

# June Perspectives 2020



**Edited By William J. DeGiovanni**

**Brandon and Aiden show their respect at the cemetery this past Memorial Day.**

Being a glass half full person, one of the positive things that I have loved during these past three months of remote learning, has been getting to know more about our children and families. In the busyness of a typical day, it would be a highlight of my day to visit classrooms and talk with children, but through the interviews in Perspective, visiting zoom meetings, and corresponding with families, it is a delight to find out about all the amazing and fun things families are interested in, and doing together, that I probably wouldn't have learned "before." School closure (and other shutdowns) happened instantly, with no time to plan or prepare, but the response to this challenge has been a testament to your resilience, optimism, and intrinsic strength to make the best of an unforeseen situation and to meet head on the challenge that was before us. As has been said by many, we wouldn't have chosen this pandemic, but our response to it *was* a choice and I am filled with respect and awe with how families have coped throughout. As we near the end of the 2020-2021 school year, I want to thank you for your support and wish you all a peaceful, safe summer. I look forward to a new beginning in September for the 2020-2021 school year, and can't wait to be together again!

Mrs. Maher

# Kindergarten

## By James Minor

Sixth grader James Minor asked several students in Mrs. Donohoe's class to answer questions about what they have been doing while in quarantine.

Kendall from Mrs. Donohoe's Class shared:



**Kendall and her brother Hunter out for a bike ride.**



**Kendall is ready for an outdoor movie.**

I have been watching outdoor movies on our back deck with popcorn and learning to ride my bike without training wheels. To stay safe, we are staying home and keeping away from family and friends. I miss seeing my friends and teachers plus playing soccer and tee ball. I miss hugging my grandparents too. I like seeing my mom and dad every morning and night and extra movie nights.



**Bennett from Mrs. Donohoe's Class plays on his swing set.**

**What is something cool you've done?** I have built forts with traps out in my yard.

**How are you staying safe?** We are staying home and keeping our distance. When we take rides to my grandparent's house, we keep our distance and wear our masks.

**What is something you hate about this?** I can't have sleepovers with my cousin.

**What is something you like about this?** I like that I get to play outside with my dad a lot.

Autumn from Mrs. Donohoe's class shared:

**What is something cool you've done?**

Well, I learned to ride my bike without training wheels and so

did my twin brother Aiden. We learned on the same day!

**How are you staying safe?**

By wearing masks and gloves and not leaving the house much.

**What is something you hate about this?**

Not seeing my teacher and my school!

**What is something you like about this?**

That I am having plenty of family time.

**Can you share a picture of something you have done during this time?**

I went to the beach and I was diving in the water with my sister and brother. We were social distancing with one of my sister's friends. We had pizza and ice cream that day.



**Autumn jumps in the ocean at the beach.**



# An Interview with Mrs. McPhail

## By Kyle Gilstein

These are the question and answers for Mrs. McPhail. She is one my favorite teachers in all of Penn Brook. She is a Kindergarten teacher with two young kids.

### **1. What are you doing to stay busy?**

I have a 3 year old son and a 10 month old daughter. I am always busy! There's always a load of laundry to do, lunch to be made and cleared, or a dishwasher to be emptied. When I do have a free moment like at nap time I enjoy sitting outside on the deck in the sun, watching all spring as the green grows greener and fuller each day, and listening to the birds.

### **2. What are your kids doing to stay busy?**

My kids are loving the outdoors. Ava is 10 months and has already figured out how to open the back door and head out by herself! We love going for daily walks. My son will either walk, ride his bike or be pulled in the wagon. Outside we are also doing lots of chalk, playing in the sandbox, yard work, or with the warm weather recently, playing in the water table. When we are inside we love doing crafts. We've painted, built with magna

tiles, made homemade bird feeders, and practiced cutting and gluing.

### **3. What have you learned during this time?**

I have learned to not take for granted time outside of the house. The ability to run a quick errand, go out to eat, or visit a farm with my kids is a privilege and I hope to embrace and remember that it is a privilege after this is all over.

### **4. What do you miss the most about your life before this?**

What I miss most about life before this is the ability to go see friends and family whenever I feel like it. Again, you take for granted this privilege and unfortunately it takes a quarantine to notice how important these simple visits with friends and family are.

### **5. What is your favorite memory in quarantine?**

My favorite memory in quarantine is getting to be home with both my kids but in particular Ava has been practicing and learned to walk in the past 2 months and I am sure I would not have been able to be there for 'every step' had it not been for this quarantine.

I would like to thank Mrs. McPhail for answering these questions and also for all she does for the school and her family.

