

# *I'm a Child of Appalachia*®

2009 WRITING CONTEST



THE FOUNDATION FOR  
APPALACHIAN  
OHIO





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## RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION

In September 2006, the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio sponsored the first *I'm a Child of Appalachia*® Writing Contest, open to students in grades 4-8, to encourage students' consideration of the geographic strengths of the region they call home. Just four years later, the Foundation has greatly expanded the contest through the help of partners, including increased awards and a 9<sup>th</sup> grade poetry component.

With the generous partnership of American Electric Power, the Walmart Foundation, Edward Jones offices throughout the 32 county region of Appalachian Ohio and Grange Insurance, every grade level in each of the region's counties had the opportunity to receive a student and teacher award. Each teacher of a winning student received a \$500 classroom enrichment grant to spend in his or her classroom on activities and items that enrich curriculum and each winning student was awarded a \$100 savings bond.

At the Foundation, we believe one of the most critical things we can do is encourage our region's youth to believe in their ability to succeed. Through the *Child of Appalachia* Writing Contest, FAO is working to prompt thoughts and conversation in classrooms across the 32 counties of Appalachian Ohio with positive messages to instill the mindsets and confidence necessary for success.

In addition to the Contest's major sponsors, FAO would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the following colleges for their generous support in reviewing student submissions: Central Ohio Technical College; Kent State University – Tuscarawas; Muskingum University; Ohio University; Shawnee State University; Washington State Community College; and Zane State University.

The Foundation would also like to give a special thanks to the Athens International Association of Administrative Professionals for donating their time and support, as well as Dr. Barbara Hansen, FAO Trustee and Dave Longaberger Professor of Teaching and Learning, for her continued vision and leadership of the Contest.

This year's contest prompted students to ***describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired them*** and we hope you, like us here at the Foundation, enjoy reading the enclosed poems and essays.



**SPENCER HARRISON 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Kohli/Meigs/Southern Elementary School**

Appalachian Ohio is, well, different from other places. It is very country like. I love it. It's a dream. The mornings and evenings are very peaceful. I like them the most. There is very little crime here. We do not have traffic jams and you can almost always find a place to park.

The hunting and fishing is very good in the calm and quiet nature where there are no noisy towns. I like to hunt squirrel, deer, and turkey with my dad at his friend, Jarrod's, and at my grandpa's. I like to fish at my camp on the river bank. We catch bass, sauger, catfish, bluegill, and gar.

The jobs people have here are mostly at the industrial plants. There are a lot of these plants here because the Ohio River runs through Appalachia. Industrial plants are built on rivers because boats can carry their supplies to them in big amounts. My dad used to work at an aluminum plant. Now he is a coal miner.

Some schools have swimming pools and are very rich. Our school does not have that much money but is trying to raise some. If our school had a swimming pool, I would be on the swim team. Maybe our teachers could convince the principals to have a fundraiser to build us a swimming pool. Our school building also needs more air conditioning. It gets really hot sometimes, and sometimes it gets too cold. There are a lot of kids that go to Southern Elementary, but not as many as in New York City schools.

When I grow up, I want to be in the U.S. Navy Seals. I do not think there are any U.S. military bases in Appalachian Ohio, so I will probably have to move to the state where I was born, which is Alabama. There are military bases there.

**ASHTON HIERONIMUS 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Deer/Lawrence/Dawson-Bryant Elementary School**

For the most of the 1800's Appalachian farmers remained small farmers, producing mostly just what they needed for their families. They produced only a small amount to trade for some imported goods such as coffee, and sugar, sometimes available up to 40 miles away.

Appalachian farmers have a large range of skills such as strong independence such as blacksmithing. They also traded such things as wood, and coal and oil on the rivers to earn a living.

Appalachian women handled all of the family and home affairs, they always had large kitchens and gardens, most with smarts for herbal medicines as my grandma would say "Home Remedies". The women also spun wool to make quilts and clothing.

Just like in old times as my grandparents still do today we still grow vegetables and crops. We still use the Ohio River for a large trade port in Appalachian Ohio.

I am inspired to live here because it seems to be a very smart way to live if you really stop and think about what our ancestors have achieved, as well as what we still use today.

**JARED HERRON 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Barger/Clermont/Batavia Elementary School**

One of my favorite things about Ohio is the Ohio River because we go boating. We water ski during the summer with my mom's friends, family, aunt, uncle and my cousin. Our aunt lives next to the river, and we park our boat there. We tube, kneeboard and water ski. We have lots of fun!

Also in the summertime, my brothers and I are members of the Buzzing Enthusiasts 4-H Club. I took a photography project this year and demonstrated how to make rope. I also participated in a project called "Play the Role." I received third place. This is a project about acting.

My brothers raised ducks and took woodworking. We took them to the county fair. We also all went to 4-H camp this summer. 4-H was created by A.B. Graham in Ohio. 4-H

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you!* 3

Camp Graham in Clarksville is named after him. That is another reason I like Ohio. I also like how we have a big yard so I can bike around and play football. Ohio is like that.

**TORI LONG 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Bentley/Scioto/Wheelersburg Middle School**

Appalachia Ohio is a good place to grow up. There are many things that make my area unique. I think you will agree with me.

First of all, my family is SO Appalachian because my Grandma and my Mom love to can corn and green beans. My Mom and my sister love to make homemade food like cornbread and dumplings. I like to help my Grandma make quilts and clothes because I really like spending time with my Grandma.

Holiday traditions are a part of my life here in Appalachian Ohio. My family gets together for Thanksgiving and Christmas because it is our tradition and we get to see all of our family. We celebrate Halloween by going Trick or Treating. If we don't like the candy, we go outside and let everyone get as much candy as they want. We also celebrate the Fourth of July.

Finally, we have our own style of entertainment. My entertainment is camping and bonfires. My family and I love to camp. It is really relaxing. I like to look for buckeyes because I collect them. I love when my Grandma makes a bonfire and then cooks breakfast like eggs, biscuits, gravy, and more! My family loves fishing because we like to keep them until we know what they are. We also like to swim in the lake. We like to play and splash each other. Now you know why Appalachian Ohio inspires me!

**JOSEPHINE MARCHI 4<sup>th</sup> · Homeschooled/Athens**

"Konk la reeeeeeee, konk la reeeeeeee!" I lie under the large oak tree on the dewy grass of my backyard, listening to a male red winged black bird sing. The morning is bright. My backyard is full of life. Crows fly overhead. I heard coyotes howling last night. Suddenly I see a bright neon blue flash in the sky. I think it is an indigo bunting! Then I hear his song nearby; it sounds like he's saying, "sweet, sweet, sweet pretty birdie-er."

I love living in Appalachian Ohio because there is so much wildlife. I also love living here because there is this feeling that you are free to run! It inspired me to love birds and now I want to grow up to be an ornithologist, so I can teach others to love birds as I do.

**KARLEE MCGRAW 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ames/Ross/Bishop Flaget School**

What I like about Appalachia Ohio is the beauty that surrounds us and all of the wild animals. I have a creek behind my house and I can hear the water run over the rocks when there is a hard rain. We are so lucky and I feel so proud to be living in such a peaceful and beautiful place.

In Appalachia Ohio the scenery is beautiful. The rolling hills are lushful and green in the spring and summer. In the fall they're are pretty colors of red, yellow, and orange. The hills are home to lots of wild life, especially deer. There are also several deer that live around the small cluster of trees by the creek near my house. A mother deer had three babies this past spring. I watched them in awe as they grew up over the summer. I would throw apples in the yard for them to eat. I also like to go outside at night and look at the stars in the sky. I like studying and watching the stars because they are so bright and shiny and they light up the night sky. I feel peaceful and relaxed when I am star gazing. When I look at them, I thank God that he has given me such a wonderful place to live.

**MADYSON NEWSOME 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Rupert/Vinton/Central Elementary School**

Appalachian Ohio inspires me to be an artist. It inspires me to be an artist because of how beautiful it is. It just makes me want to draw it. I just love how beautiful the hills and lakes are! Ohio is my number one favorite place to be! My favorite part is how beautiful the sunset is! The colors are just so vibrant! I wish I could paint the sky just right! I love

the reds, pinks, and oranges! The beauty of Appalachian Ohio makes me proud to live here! I wish I was an artist now and could draw every beautiful spot of Appalachian Ohio! I just hope I can do what Appalachian Ohio inspires me to!

**JARED PFLUGH 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Long/Jefferson/Buckeye Northwest Elementary School**

I love living in Appalachian Ohio because it is very beautiful. It is peaceful and relaxing without the noise of horns honking, but quiet with the sounds of birds singing. I get to go camping every summer, where I can explore the woods and creeks. In the winter, I can sled ride in my own yard. Kids who live in cities do not have the opportunity to enjoy what Appalachian Ohio has to offer.

Sometimes when I go out to catch the bus, I get to see deer in my own backyard. There are also lots of birds, and right now I get to see the Canadian geese flying south for the winter. In the spring I go with my grandpa to hunt for mushrooms. In the summer I go with my dad to hunt for berries. I like to go fishing with my dad.

The people in my community are very friendly. I know all of my neighbors, and everyone on my street. My mom grew up in our town, and now she is a member of the village council. I am happy that I live in Appalachian Ohio because it is a great place to grow up.

**ALYSSA PRINCE 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Lighthizer/Muskingum/Dresden Elementary School**

What inspires me most is my family and friends. They live in the Appalachian area, too. That makes me want to stay in the Appalachian area the most. They always encourage me. Like be happy with who you are and what you have. Also, you can be anything that you want to be. The thing they say the most is you can be the best.

I think that in Appalachia we help each other. We help each other by cheering each other up when you are down. We also look out for each other. We look out for each other because that makes us closer. When you are closer to somebody you feel more comfortable.

In Appalachia we garden a lot. Once we garden we have to harvest. Once we harvest we have to can. Canning is really fun especially canning strawberry jelly and freezing it. We can corn, green beans, peas, a couple tomatoes and a lot of strawberry jelly.

The Longaberger baskets are made in the Appalachian area. My grandpa used to help make Longaberger baskets, until he retired.

We make cookies every year with my whole family and my grandma and grandpa and great grandma and grandpa. This is why I want to stay in the inspiring Appalachian area.

**MADISON RICHARDS 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Smith/Jackson/Westview Elementary School**

I have grown up in Appalachia in an apple orchard that is many generations old. I can tell you the season, not by the calendar, but by watching the apple trees change. I cannot imagine growing up any other way. I am fortunate to be able to live next door to all my immediate family, grandparents, great-grandparents and even great-uncles. I ride my bike back and forth from my house to our orchard packing house. By living in the orchard, I get to work in the packing house with my grandmother. I get to walk in the orchard and pick apples and peaches. I always feel safe. This is a country way of life and I can't imagine living in a big city and not knowing people when I walk into Wal-Mart. People actually come to Appalachia to visit in the spring and fall because it's beautiful here. Everyone has a different experience growing up based on the part of the country they live in, and I am so thankful to grow up here as a part of the Appalachia culture. I have history I will be able to continue to pass down from generation to generation with pride.

**OLIVIA SLUSSER 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. McPherson/Coshocton/Ridgewood Middle School**

There is no other place I would rather grow up than Appalachian Ohio. The scenery is so beautiful with the leaves all changing colors and my hometown is inspiring me and

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 5*

preparing me to follow my dreams. When I get older, I would like to be an actress. We have a Coshocton County Children's Theater in my hometown where I was in the play "Oliver Twist." I learned about staying in character even when you don't have lines, and about all the things that go on backstage. I have also been in a karaoke contest with my friend Faith at our West Lafayette Hometown Festival for three years. We have received two third places and finally a first place award! I am also trying out for the Ridgewood Middle school play "A Christmas Carol" based on the novel by Charles Dickens. I am hoping to get a good part. Living here in Appalachian Ohio inspires me and gives me lots of opportunities to follow my dreams.

**DANYON WINEBRENNER 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Murphy/Morgan/Morgan South Elementary**

The Appalachian Ohio is inspiring to me because of the veterans. My great-great grandpa was a veteran and I'm happy he fought for my freedom and yours. He has a purple heart by his gravestone. But I have the real one! He died when he was in his 70's, but I will never forget him for fighting for our country and for us.

**JULIANNA YATES 4<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Vollborn/Gallia/Washington Elementary**

As I watch out the window of my dad's car, I enjoy the scenery all around me. As we pass the river I watch as it flows beautifully by. In the background the mountains tower over the sparkling river. Beyond the horizon the last rays of sunshine gleam through the trees.

The expansive fields around our house are full of deer. Babies prancing wildly, while moms and dads graze. Across the road there is a farmer riding a big green tractor, harvesting his crops. I see a small group of turkeys, out in front is a tom, all puffed up and strutting. The wildflowers are everywhere; they smell so beautiful this time of year. Berry picking is one of my most memorable experiences in Ohio. The trees are changing colors and look so pretty. Under those trees are acorns, chestnuts and walnuts. The bushes look so big as I start picking berries.

Ohio is wonderful place to live. All the beautiful things I see every day inspires me to be a photographer when I grow up. When I have kids I know they'll love living in Ohio. I love living in Appalachian Ohio.

**5<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS**

**CODY BOONE 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Clemens/Morgan/Morgan West Elementary School**

I am an Appalachian child. This area is hilly and has lots of creeks and rivers. I have lots of things I enjoy doing here. I like to explore the woods and the creeks, swimming and fishing in the lakes, and sitting around bon fires.

Living in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains has inspired me to become a geologist. There are lots of rocks in all of the hills and creeks. I'm sure there are rocks that are not discovered just yet and that are exactly what a geologist does. I always go rock hunting with my parents and I enjoy collecting all different types of rocks.

