

FALL 2020

STORY BUILDERS PORTFOLIO

**A COLLECTION OF STORIES WRITTEN BY HIGHLAND
FRIENDSHIP CLUB MEMBERS**

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What Can Go Wrong on a YouTube Channel

8.18.2020

My best friend Kacey and I decided to start a YouTube channel a few months ago. We like to make things by hand, or DIY, and decided we would showcase our talents online. Our first recording went very wrong! For starters, Kacey was late and her annoying brother, who never stops misbehaving, came with her!

We decided to call our channel “DIY Central,” and were trying to set up the camera, but little Benton got in the way. We told him to get out of the way, but he didn’t listen. We told Benton that it was nap time, and he went to take a nap. He took a nap for about thirty minutes, while we read a book about DIY activities.

We decided we wanted to play rock and roll music, with a cat and a dog. We made the instruments ourselves; we made drums from a can, a guitar from a bowl and flat wood, and a shaker from a bottle. When we were going to start recording, our cat jumped onto the table and was playing the drum with her tail. Since the camera had recorded the cat, they had to think of a

new idea. They decided to try loom-knitting. Hopefully, the camera person would actually focus on them this time instead of the cat. The loom knitting was going pretty well, we made knit hats, scarves, and coasters. We used blue yarn for everything. We decided next we would make some popcorn to eat and get a cold drink while we edit our video. We had bowls full of popcorn, and the popcorn had a cinnamon smell. We enjoyed the popcorn very much. But we made too much noise popping popcorn, and covered up all the sound in our videos! We had to go to a different room, and the animals stayed behind.

When we left the room, the dog woke up Benton. When Benton woke up, he was full of energy. He started running around, and spilled popcorn all over the floor. The dog ran through and slid on the popcorn, getting it everywhere. All of our crafts were covered in popcorn, and we hadn't taken pictures of them yet! There was too little time left in the day to come up with a new idea, so we decided to make the best of what we had.

We decided to use the popcorn and the yarn to make a new trend on youtube, we made scarves and hats that smell like

popcorn! We decided to do a give-away on our YouTube channel, and to sell popcorn-smelling loom knit merch. Not a lot of people liked our popcorn scented merchandise, so we stopped making it. We decided to make rugs and blankets that smell like cat and dog treats. The rugs and blankets were easy to make, so we made five of each. Some of the rugs and blankets were strawberry scented, and some were tuna scented. The Tuna blankets weren't selling, so we had to come up with another idea.

We took pictures of our dog and cat and made merchandise with their pictures, the new merchandise sold well! But when we went to go send the merchandise out, we couldn't find it! We had to make more merch to send out as replacements, and we put up "Lost Merch" signs around town with photos of what we lost. A little bit later, we got a phone call from the neighbor who told us all the merch was outside our house! We weren't sure how we got it back, but with all the "Lost Merch" photos around town, we had tons of people coming by to get their own.

This all took place over several months, but once we found our rhythm we were able to be moderately successful. We ended

up selling in local retail stores. We sold so much that we eventually made a traveling retail store to travel across the world and sell our merchandise. In the end, we became Youtube famous because our videos were super funny and highly rated. Lots of people watched and gave us a thumbs up, and bought our merch.

Crazy Flying Dog Adventures

8.25.2020

Luna was a two and a half year-old dog, and Tom Quinn was a one and a half year-old cat. They lived in New Orleans, in the middle of the busy city. The year was 2007. Luna was a special dog, she could fly! One day, Luna flew up to the sky and got lost. Tom Quinn was upset because he lost his friend, but there was no way that he could go look for her because he wasn't a special cat like Luna was a special dog. Tom Quinn decided to check the news to see if anyone had seen a flying dog, and to put a question about a flying dog in the newspaper looking for her. Tom Quinn turned on Fox News, and saw a program about a lost dog that had run off into the woods. They didn't believe the dog could have been flying. Tom Quinn emailed Fox News and told them that it was Luna, the flying dog. He told them she does tricks and she's the nicest friend that Tom has ever had. A young reporter from Fox News came to meet Tom, but realized he's a

cat and couldn't speak english. Tom typed a message out to her on the computer to explain that the lost dog was Luna. The news reporter was very curious about this typing cat, and decided to rent a helicopter to see if he was telling the truth. She wanted to find proof before she told her coworkers about the magic cat and dog. In the helicopter, she saw Luna flying around practicing her flying drills, but none of her coworkers had seen Luna.

When she went to tell her coworkers, of course they thought she was crazy! It became the office gossip all week, people were prank-calling and emailing her, writing mean things on her desk, and stealing her lunch. She didn't know what to do, would anyone believe her? The reporter decided that she would have to get Luna to show her powers on camera. She brings a camera guy with her again in the helicopter, and looks for Luna. They found Luna, but she moved so quickly in and out of view that the camera couldn't keep up!

Not only was Luna flying around super fast, she was building copies of things from her home, like her favorite green teapot. To build, Luna flew around super fast and grabbed tree branches. Luna was making a castle in the sky that her friend

Tom Quinn and her could live in whenever they want, and it was almost done! Luna's weakness was chipmunks and squirrels, and Tom Quinn's weakness was mice. Luna was leaving the castle when a squirrel bit her in the hind leg! With her flying powers lost, she begins to fall.

Tom Quinn sees this and runs into the reporter's office across the street to ask for help. He typed out an urgent message on her keyboard saying "Luna needs help, please help now." All her co-workers saw she was telling the truth, and went to help as well. The reporter and the camera guy rushed outside to take video, while others called 911 to get the firefighters to bring a safe emergency landing pad. The firefighters came just in time to deploy the landing pad, saving Luna from crashing into the ground.

The reporters decided to talk with Luna, the flying dog, on live TV. Luna couldn't speak english, she could only make dog noises, but Tom Quinn could understand her and translate. The reporters were talking with her, and discussing how to connect with the sky. They were making a point that Luna really was

flying through the sky, grabbing tree branches, and building a castle way up in the sky.

