

**Bird Habitat Development for the Haakon County Outdoor
Learning Center**

**Tanya McIlravy-2001
Haakon County Conservation District
PO Box 130
Phillip SD 57567**

Project Title:

**Bird Habitat Development for the Haakon County Outdoor
Learning Center**

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS
WILDLIFE DIVISION
SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM REPORT
May 2001
by Tanya McIlravy
for Haakon County Conservation District**

The Outdoor Learning Center is a project aimed at enhancing environmental, biological and land management education for Haakon County students and residents, as well as travelers and nearby residents and schools. During classroom visits, it has come to our attention that even in our rural setting, there are students who rarely if ever leave "town" and see conservation in practice. There are also students who, while exposed to practices, are not able to fully appreciate and understand them. In addition, in the past there has been interest expressed by various teachers in hands-on activities. What better way to offer these activities than to have them within walking distance of the classroom?

We believe that the Outdoor Learning Center can serve the students and teachers well, while enhancing the community and providing a destination for residents and visitors. The Center will be designed to educate students of all ages. It is our hope that the design and aesthetics will entice people to come and enjoy the park-like setting and teach them about their surroundings at the same time. It is our belief that by involving the teachers, students, and communities in the creation of the Center, that they will take ownership of it, visiting often and treating it with care and respect. We envision the Center being active long into the future.

In 2000, we were awarded a \$750 grant from the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks Wildlife Division Small Grants Program. This specific facet of the Outdoor Learning Center, developing bird habitat, is driven by the need for a place to take the 6th grade class to demonstrate the birding techniques taught in the classroom. The funds were used to provide feeding stations, birdhouses, and water on the school grounds. These features combined to create areas for observing the habits of birds and identifying them. This project also improved the aesthetics of the area and increased use of the area.

The 5th and 6th grade classes built the birdhouses, as well as installing the feeders and waterers. Two teachers put up the birdhouses, as there were concerns about safety of students being up in trees, etc. The houses were in place in May of 2000. The feeders and waterers were in place in January 2001. The birding program was presented to the 6th grade class in March 2001.

Assistance was requested from Chad Tussing, SD GF&P Education Specialist, to present a bird feeding program for the 6th graders. We were able to present this program to the Ottumwa Rural Attendance Center and the 5th grade class as well.

Benefits expected included increased awareness of birds and appreciation for their beauty and purpose. We also expected to see an improvement in the quantity of birds identified and the quality of the journals created by the 6th grade class, as well as a quality learning experience for them. We were not disappointed!

The feeding stations and birdhouse projects stimulated tremendous interest in birds for the students, staff, and parents. Classes and teachers not directly involved in the project expressed interest and

utilized the stations. Parents got involved and excited about birding with their children. The 6th grade made quite a production out of their daily ritual of cleaning and filling the feeders and birdbaths.

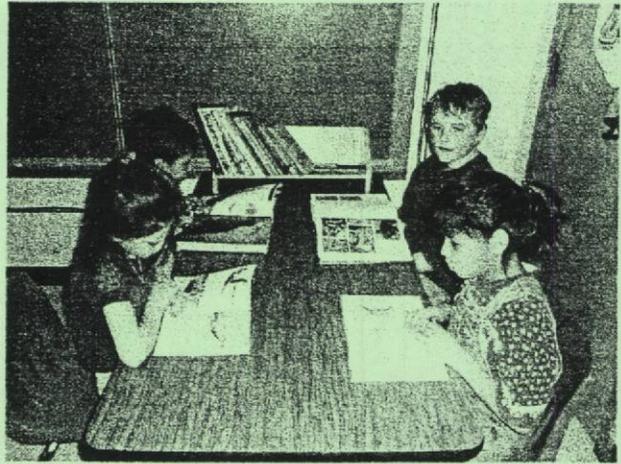
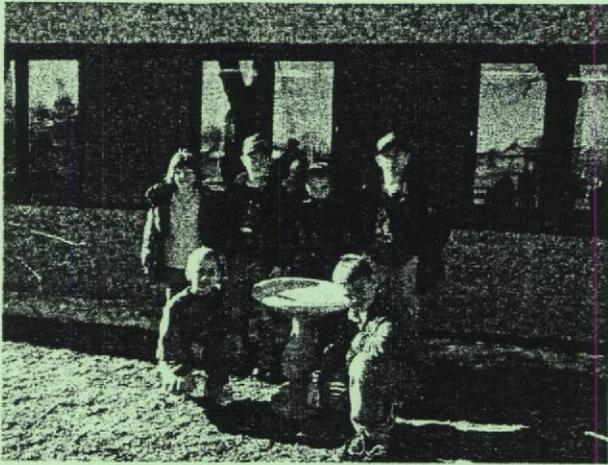
While visiting the 2nd grade class to brainstorm ideas for the Outdoor Classroom project, their teacher, Mrs. Rembold, expressed a desire to have a bird feeder outside their window. We were able to provide two-way mirrored feeder for the 2nd grade room, as well as placing one of the birding stations outside their window. Attached are copies of thank you's received from the students in that class. The kids were often 'distracted' from their work by visitors to their feeders, and they turned their desks so that the feeders were always in view. They also created a special study area in their room devoted to birding. They created birdhouses from seed packets for Mother's Day gifts, carrying the theme home to their families. Another teacher, Mrs. Mortellaro, became personally interested in birding because of the activity and opportunity close at hand.