I also enjoy looking for fossils. Appalachia Ohio has lots of interesting fossils. Fossilized rocks are prehistoric animals or plants in rock form. I have found petrified wood, a trilobite, and horned corral. Fossilized rocks are more rare than a normal rocks and more expensive too.

I love being a child of Appalachia Ohio. I enjoy finding rocks and fossils here. This area has inspired me to go to college to become a geologist so I can keep exploring the rest of my life.

**BAILEE BOYD 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Pryor/Tuscarawas/East Elementary School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me. There is so much to do. In the summer, you can cool off in a cool pool. In the fall, you can jump in big piles of leaves. In the winter, you

can build white fluffy snowmen, and in the spring you can plant beautiful flowers.

In the summer, I'm inspired to do all kinds of things outdoors like hiking in the green woods, going on walks and gardening in the wonderful soil we have. Also, in the fall, I'm inspired to jump in all the colorful leaves and carve pumpkins. I'm also inspired to go on walks in the cool afternoon.

In the winter, with all the fluffy snow we get, it's fun to go sled riding and snow boarding. It's also good for snowball fights and building snowman the way the snow packs together! In the spring, we have such warm and lovely weather which is good to pick flowers and lie in the sun and read a book. It is also inspiring to go on a trail ride in the woods on a horse. Those are some of the ways living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me!

**JOSEPH EARWOOD 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Swanson & Ms. Allen/Muskingum/Roseville Middle School**  
Ohio is the heart of America. Ohio is the most astonishing state in America. Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me in two ways.

First, I recognized that there are famous landmarks in Appalachian Ohio. A well known famous landmark is Lake Erie. Another famous landmark is the Y-Bridge.

Second, I discovered that famous presidents lived in Ohio. Ulysses S. Grant lived in Ohio. His life was started when he commanded the union armies during the Civil War. Rutherford B. Hayes followed Grant in office, becoming the 19th president.

Those are two ways Ohio inspires me. I hoped you enjoyed hearing about Ohio the heart of America.

**DYLAN HERRMANN-HOLT 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Sturgill/Lawrence/Ironton Elementary School**

I woke up one morning to the birds chirping and nice cool breeze. These are the things that inspire me. Appalachian Ohio is a wonderful place that inspires you to go out and enjoy the natural surroundings. Here in Appalachian Ohio there are lots of things to do. I love to farm, camp out, and have fun with my family.

Appalachia Ohio can be described as a splendid, wonderful and exciting place to live. I love the fall colors, red, gold and orange. In the winter I love the fresh blanket of snow over the gently rolling hills. Spring has its special colors like, red and purple tulips and nice soft green grass. To me it's just a perfect place to live.

In the summer a nice camping trip or a swim in one of its many lakes is a perfect way to spend the day. Appalachian Ohio inspires me to spend time with my family out in the beautiful nature of this area. My family likes nothing better than a nice cooked meal over a fire like chicken and dumplings and apple cobbler. We love row boating and swimming and when fall rolls around its time to harvest our crops.

I think it is wonderful living in a place where I have so many opportunities to go out and enjoy nature while having fun with my family. That's how Appalachian Ohio inspires me.

**MACKIE JOHNSON 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Schwarzel/Athens/Morrison Elementary School**

When I was younger I wanted to be an astronaut when I grew up, but when I moved here the beautiful scenery in Athens inspired me to become a photographer. I saved up my money and bought a digital camera, and started taking pictures. I hope to be a great photographer some day all because of Athens.

Another thing that inspires me is the people who live in Athens. They inspire me because they take such good care of the plants and animals that live here. Athenians also take care of their surroundings and they make sure people in need get taken care of. That inspired me so much that now I try harder to take care of this Earth.

Ohio has a lot of things to learn about History. The schools here inspire me to try harder to learn more. Since I moved here I've raised my grades and raised my self-esteem. I'm so

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 7*

inspired by Athens; I try to help people with their school work, like my brother. I love Athens.

**JALYN JONES 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Scarfpin/Harrison/Harrison Lakeland Elementary School**

Why does living in Appalachia inspire? It inspires me because it is a better place to live than the city. One thing about living in the country is that I can raise my own cattle. The way that I can raise my own cattle is because I got a Youth Loan that is for kids that are my age to get if they live in the country and want to own livestock. If I did not live in the Appalachia, I would not be able to own the herd of cattle that I own today. One of my responsibilities is to check my fair animals when I get them. In 4-H last year I took two market lambs and a feeder calf.

Living in Appalachia is a great place because when you go outdoors you do not have to hear the loud car horns. When I go outdoors I can see farm animals all around me.

Sometimes when I look off my deck in the morning I see deer. Last year I went hunting with my dad and I shot my first deer. If I did not live in the Appalachia, I would not have had the chance to do this. I'm proud to call myself an "Appalachian Girl."

**NATASHA LATOUF 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Sage/Holmes/Millersburg Elementary School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me because John Glenn was the first and oldest astronaut to go to space. He was born in Cambridge, Ohio which is in the Appalachia region. It also inspires me because the Amish have proven that you can live happily without the luxury life that most people have. Appalachian Ohio is also a very good place to see scenic beauty. What I mean is you don't see pollution or huge skyscrapers in the way. What you do see is miles of fields, rolling green hills, and trees as far as the eye can see.

Ohio is also a very good place to farm because our soil is filled with humus. Humus are the nutrients in the A horizon that help plants grow. The A horizon (topsoil) is part of 3 horizons. The A horizon (topsoil) has most humus, so Appalachian Ohio is a place with many, many fields. I am proud to be living in Appalachian Ohio!

**MADISON OILER 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Covey/Gallia/Rio Grande Elementary School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me by making me want to be a botanist because of all the wonderful types of plants. In Ohio, we have great soil for many plants to grow. I also think that we need to focus more on our plant and animal life because we are slowly destroying them by pollution, but that doesn't mean that we don't care. Many people are trying to make a difference. I am very creative and would love to do something very helpful for the environment when I get older. For example, by being a botanist, I could make a difference in the way we treat the earth.

Appalachian Ohio has also inspired me to be an artist because there are so many things to draw, paint, and explore. I love to draw the falling leaves, the Ohio River or maybe even my backyard. I am inspired easily by the surroundings of Appalachian Ohio. I have made many paintings and sculptures. I hope to be very successful in the future by selling my art. These are all of the wonderful things of Appalachian Ohio that inspire me. Therefore, Appalachian Ohio is a great place for me to live.

**MARIA ONUSKO 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Cook/Highland/Greenfield Middle School**

Living in Appalachia has inspired me to respect my elders. I always would moan and groan when my mom or dad said it was time to go to my grandparent's house. I thought it was old and had lots of spiders. I didn't think they had any good games, only old ones from when my mom and her sisters lived there. Another reason I didn't exactly like going to my grandparent's was we went every day. Homework, friends, T.V. and everything else seemed to have to come after grandma and grandpa's house.

I started to think about my grandparents and their house. As I started to focus on my social studies homework again, my mind wandered. I thought of all the stories my mom told about that house. I thought of the building that was part of a Camp Sherman



training camp. I also thought of all the stories my grandpa had told me. I thought that I was lucky to hear all of the stories he told me. I started to think that I should be inspired by living in Appalachian because people live close and there is lots of history. I thought I should treat going to my grandparent's as if it was a treat. If I lived in a big city like New York or Las Vegas, I wouldn't get to hear all these stories from the past. I felt ashamed that I had acted so immaturely. My grandparents are in their 80s and 90s so one day they will be gone; I think I should learn all I can about this wonderful region of Appalachia that I call home.

**TRUDY OSWALD 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Slusser/Coshocton/Ridgewood Middle School**

Everything has its place and mine is here. If ever there was a place I wanted or any kid would want to be raised, it would have to be here in the Appalachians of Ohio! Country land, hills, the cool sunrise, the white-tailed deer, the beautiful scenery is so gorgeous and inspiring. Some people think that we're all cowboys and wranglers out here but really we are regular people. But we do have privileges here. The scenery here is beautiful, most people say it is gorgeous on the planes because you can see for miles around but hills add so much flavor. If you are on a hill and look around especially in the morning with the sun coming up, the sky is beautiful but what adds more are the hills. You can see the grass and the tree lines maybe even deer. Seeing these scenes from a bus window at first made me hope to become a professional photographer but I have decided that with God's beauty all around me I should tell others about its creator so I am going to be a missionary.

**ANNA PRICE 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Adkins/Vinton County South Elementary School**

What inspires me most about Appalachian Ohio are the sights and sounds of the wildlife and the land. There are many farms close to where I live. I just love the big, wide open fields! I can run free, play, and "act crazy" there.

I also like the nature and animals around my community. The animals are just so peaceful. I enjoy watching the deer. They are really pretty. I also love the trees. They are very beautiful and colorful in the fall.

I really like the summer flowers. They are bright and cheerful. I enjoy the many amazing birds! They are very colorful, too. Like red, blue, maroon, and gray, black and sometimes white. I really like the way the cardinals "chirp" and "sing in the morning."

I also appreciate the way I can open my door and go play outside without having to go to a park. I feel safe here. Those are some of the reasons I like living in Appalachian Ohio. It is a great place to live.

**LOGAN SHOPE 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ginther/Ross/Huntington Elementary School** Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me to show people that all of the people living in Appalachian Ohio have been professional players of sports, successful doctors and lawyers. And have had very successful jobs. I want to show that the people living in Appalachian Ohio are equal to everyone living in big cities and larger areas. Just because some people think we many have more hillbilly people than other areas doesn't mean we are all not smart.

One example of Appalachian people being as educated as people in other areas is my parents. Both of my parents were raised in households where their parents did not have a college education, but my parents both do have a college education. My dad has a degree in Environmental engineering and has a very good job at a nuclear enrichment plant as a radiation protection supervisor. My mom has a bachelor degree in Science and a Master's in teaching. She is a Science teacher at Huntington Elementary School. My parents have come from low income families and have overcome many financial challenges by going to college.

My parents insist that my brother, sister and I go to college to become successful. I plan to further my high school education by going to college to be a cardiothoracic doctor. Then Then no one could ever call me, Dr. Logan Shope, an Appalachian hillbilly could they?

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 9*

**ALEXIS SPENCER 5<sup>th</sup> · Mr. Rinkes/Jefferson/Buckeye Northwest Elementary School**

I am inspired by the natural beauty of Appalachian Ohio. In Jefferson County where I live, there are many lakes, parks, and even a State Forest. There are many beautiful places to visit, and a lot of things to do.

Appalachian Ohio has farmland, woods, and even some caves. There are many pretty trees, animals, and land. In our area you can go to Brush Creek Wildlife Area and fish, hike, and hunt. At Austin Lake you can do many water activities, or camp. At Fernwood State Forest you can go on a nature trail walk, and see a lot of Ohio's different animals.

Appalachian Ohio is a wonderful place to live. If you want to see for yourself, just come visit us in Appalachian Ohio!

**WILLIAM SPIRES 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ruggles/Jackson/Northview Elementary School**

I am a kid from Appalachian Ohio. I love to live here because of the wildlife. There are lots of lakes, hills and creeks that make up our landscape. It is a very interesting place to live.

The thing that inspires me most about Appalachian Ohio is the wildlife. We have deer, birds, foxes and coyotes. There are also smaller creatures such as ladybugs, butterflies, bees and other insects. It is interesting to see how these creatures live in their natural habitat that is native to our region.

I spend a lot of time outside at my grandma's house. There are many trees, hills and animals for me to enjoy. I have been to other places in the country, but none compare to Appalachian Ohio.

I like living in a small town because of the fun stuff that goes on here. People get together every fall for events like the Jackson County Apple Festival, the Coal Festival, and the Wild Turkey Festival. People seem really happy when they come together for community events like these.

When I grow up I want to live in a place that has awesome wildlife, community gatherings, and wonderful scenery. There is no place on Earth like Appalachia.

**STEPHANIE SWEAZY 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Stoltz/Perry/Thornville Elementary School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired me to help keep our world beautiful. If we don't we will be living in a world of trash. We should all help in keeping our world clean by taking care of the Earth.

Wanting to keep our world clean has made me change the way I look at caring for our world. I've been telling other kids that we need to recycle and reuse the things we have and spread the word about keeping the Earth beautiful. We also need to stop cutting down so many trees and instead plant more. I've started making good habits for saving the Earth by recycling, turning off lights when not in use, and thinking about what is better for the Earth.

More needs to be done to care for the Earth. We can put out more air turbines. More programs need to be set up, such as one to allow more people to be able to afford to install solar panels. Another idea is to use less gas and electricity. Living in beautiful Appalachian Ohio inspires me to dream of keeping the world clean.

**ANDREW TURNER 5<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Campbell/Scioto/East Portsmouth Elementary School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me to stay here because of the following. There are lots of trees in the area like apple, pine, and walnut; they grow tall and strong, this reminds me that all good things take time and patience. There are many varieties of fruits and plants grown as well here in Appalachia: tomatoes, watermelon, strawberries to name a few. We raise a lot of what feeds America here. Dandelions, roses and wildflowers grow here and that makes the area look good.

Appalachia is full of wildlife like fox, deer, and raccoon. I like to watch these animals and I am inspired to take care of their environment so they have a home like me. It is easy to like this area and want to stay here with all the natural things it has to offer.

My family lives here in Appalachia; everyone from my grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins, mom and dad, and I like being near them. For the reasons listed and being close to my family, I think this is one of the best places to live.

