

7th & 8th Grade Projects





Introduction

Each year the students in our oldest class take on independent projects as the culmination of their educational experience at Ashwood. It is an opportunity for the students to have a truly self-determined learning experience based on their individual interests and aspirations.

Students combine the academic, artistic, and intellectual capacities fostered by their Waldorf education to research, develop, and present a project of their choosing. The maturity

and self-motivation required to accomplish such a project is a prerequisite for moving on to secondary school.

The project requires the students to find a mentor, research their topic, complete the work, and share this experience with an audience. They spend many hours, above and beyond their regular academic school work, developing their independent projects.

Congratulations, Class of 2020!

Learning the Art and Business of Candle-making

Aidan Wyman

F*resh beeswax melting, dripping and splashing—*
I was pouring golden beeswax candles. For my project I created a functional candle business. First, I learned how to make beeswax candles with help from Susan Smith, a talented candle maker. Then, with help from my business mentor Bill Laurita, one of the founders of Swans Island, I created a business plan consisting of a marketing strategy, some product margins, my selling platform, and my target audience. Last, but not least, I designed my packaging and established my shipping methods.

This project has given me a new appreciation for the work of business owners as well as people in the product design industry, because I learned that product design was quite a challenge!





Learning about ASL and Interpreting a Spoken Poem

Anna Hildreth

*My eye is my ear.
My hand is my mouth.*

The goal for my project was to interpret a spoken poem in American Sign Language. I started by learning the basics of signing, then moved on to more complicated signs. I did quite a bit of research on ASL and interpreting and learned so much in that process. Danielle Perfetto and Laura Merrill were not only wonderful mentors, but huge inspirations to me. Learning how to sign and researching the history of interpreting has been an amazing experience. I don't think I will ever forget it!



Wave back and forth "hello"



Place hand on chest "my"

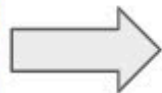
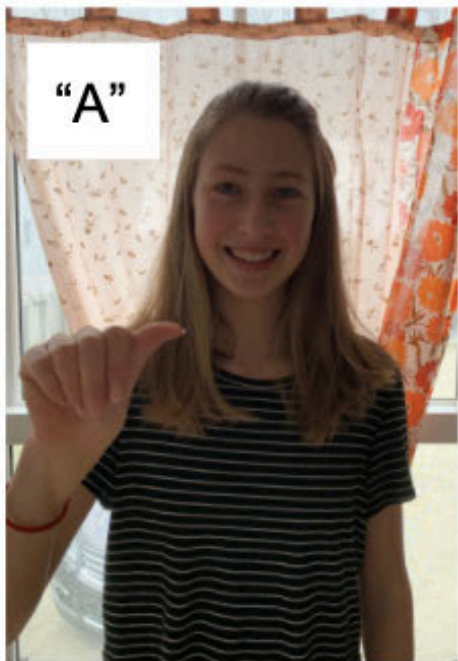


Tap fingers together twice "name"



Signing "Hello
my name is
Anna" in ASL

"A"



"N"



"N"



"A"



----- In solitude there is healing -----



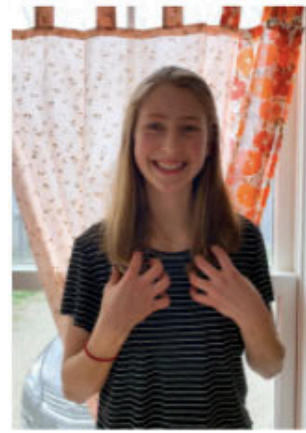
Tap your
chest twice



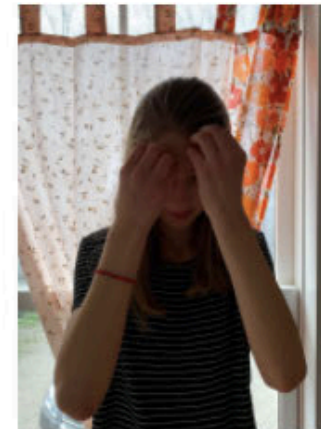
Bring your
hands into
into a "V"