## Chloe and Eliza: Grade 1



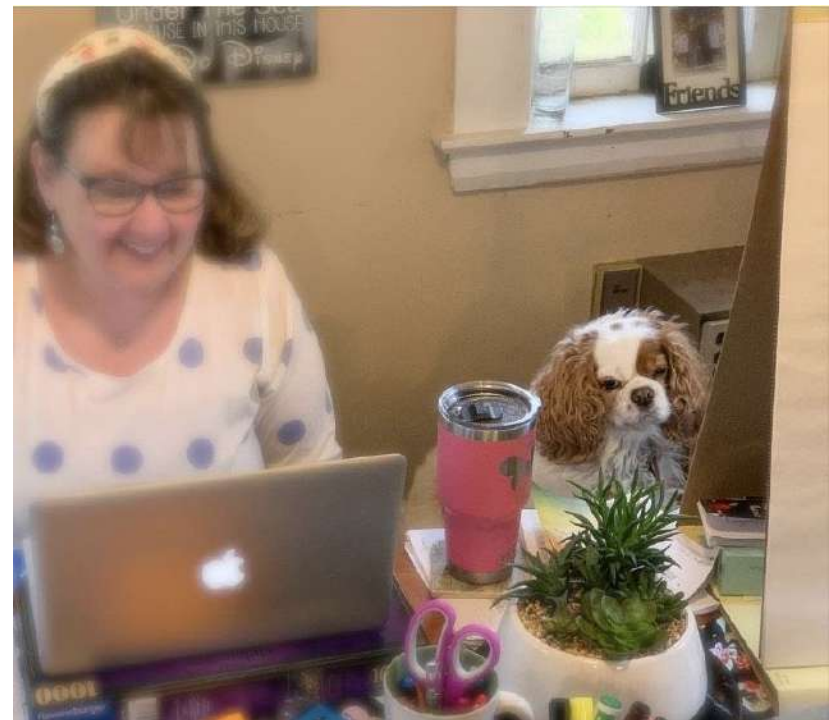
**The Cyrs shared what they have been doing during their time at home.**

Chloe and Eliza have been busy with the assignments and zoom meetings that their amazing team of teachers have been giving. They have been working on writing complete sentences and have loved learning about habitats and American symbols. They both would love to see the Statue of Liberty up close someday. Other than school work, the girls were lucky to get a climbing dome and have been working on hanging upside down. They also have been busy getting dirty and going on a lot of walks.

They have loved "playing" with their friends on Facebook Messenger for kids. They miss playing with their friends in person and also miss going to their jujitsu classes and look forward to playing with friends in person again. They have also loved having family and friends stop by from time to time to say hello. They miss Penn Brook a lot and can't wait to see everyone again!

## Grade 2

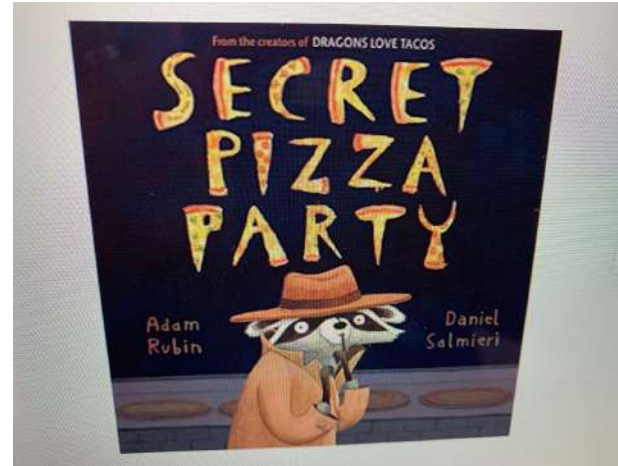
**By Roman Kaczmarek**



During these trying times, teachers have been doing many things to keep themselves occupied. I interviewed Mrs Pike to see what she was doing at home. My first question to her was what was her favorite thing to do? She said “I have so many favorites! I like to knit, read, walk, bake, color, tap dance, and do puzzles and everything Disney!” Then I asked, do you get outside a lot? She replied, “I do get outside a lot to walk our dog Belle.” Next I asked, if she was bored or busy? She responded “I am definitely not bored! I have kept very busy working at home and I also have some more time for hobbies.” What is your new schedule? She responded, “I typically spend an hour and a half doing school work in the morning and two hours on school work in the afternoon. I try to make time to create something every day (a game for my students or I knit, color, or bake). I also try to devote an hour to reading every day.” My last question was what books are you reading if any? Then she said “I am currently reading: *Gracie’s Secret* by Jill Childs and *Go See the Principal* by Gerry Brooks.” In closing, even if teachers are still working from home, they can still have a fun time doing it.