## 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS

### **TREVOR FOSTER 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Donaker/Coshocton/Conesville Elementary School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me in many ways. I live in Coshocton, Ohio. Living here has inspired me to try new things. I am an eleven year old boy who loves being outdoors. I enjoy hunting, fishing, motorcycle riding, and playing baseball. There is always something going on in our town for people to be part of. Our community is made up of very caring people who enjoys serving others, like people with disabilities.

Coshocton preserves our history through Roscoe Village. We have a really nice library, which has many events throughout the year. I couldn't imagine living anywhere else. I believe when I grow up that I will be able to succeed at whatever I choose, because of my parents, teachers, family, and friends' encouragement.

### **RACHEL BARLAGE 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ames/Ross/Bishop Flaget School**

Living in Appalachia inspires me, because when I am feeling sad or lonely I can look outside the window and see all the beautiful nature in my backyard. When I look outside my window I see these beautiful trees that are just starting to grow or see the trees that are so tall that they don't seem to stop. I love the leaves on the hills in the fall. The red, yellow, orange, brown, and green leaf colors blend to make one of the most beautiful scenes in all of Appalachia. I really love it when I am sitting at home in the night or morning and I hear crickets chirping and birds singing. It is also nice when I am sad or mad about something, their singing cheers me up. There is a pair of cardinal birds that often sit in the trees in my front yard. Their red feathers remind me of the beautiful red fall leaves. The hard work of the neighborhood squirrels and chipmunks gathering nuts is inspiring to us all. These are just some of the reasons that living in Appalachia inspire me. I am lucky to live in this beautiful area.

### **EMMA EDWARDS 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Newman/Scioto/Portsmouth Elementary School**

My name is Emma Edwards; I live in Portsmouth Ohio and go to Portsmouth Elementary School. Southern Ohio is surrounded by rolling hills and river valleys. This natural beauty is vulnerable because people are chopping down trees, polluting the river, and starting forest fires. All this destruction inspires me to protect my piece of Appalachia.

Here in Portsmouth the grass is as green as a Granny Smith apple. The hills are as close as my nose, and you can barely go five minutes without seeing at least one animal! In the spring and fall the trees are touched by Mother Nature's paintbrush. Two rivers flow together in our valley. These things make this area close to my heart. That is why I will always recycle, conserve water, never litter or pollute. I will take these steps to help preserve Appalachia for years to come.

I love it in Appalachian Ohio and never want to leave here. If I help take care of this place it can stay like this forever, so that all may see how gorgeous it is and want to help protect it.

### **RACHEL GRIFFITH 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Toon/Vinton/Vinton County Middle School**

I am eleven years old and I was born in Appalachian Ohio. I come from an Appalachian family. My grandparents are from Kentucky and West Virginia, which are also Appalachian states. "Living in Appalachian Ohio is a gift." There are wide open spaces.

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you!* 11

There aren't many tall buildings or much loud traffic. I have room to play in my yard and I can have pets. In Appalachian Ohio, your neighbors care about you. They help you when you need help. Even strangers help other people. We have farms with animals and gardens. We work hard here. When my grandpa retired from construction he went to work on his farm, and he works as hard now as he did in construction. It's not all work, we have fun too. When I go to my grandparent's house, sometimes my grandpa will take my brother, sister, and me to their creek. We skip rocks and swim. He makes us whistles out of wood. Even though we work hard and have fun, we know that education is very important. I am going to college, but I love living in Appalachian Ohio, and I would like to stay here always.

**TOMMY HENRY 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Simpson/Highland/Greenfield Middle School**

The green hilly area in which I live seems like an ideal place for a kid like me to grow up. We have a four acre yard and the majority of it is covered in trees. Living in this area near the Appalachian Mountains has made me want to get a job involving wildlife and nature. I also really love to take pictures and I seem to be relatively good at it. Put those together and I get a nature photographer. The reason I want to do this is because I want to capture the amazing phenomenons of the natural world on film. I could share those excellent pictures with people around the world or I could publish them in books. This could help people understand these animals and plants and it could help stop habitat destruction, pollution, and other things that harm the natural environment. The Appalachian region has always been a great source of inspiration for me. The difference I may make by choosing this career be it big or small, will hopefully have a positive influence on my community. Appalachian has always been a great home and source of inspiration to me.

**RICHARD HWANG 6<sup>th</sup> · Mr. House/Athens/East Elementary School**

I am proud to live in Appalachia.

Living in Appalachia is amazing and inspiring. Appalachia is a synonym of Beautiful. To be able to live in Appalachia is a prize. It is a life of trees, wildlife, people, and great beauty.

I am proud to live in Appalachia.

Just two years ago, I moved from the city to Appalachia. And in those two years, Appalachia has captured my heart. The kindness of the people has made me a better person. The scenery free of towering skyscrapers has liberated me from the dull city life and allowed me to experience the beauty of Nature.

Every day, I wake up and look out my window to see the sun peeking over the mountain. Every day, I step out onto my porch and take a deep breath of the cool morning air. Every day, I hear the sweet chirps of birds, the chatter of friendly squirrels, sounds that I could never hear in the city.

Every day, Appalachia makes me smile and puts joy in my heart. Appalachia has opened my eyes and allowed me to extend my mind further than ever.

I am proud to live in Appalachia.

**PAIGE LOONEY 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Speed/Lawrence/Fairland Middle School**

Appalachian Ohio inspires many various people in different ways. I always push myself to be better but, being an Appalachian inspires me to be determined. I want to succeed.

Firstly, knowing my family heritage contributes to my need for success. My ancestors have always dwelled in Appalachia. They were lighthearted and had a positive attitude. When times were tough, they continued school and persevered to get an education. Knowing that they had to be self-supporting encourages me to work hard and influence others.

Secondly, I want to be educated. Appalachian Ohio has many excellent school systems, so this way my career dreams can come true. Seeing others progress and accomplish

something motivates me strongly to follow in their footsteps. I want to get a degree in photojournalism.

In addition, Appalachia's beautiful scenery inspired my want to be a photographer. The green backdrop, the pale blue sky, the ebb and flow of the river: it leaves me awestruck. Living in Appalachian Ohio has given me an eye for picture moments.

In conclusion, inspiration can generate anywhere or anytime, but mine lies within Appalachian Ohio. Living here promotes my need for success. Appalachia has left its mark on my life.

**CARRIE MEENAN 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. VanHorn/Carroll/Malvern Middle School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me a lot; it makes me a better person. I have always felt safe where I live. Another way living here inspires me would be the way the community cares for me.

I feel lucky to live in such a place. I don't feel scared if I'm home alone. All my neighbors are here to help protect me. That's why I feel safe living here.

Another thing that makes me a better person is the community of Appalachian Ohio. This community is very caring for one another so I'm inspired to be caring. The community makes me feel like I am important to them. An example of how I am important to them is how you go around town and everyone knows your name. It makes you feel popular or important. So that is why I think it is a caring community.

These are a few ways living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me to be a better person. I am a better person because the community cares for me and I care for them. This community is like a big family. That's why I love living in Appalachian Ohio!

**JOEY NEILSON 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Sonk/Belmont/Union Local Middle School**

What inspires me about living in Appalachian Ohio? Is it the famous people, the beautiful scenery, or the great seasonal changes? No, what inspires me about living in Appalachian Ohio are all the historical artifacts I can find in my own backyard. I can walk outside on any given day and find fossils, arrowheads, and many other neat and exciting things from the past.

Where is the term Appalachian from? Appalachian was a term used by Indians during the French and Indian War. This war was on the Ohio side from 1754 to 1763. As I search for many treasures outside, I think of all the history that happened here. There were many Indians that fought and died here many hundreds of years ago. Some of the Indians who once were here are Tecumseh, Blue Jacket, Little Turtle, Cornstalk, and Pontiac.

I have found different artifacts. I have found arrowheads, and my dad even found the head of an ax. Were these tools possibly used to survive or fight with? Tecumseh lived off the land, but when military men killed Cornstalk, for revenge of white men's death, he decided to fight. Could arrowheads or the ax we found in our family's yard be some he made by hand to fight?

Indians fought for what they believed in. They fought for land, life, and what was right. They used only what God provided to survive. Knowing that I live here in Appalachian Ohio inspires me to explore and to stand up for what I believe in just like many Indians did hundreds of years before me.

**MADISON PAUL 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Calcasola/Muskingum/West Muskingum Middle School**

The people of Appalachia are like a fence linked together by their thoughtfulness and compassion. We're all a cornfield, for we are rooted in the same spongy soil, side by side, but when you get to the actual corn, we all mature in our own personal way. The inhabitants of Appalachia are all different, but in times of dire need, we become a unity full of honesty and love, like my own family.

My life is a complex and intricate weave of supportiveness, affection, and hard work. My parents cheer me on in whatever I do. As for hard work, they have to clean, run a business, exercise, and set a flawless example for me. These admirable people give me the best they can give. Whatever I am capable of today is only possible because of the tremendous effort that my guardians put forth.

Only here, in the rolling hills of Appalachia, could this pure relationship survive. The inspiration to give back is more present now than ever. As an adult, you'll find me in Appalachian Ohio, where everyone fits in a puzzle. All the pieces are connected, like one big family.

**RHYS RAMIREZ 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Young/Morgan/Morgan West Elementary**

My name is Rhys Ramirez. I live in a wonderful community. I'm surrounded by wonderful people like my mom, dad, grandparents, teachers and many others.

The scenery here is amazing. We have rolling hills and beautiful ponds. The Muskingum River runs through our town. The river is full of life. Our wildlife is incredible. I like to take walks and observe the birds, deer, rabbits, foxes, squirrels and beavers.

I'm a student at Morgan West Elementary. I play sports however, I don't let that interfere with my grades. I try to excel in all subjects. Outside of school I hang out with my family and friends.

In the future, I hope to play football in college and professionally. If I accomplish my dreams I want to introduce new sports to my community such as rugby, martial arts and competitive swimming. I want to give back to the people who have made a difference in my life.

All of my surroundings inspire me. It's not just the people or the scenery. It is the combination of everything. Living in Ohio Appalachia inspires me to not just believe, but to take pride in myself and where I live.

**KENNEDY RIEGEL 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Hall/Jackson/Jackson Middle School**

My papaw loved to take rides in the country and we would go with him in his Jeep. We would see farmland, hills, lakes trees, livestock, and people waving hello from their front porch. This doesn't happen everywhere! On one of these rides, we came upon Leo Petroglyph, a place where Indians of long ago carved drawings of humans and animals in the sandstone rock. It is inspiring to see history right here in our own county!

In the summer, I am involved in the Jackson County Fair. I take a cooking project every year and have advanced to the Ohio State Fair. It is inspiring for me to see all the fair members work so hard on their livestock and general projects while learning important things to help them in life. Also, the Fourth of July is a big deal in my town, because Appalachia is known for its love of God and country.

In the fall, my family and I enjoy football games and the Jackson County Apple Festival. We look forward to corn mazes, pumpkin fields and apple cider at and near the Bob Evans Farm Festival.

Every season brings something to inspire me and make me appreciate my surroundings here in Appalachia. Things are more relaxed and people will stop and help when someone is in need. This is very important and I am sure as I grow older I will appreciate more of what Appalachia has to offer!

**MATTHEW STEMMER 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Veselenak/Guernsey/Meadowbrook Middle School**

The surroundings here in Appalachia are marvelous. The beauty here is all in the nature around us. The people here are very warm-hearted and welcoming. The benefits of living in Appalachia are the rich soil and all the farmland. The beauty inspires me to not pollute the environment, take care of my pets, and keep the environment clean. The people and the businesses inspire me to work hard and earn an honest living. The benefits here inspire

me to always have a little bit of here inside me. Living here inspires me to succeed because everybody here works hard for a living and I want to succeed so that I can earn an honest living like them.

#### **NOAH VOGEL 6<sup>th</sup> · Homeschooled/Tuscarawas**

The rolling hills, the giant trees with their large outspread branches, the four seasons, and the large fields to play in with my friends; these are what inspire me about Appalachian Ohio. They inspire me to get outside, explore, and learn about nature. In winter, I enjoy the bright, clean snow crackling under my feet as I walk up the hill to go sledding. The snowball fights I have with my brother are also lots of fun.

In spring, I get excited about the warm, breezy wind and the birds singing their first melodies. It means that it's getting warm and I get to go explore the fields and woods with my friends soon.

In summer, I go to the creek to catch crayfish and play in the water. The hot weather allows me to have bike rides and to go swimming at the lake. In fall, I enjoy the cool, crisp weather and the colorful leaves. The hayrides, bonfires, and playing in the fallen leaves are a blast.

I'm glad that I live in Appalachian Ohio because of the country around me. My favorite thing to do is going outside to play.

#### **NICOLE WILCOX 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Johnston/Hocking/Logan Hocking Middle School**

I am very unfortunate to have not been born in Appalachian Ohio. Its scenic lands are beautiful. I've always wanted to live in between the great green hills of Ohio, and now I am. Its hills are filled with lush green plants, colorful flowers, and all different kinds of beautiful trees. It's a land nobody could refuse to like.

The people here in Appalachian Ohio are very nice, outgoing, down to earth people. People here are also very proud and take pride in the town and environment around them.

The history here is very big. It varies from Indian mounds to civil war artifacts. There are also a couple of very aged caves. These caves have beautiful rock formations.

There are many opportunities available in Appalachian Ohio. There are many great colleges to choose from. You may take classes ranging from cooking to teaching and many more. There are also many sports opportunities. The sports range from soccer to cross-country and many more. Almost everybody is a sports fan in Appalachian Ohio.

Appalachian Ohio is an amazing place to live. There are many things to do and many places to go. In conclusion you can see why Appalachian Ohio inspires me, and I am proud to now call it my home.