Hands in
fists



Pull from
your chest
into fists



Move your fingers
in a circular
motion on your
forehead

Speak to your
soul

Interpreting
A spoken poem in ASL

*"In solitude there is healing.
Speak to your soul. Listen to
your heart. Sometimes in the
absence of noise
we find the answers"*

-Dodinsky

----- Listen to you heart -----

----- Sometimes in the absence of noise we find the answers -----



Point to
your heart



Move your hands
in a circular
motion around
your heart



Dig with your
pointer and
middle finger



Turn your
hand up



Put your hand on
your forehead



Lift your
pointer
finger up

Raising and Butchering Two Pigs

Eli Pluecker

"It's a world of profound sacredness—the sacrifice of life to sustain life." — JOEL SALATIN

For my project, I raised and butchered two pigs. My mentor, Logan Higger, the owner of Sowbelly Butchery, was a spectacular coach throughout the whole process. I learned a lot about raising and butchering pigs, from feed and fencing, to cuts and pricing. Now when I enter most butcher shops, I can identify many of the cuts, what part of the body they're from, and how to use them.

Raising livestock is a lot of work; going out every morning and night to feed and water gets tiring, and long days of butchering—straight through, all day—are a lot of work, but it's definitely all worth it. I plan on raising livestock for as long as I am able.