What Happened to the Kids on a Snow Day

9.1.2020

It was a cold February day in Minnesota. Jack decides that he will take his little brother, Simon, out sledding. They pack up all of their heavy gear, and drive to the tallest hill in Minneapolis. They were fifteen minutes away from Minneapolis and getting ready for their trip. They brought a sled, jackets, snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens. It was twenty degrees outside.

They got out of the car and checked out the hill. It looked medium-sized. They unloaded their sleds, and brought along their thermos with hot chocolate to bring up the hill. They wanted to take a drink of the hot chocolate before they went down the hill, to keep them from getting cold. On top of the hill, the hot chocolate was very good, still hot. They decided to go down the hill for the first time.

They went down really fast, too fast, and when they got to the bottom they hit a sled that no one was on! They didn't get hurt, they just hit the sled, but they were okay. It was still scary for them. They decided to climb back up the hill again. Some parts of the hill were easy to climb, some were hard to climb, but they just kept going. When they got to the top, they were still having fun and wanted to go again.

They were getting ready to go down, when Simon fell down the hill! He slipped on some ice, and fell all the way down the hill. Jack went running after Simon, and Jack fell down the hill too! Somebody saw them falling down the hill, and helped them to stand back up. Simon hurt his knee, and Jack hurt his back in the fall. Jack and Simon said they would try again, but if they fall back down the hill they are done. They climbed back up the hill and the climb was alright.

At the top, they decided to go down right away. They decided they would guide each other down the hill this time, and not go together, because when they went together in the past they fell. They thought they would guide each other down instead. Their plan worked well, but they had to remember to

lean to avoid other sleds and trees. On the way down, they were enjoying themselves at first, but when they got close to the trees they got nervous. When they realized they were going to hit the trees, they tried to keep each other as calm as they could.

They both hit separate trees, and had to call for help. They weren't sure who to call for help. They both were hurt from hitting the tree, but they could still walk. They had to call for help, because they didn't know how to help each other. Jack took his cellphone out from under his clothes, it was pretty hard to get to. He got out his cellphone, and tried to dial his mom's number with his cold fingers. Jack was tough, so he could dial the number.

Their mom answered the phone, and she asked him where they were and she wasn't happy because they weren't supposed to go there without supervision. Jack was afraid that his mom would take away the car, that's why he was hesitant to call his mom for help. Jack's mom told him she would come to get the car and drive them both home. When their mom got to the hill, she had to ask somebody for help. She decided they need an ambulance, so she called one. The ambulance took Jack and

Simon to the hospital, and they were scared. They were still scared from going down the hill.

At the hospital, they found out that the boys like music and they played music to call them down. They played The Beach Boys. They discovered that they liked The Beach Boys, so they had a party in their hospital room. The doctor comes in and says that Simon broke his knee, and Jack strained his back.

They had to stay in the hospital for a couple of weeks, Simon might have to have surgery but not Jack. Jack got medications, and physical therapy. Their mom told them they were grounded for three weeks with no phones, and she took away their DS. Their mom was mad, but she forgave them because she loved them a lot. The boys learned their lesson, do not go to the hill without supervision, and they decided to forego sledding for a while. Simon recovered from his surgery with no complications.

Liam and Charlie, Horsin' Around

9.8.2020

Going horseback riding is one of Liam's favorite activities. He has his own horse and lives only 15 minutes away from the stable. He learned horseback riding at a class for special needs adults, and he met his horse there named Charlie. Charlie is very calm, and he is brown. The first thing he learned about riding horses, is to be safe. It takes practice to learn a new skill, like riding a horse. He had to take the time to practice to ride horses, to stay focused and keep eye contact with the horse.

Liam was riding his horse on a cool sunny day, and Charlie was calm so it was an easy ride. They went on a jump and Charlie was scared, but Liam talked to him. Liam said, "It's gonna be okay, you did a really good job when you jumped." Liam's teacher reminded him to stay cool and calm, and then he will be comfortable riding horses. When Charlie goes over a jump, it's

scary for Liam too. The teacher is training Charlie along with Liam to be a therapy horse.

Liam learns from Charlie how to be patient, and how to get up on the saddle. Liam also teaches Charlie how to do tricks, and makes sure to brush him. After that, Liam feeds Charlie some hay from the barn. Once Charlie is done eating, he needs to take a bath. Charlie likes to take baths, but some other horses do not. Charlie loves to play with his rubber ducky in the bathtub.

After Charlie gets a bath and plays with his rubber ducky, Liam learns to brush his horse the right way. He learned to brush in circle-motions, instead of straight down. Charlie really liked to be brushed. When Liam was done, Charlie kept nuzzling him to brush him again.

Right after his bath, Charlie decided to go and play in the mud and got himself dirty again. He rolled around in the mud, and Liam was not happy because he had to give him another bath. As he was giving him another bath, he noticed there were some round, red, blister-like sores right where Charlie's saddle should be. Liam thought it might be saddle rash, and he asked his teacher to come look at it right away.

The teacher thought that it might be harmful, so they decided to call a veterinarian, because the horse's skin needed to be protected. The veterinarian said that Charlie could go back out in a few days, and to keep an eye on the sores. If it gets worse, they might have to remove it. The vet gave Liam ointment to use for a few days, but if it doesn't heal they'll have to remove it.

They kept the saddle off of Charlie for a few days, and walked him around for exercise instead. After three days Charlie started to get better, the sores were still there but looking better. Keeping the saddle off worked! They decided to keep the saddle off of Charlie until they were gone, to give him a chance to heal.

Liam still learned how to bond with Charlie while the saddle is off-limits, like baths and brushing. He also has his teacher show him how to put on the ointment. Liam learned that horses can have problems too, and to be patient.

One day, Charlie ran away to another barn and met a girl horse. He really liked her, and went to say hello. The owner of the girl horse is also a girl with disability, named Brynja. Liam and Brynja became best friends, and their horses became best

friends too. Liam learned that there are other people with disabilities like him, and it's not just him. They spend a lot of time together, and they go riding. The horses like to eat the hay together.