#### **CARLIE WINTERS 6<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Walker/Gallia/Southwestern Elementary School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me to dream, to live, and to be free. It inspires me to draw. The peace and quiet opens a soul. The winding creeks create a soul. Appalachian Ohio is gorgeous. You can have hope as big as the sky. And the hills, they're like fairy tales, so many to tell. There are no worries, no fears, just love. When you look outside you can see the whitest, puffiest clouds, you can see the green carpet lay on the ground. We have a lot of open meadows so the cows may roam freely, and many trails for horse back riding. There is almost enough room for a whole sea. There is no polluted air; just the sweet smell of honey suckles. Appalachian Ohio inspires me to do a lot!

### **7<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS**

#### **ANDREA ALCORN 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ames/Ross/Bishop Flaget School**

Living in Appalachia has given me many values such as faith, home and family.

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 15*

My grandfather was born in a log cabin deep in the heart of Kentucky. He lived on a beautiful big farm with fields stretching for acres and a dirt path that looks like it goes on forever. Seeing where some of my family came from and imagining my grandpa and his brother and sister walking down that dirt path with fields stretched out on both sides is very inspiring.

Many people outside Appalachia have many different values. Many think a house is just the same as the next, not a part of your family and childhood memories. Although we have to leave them sometimes they are still something we love and remember.

Nature is where much of life takes place. Here and in other areas where there aren't big cities, nature is important. It is the place to go camping and especially hunting. Hunting is a sport the whole family can enjoy. The nature here is beautiful. There aren't many places where you can look outside and see a field or farm house and a sun setting fiery orange behind a horizon made of corn blowing behind it.

The mountains of Appalachia are like a mother's arms, holding you and keeping you in. You love them so much that if you ever leave you always want to come back to your home. All who grow up here are children of the "mother" we call the Appalachian Mountains. People who grow up here are children of Appalachia. All of my family has stayed around here living in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Kentucky. Living here you belong to the mountains and they belong to you.

I have learned this from my parents and my grandparents. They have stayed here and it makes you have a feeling of belonging somewhere. This is a feeling like no other. There aren't many places where home and family are so close. Generations have worked to make it what it is today.

#### **NATE BOURNE 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Wright/Tuscarawas/Newcomerstown Middle School**

I live in a small village in the southern part of the Appalachian Mountains. The village I live in is called Newcomerstown. Though it is Newcomerstown, we are actually a village. What I like the most in the rural part of the Appalachian Mountains is the scenic view. You can get up at 6am, make a cup of tea and watch the sunrise. Though we live in an outstanding school district, some people think we are dumb hillbillies or bumpkins just because we live in a farming community. Well, yes some people here grow up just to continue running the family farm, but others like Woody Hayes and Cy Young who came from Newcomerstown can aspire and become great people! I also love the calm rural atmosphere of Newcomerstown and other places I've been in the Appalachian Mountains. It's good to know your kid can walk around without getting kidnapped, mugged, or raped. Yes, this can still happen due to the weirdoes and people who have trouble with their brains and can't help it, but it is less likely in the calm atmospheric places around here. But sometimes the calm atmosphere can be dull and boring. Like most people who spend at least 12 -13 years here think the grass is greener on the other side of the meadow. Some (like me) could have the Sagittarius Zodiac sign and it would be in the stars that they (I) would want to leave and go to some big city or Hawaiian beach. One thing that's really good about being in a small area is that lots of people know each other. People are usually nicer when they live in a small area where everyone knows each other. Plus people who know each other and are nice can sometimes borrow things from each other. But the bad part of everyone knowing each other is that if you get in trouble; don't expect to hide it for very long. That is how living in the Appalachian Mountains inspires me to prove that people here can be smart, brave, successful, happy, nice, and most importantly, be American.

#### **JUSTICE CUNNINGHAM 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Claugus/Guernsey/Cambridge Middle School**

Living in Appalachia Ohio inspires me because there are so many job opportunities for



my future. There are so many that I can't name them all, but the one that stands out to me the most is being an architect. There is only one architect company where I live and I hope one day to be employed there, eventually branching off and starting my own company. My uncle was an architect for two years and has been an inspiration to me. It will be hard work and I will have to work hard like the many men and women across Appalachia Ohio, but I look forward to the challenge. I would like to design many important buildings and houses. I will need to get a five-year bachelor's degree, take a national exam and complete a three-year internship, but I like school and it would be something new. I hope that in the not so distant future I can be a big help around where I live. The natural beauty of the state parks around here inspires me to be a photographer. Photography is a very good past time. It's good because when you are taking pictures you can observe the natural beauty of the earth that you couldn't observe anywhere else. We have Salt Fork and Seneca Lake where I live so we don't have to go far to get really good pictures. My parents take my sister and me to Salt Fork a lot. My mom takes pictures and has a photo account on the computer. I would like to enter the Smithsonian photo contest sometime. My parents inspire me because they work hard and don't give up. My mom stays home and takes care of my sister and me. My mom is a great mom. My dad works at an oxygen company. He works very hard and is the best dad in the world. They inspire me to work hard at any job I have. Change around Appalachia Ohio could help people because we need to care for each other like people used to. Now people just don't care about each other. We're just another person living down the street. But not all people think that way. I love where I live and the people I live around. Most of them are hard working and caring. That's why living in Appalachia Ohio inspires me.

**CHRISTOPHER DAVIS 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Earich/Perry/Franklin Local Community School**

One inspiration is that I work on cars with my Dad. We work on his Mustang Cobra together. When we are done with working on the car, we go to the car show at the National Trails, which is the drag strip where people race awesome cars.

I like music because rock music is awesome and I like to rock and I like AC/DC and more. I like football because it is brutal and I am a football fan. I like Cleveland Browns even though they aren't very good. I like parties. It is fun because my cousins come. I like the right to eat the food that I want. I like bikes because I am good on them and I know how to do tricks; my sponsor is Monster Energy Drinks. I race bikes and I am good. I like how people cheer for me. These are the things that inspire me, living in Appalachian Ohio.

**COURTNEY DUNFEE 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Bell/Coshocton/River View Junior High School**

Appalachian Ohio is inspiring because there are not many people that can say they live there like I can. There are several small cities along its border. Some of them are Zanesville, Chillicothe, Athens, Portsmouth, Steubenville, New Philadelphia, Marietta, East Liverpool, Salem, Coshocton, Cambridge, Ironton, etc. There are plenty more and they have a population of at least 5,000.

These places have a lot of history and culture behind them, like the music. A lot of folk songs were made in Appalachian Ohio. That music can also be called pre-bluegrass. Some known songs from them are "The Big Scioto," "Banks of Ohio," and "Pike Country Break Down."

Today, "Appalachian" is increasingly being found as an ethnic group by governments. Some people define "Appalachian" as individualism; strong sense of extended family, neighborliness, hospitality, traditionalism, personalism, modesty and being ones self.

For most of the 1800s, Appalachian farmers, particularly in the steeper hill country, remained small yeoman farmers, producing most of what they needed for their selves. The setting and confinement meant that they did not produce material crops like planters in the lower lands in the south. Instead, they focused on being able to feed their own household. After they could do that, they would make a small supernumerary to trade

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 17*

for a number of more important items like coffee and sugar. Those were sometimes only available in stores 40 miles away. Appalachian farmers developed an odd range of skills and a large sense of aptitude. For example, a lot of Appalachian males knew basic artificer, and was able to fix broken tools on their own.

The Appalachian Regional Commission was formed in 1965 to aide economic development in the Appalachian region, which is lagging far behind the rest of the nation on most economic indicators. The Appalachian region currently defined by the Commission includes 420 counties in 13 states, including 29 counties in Ohio. The Commission gives each county one of five possible economic designations- distressed, at-risk, transitional, competitive, or attainment- with “distressed” counties being the least economically prosperous. These designations are based primarily on three indicators three-year average unemployment rate, market income per capita, and poverty rate. Clermont had Appalachian Ohio’s highest per capita income.

### **MOLLY FANNIN 7<sup>th</sup> · Mr. Rhea/Scioto/Portsmouth Junior High School**

My misty love for the Appalachian Mountains is immense. I always feel pleasant when a cold, wet fog comes through the valley, and after a dense rain it becomes steamy. One day I went outside and looked up in the hills where the steam was rising. My dad said to me, “The groundhogs are makin’ coffee,” and I laughed. This inspires me to stay close to the mountains and their moist, steamy fogs.

On shining, bright mornings, I go outside and feel the refreshing breeze on my face then step onto the grass and feel the damp dew on my bare feet. On one certain morning, I walked over the small hill to our pear trees and picked up a pear that was lying on the ground. It had pieces missing and bite marks on it. At first, I was confused, but then I looked down and saw the deer tracks and knew they had come from the forest on the hill behind us. This inspires me to stay close to the mountains and the animals that live in the forests surrounding the Appalachians.

Our house is at the foot of a vast hill, and I love to go outside and climb it. Before I take the first step, I make sure I respect its beauty and greatness, and then I start. The climb is steep; my leg muscles burn; and blood rushes to my ears. Before I know it, I’m at the top. I look down, and suddenly, I feel rejuvenated. This inspires me to stay close to the mountains so I can climb their paths over and over again.

After a good day, I stand at the bottom of our hill to watch the sunset. Instead of setting over the horizons of a desert, the sun sets in the valley between two mountains. The pinks, oranges, yellows, and reds make a fascinating site to watch. When the sun is gone taking with it the warm colors, the blues, purples, and blacks remain behind, then the stars pop out of the darkness like bright flashing lights. This inspires me to stay close to the mountains, just to watch that sunset each and every day.

All of this together inspires me to remain a “child of Appalachia.”

### **GRANT GANDOR 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Frazier/Washington/Marietta Middle School**

Hello, my name is Grant and I live in Marietta, Ohio. I enjoy many sports including soccer and basketball. Over the past two summers, I’ve been to many places such as: California, Arizona, Nevada and Pipestem State Park Resort. I also traveled through most the Appalachians with my grandparents. Living here in the Appalachians of Ohio inspires me in many ways.

The Appalachians provide wonderful seasons. We can enjoy a little snow, a cool spring, hot and unfortunately muggy summers and gorgeous fall, that provide for wonderful tours of the leaves turning bright orange, gold and red. We have two rivers that provide a lot for our area. We also have great fishing and hunting. The community provides great festivals on the river and all over our tiny towns. We enjoy this rich area along with many visitors throughout the year.

One great concern in our area is pollution. Not only is this a concern for our health, but also the ecosystem of our town. While the chemical plants along the Ohio River provide jobs for many of our neighbors, it can not jeopardize our health. Many citizens in our area have worked together with these plants to make this a cleaner community. This inspires me that we can work together to get things accomplished.

Our area of the Appalachians is rich in history. Rufus Putnam settled here in 1788 and overcame many hardships. We have a museum that tells the early settlers' story to us and visitors. The museum has recently faced financial issues and almost had to close. Last year a student at my school rallied the community in support of the museum. A group of citizens have pulled together and came up with a way to keep the museum open. This is another example of working together that inspires me.

In conclusion, living in the Appalachians has taught me through the past to our present we must work together. From Rufus Putnam settling in our area of the Appalachians to a student at my school working to keep our history alive all has inspired me to continue to work together. I think that I, along with my entire class can accomplish great things learned from our past and noticing the great things that are happening right now. We have been taught to work hard and together to reach a common goal.

**SAMANTHA GEDDES 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Spillman/Muskingum/East Muskingum Middle School**  
How does Appalachian Ohio inspire me? Have you ever been to Appalachian Ohio? If so, maybe you have been inspired by some of the same things that inspire me. Come with me, I will take you through Appalachian Ohio and you will see what inspires me.

Take a walk with me on a bright spring day in Appalachian Ohio. You will find rolling hills, gurgling streams and lush green meadows. Deer roam the hills. Walking by the stream you will hear the water trickling, the bird chirping and maybe even a fish jumping. The meadows are full of wild flowers.

Play with me in a slow moving stream, on a hot summer day in Appalachian Ohio. You will find cool refreshing water, perfect for wading in. Crawdads are easy to find. They look like little lobsters, with their long legs and big pinchers. Cool, wet mud oozes between your toes. Time rushes by while splashing with family.

Jump on a dirt bike and take a ride with me on a brisk fall day in Appalachian Ohio. The refreshing cool air seeps through your helmet. Riding over hills and through the tall grass is exciting. Flying over bumps and through the crackling leaves.

Run though the snow with me on a cold winter morning in Appalachian Ohio. Fresh snowflakes cover the ground like a white fleece blanket. There are no roads; they are covered with a new layer of snow. It's a snow day, no school. We rush down to eat breakfast, then bundle up and run outside to make the first steps in the new snow.

I hope you enjoyed our trip though Appalachian Ohio. The seasons are what inspire me, I am inspired to slow down and spend more time in nature with my family. I hope that you too, can find something inspiring here in Appalachian Ohio.

**CAMPBELL HAYNES 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Bradburn/Clermont/Batavia Middle School**  
As a resident of Appalachia, I am inspired by all the stories and tales I have heard about people who lived in this region. I have heard legends and myths about people from all kinds of times, from the Revolutionary War to modern times. These stories about the great things these people did inspire me to try to do great things, too. For instance, in Belmont County, where my grandparents live, a woman named Betty Zane volunteered to run past British and Indian troops to bring ammunition to an embattled fort during the Revolutionary War.

In Belmont County, there is a statue of the illustrious poet James Wright. He inspires me, because he came from a fairly poor family and grew up to be a famous poet. Most

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 19*

of Appalachia is poor, and how some people rise up and become famous this inspires me. The fact that I live in the foothills of the oldest mountains in America also inspires me, and I try to think of the stories these mountains could tell if only they could talk. People also often say that Appalachia is an economically-deprived area, but during autumn, I think the leaves are more beautiful here than anywhere else. We are rich in our history, unique culture, and natural beauty.