## An Interview with Dylan

### By Ricky DiChicco



During quarantine, many people are bored and looking for more ways to keep busy. Reading is a great way to keep you busy and to stretch your mind. We interviewed Dylan from second grade. Dylan admires the author Adam Rubin. He is a 36 year old author that writes children’s books. Dylan’s favorite out of all his books is *Secret Pizza Party*. He says he likes it because the raccoon runs away from the pizza party and steals a pizza, tricking the pizza guy. He has been watching funny books on a YouTube site called *Mrs. B*, who reads aloud funny books. Dylan emailed the author, Adam Rubin by googling his information. He asked the author if a boy character from *Secret Pizza Party* was the same as a character in his other book *Robo Sauce*. The author said that they were the same character. He also let Dylan know that he hides a red bird in each of his story books.

# Tucker's Quarantine

## By Wade Turner

Quarantine can be difficult, but not for Mrs. Jackson's 3rd Grade class! Even though we're not in school, Tucker Shupenko is still continuing with comparing fractions, multiplication, and division! Reading is a nice and enjoyable way to pass time, especially when reading non-fiction! The Revolutionary War, to be exact. It's a great topic to learn about, and it's nice to really focus on it thoroughly when you're at home. Another fun way Tucker and his classmates are learning about the Revolutionary War is watching [Liberty Kids!](#) It's a fun cartoon show that retells the story of the Revolutionary War! Besides all that, Tucker is having a lot of fun with his family during quarantine. Some fun things he's doing are going on bike rides, playing with his dog, fishing, swimming, and doing a 6 feet apart fire pit night! Specials are difficult subjects to do at home, but Tucker finds a way! For music, he practices his recorder. He also draws and colors for art, and plays outside for gym! We all have favorite subjects. Tucker's includes; art and writing! He also loves playing with his dog. But I didn't tell you that they just got him! His name is Red. During Easter, Tucker's mom and dad asked him to hop in the car, so they could "drive around." They went near ski Bradford, where they have all the broken down cars. And when they arrived, they asked Tucker and his siblings if they wanted to get a puppy! Obviously they said yes! Who doesn't like puppies? After, they went to a girl's house who had lots

of dogs! She takes dogs in from far away, and has people adopt them! They took Red, and their friends took Red's brother. It turns out that Red was left on the side of the road when he was very little. Someone found him and brought him to a kill shelter! But luckily the girl took him to her house. And so, Tucker's house is where he is now!

## Fourth Grade

### Interview and Quarantine Pet Adoptions

#### By Ricky DiChicco

Mrs. Collins Interview :

Quarantine is a stressful time we all have been affected by. Most of our lives have changed dramatically. Since school and most work is canceled, we are having less contact with our friends, family, and teachers. We interviewed fourth grade teacher Mrs. Collins to see how her life is outside of school. She said that the hardest part was not being able to see her friends or extended family. She answers that the part she misses most is going out to restaurants with her friends and family. Quarantine isn't all bad. Mrs.Collins said that she has had a lot of free time. She has a son that is going to college, so it was nice to be able to spend time with him before he leaves. She has also learned how to use technology better, since everything is online.



Even though things are different doesn't mean they are harder. Mrs. Collins said that her life has been much simpler. She has to do less errand running and less trips. Her thirty minute commute is now a minute from her couch to the computer. It is great for her dog since all his favorite humans are home all the time.

Speaking of dogs, many families have adopted pets during quarantine. We interviewed two students who have adopted pets. Bryan Benoit adopted a golden retriever named Callie. She was seven weeks old when they adopted her and is now four months old. He said it is a fun experience because he has never had a dog and it is keeping him active. He takes her on lots of walks.

Madilyn Halmen also adopted a dog because she thought it would be a perfect time. She adopted Sebago. They go on walks and her family takes turns taking care of Sebago.

Even though things are looking down right now, we will all recover. The way people are overcoming and adapting to this pandemic is amazing and I have high hopes for the future.



**Bryan and his new dog Callie.**





**Sebago is a new dog in the Halmen family.**



**Madilyn and her new dog Sebago.**



**Madilyn and her siblings take Sebago out for a walk.**

# Donkey Adoption

## By Emma Kleiner

Emma's family recently adopted a donkey. Emma shared her story with Ms. Carroll via email.