The Football Rock Party

9.15.2020

Charlotte and her father have been waiting for the big game between the All Stars and the Champions football teams for months. It is finally the night before the game, so they have a lot of preparation to do. They pack a picnic and folding chairs, to tailgate before the game. They bought peppers, cheddar cheese, pepperoni, and pizza sauce to make pizzas to pack for their tailgate picnic. The weather would be rainy, so they would wear raincoats over Champions team jerseys with numbers and names on them.

They are ready to go to the game in the afternoon, and they arrive in the early morning to tailgate. It takes them thirty minutes to get to the stadium. When they get to the tailgate they see a lot of people cheering for their teams, but not everyone is cheering for the same team. They ask the people next to them to

join them, and they do. They play some yard games together, like the beanbag toss. They also put on sunscreen to protect their skin, their dad keeps sunscreen in his pickup truck.

While they were playing games and eating food, a fight broke out near them. Some people were mad at each other because they weren't cooperating, and because they couldn't agree which team should win. The fighting went on for a long time. The fight was broken up by someone saying, "Free hotdogs for whoever stops fighting!" Then everyone got free hotdogs, and the fighting stopped.

Just then, a group of people showed up that had had too much to drink. They were saying bad words, being rude, and starting another fight. Overall, they were showing very bad sportsmanship. It was getting so bad, that the security guards had to remove the rude people from the parking lot and kick them out. The father sees this as a good teaching moment, he tells them that they shouldn't do what those people did and goes over safety rules so that everyone can have a good time.

After a while of tailgating, they go into the stadium, and they have really good seats to watch the game. They have

chair-section seats, which are really good. They get to see really good and hear what the officials are saying. Their seats are two rows back from the front. The game is going well for the Champions, but it's a close game. Charlotte and her dad prefer to watch when the Champions are winning by a lot, but they also like to watch the game when it is close too.

The coaches and the teams both have to make sure they are showing good sportsmanship, getting along, and not using bad language. They mostly get along, but they have a couple of problems. At the end of the game, everyone clapped for the Champions for winning and the All Stars told them congratulations for winning.

After the game, Charlotte's family celebrates by throwing a party at the bar. Family members of the Champions team come to join them to celebrate. At the party, they eat cake and drink pop. They also listen to music on the radio.

After the first party, they went to a second party where there were more kids. Charlotte liked this party the most, because the kids there were around her age. She got to do more than sit there and wait for her dad to stop talking to everybody.

They ate some more food at the second party, and Charlotte ate with the other kids that were her age. They also watch the football movie *Remember the Titans* at the party. She enjoys the party, and makes thirty new friends! At the end of the party, she asks everyone for their contact info and everybody goes home happy. It was a day they would never forget!

Leaves Falling All Day

9.22.2020

The leaves have been changing colors for a few weeks now, so Ella couldn't think of anything more fun to do than go outside and rake the leaves. She starts raking the leaves, and makes a huge pile, but then her brother and the dogs come out and jump into the leaf pile! They had fun jumping in the leaves and they helped Ella re-rake them together again. They make a new pile, that's as big as a tree! It was hard to rake the leaves as high as a tree. They decide to jump into the pile of leaves. In the middle of the pile. Some leaves fall out, but they put them back into the pile.

After they jump in the pile, they decide to bag the leaves up for compost. They bag some leaves, but the pile is so huge they can't bag all of them with the bags they have. They decide to go to the store to get more, and to double bag the leaves because they are wet and heavy. They buy twelve bags from the store.

They start to bag up the remaining leaves, but the leaves keep falling out! The leaves are too heavy, so they decide to triple bag the leaves instead.

Ella had to lift the bags into a truck to take them away. It was a big stretch for her, because the truck was so big. She needs help because the truck is so long, and they need to get lots in there to fit all of them in. Her dad comes and helps her by getting into the truck and pushing them further into the truck. This way, they can fit them all in! They got them all in the truck with the dad's help. The truck company goes away.

The next day they wake up and more leaves are on the ground, because they have over 10 trees in their backyard! They had more leaves to pick up, and they were not happy about it. They thought the leaves were done falling! They stop for a warm apple cider, then they decide to start raking up more leaves. They went right to bagging the leaves, and they were done with it. FINALLY!

The dogs got into the bags, and started eating the leaves. The dogs spread 300 leaves out. Ella and her dad are not happy with the dogs. The dogs decide to roll in the leaves! Rolling in the

leaves makes the dogs all dirty. Ella and her Dad decide that the dogs need a bath. The dogs like to take baths. They decide they don't want to give the dogs a bath themselves, because Ella's dad doesn't want to get wet, instead they take them to a professional groomer. The groomer gets them all cleaned up, gives them a bath, clips their nails, and cuts their hair. When they get home, they start to clean up again. They rake and bag the leaves again that they worked so hard to bag before. It's a lot of work to do that, and it took forever!

They finally had the leaves all bagged again, and filled up the truck. After they get all that done, they decide to have a picnic outside watching the leaves fall. They want to see all the different colorful leaves, tan, grey, brown, yellow, orange and red. The falling leaves were beautiful.

They also do arts and crafts, and go on a hayride! They paint the falling leaves, and pick fresh apples for their apple harvest. They find some pumpkins, and they take them home to paint them. Then, they get a bigger pumpkin that they carve a jack-o-lantern face into and put a candle inside. They wait until

it's dark outside to put the candle in the jack-o-lantern, and it is so pretty. They end the evening with a bonfire.

A Scientific Disaster

9.29.2020

Dorothy and her science partner, Drew, are at a science fair showing off their class project, an explosive volcano. They made their volcano with styrofoam and paper-mâché. Inside the volcano there is black coal made of clay and orange lava that looks hot. They used lights for the orange lava to make it look real. When water is added, the hot lights make steam and it bursts into flame and the lava goes down the side of the volcano. For the lava explosion, they used baking soda and vinegar. After it gets all done, the fire goes out.