Some of the traditional Appalachian values inspire me as well: Individualism, which means not being anyone's slave and not being beholden to anyone; Patriotism, which is respecting your country; Modesty, which means not bragging and not being a phony; and respecting a person for who they are, not for their social or professional rank.

The people who live in Appalachia value personal freedom, which is shown by the fact that Appalachian Ohio has many Underground Railroad stations. In fact, I live right across the street from one! I am also inspired by the fact that Harriet Beecher Stowe lived in Appalachian Ohio, and an event in nearby Ripley, Ohio was the model for the adventures of the character Eliza in Stowe's famous book "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me for many reasons, and I try to do things just as great as the things the people I have written about did. That is why living in Appalachian inspires me.

#### **SAMANTHA HUMPHREYS 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Wilt/Jackson/Jackson Middle School**

I'm a child of Appalachia Ohio and I live in the country. I am twelve years old and I have lived here for seven years. I am in the seventh grade and I play soccer. One thing that I really love is the wildlife. It has inspired me because when I grow up I want to be a zoologist (scientist who studies animals).

It is nice and peaceful where I live. No loud semi trucks or noisy cars can be heard, just the sounds of birds chirping and leaves rustling in the wind; I like to listen to these noises while I am hunting. I hunt most everything from deer to squirrels. I have killed six deer, one turkey and twenty squirrels. I plan to hunt some more. When we kill a deer we always have my mom's homemade deer meat in gravy.

In Jackson we have an annual festival. Every year my friends and I go to the Apple Festival. I love the Apple Festival! The rides are amazing! My favorite ride is the Zipper, but when you get off of it you are really dizzy. Rides are cool but I love their food. Have you ever tried Fried Oreos? Oh my gosh, they are really good.

I live near Canter's Cave. It is beautiful! It has a pond, gorgeous rocks and a pretty wood building. I haven't been there in a while but I still think it's pretty cool. Another site that I live by is Leo Petroglyph. It is a place where you can see what the Indians drew. It has drawings of spiders, deer and buffalo.

I also love how we have so many hills. I live on a huge hill. The reason I like having so many hills is because we don't have tornadoes. I hate tornadoes and thunderstorms.

There are also some cool stores here that inspire me. Andrea's Bridal is one because there is only one store and it is here in Jackson. Other stores are Michael's Ice cream, and Callahan's Hardware. These stores are all locally owned and operated. This is what makes them cool because the small town charm is only here in Appalachia.

#### **ADAM JEWETT 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Hayden/Hocking/Logan Hocking Middle School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio is the best thing that has happened to me yet. Waking up every morning to the sweet smell of the dew covered flowers and sound of birds first waking and going out to find breakfast makes the day wonderful from the start.

When I first moved here I never expected to make any friends and I thought I would hate it here, by the first week I loved this place. Everybody was so nice to me that I first realized how mean some city people were.

Appalachian's beautiful scenery has inspired me to do what I love most, draw. Everyday things can be breathtaking in an Appalachian sunset. Each day Appalachia seems to give me something better than the last. I hope that wherever I go, I can show people the beautiful place I call home.

My dogs love it here too, almost more than I do. The forests and lakes are perfect places to explore. The open fields are great places to run and play (and maybe chase the occasional squirrel).

I truly know one thing, that as far as I go, I will always hold a piece of Appalachia close to my heart. Thank you.

#### **ZACKERY JONES 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Diaz/Belmont/Union Local Middle School**

Appalachian Ohio inspires me with all the wonderful scenery it has all year round. In the fall the trees are beautiful with all of the different colors. Then in the winter when the snow covers the ground and trims the trees it's a winter wonderland. In the spring when everything blooms the outside world looks fresh and clean with all of the new green leaves. When summer comes I like to see the hay fields blowing in the wind and nothing is nicer to look at than a field that has just been mowed and baled.

One of the most important things to me that inspire me about Appalachia Ohio is the farm land. I am the son of a third generation farmer. We still live on the original farm that my great-grandfather purchased when he moved to Ohio from West Virginia. My parents own about 115 acres of it and my Grandfather and Grandma own the rest. The farm will eventually be split between my younger brother and me since we are the only two Jones boys in our generation. The layout of our land might not be the most ideal to farm on since we are on top of a hill. But that's what being in Appalachia Ohio is all about.... the hills. I wouldn't want to farm any other way.

Another thing that inspires me about Appalachia Ohio is all of the famous people in this area like Clark Gable, General George Custer, and John Glenn. This inspires me because it shows me that you don't have to live in a big city or in a big house to become someone famous. You just have to be yourself and do what you do best.

I also am inspired by our woodlands. I like to go and explore the woods to see what I can find exciting and new. It's relaxing to go and just sit in the woods to see how many different creatures you can find. Our woods are full of deer, raccoon, turkey, squirrels, fox, chipmunks, bobcats, and even black bears. One of the neatest animals I have seen would be the bald eagle.

All of these things inspire me and help to make me the person I am today. I am proud to be a child of Appalachia Ohio and want to keep my roots here on our farm.

#### **CAREY LEMAY 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Hale/Vinton/Vinton County Middle School**

Appalachian Ohio is an excellent place to live. There are many opportunities for me to succeed and to enjoy my life. If you are looking for a successful life, Appalachia is for you.

One reason Appalachian Ohio is such an inspiring place is the beautiful landscapes. From the rolling hills to the lush green grass, Appalachia is beautiful. Our wildlife and nature are also wonderful. Knowing that I live in a beautiful place makes me feel relaxed and comfortable. This brings happiness to me and I become more focused on the positive things in my community.

Another reason why Appalachian Ohio inspires me is we have a low violence rate. There are few crimes here. Knowing I live in a safe place will make me feel comfort and peace. Having small towns and communities is also an advantage of Appalachian Ohio because everybody knows everybody and I know who is okay to be around and who I shouldn't be around because of their behavior. If I know I am making the right choices and my friends

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 21*

are making the right choices, there is a better chance that I will succeed in the future.

Another advantage of living in Appalachian Ohio is since it is such a quiet and small place there is a lot of family time. Most kids respect and love their parents, guardians, family, teachers, and friends. They have fun spending time with each other. When I think about the people who care about me and the people that I care about, it warms my soul and I become more focused on what I am doing.

These are just a few reasons why I love living in Appalachian Ohio. I hope that you now better understand it and I hope you love it too.

### **MOLLY MARKLEY 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Covey/Gallia/Gallia Academy Middle School**

Living in Appalachia can really inspire a person. My name is Molly Markley and I am a proud resident of this great part of America. There are many things that inspire me but, I would have to say the greatest things that do so are the people and my surroundings. You see, I am an artist and here is a great place to live. Every day I am inspired to create a new piece of art. Whether it is painting, sketching, or even a graphic image, I get my ideas from the events and people in my life.

I have done many pieces of art for friends and family members. I always know what to make for them because they inspire me. Since I know them and what their personalities are like, I know just by that simple piece of knowledge what to create for them. Also, the environment around me gives me great ideas for my work. Here in this great part of America, you can just look out of your window and have a beautiful scene. The sparkling waters of the twisting and turning Ohio River against the rolling hills in autumn are true beauty.

The people in Appalachia are very inspiring. Here is where you get a mix of all sorts of people. You get a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures here and that leads to a very diverse experience. We have different kinds of celebrations here. For example, at the University of Rio Grande there was a traditional Indian celebration called a Diwali. It was put together by the people from India that live here. I myself attended the event and it was a great learning experience. Every September Gallipolis, my hometown, holds an Emancipation Proclamation Celebration that is run by volunteers. It is one of our great traditions and we have been celebrating it since 1863. This is a great experience and can inspire anyone that has a desire to learn about our country's history and it continues to inspire me to want to learn more.

So from the beautiful scenery to the diversity of people, Appalachia is the pristine place for an artist like me to live. The experience of living in Appalachia inspires me every day.

### **RACHEL ONUSKO 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Cook/Highland/Greenfield Middle School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired me to be resourceful just like my ancestors and their neighbors. Their stories are very enjoyable and help us in everyday life. My favorite story was told by my grandpa, William Morgan, about Camp Sherman.

Camp Sherman was a training camp for World War 1. Camp Sherman was about the size of a city. Many of the buildings at Camp Sherman were built using Appalachia's beautiful trees. When World War 1 ended many people believed it was "the war to end all wars." Finally, because the war had ended, there was an auction for all the Camp Sherman buildings. Many of my relatives and their neighbors went to the auction and bought guard houses, out houses, horse barns, and watering troughs.

When these buildings were being delivered some came on wagons or in Model T Trucks. Some chose to use them for storage while others reused them and made other products. Wilbur Morgan, my great, great uncle, even made hog boxes out of a guard house. It is interesting that people were recycling as early as World War 1. I think it's really cool that our ancestors still influence us today.

My grandpa's father bought a guardhouse and turned it into a chicken house. They also bought a generator for the chickens so the light would make them think it was still day time and they would lay eggs for another two hours. Their own house didn't even have generators! One day their house burned down when my grandpa was still at school. The neighbors saw the fire and tried to rescue valuables like their piano. The Superintendent of the school told my grandpa what had happened. Grandpa went back to where his house once stood and cried while looking at only ashes. After that they moved out into the chicken house.

My ancestors were very environmentally friendly. They reused all the buildings they had purchased. Someone even had a spring and used wood and pipes to connect them to his watering trough. Some Camp Sherman buildings today are still visible and still standing. Some of the buildings had a unique scallop carved into the front. Now most of Camp Sherman is reserved at the fair grounds. It is really cool that our ancestors still influence us in our daily lives. The buildings inspire me to be resourceful and remind me of my great Appalachian heritage.

### **SEAN PAULUS 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Holland/Lawrence/Dawson-Bryant Middle School**

We live in the house on the hill. Coming into our little town of Coal Grove, Ohio you can see our house from the interstate. "Home of 2000 Good People," our sign reads. From our front porch you can see our whole town. I can see our high school football field, which is where everybody is on Friday nights. From our porch I can hear the announcer rattle off the names of our players and hear the band. It's ironic how life in Appalachian Ohio is always like looking off your front porch.

We have one traffic light in our whole town that goes from red to yellow to green, then back from green to yellow to red. It took me years to realize that all the other traffic lights in the other towns were working the right way and our one traffic light was broken. Many people see our town just like the traffic light "Broken or Boring." Being a child of Appalachian Ohio has inspired me to see things differently. I believe the traffic light isn't broken. It takes its time and does things differently than the other traffic lights. It makes us stop longer and take time to enjoy family, friends and life. There aren't any big flashing lights or tourist attractions and without that broken traffic light to force people to stop, one might miss our town altogether. It makes me realize that life is the same way, if you don't slow down and stop to look around at your life you might miss it.

Families don't always have things the easiest but everybody works hard. Seeing how our town takes hard situations and turns them into something positive inspires me to do the same. I try to focus and work hard, no matter how challenging it may seem.

Christianity is the main religion for the families in our area and we depend on God to help us overcome troubled times. We grow up close, making memories with neighbors that turn into friends and friends that turn into family and we can still sleep with the doors unlocked.

It's crazy to think that there's this Big World that I hope to explore, yet I know that everything I want to instill in my family I'm going to find right here looking off my front porch in Appalachian Ohio.

### **ABIGAIL SWINTEK 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ross/Athens/Alexander Middle School**

Look around, what do you see? Inspiration is what I see. Looking out at the scenery, the countryside, the wildlife, it's all so beautiful. Going to fairs and festivals, and having friends and family near are all great things about living in Appalachia. All this and more is what I get where I live, because I am a child of Appalachia.

In Appalachia, you see the beautiful environment, the wildlife, fields, and wide open areas. After a long day of school, I like to walk up to the hill in my backyard, sit on a hay bale, and look at all of the beauty. I can see across the land, and through the forest green trees,

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 23*

and all the birds gracefully soaring through the air. When I look out the window, I see the deer running through the field, going for an occasional run through the open, taking the chance of being seen. I love it, don't you?

As students are getting ready for the school year to begin, they have their last chance to have some real fun before school starts at all of the festivals and fairs. I like to go to the horse races with my family, and ride the traditional rides, like the Ferris wheel. Or just sit back and relax in my mom's booth, watching people of all kinds walk by. The smell of the yellow, buttery salty goodness of the fair's popcorn, the puffy, colored, cotton candy, and the baked, hot, steamy pretzels that make your mouth water just thinking about them.

Around here, most people know each other, since this area is small. It's nice to know the people that surround us, and have friends and family near us too. I like to sit out on my porch with my family and look at the sun, the hay covered fields, and all the beautiful things around us. I also like to go outside with my sisters, run around, and feel the breeze through my hair as the cool night air wisps by.

Appalachia, the environment, the wildlife, the air, and the people are so amazing and wonderful. I don't know about you, but I love where I live. I wouldn't have it any other way, because I am a child of Appalachia.

#### **RYAN WELLS 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Moore/Monroe/Beallsville High School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me because of all the opportunities it offers me. I live in a rural area of Appalachia. I have many animals and have the responsibility of caring for them. I have a dog, named Troy and four horses, India, Trixie, Gypsy, and Night Mist. Appalachia is a great place to trail ride. It also inspires me by all the freedoms I have living here. I can explore any where I want to. I have good friends living here and can go and hang out with them and play football. I like to go hunting and fishing. Appalachian Ohio is a great place to hunt and fish. It also inspires me to learn many new skills like farming, driving a tractor, shooting a bow, shooting a gun, mechanics, and how to get along with people. I live on a lake so I have also learned to drive a boat. I have many opportunities because I go to a small school, like going out for basketball or any sport. Because there are a small number of students I have a better chance of making the team. I also believe I get a better education because the classes are small. I have also been able to get experience working with my Dad, which will help me when I am ready to get a job. We have worked on a John Deere track loader and a dump truck. I even helped him build the lake by our house. Living in Appalachian also gives me the opportunity to do things like snowboarding, sledding, and tubing behind a four wheeler. Living here has given me a lot of knowledge that living in a city would not give me. I love exploring the forest and creeks I live close to. If I lived in a city I would be doing different things, I would not have the same opportunities I have now. I love Appalachia and living in the country. I would never want to move anywhere else or to the city.