**Buttercup the donkey is very happy in his new home!**

This is the story of how Buttercup came to me! On Monday, May 18 my Dad said, "Girls get your shoes on

and go outside." Of course, I was on a zoom. I told my dad, "I'm on an important Zoom." He said, "Abby let's go outside. We have a surprise for you and your sisters." I said "okay." I went outside and a beautiful donkey came out of a trailer that was parked at the end of my driveway. I could not believe my eyes. A donkey came out of that trailer. I screamed "Omg is that a donkey?" My mom and dad said "yes." By the way, my mom did not tell my dad till two days before she came. Shortly after she got here, we named her Buttercup. When I got some time with her I looked at her feet. They looked horrendous. I said, "Mom why are her feet so bad?" My mom explained that she was a rescue that was neglected. She was saved from an auction in Texas. It took her three days to get here from Texas. We saved her life and that made me feel so good! Today, Buttercup and my dad are like Shrek and donkey. She is so happy to be in a new home that cares for her. Since she was here, she had her feet fixed, and she could even have a baby donkey.

# Book Club Rules



**Olivia, Riley and Michaela took this time at home to start their own Zoom Book Club. They met with Mrs. Doran in Zoom to talk about their club.**

During the beginning of this time at home, fourth grader Riley became interested in starting a book club after hearing about her mom's book club. She asked her mother if she could start a book club with her friends and it has really taken off!

Friends Riley, Olivia, and Michaela, with the help of their mothers, started a virtual book club. The girls meet four to five times a week via Zoom to discuss the book they are reading and answer questions about the book together. The girls read a chapter or two at a time and discuss

questions about each section of the book in Zoom meetings.

The girls have read a wide array of books throughout their time at home. Parents looked for popular books and wrote the names of books on paper to place in a cup. Michaela's four year old sister Vanessa picks a piece of paper out of the cup, and this is how the girls choose their next book. Some of the books they have read are, *The Twits*, *Tale of a Fourth Grade Nothing*, *Riding Freedom*, *A Bad Case of the Stripes*, and *Howliday Inn*. Looking ahead, the girls are planning to read *Wonder* and *Lemonade Wars*.

Amongst the books, all three girls have favorites. Riley and Olivia like the book *Howliday Inn* the most. Riley explained that she likes the book because it is a mystery involving pets and their disappearance. Olivia also picked this book as her favorite. She enjoys that there are animal characters included in the mysteries. Michaela's top pick was the book *Riding Freedom* because she enjoyed learning about a time when women were not allowed to vote.

All three girls also noted the benefits of the book club. Olivia explained that she likes reading a book and deciding if you like it with friends. Michaela likes that she is able to see her friends on Zoom. Riley explained that before the pandemic she and her friends were often very busy with other things and now they get to have fun in their book club being together. Moving forward the girls would like to continue their book club and eventually



expand it when they are together in person again. It is nice to see that these fourth graders have continued to stay in touch while exploring their love of reading .

## How 5th Grade Overcomes Difficult Times By Jonah Greenblatt

I asked Mrs. McGee several questions and her responses sounded very fun, this is the inside scoop of a day in the life of a 5th grader.

The first question I asked was “How are you keeping your students entertained?” She responded that she is trying to come up with some assignments that she thinks they would enjoy. She is using a lot of Kahoots, she also is flexible and is giving them multiple choices on how to complete assignments. When they have chats, (like on Zoom), they play games together.

Then I asked “What are some ways you incorporate teaching into fun activities?” Her response was that by using Kahoots, they push some things that they are learning into them so it’s fun and also educational. They also use BrainPOP. BrainPOP is an animated educational

site for kids. It is a much more fun way to learn than rather a lecture or just plain reading.

Next I asked “What are some things you talk about during Zoom classes?” Her response was that they talk about how the week is going, they also catch up on any questions about the lessons assigned to them. The students also give an update on what they’ve been up to lately.

Then I asked “How are you keeping yourself entertained during this time?” Her response was that she has been doing a lot of yard work, watches a lot of Netflix and helps her nieces each day with their remote learning. Next I asked “How are you keeping yourself active during this time?” Her response was that she tries to take daily walks. She hopes that the nicer weather comes soon so she can be outside more. She also lives near the beach so she hopes in the future she can stroll along the sandy strip of land.

We also have some Grade 5 students with their responses on their life right now.