Dorothy and Drew decide to show their volcano off, but when they pour the water in, the whole thing explodes! It makes a big mess everywhere, and the teachers are upset because it got on their shoes. The teachers make Dorothy and Drew clean up

the mess. They use a mop and a rag with some water and soap to clean it up. Drew and Dorothy get all of the mess cleaned up.

They worry that they are going to get a bad grade on their project, so they decide to try to repair their volcano. Their first project was too broken though, so they have to build a whole new volcano. This time, they are going to build it the same way as before, but use mentos instead of baking soda and vinegar. It takes them a whole week to finish the new volcano, but they're confident in it. This time they make the volcano bigger, because it might hold the liquid better. They also make sure the volcano is level and stable before they add the mentos.

This time, they take the volcano to a safe place outside where it is stable and won't make a mess. They put it in a big tupperware container to move it. Drew and Dorothy put the new volcano on a table in the grass, because it's safe there and won't be too messy. If they put it in the driveway, someone's parents could come home and they would be in the way.

Before Dorothy and Drew can set off their new volcano, one of their friends steals it from their table! Their friend's name is Barbara, and she wants the credit for making the volcano for

herself. Dorothy and Drew noticed it was gone, and they went to Barbara's house. They asked for the volcano back really nicely, and she gave it back to them.

Dorothy and Drew finally bring the volcano back home and set it off. The volcano explodes in a massive explosion! The lava goes straight up out of the volcano. They thought they were far enough away from the cars in the parking lot near the grass, but the lava got on their mom's car. She came out of the house, and wasn't happy at all, so she made them wash the car.

They use soapy water and a sponge to clean off the car. The lava is very hard to clean off of the car, because it's very sticky. They can't get all of the lava off the car, and that makes their mom mad. They have to get the car power washed with a special soap, made of baking soda and peroxide. That finally works to get all the lava off. When it's all clean, they apologize to their mom. As punishment, she takes away their driver's licenses and they learn their lesson.

On their project, they didn't get a great grade but they didn't get a bad grade either. They still had fun making the volcano, and they would do it again.

Storm Watching

10.6.2020

Storm watching is Violet's favorite activity for summer evenings. She likes to go out with those guys who do storm chasing. They like to chase big and interesting storms. One day, they saw a tornado cloud coming and they followed it in their car. They wanted to catch it on film, to mail it into the news. They saw a tornado forming in the air, and now it was starting to be on land.

They headed to their lair and wanted to see more. In the lair they researched to learn more about the storm. In their research, they learned how to test the tornado with their expensive equipment. Outside of their lair they have a pole that tests the wind speed of the storm.

The storm was crazy! Wind was blowing, hail was falling, and there were sirens going off. Even though the sirens were going off, they stayed outside because it was more fun out there. If the storm gets too bad, they have to go inside. They built the lair in the path of tornado alley because there are lots of tornados there. They could tell that the tornado was only a level 2, but if it grew to level 3 they would have to go inside.

It was really exciting for them to see the tornado. They took footage of really big clouds moving around, and a lot of rain. It wasn't raining too hard, so they could still see what was going on. Suddenly, the roof of the lair came off and a funnel cloud came down! They made their way down to the cellar. They recorded the funnel cloud, and they had cell phones, a first aid kit, and other equipment to make sure they were safe. They could hear the noise and the wind from down in the cellar.

They had a TV in the cellar; they watched a documentary about the history of storms and how storms are made. They ate popcorn, drank pop, and took notes. They learned that the heavy winds of the tornado will get smaller and smaller until the tornado disappears. It wasn't safe to get out of

the cellar yet, so they sat in the cellar and worked on word finds about storms.

Before they left the shelter they had to make sure it was safe. They checked the weather broadcast to make sure that it was safe, and report their information to the weather broadcast service. The weather broadcasting service is the biggest group of weather scientists, and one day Violet wants to be a scientist too. By sending them her research, Violet was networking and wanted to be an intern. One of the storm chasers Violet was working with was a friend of her parents who had been doing it for a really long time.

They looked out the window to see if it was safe to go outside, and they decided it was safe. They left the cellar to see the wreckage of the storm. And to see if anyone else needs help. The wreckage was medium, there were lots of trees broken, damaged, and fallen on the ground. They could see ten big trees on the ground outside. They also saw some other house's roofs were missing shingles. The missing shingles were all spread out, and there were huge puddles. There was also car damage from the hail.

Because the storm was over, they were free to jump in the puddles.

A Trip Gone Wrong

10.13.2020

Isaac, Madeline, and their mom and dad were on their way to the cabin up north in Minnesota. They decided to bring their dog named Fluffy. The car ride is supposed to be about 4 hours, so they are packed with fun things to do to occupy their time. They started a coloring book on the way up there, and it was a bumpy ride because there were bumps in the road. They didn't know how to respond to the bumps. They didn't know if they should jump up and down in their seats.

They stopped coloring, and focused on listening to music and enjoying the ride. They also played games and did word finds. On the way up to the cabin, they saw some wildlife. They saw moose, elk, deer and other animals with antlers. They all enjoyed looking at the wildlife, so they stopped to take photos.

They got out of the car and took pictures of the elk and the moose. Their mom forgot to put the car into reverse, and it rolled off the cliff! The car fell down into the water below, and it made a big splash. The family has good car insurance, but they're stranded three hours away from their cabin.

The weather is not cold, but not too hot. It is the fall. When their mom looked on her cellphone to find a nearby town, she found one that was only about a 30-45 minute walk. They decided to grab their lunch packs from their car, as well as other supplies they might need, like a jacket. They want to be prepared in case the weather goes wrong. Once they have their phones and jackets, they start walking toward the city with Fluffy the dog. They see a lot of wildlife on the way.