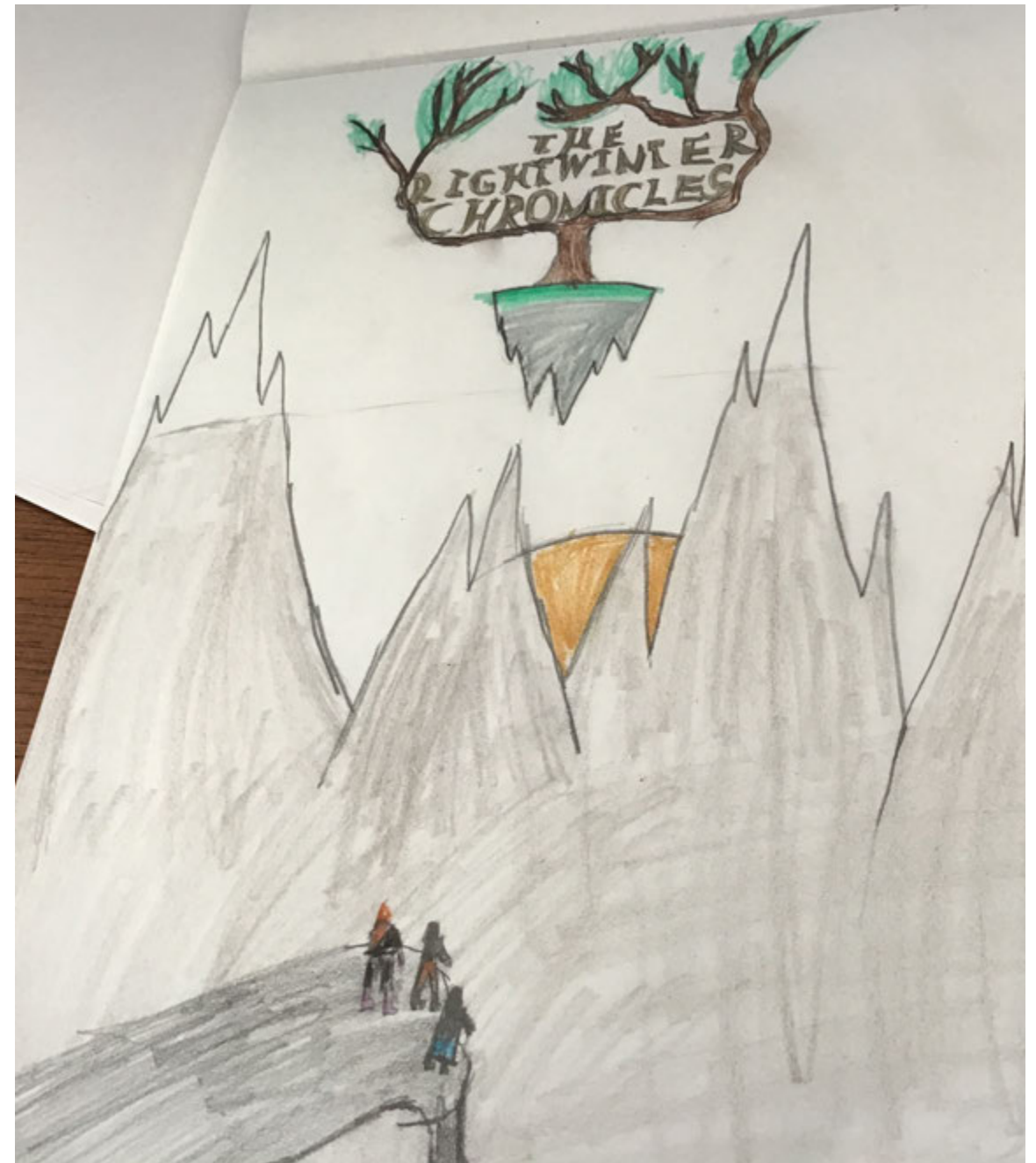




Creating a Graphic Novel

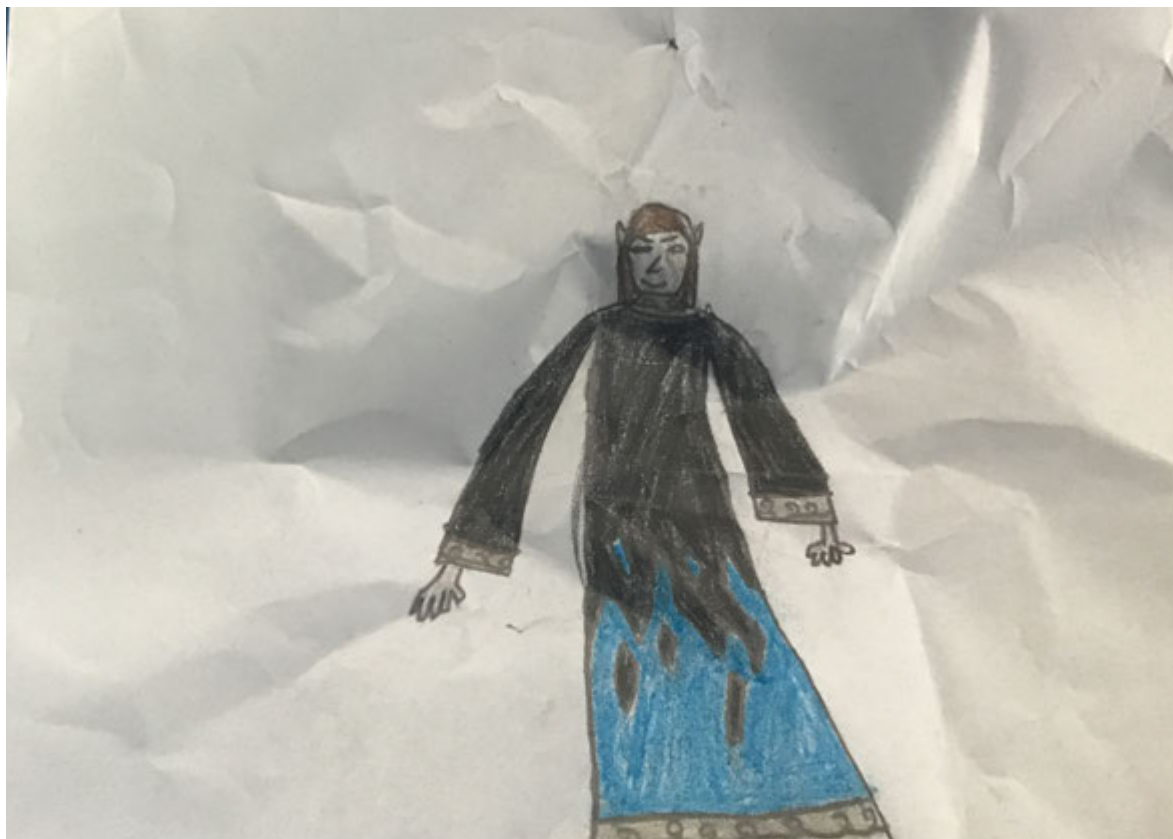
Gabe Wheeler

For my project I wrote a graphic novel. The story is about a man names Kalyan who is a woodcutter until a wizard comes along. The wizard's name is Gowstefose, and they embark on an adventure to slay the evil king. On their journey, they meet an elf girl named Kate. I chose this