**Adrianna enjoys fishing with her dad.**

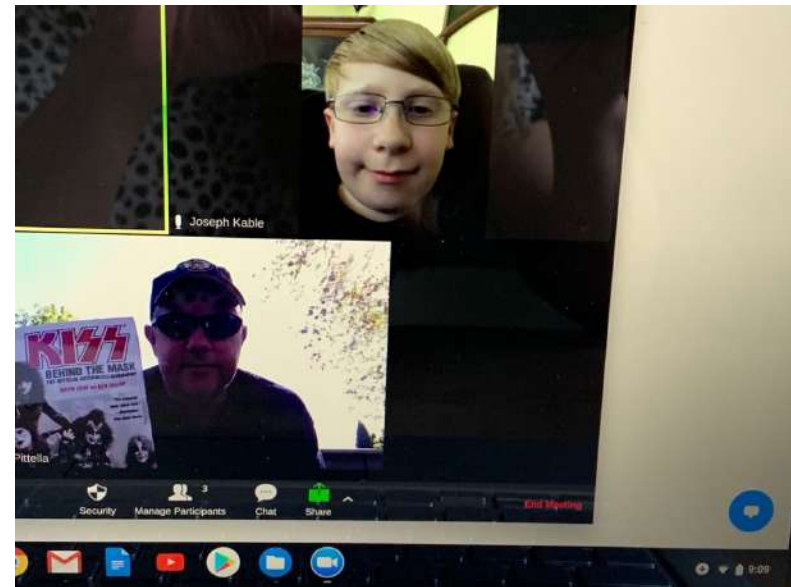
Adrianna tells us that she enjoys biking and skateboarding, and keeping in touch with her friends is always a must. She told us she learned a new trick on the skateboard. You must get bored once in a while so she plays Uno and Yahtzee, which are two very fun games.

Lessie Neill enjoys being free to choose when she gets her work done, so she doesn't get overwhelmed but is also productive; she enjoys her free time as well but not spending it all on technology. She stays in touch with friends, watches movies and plays online games with friends which is always a good time. She enjoys walks with her family, scootering, playing with siblings (like Nerf war in woods) and hanging with her pets. She uses virtual classes and recitals for the violin, which she plays.

Some games she enjoys are Clue (I love that game) the Game of Life and Spy Alley.

## How Teachers are Doing During Quarantine

### By Joseph Kable



**The sixth grade Geography Teacher Mr. Pittella is doing many new things during quarantine.**

**Joseph: What have you been doing to keep busy?**

Mr. Pittella has been doing morning Zoom calls for his classroom. Then, he would go exercise by taking a three mile walk. He has been listening to lots of music and podcasts. He has also been reading a lot and is typically reading three different books a day. He would also exercise his body and brain.

**Joseph: How have you been handling or adjusting to this?**

Mr. Pittella has been feeling mixed emotions during this. Sometimes he has been going out on a ride in his car to get out of the house. Sometimes he does not have a good day and other times, he is in a better mood.

**Joseph:** I sometimes go for a drive too with my mom.

**Joseph: What else have you been doing?**

Mr. Pittella has been doing cooking which is new to him. He usually does a lot of grilling. He has been doing a lot of housework like deep cleaning, painting and fixing up the place.

**Joseph:** I have been getting outside a lot. I have been calling friends and having more family time.

**Mr. Pittella:** I have five to six years before I retire. Being home has given me a snapshot into retirement and I want to work until I am 100! I usually go to the gym

down the street. It is closed. This is one of the biggest things I have missed. I am reading a book called ***Kiss: Behind the Mask***. It goes into detail about every song they have ever recorded.

In conclusion, Mr. Pittella has been trying many different things to keep busy during this. He and everyone else hopes it will end soon.

## Library with Mrs. Fazio

Students were asked to create Makerspace projects with cardboard by Mrs. Fazio for Library Class.

They were given the following instructions:

By using only these materials ,make a creation and name it.

Take a picture of your work and send it to me.

1. Cardboard
2. Tape
3. 2 Straws
4. Paper Clips
5. 1-Toilet or Paper Towel Roll
6. Any type of coloring materials markers, crayons or pencils.





**Please meet Shock the Robot. He is scanning the world looking to find the COVID-19 and destroy it.**



**Charlie sits with his cardboard creation.**



**Here is my creation. I made a Dragon named Elsa. The dragon is taking the princess to his tower.**

# Music with Mr. Fanning

In First and Second Grade music class, Mr. Fanning has assigned music activities that allow students to relate music and nature. Students were asked to listen to a piece of music about birds, and then listen for birds outside. First grader, Milo Condon enjoyed creating a bird on a stick to follow along with another bird music activity.



**While she was looking outside, 2nd grader Lacey Carter found a nest with eggs!**



**First grader Milo Condon enjoyed creating a bird on a stick to follow along with another bird music activity.**