The closest major city is Minneapolis, and they see leaves on the way, so they jump in them. Their parents said, "Go have fun! We don't care." They stop by a donut and hot apple cider place on the way. They get donuts and hot apple cider, and it is awesome. They enjoy themselves and the food a lot. Now they are just focused on getting back home.

In the street they see lots of wild plants, like sunflowers and tulips. There is a Venus Fly Trap on the side of the road, and it opens its ‘mouth’! It looks big enough to eat a dog! Fluffy helped them find their way to Minneapolis using its nose to follow the scent. They finally made it to Minneapolis.

They decided to go explore the skyway, and there were ten other people there. They found a map to show them the way home, and they decided to rent a car. They still wanted to go to the cabin, so they drove there. They had a really good ride, with no car breakdowns. When they got there, they all decided to take a nap.

When they woke up, they called a tow truck to get their car out of the water. Someone answered the phone and asked them, “What’s up?” They told him that their car fell off the cliff into the water, and they needed to get it out. The person on the phone laughed because they had never had a call like that before. The towing company decided to tow their car for free.

They enjoyed themselves at the cabin with different activities and grabbed themselves a warm drink because it was chilly outside. The parents also enjoyed some cabin drinks. The

adults played cards while the kids were texting and watching videos on Isaac's cellphone.

The kids started to argue about what they were watching on his cellphone. One of them wanted to watch a certain youtube video, and the other wouldn't let them watch it. They started yelling, saying "I want to watch this!" and, "I want to watch that!" The yelling didn't help them compromise.

They started to talk things through, by telling each other they would be okay. They decided to take turns picking videos to watch, and they were happy with that. They decided to watch Despicable Me, and they loved it!

They learned to always talk about their disagreements instead of walking away, and now they are a better family because they know how to solve puzzles better from this trip.

Zoo Day!

10.20.2020

Cassie and Jeff are getting ready to go on a trip to the Minnesota Zoo. They are going to see a movie at the IMAX theatre. They can get snacks at the theatre, but they want to bring their lunches. They also bring money for rides. The ride to the zoo from Madison, Wisconsin is about six hours. On their car ride, they stop at a lake to have lunch halfway.

They get to the zoo at one o'clock, so they have until six o'clock to look around before the zoo closes and they have to go home. They decide to take a map and look which way would be best to see everything at the zoo in five hours and still see the movie.

They go to see the dolphins do their tricks first. There are three or four dolphins in the exhibit, and they are all doing

tricks. They balance a ball on their nose, do flips, stand up on their tails, and flip their tails backwards.

One of the dolphins got hurt, and the zoo had to transfer him to a separate tank to look at him. They have to use five guys to transfer the dolphin, because it is a lot of work. They will bring the show back next week. The dolphin that was hurt was doing a new trick that he wasn't supposed to do, but he did it wrong. He hurt his tail, and the doctors have to look at him closely so he doesn't get really injured and have to go to a vet hospital.

After the dolphin show, they head for the monkeys! They have to see the monkeys to make themselves happy, because they got sad when the dolphin got hurt. They enjoy watching the monkeys swing from the trees. They saw the snow monkeys, they are white and they have pink faces and beards. The snow monkeys are very playful, Cassie and Jeff see them swinging from the climbing rope in the cage. They also play with one another. Cassie and Jeff think the snow monkeys are fun.

Next they want to go on some animal rides. They decide they want to go riding on the camels, elephants, and

horses. They ride the camels first, the ride is slow and steady and very high up. They think it's fun. The camels are about eight feet high. Then they go to ride the elephants, but they have to walk past the tiger exhibit to get there. It's a long path, but they see a couple other animals on their walk. When they finally get to the elephants, there's a long line for the ride. They are waiting in the long line, when one of the elephant handlers lets them skip the line. The elephant handler is their cousin who sent them free passes to the Minnesota Zoo.

The elephants are very steady on their feet, and Cassie and Jeff think they're so fun to ride with. The elephants are good-sized, and they are very tall. They are African elephants. They think it's cool that the elephants have a long nose they wrap around grass to eat. While Cassie and Jeff are riding the elephants, the elephants eat grass with their trunks.

The elephants stop to get a drink of water with their trunk, then they lift their trunks and spray out water at people! The people are wet from the water, but they are having a good time. Then the elephants ate some hay.

They decide to ride the horses next. On the way to the horses they decide to get some hot chocolate. The hot chocolate is delicious. They are getting ready to get on the horse ride, and they ask about the rules. They hop on the horses and ride, and it's a really good ride. Cassie really loves horses. When they finish their horse ride. They hand the horses an apple and a carrot to say "good job".

After the horse ride, they decide they need to sit down and relax, so they go to the IMAX. Before they sit down, they get the snacks that they want. The IMAX movie is about the safari. They see safari animals: zebras, camels, lions, cheetahs, flamingos, giraffes, water buffalo, and hyenas. They watch the movie, and the movie happens to break down while they're watching it! They try to fix it, but they can't fix it. Cassie and Jeff decide it's time to leave the IMAX and go to the souvenir shop. They get a discount at the souvenir shop because the IMAX movie broke down. They each decide to get themselves a safari stuffed animal. Cassie gets a giraffe, and Jeff gets a lion. They enjoy themselves at the zoo, and they leave to get a nice warm apple cider and hot chocolate.

The Spooky Party

10.27.2020

It is the morning of Halloween, Libby's favorite holiday. She is planning on having a party, and has a lot to prepare. She wants to do party games, like pin-the-tail on the pumpkin, pumpkin rolling, apple-bobbing, and a pinata. She has halloween music playing, and there are pumpkin cookies for guests to decorate.

She has to carve a pumpkin, so she gets her dad to help her. The pumpkin has got a triangle nose, triangle eyes, and a mouth with some teeth carved into it. It looks like a regular jack-o-lantern. Libby puts the pumpkin outside and puts candy inside of it. She also puts a handle on the pumpkin, to hold it while she passes out candy.