#### **KAILEY WORKMAN 7<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Janofa/Columbiana/Salem Junior High School**

"I'm sorry for the person I became. I'm sorry that it took so long for me to change. I'm ready to be sure I never become that way again 'cause who I am hates who I've been. Who I am hates who I've been." These are the lyrics that blast through my headphones as we take a long trip in the car or I just want to relax. What inspires me you ask? Music, music, music is 98.9% of what inspires me. Music is what inspires me to write and write and write until I want to saw my own arm off to make the pain stop. Music is what inspired me to write my one poem which was published in a book. Music is what inspired me to rebel against stereotypes by sticking up for people and joining many different clubs like cheerleading, student council, and Academic Challenge. Another weird thing that music inspires me to do, well, I would definitely have to say that would be crocheting.

The best thing about music is that I can relate to it and I feel connected to it. Sometimes



I just say in my head, “Well, they’re writing and singing about the same stuff that’s happening to me, so if they can write and sing about it then so can I!” The lyrics you saw above are from a song called “Who I Am Hates Who I’ve Been” by the band Relient K. This band is from Canton, Ohio. I can really relate to that song and also most of their other songs like “Be My Escape” and “Sadie Hawkins Dance.” These songs are really meaningful and they’re also really fun to dance to!

I think that music just triggers something in my mind and it makes my brain spin around. My brain will bounce off the walls of my cranium and I swear I can hear the sound it makes. (It’s a BOOM BOOM POW sort of sound.) My head gets flustered with all of these emotions and I need to find a way to just let them all out so I write or sing or maybe even dance a little bit. Music is not only my inspiration, but my life; I just have to remember to send out CD’s after I win American Idol! Appalachian is full of inspiration.

## 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS

### **ALLIE ARMS 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Foster/Vinton/Vinton County Middle School**

Appalachia Ohio has inspired me in so many ways. A few of those ways are the sense of beauty that surrounds me, how beautiful the scenery is, and the strong sense of solidarity that is so well known in Appalachia.

I’m inspired by the sense of beauty because the way you express yourself is very important. People in Appalachia show expression in music, art, poetry, and so many more ways. Music shows how beautiful the culture inspires you. Art portrays the wonderful colors shown all around the Appalachia. Poetry shows how people feel about what surrounds them on a daily basis.

The beautiful scenery inspires me by letting me know how the earth can be shaped into what we call beauty. The leaves change every year during the fall in many wonderful colors that make my heart sigh with warmth for the region I live in. During the winter snow covers the ground in a soft white blanket that makes me smile. Spring time is so full of life with flowers blooming and bees buzzing all around. Summer is the time for all things green to find their way.

The strong sense of solidarity inspires me because I’m proud of how my family and friends stay together even in the hard times. Family is most important when times are rough. Friends help you to laugh when you can’t take it anymore. You have to agree to disagree to keep arguments away and peace and love in your life always.

In conclusion, I just would like to state that of all places Appalachia Ohio inspires me the most to be the person I am today. Life in Appalachia is unique but teaches a life long lesson you will never forget! Be yourself and let the world around you inspire your way of thinking. Let Appalachia be your guide in everyday life.

### **ALEX BANDYK 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Kerns/Jefferson/Buckeye Local Southwest Middle School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me by the thought of my band and me getting famous one day. If we did it would be pretty crazy because there aren’t any bands that got famous in Ohio. So we’d be the first. It’s what keeps me motivated to write new music. I have about three songs right now and one in the making. I only write them on the way home on the bus from school because my bus ride is a whole forty five minutes long. I write about how no one makes it in Ohio. Well no one seems to want to make a difference in Ohio. Well there’s that one football player, I don’t know his name but he wanted to make a difference. That’s how I feel because I don’t want to get a boring job like everyone else in Ohio. So that’s how living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me. It motivates me to write new music. What also inspires me is that one of my favorite bands was in Columbus about three weeks ago and if they’re in Ohio, then it couldn’t be that bad. I didn’t know they had tours down there. So that inspires me to work at what I do well,

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 25*

writing new music because that's not that far from where I live. If we got pretty good and wrote a few songs and maybe get a record deal. Then we could be on the radio for the time being. While we're getting played on the radio we could write a lot more songs and maybe get a better record company. We could make an album and maybe start touring over the summer. Touring over the summer would be crazy because we'll be making money and meeting a lot of new people, new bands and new record companies. Pretty much I'll try to take the world by storm. If we get a lot of band practices in then we might play in a few local shows. We could get lucky there but I doubt it. It's all in the state of Ohio, so that's how living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me.

**JOSEPH CERVONE 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Janofa/Columbiana/Salem Junior High School**

Wagon wheels rolled along dangerous passages to undiscovered lands. They came to this place because of the over-population of the colonies, forcing them to move west. The journey was treacherous and many men, women, and children didn't survive. Despite the loss of family and friends, these amazing settlers pushed on, bridging the gap between the thirteen colonies and the new world. These pioneers became the Appalachian People. Without these hardworking men and women, I would not be where I am today.

I am inspired by the people of Appalachia then and now. The qualities of the people haven't changed over the years. They are still hardworking, independent, self reliant, and proud. Their willingness to help their neighbors is legendary. They are hospitable, humble, modest, and truly patriotic. They have a good sense of humor and their storytelling has captivated audiences through the years. Their resourcefulness helped them to bring in money to care for their families. They would weave baskets, make rugs, make quilts, or even make musical instruments, such as banjos, fiddles, and dulcimers. They would play these instruments for their entertainment and would also sell them.

Seeing these people survive and flourish through all that life has thrown at them has made me realize what hard work and determination can accomplish. As a child of Appalachia, I know that if I follow in the footsteps of these astounding, well-rounded people anything is possible. I will achieve all of my goals through hard work and determination.

**GRACE HAAS 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Frazier/Washington/Marietta Middle School**

What inspires me about living in the Appalachian Valley of Ohio is the idea of making a success out of myself and showing everyone what I can do. The people in my town are very polite and well mannered. I think being around them all of my life has made me a great person who will do well in the future.

When I become an adult, I plan to do a thousand things I never would have dreamed of doing earlier in life. Living in the Appalachian area makes me dream about people, places, and things outside of small towns like mine. What I like about small towns is the peace and quiet around me. It makes it easier to focus on every day things. I get more inspiration from nature than I would from bustling cities. Relaxation is also easier to find in small towns, while it is harder to find in largely populated areas.

I am very much inspired to stay in small town Appalachia Ohio. Everything here is just so calming and I just do not want to leave this hilly paradise I live in. I love the smiling faces, the changing seasons, and the feeling I get when I greet people I know. Everybody knows everyone in my town. We have great food, and many varieties of options. Big cities bother me, with the traffic, annoying salespeople, and sometimes-greasy food. Also, I'll get a great education in my small town of the Appalachia Valley because with a smaller population than big cities, I get more individual attention. This also means that I get better inspirational attention.

In addition, I am interested in playing national league sports in the future. Staying in my small town would actually give me a better chance of getting recognized as long as I work

to improve my game more than the people around me. Getting into a major league that is nationally known would let me prove that small town people are capable of much more than others think we are.

There are many things, people, and ideas that excite and inspire me. Here in the Appalachian area of Ohio, no one really knows for sure where they will be in the future, and neither do I. I know now that I will use my childhood to show everybody what the Appalachia Valley of Ohio can do for the world.

### **KATELYNN HENRY 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Deel/Gallia/River Valley Middle School**

I find inspiration everywhere in this magnificent county of mine. I wouldn't want to live anywhere but here in Gallia. When I hike the trails of these fabulous forests, I take in the majestic beauty of the rolling hills, the richness of our valleys. I am in awe of the sights I behold in this wondrous place.

I'm a writer, well; I will be when I get older. I find all my inspiration right here at home. My family has always lived in this area. I was born here. I come from a long line of railroad workers and engineers. My family is proud, hardworking people. They inspire me also, through their strength and morals, I have grown strong.

I'm not the only one inspired to greatness here in Appalachia, just look at our history. We've had seven U.S. Presidents and three Vice Presidents. Orville and Wilbur Wright were inspired to take flight. Neil Armstrong dreamt of the moon. His dreams came true and mine will too, here in Appalachia! My mother introduced me to the McGuffey Readers. I treasure these books. I love them even more now that I read of William McGuffey's life. A fellow Ohioan, his work reached almost every American going to public school during the last 19th century. That kind of impact is awe inspiring!

I am only 13, but my dreams are solid in my heart. I'm currently working on my first book. I will continue to draw upon the inspiration around me and focus on my goals. Though I'm sure I will travel the world one day, I will take Appalachia with me. It's a part of me now. A part I wish to share with others, to inspire them as well.

Another great writer, Peggy Tabor Millin once said, "We never touch people so lightly, that we don't leave a trace." I wish to leave words of encouragement and a trace of my inspiration, my Appalachia.

### **JACOB HIRSCH 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ames/Ross/Bishop Flaget School**

It is hard not to be inspired while looking over the beautiful foothills of Appalachia. Sitting on a hill surrounded by apple blossoms and the smell of fresh pine, the inspiration flows around you as if carried by the cool breeze. Your worries melt away and your problems are taken with the wind.

On my family's orchard in Appalachia, there is a stunning view. It overlooks the city of Chillicothe and the surrounding hillsides with Paint Creek flowing below. In the spring, the apple trees begin to blossom in lovely shades of pink. In the fall, the sight is breath taking! All of the leaves on the trees change color. Awe-inspiring patches of yellow, orange, pink, and bright green make you want to sit and stare for hours.

When I write stories and poems, the words come flowing from the pen as if written by nature itself. Many of the poems I have written are about the amazing view. It gives me inspiration to write about the world around me and share its radiating beauty with others. People who live in cities can't get this type of awakening from their own surroundings. I feel privileged to be able to live where I do!

Down the orchard hill and across a pasture lies Paint Creek. The water ebbs slowly against the embankments. Ripples part the water as a canoe glides down the water, its paddles gently sweeping the water.

It reminds me of the Native Americans that used to live in the area. My mind wanders to

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 27*

a time before the settlers claimed the land. I want to learn how the Native Americans lived, and what they did; to know what they learned about nature. To be able to picture the serene land they lived on is amazing. Learning about them helps me to more appreciate the rural areas and the parts of untouched nature. I am inspired to do my part to save what is left of the untouched nature around us.

Appalachian Ohio inspires me to share and protect the beauty it holds. Living in such a place, I want to learn who saw this before me and what I was like to them. Inspiration is truly not hard to find when you are a child of Appalachia.

**CHASE FACTOR 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Earich/Perry/Franklin Local Community School**

What inspires me the most is fishing and hunting with my family. These are the two things that inspire me.

First, I love fishing. I wake up in the morning at 6:30 and I get something to eat. Then I watch some T.V. before I go to my fishing hole. I put on my boots and my clothes.

After that, I get out my fishing pole and put on the bait that I use at my fishing hole. The bait I use is called TUBE BAIT because it is the best bait there is and catches the most fish at my fishing hole. I go to this spot almost every day in the summer because it is the best.

Next, hunting inspires me because I can shoot animals for food! I have to wake up in the morning at 5:30 so I can get in the shower. After I get out of the shower, my Uncle Joe and I get something to eat. After that, we put on our boots and overalls. Then, we get our guns and bullets and head to the woods. One time, we went hunting and went out to the car and got in. We went to the store so we would have something to drink and we got some more bullets. When we left the store, we had to find the car. We found the car, got in and left. When we got to the place that we were going to hunt we got our guns and our bullets and we went into the woods. We were walking in the woods and I saw a big buck and I shot it and we had to go track it down. When we got to the deer we dragged it to the car and we put it on the top of the car. We got into the car we were driving home. When we got home we showed my family. Then we ate the deer and it was good.

Living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me in many ways because there are many things to do in Roseville, Ohio.

**MORGAN FLEMING 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Zumbro/Morgan/Morgan Junior High School**

To inspire, I think, is for something to have enough impact on someone's life to help them make choices for the better. To be honest, I've never actually thought about how living in Appalachian Ohio inspires me. When I was given this essay, however, I realized that living here impacts my life more than I thought.

While I was looking up information on Appalachia I came across an article that stated that Appalachians are known for their simple lives. I think that simple lives are better than chaotic ones. Simplicity gives us chance to take time to stop and smell the roses and appreciate the little things that make life worthwhile. Instead of having a hectic day we try to spend time with the ones we love. Doing just that inspires me to live a life that both strengthens and brings my family closer.

Most Appalachian families have a strong background in music or other crafts. I believe that creativity and imagination support our world and encourage progress. Without them we'd likely lead boring lives with little inspiration and not much of a future. This motivates me to follow my interests and try new things, even if I'm not very good at it. I can learn to play an instrument or develop a new skill or talent to help color my universe and make life more interesting.

Setting goals for me and working hard to reach them is an inspiration I received from Appalachia. People in Appalachia are considered to be more ambitious than most. I know that even if I don't always reach a goal, giving up isn't going to get me any closer to it.

