonder about my animals'
safety*

*I hear my goats in the dairy
I want to sleep without worry*

I see the ocean of gold

I am a farmer, not a harmer

*I feel sorry for the less
fortunate*

*I worry what will happen to
them*

*I cry for the abused animals
and people*

I am a farmer, not a harmer

I understand animals

I say animals deserve better

I dream of happy animals

And I try and help them

I...am...a...farmer, not a harmer

--Henry Mulholland

Kindness

Take the time
to offer a helping hand.

To hold the door open.

To say what you know
needs to be said.

Take the time
to share a smile or a compliment.

When you offer kindness,
you walk in the footsteps
of the world's great healers.
What may seem a small act to you,
may be a shining beacon of hope
to someone lost in dark days.

See the light where no one else does.

Be the better person.

Do the right thing.

When compassion is your guide,
you serve the greater good,
and every choice you make
is the right one.

--Mr. Morris



Mrs. Green's Recommended Reading • Books Related to Kindness



***Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli**

In this Newbury Award-winning story about the perils of popularity, the courage of non-conformity, and the thrill of first love, an eccentric student named Stargirl enchants her classmates at Mica High School, but then they turn on her.

***Coffeehouse Angel* by Suzanne Selfers**

Sixteen-year-old Katrina's kindness to a man she finds sleeping behind her grandmother's coffeehouse leads to a strange reward as Malcolm, who is actually a teenage guardian angel, insists on rewarding her by granting her her deepest wish.

***Spindle's End* by Robin McKinley**

The infant princess Briar Rose is cursed on her name day by Pernicia, an evil fairy, and then whisked away by a young fairy to be raised in a remote part of a magical country, unaware of her real identity and hidden from Pernicia's vengeful powers.



***Firegirl* by Tony Abbott**

A middle school boy's life is changed when Jessica, a girl disfigured by burns, starts attending his Catholic school while receiving treatment at a local hospital.

***Stories Told By Mother Teresa* by Mother Teresa**

A collection of stories based on the simple yet special moments Mother Teresa experienced during her daily work in the streets of Calcutta illustrates her belief that even the smallest acts of kindness make the world a better place.

The Sagamore was made possible by the generous effort and support of the following individuals:

Dr. Dorothy Flaherty

Ms. Jennifer Rabold

Ms. Ursina Amsler

Mr. Michael Morris

Mrs. Diane Green

Mr. Nicko Tzortzis

Mr. Tom Donovan

Mrs. Deborah Silva

and the students and staff of

Masconomet Regional Middle School

20 Endicott Road, Boxford, Massachusetts 01921



**Masconomet Regional Middle School
Core Classroom Values**

M

Mutual Respect

A

Arrive Prepared

S

Speak After Thinking

C

Carefully Listen to Others

O

Offer Kindness