Inside the pumpkin, the candy is mixed. There are Three Musketeers, KitKats, M&M's, Reese's Peanut-butter Cups,

Snickers, and Milky Ways. Libby's dad helps her to make it a really fun Halloween party. They bring their karaoke machine out to the driveway, and have a skeleton to dance around with! Libby sings, "I want to move it, move it," with the skeleton.

Libby will hand out candy by tossing it into people's cars when they drive up. They set up tables and chairs, and they set the food up on the tables. They bring Pepsi, Dr. Pepper, and Sprite to the party. They were having a fun time, until Libby started a food-fight with her neighbor. The parents chaperoning the party call the kids over who are food-fighting and put their foot down; they make them clean all of the food up and call the kids' parents to lecture them later.

Libby and her neighbor were fighting because they are wearing the same costume! They are both dressed as elderly women. They clean up their mess, like their parents told them to, but they're still not happy with one another about having the same costumes. They try to work it out between the two of them, but it's just not working out. They need to find a solution to this problem.

Libby's neighbor is going to sew a new costume for the neighbor kid. Their new costume is a butterfly! The costume has medium sized wings sewn onto it, and is painted purple.

Libby goes back to the party while the neighbor sews a new costume, and her mom brings out a tray of pumpkin cookies for everyone to decorate. Libby's mom is supervising to make sure no more food-fights go on. To decorate the cookies, they bought a lot of frosting with food coloring and a thinner frosting pipette for doing words. They also have halloween themed sprinkles to sprinkle on top, black for bats, orange for pumpkins, and yellow for stars. Everyone is calm, but then they get a sugar rush!

They are all having fun decorating their cookies, it's too much sugar for them but it's definitely a fun treat. The kids are excited, and very hyper. They all start singing, " I want candy," and jumping on the trampoline. Suddenly, one of the kids falls off and then the trampoline collapses! One kid broke their arm, Libby twisted her ankle badly, and Libby's mom had to call 911 because Libby couldn't walk. The ambulance came right away.

The party is over, and the parent's are not happy and everybody leaves. Even though the night ended badly, they had a

great halloween. They will remember next time not to get loaded up on too much sugar. Now they know that sugar isn't very healthy, but they had fun decorating for halloween.

Inside Scoop: The Science Museum

11.3.2020

Oliver is a volunteer at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Oliver has been trained in the rock zone of the museum, where they show all different kinds of rocks and do trades. He has been training there for two weeks, and now he gets to go downstairs where the old experiments and inventions are. Oliver wants to make sure that he is doing a good job. His training was good, and he wants to do good work. If he does a great job, he gets to supervise!

Oliver does a great job at the old experiments and inventions exhibit, so he gets to supervise. He gets to be in charge of making sure the exhibits are cleaned and greeting visitors. While Oliver was supervising, a kid came up and broke the trigger on the tennis game. Oliver tried to fix it, but he had to

call one of the staff over to help him decide if they needed an engineer or if the staff could fix it themselves. They decided to call an engineer to fix it, because the staff member could not. The engineer has experience from school that helped him to fix the tennis game.

When the engineer comes, he tries to fix it but has no luck. They had to call somewhere to get new parts. Once they get the new part and put it back into the game, it starts working again! After it was fixed, Oliver gets a new job at the museum, he's going to showcase how to make a ball stay in a wind tunnel without falling. He gets to teach the visitors how they can do it too.

Oliver also teaches the visitors to design their own science museum adventures and creatures! The visitors make a model planet earth, and they make lots of model wild animals. Oliver thinks it's pretty simple to teach the visitors how to design their adventures and creatures. They also make some car models. All of the models are made out of rubber of different varieties and colors. The models are pretty big, about the same size as a basketball.

While the visitors are making their models, someone drops a model of the IBS tower! It was too tall, and it couldn't stand up straight up. Because it was made of rubber, it started to bounce around the room! They decide to wire the IBS tower model down to the floor so that it doesn't fall over or bounce around the room anymore.

Oliver went outside to help a family that wanted to play mini-golf. The family didn't know how to buy golf clubs and balls, so it was Oliver's job to help them out. The family talked with Oliver, and Oliver asked them, "Which ball do you want?" They picked one of the balls that was free, and the family had a great time. It put a smile on Oliver's face to help people. The family invited Oliver to play golf with them; while they were playing Oliver got a hole in one! After they played mini-golf, they went back inside the science museum and got a snack. Oliver has to go back to supervising the science museum.

Oliver is helping a new volunteer to learn the rock zone and there is a visitor who wants to bring in an old rock to trade for points. The visitor is upset because they didn't have enough points from trading in their rock for what they wanted. Oliver

shows the visitor the prizes that they can get with the points they have, and that helps to calm the visitor down. For prizes, they have butterflies and insects in resin, old crystals, old coins, and fools' gold. The visitor picks a few crystals and old coins that she can afford with her points.

Oliver's experience at the science museum is good, because he gets to keep the visitors company. From being a volunteer, Oliver learns to be good company and be a good workmate to his coworkers. Oliver also learns how to help clean the exhibits, and even gets named "Volunteer of the Month"!

A Musical Success

11.10.2020

The Highland Friendship Club has decided to put on a musical production, directed by and starring HFC members. The musical they have decided to put on is Highschool Musical. Four positions that need to be filled are sound designer, director, camera person, and makeup artist. Tess is cast as the director. Hanna is acting as Gabriella in the play, and Jonah is acting as Troy. Denner is cast as Chad, Caleb is cast as Ryan, Kayla is cast as Sharpay, and Stephanie is cast as Coach Bolton.

The first thing they will do is gather up and look over the lines that they each have and discuss what their roles will be like. They also discuss what they'll need for the set design before they start to act. They are going to do a table read, taking their time to remember their lines.

They need to build a classroom set, with tables, desk, books, and backpacks. They also need iconic props such as basketballs,

pianos, microphones, and of course sheet music. The cast started to learn the songs in small groups, and later they started blocking. They need to learn three songs at a time, so they start with the first three.

The first time through, some people mess their lines up a few times in the songs and in the script. They practice the first three songs a few times, and when they make mistakes they just roll with it.

The director, Tess, took the main cast aside and told them that they have to practice different songs because they have to know their own songs too. They get really good at the first three songs, so they don't have to practice anymore. They watch the other people practice and help them when they need it.

The new songs, for the main cast, are more challenging. They are hard to memorize, and it's hard to hit the right notes. Some also have to learn dances to go along with their songs. At first, everyone is tripping and falling. They're falling over each other and off the stage! Denner, playing as Chad, almost twists his ankle— so they decide to practice one at a time instead of all dancing at once. Practice is perfect!

The cast is feeling confident, it just takes them time to remember their songs and dances, and it takes the band some time to get the music perfect too. Eric is the band director. Now they've practiced enough and they're ready to go for a full run through. The run through goes well, and they don't need to work on a whole lot. They run through the whole musical two more times, and it still goes well.

Before they knew it, it's tech week; and then it's dress rehearsal day! Everyone gets their costumes fit, and is feeling comfortable. There are wardrobe people there in case of any wardrobe malfunctions. Tess makes sure that everyone is there every day during tech week. If someone doesn't show up, Tess will ask someone else to replace them. Tech week goes well. The song, *We're All In This Together*, goes perfectly!

It's the day of the big show, and the cast is feeling nervous. They have a little anxiety, but some are excited for the performance. At the end, the whole cast and the band does the ending song together, and it goes really well! The audience thinks the performance is awesome, they give a standing ovation and clap for the cast.

The World's Largest Painting

11.17.2020

Anne and Ellie want to make the biggest painting on planet Earth. Before they begin painting, they have to purchase all of the necessary supplies. They have to get a big giant canvas. Before they get supplies, they have to decide their idea and pick colors for their painting. They need painting supplies, like paint brushes, a bucket of water, aprons, a container for paint, and a lot of paint.

They decide they will paint the whole painting with one color: blue. They are going to paint in different shades of blue, so they need blue paint, white paint, and green paint. They have all of the supplies and they are ready to check out. They try to put the giant canvas in their car but they come across a problem, it doesn't fit in their car.

They order a moving van, and it takes six hours to get there! Then, the van won't start so they ask somebody to jumpstart it. After they jumpstart the van, it starts right up. The van takes the

canvas to their house. Anne and Ellie take the canvas out of the van and pay the driver, then they get started on their painting.

They put the giant canvas in their art studio. They are going to paint a nature scene, something with a beach. They decide on painting the ocean. Anne and Ellie make sure to be careful while they paint so they don't get paint on their clothes or faces. They also cover the floor with newspapers. They have to follow one rule: if they paint the walls by accident, their parents have to repaint the walls! Their parents would not be happy if they had to repaint the walls.

Before they start putting paint on, they sketch out their design in pencil. They like what the sketch looks like, so they start putting the paint into containers and mixing colors. Anne and Ellie mix twenty shades of blue for their painting. They decide to do the darker blue on the bottom of the canvas so it would look like water, and the lighter blue on the top of the canvas for the sky. They paint a mixture of other blues from the bottom to the top.

They paint the sky first, with a blue moon, then they paint the ocean. They also paint four speed boats on the water that are

really big. They paint moons in different shades and sizes, five moons in total. There are small, medium, and big moons in the painting. In the ocean, they paint stingrays, sharks, seahorses, whales, dolphins, jellyfish, and starfish. The dolphins are jumping out of the water. The painting is going well, nothing goes wrong so far.

They think the painting is good, and they are happy with what they've done. They are starting to clean up, when Anne spills the water all over the canvas! Now they have to go get a new canvas and start all over. Ellie is not happy about this, but she doesn't yell at Anne even though you can see she's not happy. They get a new canvas, but this time they decide to paint in purple. They paint a big purple boat that people live on, as big as a cruise ship.

Their painting goes well, and Anne and Ellie enjoy themselves while painting. They enjoy painting this new painting as much as the old painting. Once the painting is finished, they send it to a museum in Paris to put it on the wall. They have to use a cruise ship to send the painting, because the plane was too small. The people of Paris like Anne and Ellie's painting, and it is

a big success! They break the world record for the largest painting and get to go in the world record book. That makes them happy.

A Wild Thanksgiving

11.24.2020

Thanksgiving is coming up in two days, and Enya is planning a Thanksgiving Dinner for her whole family. First she has to order food from Seward Co-op, and it will be a big order. Twenty two people will be coming to dinner, including aunties and uncles cousins, step-cousins, sisters, and pets.

Enya's mom and dad drive to the store and call them to bring out their groceries, now they're on the way back home planning what food they're going to make. They plan to make mashed potatoes, ham, turkey, apple pie, pumpkin pie, and green bean casserole. They will have water, milk, sparkling juice, and pop for the guests.

Before the guests arrive, they have to clean the house and set up the table for their twenty two guests. They put out a candy corn jar, whoever can guess how many candy corn are in the jar will win it! They also set out a trivia game with some prizes. The family makes appetizers for the dinner: cheese and crackers, little sausages, bacon and water chestnuts, a relish tray, and stuff

like that. There is a cooler for drinks, with adult beverages for the adults and regular pops for the kids. Enya and her parents put down a tablecloth on the table, and set the table with plates and forks. They put flowers in a vase on the table, and start on the turkey.

Enya's mom woke up at six AM to start the turkey and the stuffing, but she forgot to turn on the oven! Enya's mom noticed that she forgot to turn the oven on about half an hour later, when she was making potato salad. Enya's mom turns the oven on, and no one was angry with her.

Outside, the family's dog starts barking and Enya's mom can't get him to come inside! The dog starts waking up the neighbors, and some of the neighbors aren't happy that the dog is barking at 6AM. Some of the neighbors called Enya's mom on the phone.

The dog's barking wakes up Enya and her dad too. They decide to get a milkbone to lure the dog back inside, and it works! The neighbors still aren't very happy. The turkey is ready, so they take the turkey out of the oven. They also take the pies

out of the oven for dessert. They put the thanksgiving turkey in the center of the table, just as their guests start to arrive.

