



WHEN I WAS YOUNG AT THE CABIN

When I was young at the cabin my cousins and I would catch frogs with our quick hands and use buckets to catch fish from the lake. We would swim, laugh and yell to our hearts' content. Those days seem just like yesterday...

When I was young at the cabin we would light fireworks off of our floating dock. Then we would paddle away quickly in the canoe (the fuse burned quickly), waiting for it to fly into the air. The fireworks seemed to dance in the sky, and then suddenly vanish and once again the sky was black.

When I was young at the cabin I would water ski on the crystal clear water, dropping to one ski as the speedboat looped by the cabin. I loved the spray of the water as I quickly cut through the wake from side to side.

When I was young at the cabin I would wake up early, before the sun, and take the fishing boat out to our special spot. Watching the sunrise was the best part of all from darkness to light in only a few minutes. The colors were amazing; purple, yellow and reds all blended together to start a new day.

When I was young at the cabin life was carefree and full of adventure. I hope to always be young at the cabin . . .

By Jack Laird Grade 6

WILDFLOWERS

John groggily lifted his head, his eyes fluttering open. He saw what appeared to be a giant mass of fog engulfing the garage's loft where he was sleeping. He sniffed the air. It was a familiar smell and brought a memory to mind. His thoughts flashed back to the time his younger brother, Patrick, had lit a bathroom trashcan on fire. He suddenly jolted upward into a sitting position. It was smoke.

A few traumatizing minutes later, he had roused everyone in the room (his brothers, Matthew and Patrick, and my brother, Paul), and directed them out of the smoking building and to the cabin's back door. I, eight years old at the time, was fast asleep only feet from that door, but not for long.

Pound! Pound! Pound!

I drifted into a subconscious half-sleep next to my cousins. As I lay wondering what the reason could possibly be for the interruption, I heard my uncle's heavy footfalls and saw his blurred figure hurrying toward the door. *Slide.* The door opened and my cousins and brother stumbled inside. "Fire," they coughed, "the garage is on fire."

Moments later I heard many feet pounding and scuffling along the floor as people got ready to quickly leave the cabin. I felt someone lift me up to take me with them, myself too tired to notice who it was. I fell back asleep in my unknown relative's arms, and the next thing I knew, I was awake in a stationary car removed a safe distance from the catastrophe.

I looked over my shoulder. The sight I saw will be with me forever. The garage was a movie set, something I thought I would only see in exaggerated movies. But this was real. The entire garage was being eaten up by merciless flames. Black crust and fallen debris littered the white snow beneath. Fire fighters strolled the perimeter. There was nothing they could do but let it burn to the ground.

I didn't realize it at the time, but the amount of damage done in the fire was enormous. My grandpa stood a distance away. He lost his garage that he himself built, his two boats, the speedboat and the pontoon, and all of his valued work tools. But to him, what he *didn't* lose was more important. His grandchildren were safe. He stood praying, but not in hope that some of his possessions might be spared. He prayed in thanksgiving that everyone was safe. Everything else would take care of itself, given time.

I remember, later, looking upon my older cousins, brother, uncles, father, and grandfather working. I saw the cement base and wooden outline of what they said would soon be the new garage, as beautiful as the previous. I found it hard to believe that the stacks of lumber and buckets of cement could make a building. But not only would it make a building, it would make a bond as well.

That next summer everyone got to spend more time than usual together, working and helping in any way possible. My grandfather grew closer to his eldest grandsons because of the fire; something that might not have happened had the boys not left the heating stove on, had the garage not burned down. The fire also made each of us prioritize and realize what is *really* important in life. What happened was not a good thing, but from that experience I learned that good things can grow from bad situations, like wildflowers after a forest fire.

By Sarah Underwood Grade 8

This is the true story of the Laird family cabin and garage.