As long as I try, I still have the chance of reaching it or maybe even something better. I want to help others reach their goals too, because it makes me very proud to know that I impacted someone's life. I'll reach for my goals and try to succeed.

I am happy and proud to be one of the millions of people that live in Appalachia Ohio. I'm inspired to reach for my dreams no matter how big they may be. I feel I've been given the strength and opportunity to accomplish anything that I set out to do. I'm ready for any challenges that may be thrown my way because I know that I am able to reach my full potential.

#### **MADISON LEWIS 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ballard/Scioto/Valley Middle School**

I used to think living in Appalachian Ohio didn't influence me at all, but now I think that it is important to know your background and surroundings. If you look closely at your environment, you can become inspired by it. You may think that the only good places to live involve big buildings, warm weather, and possibly a "Hollywood" sign. On the other hand, I believe that all it takes for me is a welcoming home with welcoming people. With these necessities in marvelous Appalachian Ohio, I become inspired to live as a better person, who wants to do my best in life.

Many people think that living in Appalachia doesn't take hard work seriously, but I think anywhere you go it takes hard work to get somewhere. When I think of Appalachia, I think of all the large mountains located here. As I think about this, I realize that hard work is like these mountains. Climbing up the mountain it takes a large amount of endurance. Then, when you get to the top, you feel like you accomplished something amazing. If you picture life as a mountain from Appalachia, then I believe everyone will want to try to accomplish their goal, with work.

I've come to believe that Appalachia is an inspiring environment. Appalachia inspires me to work hard, or to preserve the beauty by picking up trash outside. Either way, I feel as if living in Appalachia will help me continue to conquer my goals. Wherever you live, you can do so many deeds for your environment. This is why I will try to do as much as I can for my inspiring environment, Appalachian Ohio.

#### **GABBY MOORE 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Butler/Belmont/Union Local Middle School**

Hi, my name is Gabrielle Moore. I attend Union Local Middle School as an eighth grader. I am thirteen years old. I live in Bethesda, Ohio, a small town on the outskirts of St. Clairsville. I live in one of the thirty-three counties of Appalachia. Being a child of Appalachia inspires me to live above what other people think. Most people from other states may think that Ohio does not have a very good health care program. We are known to have a lot of early teenage pregnancies, underage drinking, and low socioeconomic status. I think differently.

Living in Appalachia is wonderful. We have smaller communities. People are friendlier; therefore, we have fewer crimes. Not all places are as subtle and peaceful as our community. In Appalachia, I feel very secure in the environment in which I live. I have much trust in my community to keep me safe.

Even though I live in a deprived area, I am in several extra curricular activities. My school has so much to offer students. I am a cheerleader and a softball player. This is my second year as a Union Local cheerleader. I have played softball for seven years and have been starting pitcher for five. Outside of school, I am involved in community service and volunteering for daycares, school, and camps. My future is very important to me. I set my goals high to achieve them, not let them pass me by. I have decided as my career choice to be an occupational therapist. This is the only field in which I am interested. I believe I can achieve this while living in Appalachia.

I intend to live my life above any of the stereotypes about Appalachia. I know what I

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 29*

am going to do with my life and I will do it in Appalachia. I am proud to be a child of Appalachia.

### **GRACE ORR 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Cook/Highland/Greenfield Middle School**

Living in the Appalachian region my whole life has really inspired me. I live in a town called Greenfield in Ohio and it is pretty small. We don't have any big malls or theaters. Although sometimes I wish we had better access to those kinds of things, there are still advantages to living in this area.

One of the best things is that everybody knows each other. My dad is a vet and I help out at his clinic, so I get to meet a lot of people. Then whenever I see them around town, I start a conversation. I also get to know folks through church and school activities. I feel safer knowing there is someone I know who is usually around. It helps us become a better community and we all join together.

I have learned many life skills from living in this part of Ohio. Being in a little place can make it hard to get things when we want them. That helps me understand it's a hard world out there but my life isn't limited to my hometown. For those reasons I have learned to have big dreams and try my hardest to accomplish them even though it may take a long time. Since we work hard to be successful, it carries into our adulthood helping us to succeed.

The environment is extremely important to me. I guess I take advantage of all the trees and wildlife. I enjoy seeing squirrels, chipmunks, birds and other critters. In the city, those things are limited and rarely seen. It is important that we keep areas with meadows and forests clear from industrialization.

Overall living in this zone is pretty nice. I may complain about not being able to go to the big sale at Forever 21 or Pac Sun, but the city doesn't even come close to being this nice. Most people take it for granted, probably like me, and haven't experienced living in the metropolis with houses window to window and little or no yard. I am glad my family has settled in this spot.

### **MAILE ORR 8<sup>th</sup> · Mr. Barrington/Athens/Athens Middle School**

What is Appalachian Ohio? To put it simply, it's where I live. But a more profound level, Appalachian Ohio is my home. It's where I moved to when I was four years old.

Athens, Ohio, at first glance, could look like numerous things. A town full of hippies and college students, for example. But I know it's more than that. I know there are many educated people in Athens, achievements large and small being accomplished everyday. A sense of community is ubiquitous.

If I weren't raised here in Appalachia Ohio, with its passion for all art forms, I probably wouldn't have been inspired to be an artist. I am surrounded by supportive people who love to create as much as I do. People who are just as insane and kooky as I. They also inspired me to become a fashion designer. With creativity and inclination to be an individual omnipresent in the air, it's actually no surprise I was subconsciously encouraged to pursue this desire.

Furthermore, I think about how this town keeps things local. I remember when I was younger my mother would take my brother and I to our local Farmer's Market every Saturday to get feta spinach rolls from the Crumbs Bakery stand. Even to this day I enjoy eating those yummy rolls. It's a nice feeling that we stay connected and grounded to our local roots instead of believing bigger is better.

Another characteristic of Appalachian Ohio that inspires me is the variety of wildlife and natural beauty. The stunning trees transform into fiery colors in autumn and the large and small creatures that wander around the many forests. The infinite fields and wildflowers are

beautiful. The rivers and the lake at Burr Oak make up some of the many aesthetic bodies of water.

More than anything, living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired me to simultaneously be a unique individual and to consider myself as part of a close knit community. To be creative, and never forget what's really important; how I think of myself, not how others think of me. "Because those who matter don't mind, and those who mind don't matter." Living here has taught me to focus on the remarkable, meaningful few, not the superficial, insignificant many.

So what is Appalachian Ohio? Appalachian Ohio is my beautiful home – the place that allows me to be myself and be fully accepted for who I am.

### **BILLY RAYNOVICH 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. York/Brown/Rulh High School**

My name is Billy. I live outside of Felicity, a small town in Ohio. I live on a farm and live with mom, dad, Chessa, Tessa and Trevor. We own almost 10 acres. We live beside grandma and grandpa. My Uncle Clinton and Aunt Melissa's house is behind us on a hill. My Aunt Farrell and Uncle Bill live in front of my house.

I love being Appalachian because my family always loves me and tells me I can do anything I want. My teacher encourages me to keep trying, but I have a lot of health problems and it is hard to do everything I want to do, but I am very stubborn and like my grandpa says; I am not stupid, so keep on going and don't stop.

I believe that you need to help people. When Pam Crawford, our school secretary, was killed in an accident, it was hard on everyone in the school. That week I suggested that the high school could have a "Pam Week." I sold yellow ribbons one day, and suckers the next. We had a blue jeans day, and a hat day. I made a donation box and gave-up my lunch for the week. We collected \$250.00 for a scholarship fund for college.

### **CHASE FITE 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Day/Pike/Western High School**

Living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired me in many different ways. My grandfather has lived in this area for a long time and has taught me many things. He lived at the end of a small road in Beaver, Ohio. To get to his house you had to cross two creeks and walk up a hill. It was the only house you could see, just a plain trailer at the top of a hill in the middle of nowhere.

He didn't care for money or a big fancy TV. To him the finer things in life were getting to see a deer run across the field or shooting a squirrel that was eating the bird seed. He didn't buy fancy things; he just used what he had. He only wanted to wake up and see the woods. He also loved his three dogs.

They aren't the cutest dogs, but they are loving. He didn't give them fancy collars or leashes because they didn't like them. Whatever he ate, they would eat, whether it was eggs or double cheeseburgers. They didn't have fancy dog beds; they just slept on the couch. He also had advice for my siblings.

He didn't want my siblings and me to fight. He understood sibling rivalry and said that every once in a while, we should get along. He didn't want us to be spoiled either. He thought if you had food, clothes, and a bed your parents did their job. Sometimes I forget his words of wisdom, but at the end of the day, he has left a mark on me.

Living with my grandfather in Appalachian Ohio has taught me many things. To respect the things you have. That family is very important. You should love the people around you because they won't always be there. Appalachian Ohio is full of wilderness, but it is also full of poverty. So, always remember the little things because someday you might not have them.

**RACHEL RIGGS 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Hayden/Hocking/Logan Hocking Middle School**

Sparkling, white, diamond-dusted hills in the winter; color after color of dazzling floral carpets in the spring; lush, rolling fields of green in the summer; and a vivid display of ochre, scarlet, and gold in autumn. The beauty of the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains is simply breathtaking year-round. I am a child of Appalachia, and my heart rests in inspirational land around me.

The closely bonded families of Appalachia most often come from the land. Families work together to raise live stock and crops, and neighbors frequently help each other out. In our small towns, we strive to communicate and assist each other. The foothills don't have the hustle and bustle of big cities, leaving more time to create ties with those around us.

The hominess and the beauty of my homeland have kindled my love for writing poetry, stories, and weaving intricate splashes of color together. The songs of the trees and wind chime in a chorus to edge me forward in my aspiration of writing and wildlife rehabilitation and behaviorism. Every morning I wake up to the splendor and charm of my land, and every morning, I get ready for a new day.

When I get home from school, sometimes I will just sit outside with my dogs, marveling as the hills flow in rhythm with the trees, gracefully stretching through rich green and gold fields, bright with intense colors. My notepad always with me, I am happy for the serene peacefulness that goes uninterrupted by the obnoxious sounds of traffic and incomprehensible babble of crowds.

In big cities, you don't see deer feeding outside your bedroom window in the winter, nor do you observe fox kids at play near their den as their mother brings back breakfast in the springtime. The songbirds trill their melodies, and the red-tailed hawks cry out in the afternoon sky. Crickets and cicadas chirp their calls to each other at sunset, and the sky casts a golden-pink hue upon the countryside at dawn and dusk.

Appalachia is bonded in its communities and land. The richness of the affection for the earth beneath our toes and the air we breathe... The tenderness we express for each other and our animal companions... Big cities personages don't get the deep, bonded lifestyle that we do. I am thankful for my land. I am a child of Appalachia, and my way of life inspires me.

**HUNTER SCHENEWARK 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Speed/Lawrence/Fairland Middle School**

Recently, my family and I moved to Lawrence County, Ohio. Although I have had my fair share of moving around, I was extremely nervous and anxious. After doing some quick research on Goggle, I was beginning to worry.

Eighteen hours of driving brought us into Lawrence County. Nothing could have prepared me for moving here. I thoroughly enjoyed residing in Texas, but could not have predicted the joy I would experience living in Ohio; the tri-state area felt like heaven. Before our family had time to unlock the front door, neighbors from up and down the street offered to help unload our U-Haul moving van, cook dinner for us, or anything else that might help us. Appalachia Ohio had already moved me.

Only three days later, school started. My nervousness had returned. Once again the areas residents helped me feel right at home. Nobody ever stopped trying to assist me. These experiences have motivated me to this day.

The influence this area has had on me is huge. Because of others lending a helping hand to me, I want to help others. Before moving here I could have been considered selfish. Now I try to go out of my way to aid others. I am trying to replicate the service that others gave me. They invited me to join clubs, participate in sports and sit with them at lunch. It did not end there. If I needed a ride to anything, my new friends and inspirers would go out of their way to assist me.

I think that because of the service that was given willingly to me, I should never stop



trying to help others. I can volunteer at charities, at hospitals or schools. I can help the next new kid at school. I want to inspire, motivate, and make a change now and in the generations to come, just like I was inspired and helped.

**DANIEL THOMAS 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Bell/Coshocton/River View Junior High School**

Life in the Appalachian Mountains is the best life possible for me. From the green grassy summers, to the icy snows of winter, Ohio is the place to be. My favorite time in Ohio is fall. The temperature is just right for being in the woods and camping. My story probably won't be like any others in the school, because I moved here from out of state. My passion for Ohio started right here in the town of Coshocton, when I was eight years old.

When I was eight, my family and I lived in New Jersey. My family had lived there for generations and it was hard for us to leave. We lived in the city and it wasn't near as good as here! So the countryside seemed even better than it seems to most people who live in the state of Ohio. Going from the streets and noise of cars at night, to the woods and sound of an owl hooting or the spring and summer bugs was a great change! When we left I was eight so I didn't really care where we lived, but am I glad we moved to Ohio!

The first day we got here was crazy! All the cows and livestock were a sight. Where I lived in New Jersey wasn't a big city but it was slowly turning into one so animals weren't all new, but I didn't see them everyday. But what most inspires me here are the rolling hills of the Ohio Valley. The land in New Jersey was as flat as a pancake and to see any hill was amazing there! But they just aren't hills here, they were big and they look the best covered in the colors of autumn.

Another thing that inspires me here is the freedoms you have. In New Jersey you couldn't buy a BB gun without having a whole filing cabinet of paperwork and a lot of money. But here you can buy guns off the shelves like candy! And they are very into getting kids in the outdoors here and teaching them how to hunt and fish early on with the youth programs. The first winter I was here I hunted and I've done it ever since. And the people are very solid in their beliefs here. Many go to church and have some good set of standards they keep.