Enya's cousins come with their mom and dad, and they're happy to be in a warm house. Outside it is thirty four degrees out. Enya's cousins are from Florida, and they didn't pack clothes for the right season. They weren't expecting cold weather. Enya's aunt and uncle came, they live close to her house, and then her grandma and grandpa came from Woodbury.

Everyone says hi to each other and starts to catch up, enya hadn't seen her cousins since last summer. After they say hi, everyone gets ready to play a game of football before they eat. When they finish and head inside, Enya takes everyone's jackets to the bedroom. They each share what they are thankful for, then they all sit down to eat.

Everybody loves the food, especially the mashed potatoes. Some of the guests like the green bean casserole, and some like the bacon and water chestnuts. They eat apple and pumpkin pie for dessert, and everyone likes the two equally.

After dinner, the guys sit and watch a football game on TV, while the girls talk and drink and eat. The game on TV is between the Dallas Cowboys and the Detroit Lions. The Lions won the game, and they made the Dallas Cowboys go home crying. The party guests were mostly rooting for the Dallas Cowboys, so they aren't very happy about the loss.

After the football game, they play a wheel of fortune video game. One of Enya's cousins, cousin Eric, wins the wheel of fortune game. They also decide the winner to guess how many candy corn were in the jar, there are 122 candy corn! Enya's mom guesses the correct number and wins the candy corn jar. Suddenly, all the lights go out while they are playing a game. They all have to go look for flashlights, and they have no idea where the flashlights are. They look in the drawers, the closets, and the hallway, before they find two flashlights with no batteries in the closet upstairs. Then they found some batteries in a drawer downstairs.

While the parents are looking for flashlights the kids decide to play hide and seek. Then, the adults join in and the whole family is playing hide and seek, the adults like to play hide and

seek. Eventually, the lights come back on when they are done playing hide and seek.

Before the party ends, the family chats with each other about how they are doing and what's new. Everyone enjoys seeing each other for thanksgiving, and they are bound to see each other again since they had such a fun time. Everyone decides that it's time to go home and relax, either go to bed or watch some TV.

A Snowy Adventure

12.1.2020

It is the first day of December in Minnesota, and Kelsey wakes up to almost two feet of snow. She is excited to go sledding and snowshoeing in Duluth, Minnesota. She is going to travel to Duluth, which is three hours away from where she lives. She is going to bring her dog, Chloe, with her. She's going to visit her aunts, uncles, and cousins. On the way there, Kelsey gets stuck in traffic, then she grabs an apple pie from McDonalds.

With all the traffic, Kelsey is three hours behind! She's worried that she won't be able to go sledding. Kelsey finally makes it to Duluth safely at 5:30 AM. Kelsey drops her stuff off and heads to sleep. Kelsey sleeps for an hour, and when she wakes up she feels happy. In the morning, everyone is asleep except for Kelsey and her aunt's dog, Maya. She reads a book until everyone else wakes up.

When everyone else wakes up, they have breakfast. Kelsey's aunt cooked an egg bake for everyone ahead of time. Kelsey enjoys the egg bake. After breakfast, they sit on a three season porch and talk while they look out on the lake. While they are sitting on the porch, Kelsey's aunt surprises them all! She tells them that while they are in town they will go see the Bentleyville light display. They are going to go see the lights in a few days.

They all decide it's time to put on their snow gear and go sledding. They put on snow boots, hats, gloves, and warm coats. They have to bring their three sleds, one for each of them. The sledding hill is close to Kelsey's aunt and uncle's house. They all go up the hill, and the aunt says, "Are you ready?" Kelsey says no, because she is scared, but she's going to sled anyway. From the top of the hill, the hill looks gigantic! Kelsey goes down the hill by herself, and she thinks that it is amazing. When she gets back up to the top, she says, "You don't have to be scared, you can go anytime! You'll have the most fun ride ever," to her Aunt.

They are having fun sledding, and when they are all done they get ready to go to the christmas light show. They pack binoculars to see the lights better. At the light show, they see ice

sculptures. They see a flower sculpted out of ice that is really big, almost as big as a person! They also see a sculpted ice fairy and a sun sculpture, and they think the sculptures are cool. Kelsey's favorite sculpture is the sun, because there are lots of cool lights built into the sculpture that make it light up.

The light show has 50-60 foot long lights, lighting up different christmas trees. The lights are all flashing in time with the christmas songs "Deck the Halls" and "Angels We Have Heard on High." Kelsey and her family love the lights! The green lights are their favorite. They watch the lights and listen to the music for two hours, and then they go home for dinner.

After dinner, they all sit down to watch a christmas movie on T.V and drink hot chocolate. They watch, "Jingle All the Way." Kelsey's family all likes the movie, and Kelsey had never seen it before. Everyone is getting tired, so they say goodnight to each other and go upstairs to put their P.J's on. They all put T.V shows on in their rooms, and that helps put them all to sleep. Everybody sleeps wonderfully, and they wake up in the morning when they are ready.

When they wake up in the morning, they have Belgian waffles, fruit, and sausage for breakfast. Kelsey's aunt makes the food for them. Kelsey is going home in a day, and today she will be snowshoeing with her aunt and uncle. Snowshoeing goes great; they walk pretty far, up lots of hills. They snowshoe for three miles, and it's not too difficult.

Kelsey's aunt tries to snowshoe, even though it's not her favorite activity. In the end, she ends up enjoying it, but it is really really cold outside. Kelsey's aunt is excited to get back home by the fire where it's warm, and Kelsey wants to get home to watch her favorite gymnastics show. When they get home, they make hot chocolate for both of them. After they drink their hot chocolate, they decide to play some board games.

Overall, Kelsey enjoys her trip. It's a lot of fun, and everyone enjoys themselves playing games and doing winter activities. Kelsey is definitely going to come back again!