Mr. Vaughan, the 6th grade teacher, remarked that the books this year were much improved over last year. He also noted that the level of enthusiasm was much higher, and they showed a lot of pride in their work to maintain the stations. He is excited and making plans for next year. We believe that the stations have cultivated a keen interest and continuing desire to explore the world of birds.

A summary of the expenditures for this project is attached. Receipts are available upon request. Photos of the project are also attached. Below is a summary of the in-kind match for this project.

Activity	People Involved	Time Spent on Activity
Project Administration	Tanya McIlravy	20 hrs
Birdhouses	Lee Vaughan, Ed Krogan	12 hrs total
Birdhouses	22 students	3 hrs of class time each
Birdfeeding Presentation	51 students, 4 teachers	1 hr of class time each
Birding Presentation	22 students, 1 teacher	45 min of class time each

We would like to express our thanks for the grant and the chance to improve the schoolyard habitat as well as generate excitement about birds and their environment.

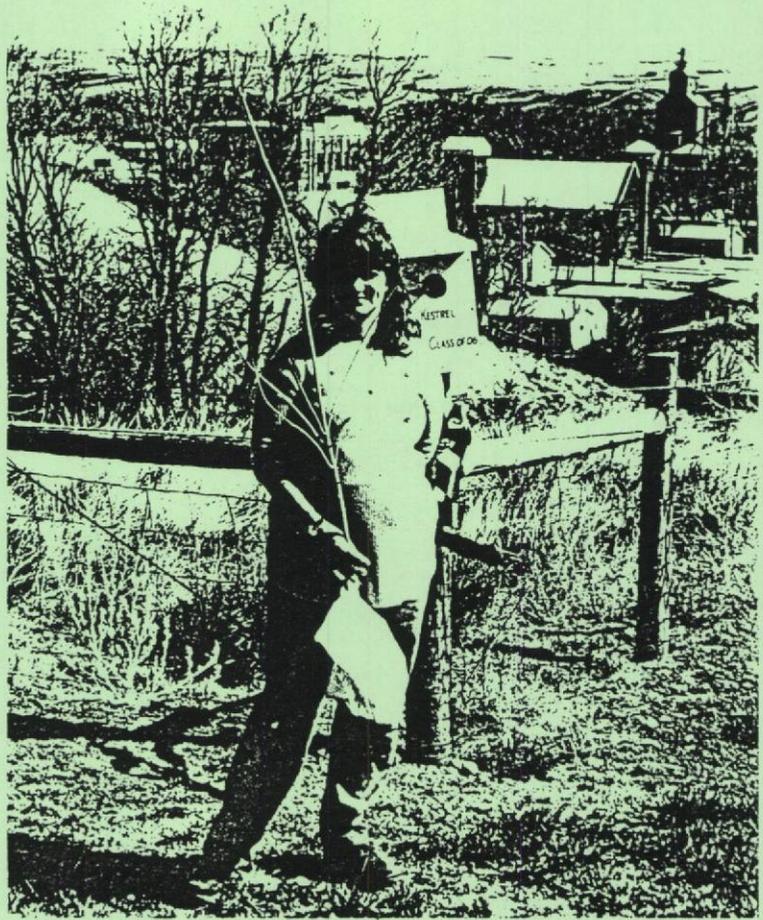


These photos are of Philip Second Graders. They are shown with the birdbath and one of the bird feeders placed outside their room. Above, some of the students are utilizing the special place created for them to study birds.