project because I thought it would be fun just to make up stuff that you can put in a book that other people read.

I would like to thank Eileen Morelli for helping me with my project.



George Bickham

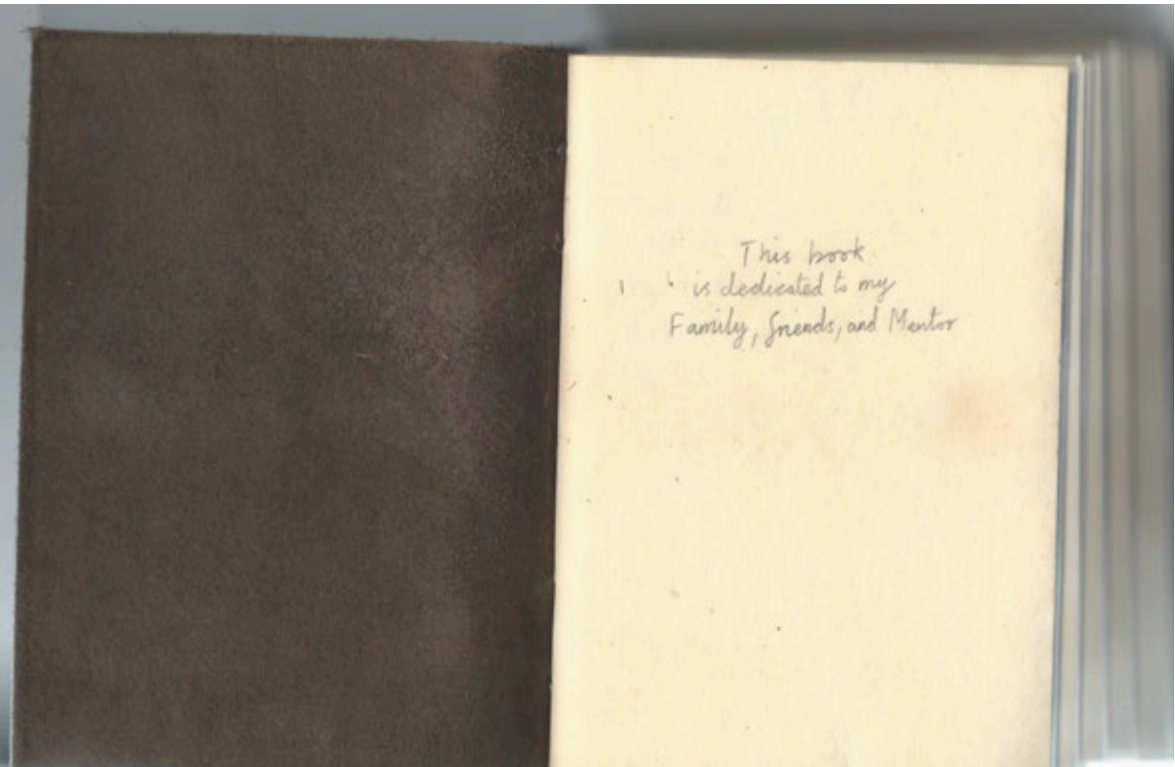
Give a man a fish, he will eat for a day. Teach a man how to fish, and he will eat for a lifetime. — TRADITIONAL SAYING

My project was sparked by a moment in summer camp when I went into the camp kitchen and realized suddenly that I did not know how to cook.