One thing I also noticed here was that people are a lot more polite. In New Jersey people would pass you in their cars and say rude things if you drove too slow, but here I've seen people let someone go around them if they drove slow and they help each other out more around here. They also don't try to rip you off as much, or at least in the bigger stores, and I respect that.

Now I believe I must put this essay to an end. It may seem like more of a story but for me it was a big contrast between the two. I hope you enjoyed reading this as much as I did writing it, hopefully more. Life in Appalachian Ohio is the best spot to be and I hope a lot of others think this as well.

**REAGAN TYNER 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Calcasola/Muskingum/West Muskingum Middle School**

What is inspiring about the Appalachian region? How could living here help us be creative in our everyday lives? The definition of inspire is "to encourage greater efforts and to arouse and create high emotion." When hearing this definition, I instantly think of the Appalachian region.

What's inspiring about the Appalachian region? As a child of Appalachian, to me, I am highly inspired by my community. We aren't just people living in the same area; we all have a sense of family. There seems to be something for everyone. Our community can help us be creative in our everyday lives. There are community theaters and Power House for children wanting to get involved with the arts and be creative. There are also many art centers like the Alan Cottrell Art Center.

If we fail, we can depend on our community. From churches, to schools, to neighbors,

everyone is willing to assist anyone. To me, that is true inspiration. I think we are a family because of where we live. The Appalachian region has gathered us as a community. It's a beautiful, welcoming place. Anyone can acquire inspiration from this marvelous region. From the Y-City Mile, the County Fair, the Fraternal Order of the Eagles or the Heartbeat Family Center, the Appalachian region is willing to influence anyone who is willing.

The Y-City Mile is a run or walk, downhill for one mile. It's a fantastic way for the community to stay healthy and interact with one another. We encourage each other and have fun doing it. Another inspiring way my community helps each other is through the Heartbeat Family Center. It is a non-profit Christian pregnancy crisis center. Their goal is to turn mothers away from abortion, and give them the supplies and support that's desperately needed. To me, this is extremely inspiring. It's an amazing way to show that the community cares for and supports everyone.

Cicero once said, "We were born to unity our fellow men, and join in with community with the human race." The community is teaching the younger generation to give back, and be innovative. Looking back at the definition of the word "inspire," the Appalachian community fits completely into that. In my opinion, that is what truly inspirational about the Appalachian community.

### **ERIC WARD 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Parden/Monroe/Woodsfield Elementary School**

When one hears the word "Appalachian" they often think of "rednecks," I am proud of the area that I live in and the influences that Appalachian Ohio values have had on me. Appalachian Ohioans are hard working, family oriented, and enjoy a rural life style.

People in Appalachian Ohio work hard to achieve their goals. They have a strong work ethic that comes naturally because of the area. Many people are working towards a better life. I want to go to college and further my education. When I go to college I want to go to Ohio State. Besides working hard for their goals, people in Appalachian Ohio are dedicated to their families and communities.

Family and friends are a very important part of my life. Helping your neighbors is a common place in life around here. Spending time with my family members is very important. People are very generous be donating to those in need. Part of the closeness to neighbors and family is related to the rural life style in Appalachian Ohio.

Life in Appalachian Ohio still has similarities to life in earlier times. Families often pass property and land from generation to generation. There is still a strong connection to agriculture and even those people who do not live on a farm often garden. The rural setting allows me to enjoy outdoor recreation including fishing and hunting. I love to go deer hunting. I shot a big six-point buck as the first buck I ever shot.

Growing up in Appalachian Ohio teaches you many things. It will inspire you to work hard and further your education and make a better life. People in Appalachian Ohio understand the importance of helping each other and taking care of their families. These are just a few reasons that make Appalachian Ohio a great place to live.

### **KYLE WRIGHT 8<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Singleton/Guernsey/Meadowbrook Middle School**

Most people think of us as rednecks, hicks, and hillbillies, but we are not. Our values are less modern than the customs of the bigger cities in America. Some people think that we are uneducated, barefooted Appalachians and should not be alive if we did not have a good education. We are considered poor, but we make do with what we have and we don't complain.

I like being a child of Appalachia, Ohio. I am able to do a lot of things from hunting and fishing to riding a 4-wheeler in the woods or peacefully hiking through our state parks. I can also enjoy county fairs and festivals or playing sports. We have close family ties and

values. We appreciate one another for who we are. Our families work hard for what we have and do not take advantage of others.

I can go to school and not worry about police in our hallways, a student gunman, or gangs. I can play outside without worrying about drive by shootings and fights. You can run barefoot outside, sit on a swing and watch the clouds and wildlife, catch butterflies and look at the stars at night, and even have friends over for a bon-fire. Small town, country living at it's best; without the hustle and bustle of the big city. You know your neighbors names, and going to Wal-Mart is like going to a reunion; you always see people you know.

I like to make snowmen in the winter and paths with the leaves in the fall, relaxing by the swimming pool is a fun summertime activity and watching baby animals being born in the spring makes you smile from ear to ear. I live on a small farm with my parents, older brother and younger sister. Sometimes the work is hard, but I believe that it is all worth it in the end; it helps me a stronger person and has a sense of responsibility by taking care of the animals. It also prepares me for the future. I know that volunteering is not a bad work because helping each other out is a very rewarding feeling.

Appalachia, Ohio is inspiring to me because the people and places here help me accomplish many things as I grow up. The people here, being old fashioned gives me more time to appreciate my family values.

## 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS

**ABRAHAM BLAIN 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Spencer/Gallia/Gallia Academy High School**

### *The Beauty in the Sky*

Some say the Appalachians' no place to live  
Void of soil used for farming  
But let me tell you one thing now  
The beauty of the Appalachian  
Keeps me smiling the whole way through  
See the mountains embrace the sky  
As a mother does her son  
The clouds resemble the Sistine Chapel  
As if Michelangelo painted the sky  
Nature is an artist  
You can learn much from the mountains  
Just stand atop the mountain tops  
And see the world as it is  
So craggy, yet so smooth  
As the mountains are too  
So when you're feeling down, like dirt  
Stare into the mountains and sky  
It will brighten up your day.

**ABBY BURGETT 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Pratt/Morgan/Morgan High School**

### *"Where I'm From"*

I am from Mason jars,  
From Mr. Clean and bobby pins.  
I am from just enough space for six.  
(Packed, chaotic, and too loud.)  
I am from lilacs,  
The honeysuckle,

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 35*

Whose fragrance calmed me  
When life was a storm.  
I'm from gathering on holidays and being too short.  
From Veldene and DeEtte.  
I'm from the music at every moment,  
And the voices that ties it all together  
From walk it off and call if you need me.  
I'm from he who believes in the Son shall be saved,  
With graham cracker Noah's ark  
And goldfish crackers during Sunday school.  
I'm from Zanesville and distant Ireland  
From homemade bread and what the garden grows.  
From the raspy sound of my grandfather's voice,  
Being kicked in the throat by a Horse.  
The swift sewing of my aunt's hands.  
The chest they use as a stand,  
Sitting beside the bed,  
And holding the childhood  
Of my sisters and me.  
I am from those pictures,  
Those memories, boxed up and sealed  
So that the magic and love they hold  
Is not carried away with the wind

**MADDY BUTLER 9<sup>th</sup> · Mr. Salvino/Tuscarawas/Claymont High School**  
*Inspirational Poem*

I am surrounded by these mountains I call home,  
They're yelling at me, so that I never shall roam.  
Little do they know that it is because of them,  
They have instilled in me the roots, and I am the stem.  
They have protected me, for which I am thankful,  
I have found their beautiful majesty to be joyful.  
But it still remains that they will force me to depart,  
Still, now and forever they will remain in my heart.  
I must now move on for those who cannot,  
I unlike many others have a chance to be taught.  
So I will now move on from the home I love,  
To soar over these mountains on the wings of a dove.

**NATHAN COLE 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Rucker/Muskingum/Maysville High School**  
*Picture, in Perfect*

Jade strands of primal grass  
Blanket my back and  
My breath inhales the fresh air forest.  
Nostalgia inflames a yearning  
Through my candlewick veins for something  
I've yet to know.  
My eyes dance across the skyline, etched in vegetation;  
Home feels so far away (though I'm standing on Muskingum ground.)  
No one ever admires the scars  
Decorating my eyes, nor do they ever ask. I could say,  
"It's because I'm missing

The variegated picture, the map of the world.

This Ohio River will  
Breathe for me, only for so long.”

My world has not yet become  
A Hallmark motion picture and  
I'd rather it stay that way.

**JAMIE DAVIS 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Zirillo/Columbiana/Beaver Local High School**

***One More Walk***

The sky it's crimson, azure, and gray  
The sun it's sinking, turning pink  
The trees in the wind they sway  
Their colors stained like ink  
As Beaver Creek flows with frothing foam  
Churning its way over rocks of charcoal  
A fawn stands near a stepping stone  
Transfixed by the water when it sparkles  
Trails at the edge of the forest winding along  
Wildflowers bob in a perfumed breeze  
With every turn birds sing a different song  
And a silent deer leaps over a log with ease  
The air it's chilled and the leaves they're dropping  
You know what's coming like thunder before the rain  
Winters nearing and it's not stopping  
So I'll take one more walk down this  
wilderness lane

**CATY FUSSNECKER 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. McNair/Brown/Georgetown Junior Senior High School**

***This Is Where It All Began***

The rivers run long and wide,  
The hills run on and on,  
Plains go on forever,  
Farms are everywhere you go.  
Small towns are all we have, everyone knew everyone,  
People work hard to get what they deserve,  
God is the center of the house,  
Families are as woven as braids.  
The sweet old lady down the street,  
At the end of the day we sip sweet tea,  
This is where it all began,  
Here is where it all will end.

**BRAXTON GAFFIN 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Ward/Adams/West Union High School**

The big, blue sky,  
The clean air,  
Big green trees,  
Crickets chirping at night,  
No rush-hour traffic.  
Cows in the pasture,  
Horses in the corral,  
The thrill of the hunt come fall,  
The town supporting the team every winter,

*Describe how living in Appalachian Ohio has inspired you! 37*

Friends and family here for your sport.  
Yes this is where I belong,  
On the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains.

**MORGAN FREDERICK 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Patrick/Ross/Chillicothe High School**

***Child of Appalachia***

Child of Appalachia,  
Taught to be honest and loving,  
With kindness and care  
Just like Grandma's messy, gray hair.  
With big dinners on Sundays after church,  
A full inner circle of friends,  
Where your parents are your biggest fans,  
Glad to help you succeed with helpful hands.

County fairs and summer camps, too,  
Along with late trips to Wal-Mart  
Help the small town dream come true.

It's where you know your neighbors like family,  
While news travels fast,  
Old shoeboxes of photos kept in the attic  
Bring a blast from the past.

The hot of summer,  
The fiery fall colors, and chill of winter,  
Plus the smell of spring;  
The ever-changing surroundings.

Gravy and biscuits,  
Chicken and dumplings plus apple pie,  
When relatives eat them together,  
Their hearts become light as a feather.

Definitely not perfect,  
As you can tell,  
Appalachia is beauty  
All bottled up in me.

**KENDRA GAMBILL 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Wolford/Vinton/Vinton County High School**

***My Appalachian Ohio***

A place where the pace moves a bit slower,  
Where memories are made time and time again,  
Where visions of yesterday can be seen throughout the year.  
My Appalachian Ohio

It is green in spring, gold in summer,  
Brown in fall, white in winter,  
Everlasting, ever-changing,  
My Appalachian Ohio

Around here the smallest good deed  
Is better than the grandest intention.  
My Appalachian Ohio

I am a child of the Appalachian Ohio  
No less than the trees or stars,  
I feel inspired to be here.  
My Appalachian Ohio

Every once in a while we lose ourselves  
In the nature and find peace.  
To sit in the shade on a fine day  
And look upon lush green hills  
Is the most perfect refreshment.  
My Appalachian Ohio

Our road will be smooth and untroubled  
No matter what care life may send,  
If we travel the pathway together and work  
Side by side with each other.  
This is my Appalachian Ohio.

**MARIAH MCINERNEY 9<sup>th</sup> · Ms. Earich/Perry/Franklin Local Community School**  
***Living in Appalachian Ohio***

Autumn Saturday-  
I sit on my front porch step,  
I gaze at the treetops swaying in the wind.  
Watching the colorful leaves falling slowly to the ground.  
Listening to the birds chirping peacefully.  
I watch the water in the creek behind my house,  
It's shimmering in the bright sunlight.  
I see the leaves twirling down into the water,  
And slowly  
    Floating  
        Downstream.

The scenery is amazing.  
Oh! What it's like to live in Appalachian Ohio.  
Inspiration is everywhere.

**MIRANDA MISER · 9<sup>th</sup> Ms. Wesson/Guernsey/Meadowbrook High School**  
***Appalachia Inspires Me***

I'm inspired by the breathtaking view across the land I love,  
I'm inspired by the birds that sing their melodies above,  
I'm inspired by the animals which everyday appear,  
This Appalachian home of mine I will ever hold so dear  
Where I may wonder whether young or old,  
I'll always sing the praises of my countryside abode,  
For the grass is always green, and the sky is ever clear,  
My heart may grow weary but Appalachia will always be near  
The future is so far away and I know not what to expect,  
With Appalachia behind me, in my choices twill reflect,  
It inspires me to do better every single day,  
With my Appalachian upbringing, I know I'll find a way  
My home not only inspires me but everyone knows it's true,  
It may not seem like very much but it all affects me and you,  
From the agriculture that floods the fields to the communities around,  
Throughout all of Appalachian my inspiration is found