Haakon County Conservation District
GF&P Grant Expense Report
 May 2000 through February 2001

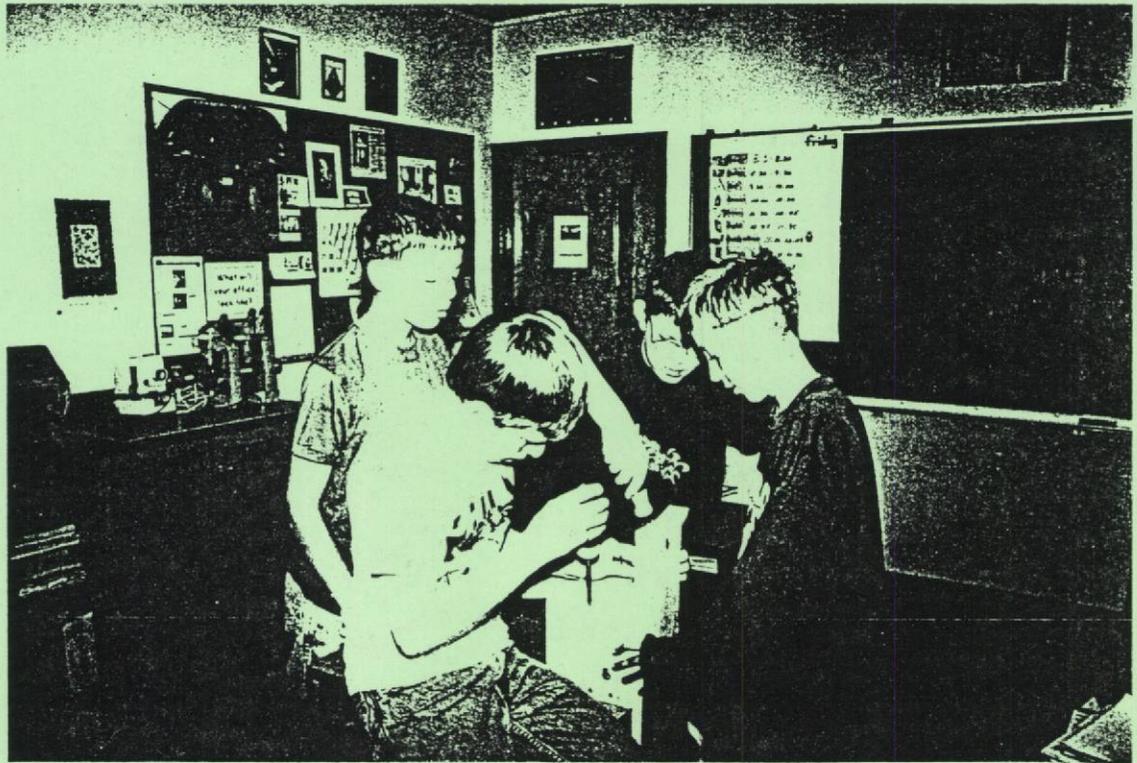
04/18/01

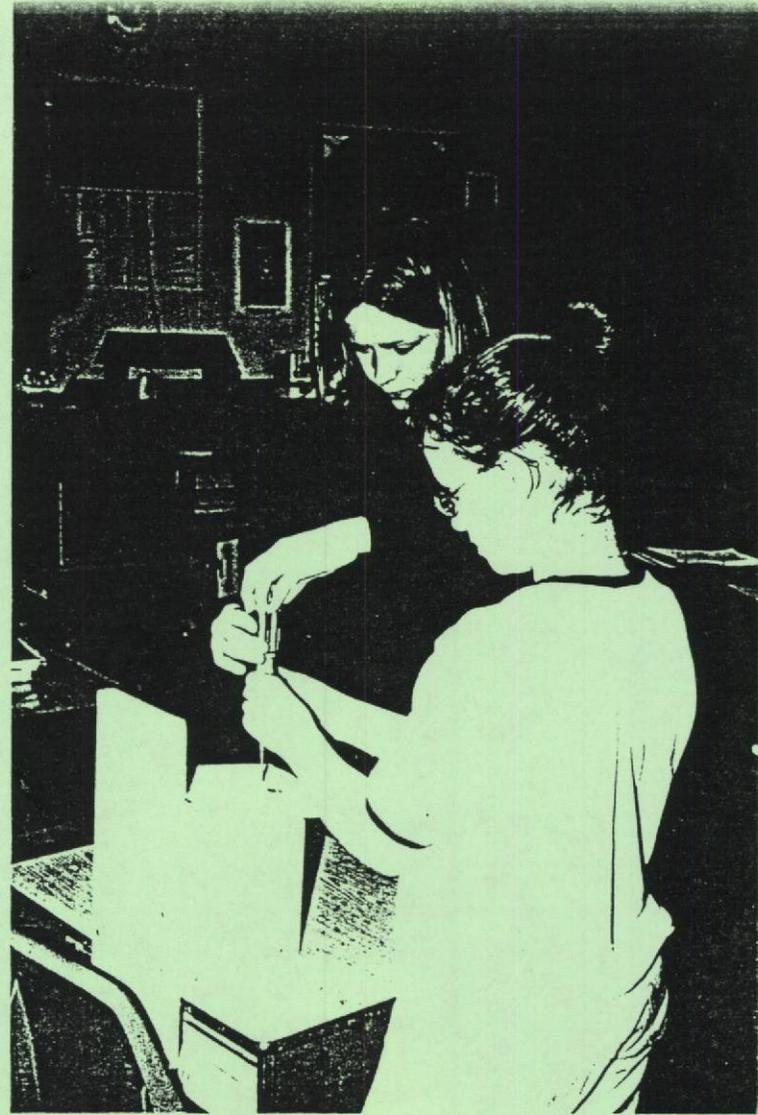
Type	Date	Num	Name	Memo	Amount	Balance
8500 · Outdoor Classroom Expenses						
8300 · SD GF&P Bird Habitat Expenses						
Check	5/11/2000	3641	Moses Building Center	birdhouse materials	46.65	46.65
Check	6/9/2000	3659	Moses Building Center	birdhouse materials	1.33	47.98
Check	6/9/2000	3660	Perryman, Denise	OC photos	9.28	57.26
Check	12/22/2000		Postal Service	return postage	6.85	64.11
Check	1/4/2001	3781	Tanya McIlravy	birdfeeders, feed, waterers	679.28	743.39
Check	2/13/2001	3804	Moses Building Center	feeder posts	9.28	752.67
Total 8300 · SD GF&P Bird Habitat Expenses					752.67	752.67
Total 8500 · Outdoor Classroom Expenses					752.67	752.67
TOTAL					752.67	752.67



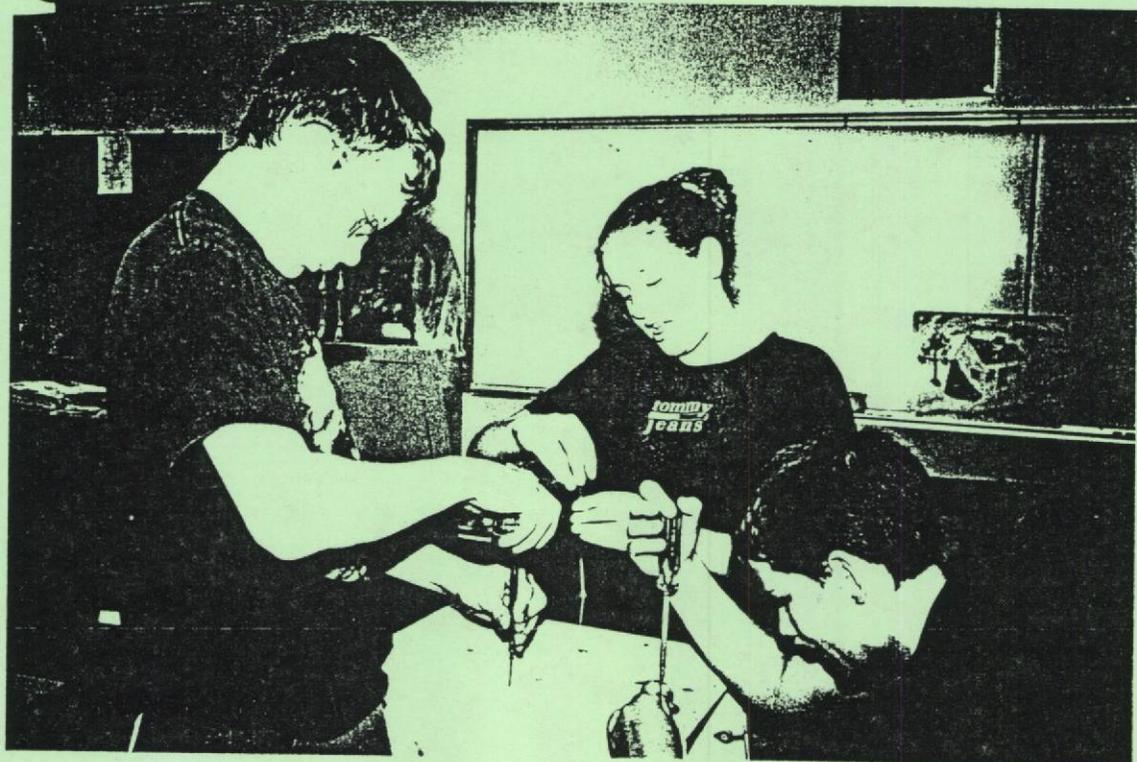
Arbor Day 2000 -- birdhouse in background

6th graders building birdhouses

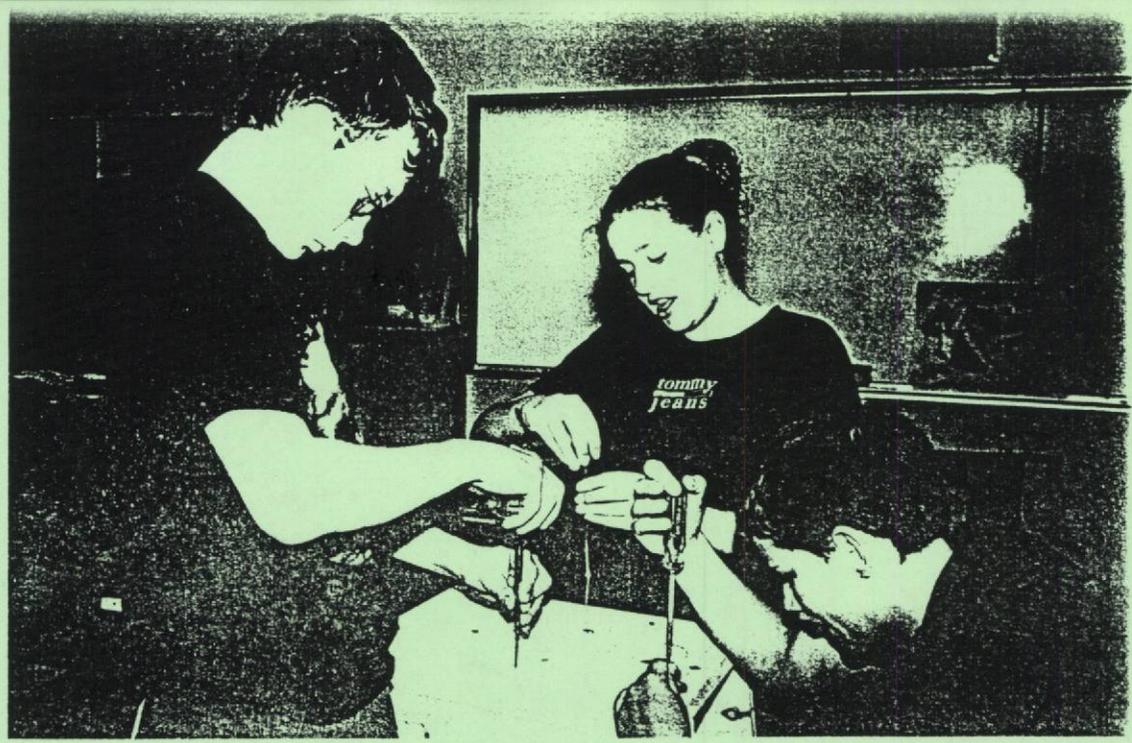




6th graders building
birdhouses



6th grade building
birdhouses
(at + below rt)



Tanya McIlravy, HCCD
Chad Tussing, SD GF&P
Birdfeeding presentation



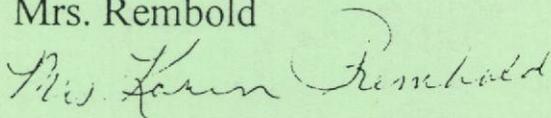
April 10, 2001

Dear Tanya,

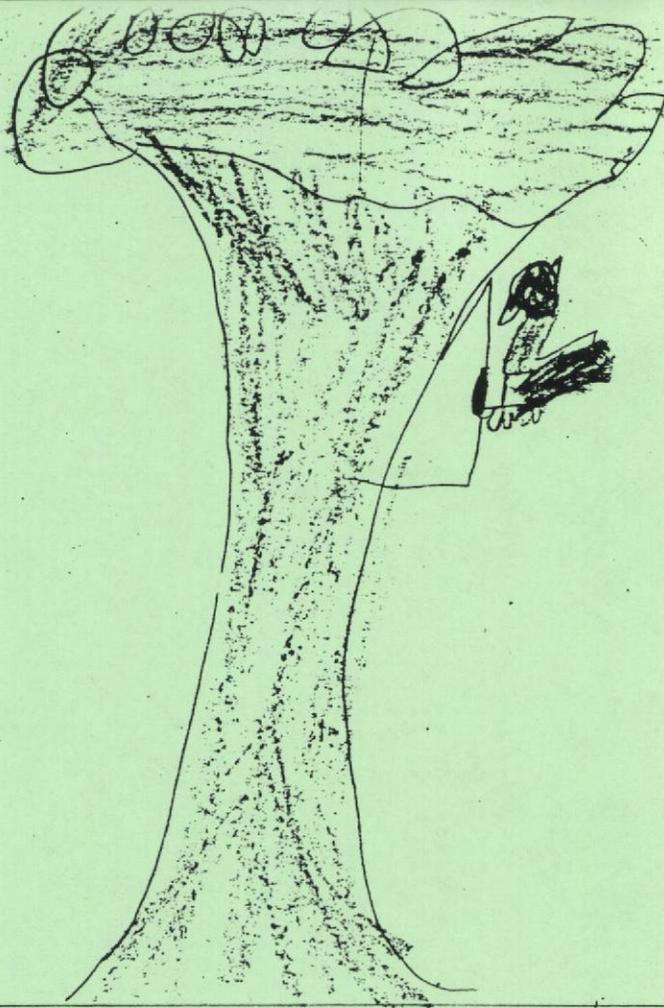
Thank you for all you've done to get birdfeeders and birdbath outside our classroom windows. It has been so much easier to get my students interested in bird watching, finding information, and doing a daily check to see which birds are using our feeders. The feeder that is hooked on to our classroom window is especially interesting. My students will try identifying the different birds using the feeders. It is really rewarding when some of them will share information they have been reading about a particular bird.

Right now they are excited about the outdoor classroom and are already thinking of other things they want to research. I appreciate you sharing web sites with my classroom. Keep up the good work.