Now, thanks to my astounding mentor Jessica Wheeler, who used to be a Cordon Bleu chef, I have gained the skills to make everything from quiches to crumpets and everything in between.



Having lived in other countries, I have made and recorded recipes from all over the globe to try out and experience different cultures through a new perspective. From these experiences, I have put together a “living” cookbook to be filled with my favorite recipes.



Building a Chess Set

Harrison Garcia

Measure twice; cut once.

I've been playing chess for a couple of years, so for my project I built a chess set, with the help of my mentor Forrester Valle, who is our woodworking teacher at Ashwood. Mr. Valle would always tell me to pay attention to the measurements and cutting, and to "measure twice; cut once." After putting in so many hours of measuring, glueing, and cutting, I will never view chess sets in the same way!





Building a Rube Goldberg Contraption

Ina Wolovitz

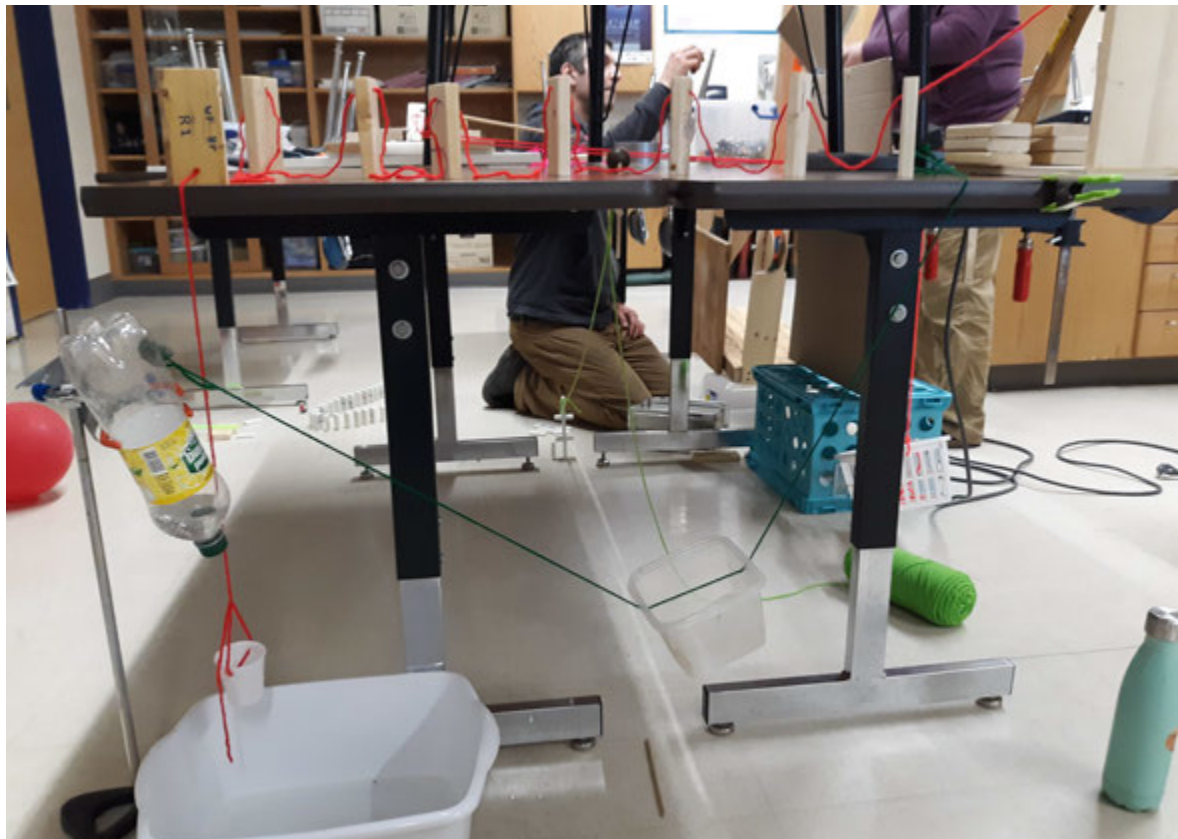
A Rube Goldberg machine is, in its essence, a trial-and-error thing. — ADAM SADOWSKY

