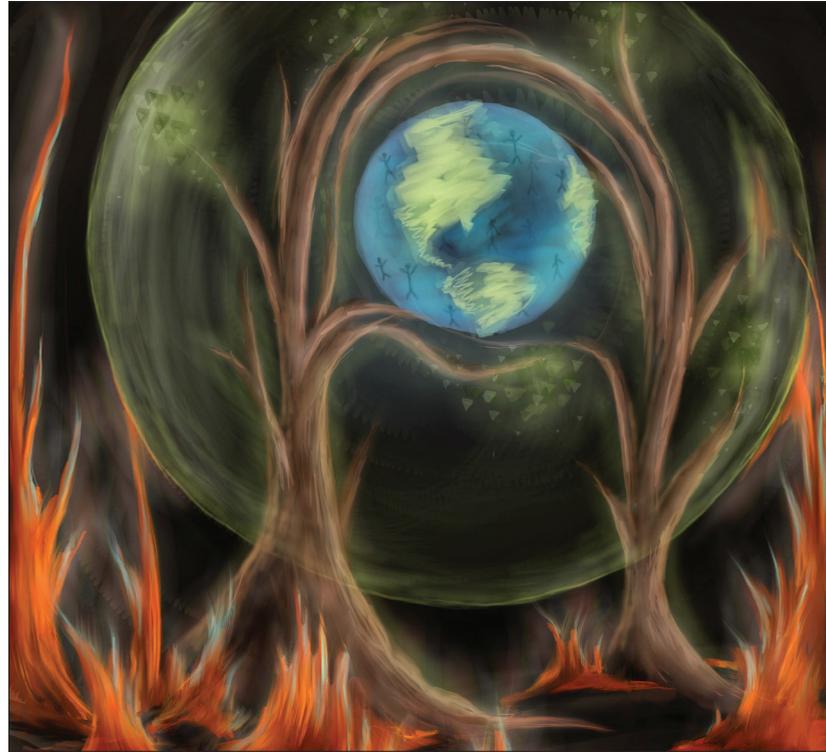




Voices of young Vermonters on the issues that shape their lives



YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT



"Can't We See?" by Vivien Sorce, 15, Hinesburg
Silver Maple Award, Visual

Congratulations to the eight prize-winners and eight honorable mentions in this spring's writing and visual art contest, **Trees: Lifeline for Our Planet**, by YWP and **Branch Out Burlington!** Thank you to everyone who responded to the contest challenge: *Given the vital role of trees for moderating climate change, in words or art describe the importance of trees to you and the critical role they play in saving planet Earth.* Special thanks to our contest sponsor **BOBI!** for this partnership and the generous prizes and professional judging of the contest!

SUPPORTING YOUNG WRITERS AND ARTISTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

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Escape

Never began, never ended.
Don't worry or blink, it will all be over.
I am so hopelessly awake,
just like I can't escape.
I want you to explore my mind.
Everything becomes so vivid,
you can almost see it all,
the beating of my heart,
the pounding of my head.
Yes, it will haunt you as it haunts me
while I'm sleeping in my bed.
I want it to escape, go ahead,
run at the exit.
Just know one of us got to escape.
Now don't turn back.
Run, run, don't let it stay
in your mind, you've got this.
Just keep going and escape this feeling.
You know you can do it, just like me.
I did it, I finally escaped.
Just look forward. Yes,
it's going to take a while, that's okay.
Just know you have
someone who will be with you.
So escape that feeling,
break out of it – show yourself you rule,
and you are your boss.

– JENNAFYR PATTERSON, 14,
CUTTINGSVILLE

ABOUT YWP

HOW TO JOIN: Young Writers Project (YWP) welcomes teens, ages 13-18, to join our free, online community of writers and visual artists. Youth who are 12 may join YWP with parental permission. Teachers are also invited to join to submit work on behalf of younger students for publication. To join or for more information, go to youngwritersproject.org.

HOW TO SUPPORT: Young Writers Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that relies solely on grants and donations for support. If you enjoy this monthly feature, please consider donating online at youngwritersproject.org/support. Or mail your gift to YWP, 47 Maple St., Suite 216, Burlington, VT 05401. Contact Susan Reid, Executive Director, sreid@youngwritersproject.org; (802) 324-9538.

SPECIAL THANKS THIS MONTH



BRANCH OUT BURLINGTON!

After the fire

Honorable Mention

A bee descends upon a flower
in a vast field of peonies.
Water flows in a brook nearby,
over rocks, and around bends.
The sound of
the sun shines through leaves,
spotting the ground with light.
An infinite forest of trees,
each with their own story.
Among the trees, a single ember.
It makes its way along passively,
coming and going
with the way of the wind, and
finds its way to the roots of a tall birch.
The ember sparks into flame
and begins to devour the tree hungrily,
digesting, festering, growing.
Climbing with eagerness.
Soon, the whole tree is engulfed within
the infectious blaze.
The bark peels back in agony,
flames lashing out in anger.
Tree to tree, it spreads, breaking down
the luscious forest and greenery;
the forest argues in protest, wind
whipping through the maze of trees,
the fire and flora having a final
showdown.
Rain begins to fall;
the fire begins to smolder, dissipate,
covering everything in a thick layer
of smoke and despair.
The fire, with a loud, orange flash,
gone as quickly as it arrived.
Beneath the smoke,
the battleground of trees remains
breathless.
Still.
Smoke hangs in the sky above,
last tears of the fallen soldiers.
The once vivacious forest, now sitting
as if it were an abandoned lot.
Time marches forward,
and you beg before its feet to march
back.

– COLE NACE, 16, PROCTOR

Light

The shining water.
Light making the lake shimmer.
Gleam makes life happy.

– BRAYDON MARS, 11,
MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS