Erich Strauss Grand Champion and First place, fourth grade Tracy Strysky, teacher

## The Beautiful Capoolong Creek Trail

My family and I live right near the Capoolong Creek Trail. We walk or bike along the trail during all of the seasons each year. There is a creek that flows along the trail and a few bridges along the partly bumpy path. The trail is where train tracks used to be. We often find cool pieces of black coal from many years ago that were used to power the train. The trail is also used by horseback riders. To me, this trail is the most beautiful scene in Franklin Township any time of year.

My favorite time of year for exploring this pretty trail is in the winter. I love to walk on it during or after a snowfall. It is so quiet and peaceful. As I start onto the trail, the snow makes a crunching noise beneath my feet. As I look up, I see the deep blue sky and sometimes even a red-tailed hawk circling above me. The trees are tall and bare. I see big bunches of leaves and sticks —a sign of cozy warm homes for birds and squirrels.

As I approach the wooden bridge, I hear the bubbling sounds of the creek. When I look over the edge of the bridge, I can see the water rushing over rocks and underneath a thin layer of clear ice. I keep walking and I get to my favorite part of the trail. There are large, tall, gray rocks on one side of the trail. I see the giant icicles clinging onto the sharp edges of the rocks. I run toward the icicles happily, reaching out to grab the biggest one. Then I throw it as hard as I can against a tree and watch it shatter. My mom says not to break all of them because they are so pretty and other people would want to see them, too. I think the icicles are so amazing.

Being on the trail makes me feel very relaxed. It makes me feel like I am part of nature and all its beauty. I enjoy experiencing nature on the Capoolong Creek Trail during all of the seasons.