Life is a series of chain reactions. In my project, I imitated just that: reactions. With the help of my superstar mentor, Margo Murphy, I built a Rube Goldberg contraption. I chose this project because I enjoy physics, and mechanics in particular. In my day-to-day life, I don't get many chances to contemplate topics such as how to build an elevator for marbles. I got to think in that way throughout my project. Over the roughly five months that I worked on my project, I learned about trial-and-error and being flexible with my ideas. Also, I learned that if something works well, do it again. And again. And again. And maybe one more time, just to make sure. Coming up with new ideas was



challenging but fun, and I hope to continue building Rube Goldbergs in the future.

I would like to thank my amazing mentor, Margo Murphy, for ideas, a space to work in, and awesome support; Paul Cartwright, for letting me use his bandsaw, his shop, and a superb idea; my dad for helping me with different aspects of the project; my mom for filming about 50 takes; Ami for being my sister mentor; and both of my parents for driving me to the high school so I could work on my project. Last but not least, I'd like to thank *you* for reading this and for watching my Rube Goldberg. Thank you!

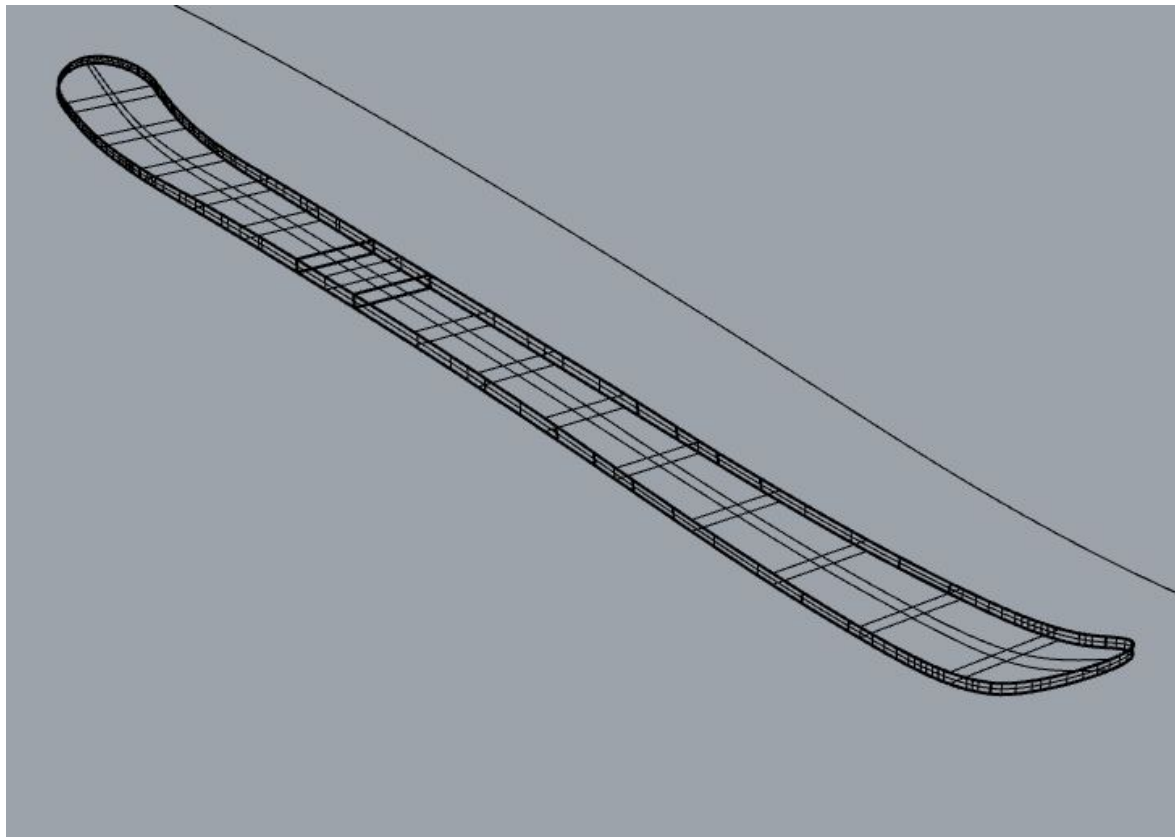


Making My Own Skis

Jonny Troutman

One of my biggest passions is skiing. Since I started skiing around seven years ago, I have always wanted to make my own skis. My mentor, Weber Roberts allowed me to work in his shop to build my skis, and I am very grateful that he made the time to mentor me. Over the course of making my skis I learned how to use a lot of tools and different techniques. I am super excited to use my new skis and see if they will hold up!





Lily Mott

“There is one thing the photograph must contain, the humanity of the moment.”

—ROBERT FRANK

There are moments in life that we wish we could capture and save forever. I was able to do that through dark room photography. For my project, I developed a small collection of non-digital black and white photographs that I will eventually put into a portfolio. I learned the process of creating a photo from just a roll of film. Facial expressions are a part of someone that lets us know how they are feeling and their emotion. That’s why I did portraits. My dad, Doug Mott, and Robert Frank have both been huge inspirations through this project. And of course, I was inspired by Brenton Hamilton, who has been an amazing mentor and has helped me create a vision for my project.





Forming Glass with Heat

Roza Chandler

Before we had torches, people used oil lamps.

For my project I decided to learn how to shape and form glass using heat. This is called lamp working. My mentor Julie Gee served in the U.S. Army and is now building a lamp working studio in her home near Owls Head, Maine. Julie has helped me create my project along with the assistance of Ed and Virginia Slawson, additional experts in working with glass. I made a sun and a moon with Julie and three stars with Virginia.



I made the sun and moon as marbles and the stars on a bead release which is a long rod used to shape the melted glass into a bead. They were all challenging in different ways. I really enjoyed this experience and I'm very thankful to my mentors who took the time to help and support me to complete this project.



Sadie Luehman

“To take a good photograph you need more than just a camera. You bring to the act all the books you've read. The pictures you've seen. The music you've listened to. And the people you've loved.”

For my project I learned how to use a Nikon FM10 camera and develop Kodak 400TK black and white film in a darkroom. My mentor was Brenton Hamilton, and I used the darkroom at Maine Media in



Rockport. The hardest part of this project was deciding what the final product would be. We went through so many ideas that I'm surprised Brenton didn't tell me to find a new mentor. But I'm so very grateful that he didn't! At last we



decided that we would create eight to 10 pictures with interesting textures and details that set them apart from what people usually see. Once we set the end goal, my task was to get four roles of the 36-exposure film, which proved to be the second most challenging part. I did it though.

The next time I visited my mentor, we developed film to get the negatives that would later become the photos. When I returned the following week, we went into the darkroom and created the first photo on silver gelatin paper.

My favorite thing about the whole process is that every step of the way it's *you*, and once you have the finished photo you are very attached to it because it took more than just the click of a button.



Sanbate Doshi

How many cakes have you eaten? Or ordered at a restaurant? Or simply tried? Probably many.

For my project, I learned how to bake and decorate cakes. I've always loved baking—cookies, cupcakes, muffins, scones, and cakes. I love the smell of them baking, the satisfaction of seeing them puff up in the oven, and, of course, eating them.

When it came time to choose a project, I had no idea what I wanted to do, until I remembered that someone in my old school had done cupcake making, and I decided this was perfect. Now, however, I needed a mentor. I didn't know any bakers, but then my mom told me that one of the parents at our school owned a bakery. This parent was Megan Murphy, and she became my mentor. Thank you, Megan! You were a great inspiration!



The first thing I made was my dad's birthday cake which was a chocolate cake with a mocha buttercream in the rosette style. The rosettes were harder to make than I had expected, and I was extremely proud of myself when I finished them—until Megan wiped them all off and had me start over because the buttercream had grown too warm! The next cake I made was a Christmas cake, which was much bigger than the first; it was a simple white cake with a Swiss buttercream, and mint buttercream stripes. This cake got mixed results from my tasters. The mint flavor tasted like toothpaste, and was probably my least favorite out of all the ones I made. The third cake I baked was a red velvet cake which got mostly positive reviews, with the exception of it having too much buttercream. The second to last cake was a confetti cake which never got to be eaten due to the cancellation of school, but it had a positive reception from those who did try it.



Scarlet Labbe- Watson

Have you ever made a snow fort you could sleep in... and actually slept in it? That's what I did when I learned primitive skills for my project.

Now you might be wondering what primitive skills are. Think of them like survival skills—learning to live independent of civilization, and enjoy it.

For my mentor I was lucky enough to have Mike Douglas. He is an old friend of my dad and runs Maine Primitive Skills School in Augusta. I took some group classes with Mike, where I learned many things, one of which is what to look for when finding a good shelter building site. First you look into the canopy. Are there any dead branches that could fall and kill you in the night? Is it high in the landscape, where it is less swampy, so water won't get in and create mold as well as



make your bed compact faster? A compacted bed allows the ground to suck the heat out of you, making for a cold night. On that note make sure that there is sufficient wind protection, so your heat isn't blown out of you.

My biggest ordeal was sleeping in a snow hut, or 'Modified Snow Cave, in 7°Fahrenheit weather. I was a little scared I wouldn't make it through the night and would have to go into the emergency shelter, or risk hypothermia, but I got my sleeping bag, and then I was fine.

I learned a lot while studying primitive skills. I have built new relationships that I hope will last years, I have learned valuable skills that will serve me in the future, and I have enjoyed myself!



Designing and Building an Electric Violin

Sofia Howell

As you may have guessed by my title, for my project, I designed and built my own electric violin. I started playing acoustic violin with my teacher, Sophie Davis, almost 10 years ago. However, I was first inspired years ago when my aunt sent me a CD (yes, a *CD*) of the alternative electric violinist, Lindsey Stirling.



I think the idea of building an electric violin for my project was always in the back of mind, yet, it wasn't until last summer when I met my mentor, Ned Steinberger (by coincidence, at a housewarming party), that I realized it was possible.

I started my project by working with Ned to create a design to my liking, cutting it onto a piece of walnut wood using a bandsaw, and doing *a lot* of sanding. We then attached the chin rest, tailpiece and other parts, as well as inventing a scroll for the violin. Finally, we added the electronics and strung it up.

Although the project took months to complete, in the end, my violin turned out better than I'd hoped and sounded fantastic.

I wanted to give a huge “thank you” to Ned Steinberger for helping me so much on this project. I'd also like to thank Ron at WoodSound Studio for being so kind and giving me all the pieces I needed to complete my violin. Finally, I want to thank my parents, especially my dad, for being so incredibly helpful and supportive. My violin definitely wouldn't look or sound as good as it does without you.



Making a Pinhole Camera and Creating Pinhole Photographs

Zola Roberts

For my project, I did homemade pinhole cameras and pinhole photography. During my time doing this project I learned new skills involving how a pinhole camera works, how to make a camera from scratch, and how to get the perfect photograph. I want to give special thanks to my two amazing mentors, Lindsay and Chris Pinchbeck, and my parents for supporting this amazing opportunity. I also want to thank Ashwood for making it possible to do this.



Our Mission



Ashwood Waldorf School is an early-childhood through eighth-grade learning community based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner and imbued with a deep reverence for the spiritual nature of the human being.

We provide a balanced and rigorous education, integrating academics with the arts, nature, and social values. In an atmosphere that encourages respect for oneself, others, and the environment, we build a foundation for lifelong learning and adaptability, fostering inner strength and preparing children to thrive in a changing world.

We are a school that values responsible decision-making, diversity, meaningful relationships with our community, and stewardship of the environment. A dedicated parent body supports our work. Surrounded by the natural beauty of mid-coast Maine, Ashwood students learn and play, both inside the classroom and out-of-doors, growing each year in their appreciation for seasonal rhythms and the world around them.



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