Thanks again,
Mrs. Rembold



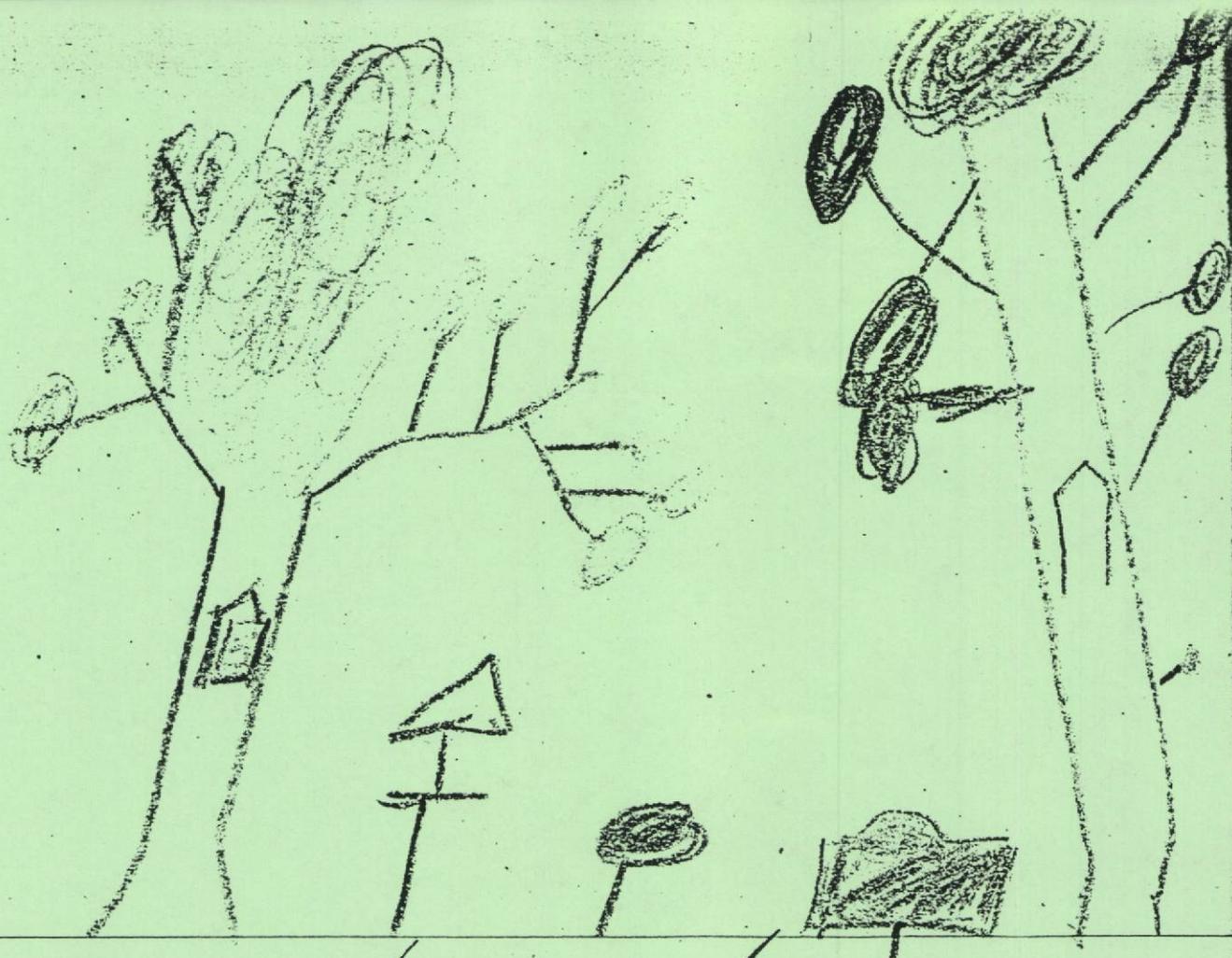
Mrs. Karen Rembold
Second grade teacher
Philip, SD 57567



There is a research table in our classroom that we use to study birds. I have gotten more interested in birds every day. The birds we've seen is the robin and the sparrow. Second grade has birdfeeder. give us

Thank you,

Beau Ferguson



In second grade we
are making a bird
reference book from
an internet site. Thank
you for giving us that
information. Erick Hoag



I am learning about birds, We
are watching the birdsfeeder

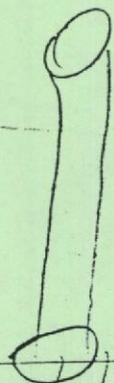
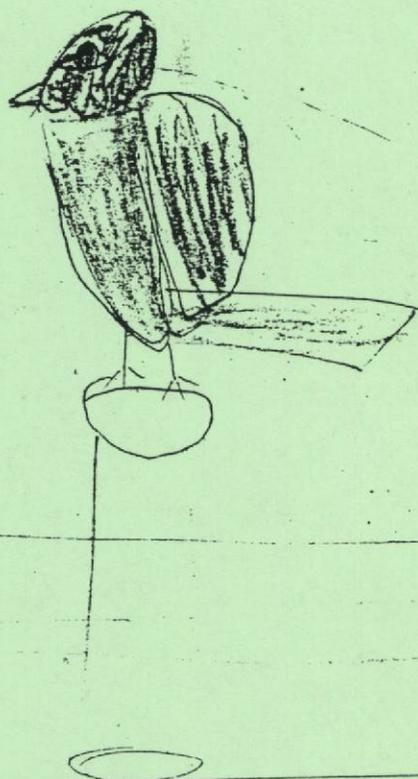
Male birds are bright red,

Kyle Iwan



I am learning about
robins and other kind of
birds too. We like the
bird feeders and the
bird bath to watch the
birds. It is interesting.
Thank-you, Santana Coater

Wyatt



The birds we saw at the
bird feeder are the robins,
sparrows, house finch, cedar wax
wings. We are also checking
the w-b sites sent us. We
learned about the robins
color. The male is brighter red

brighter colored than the female.

Thank you for the bird feeder

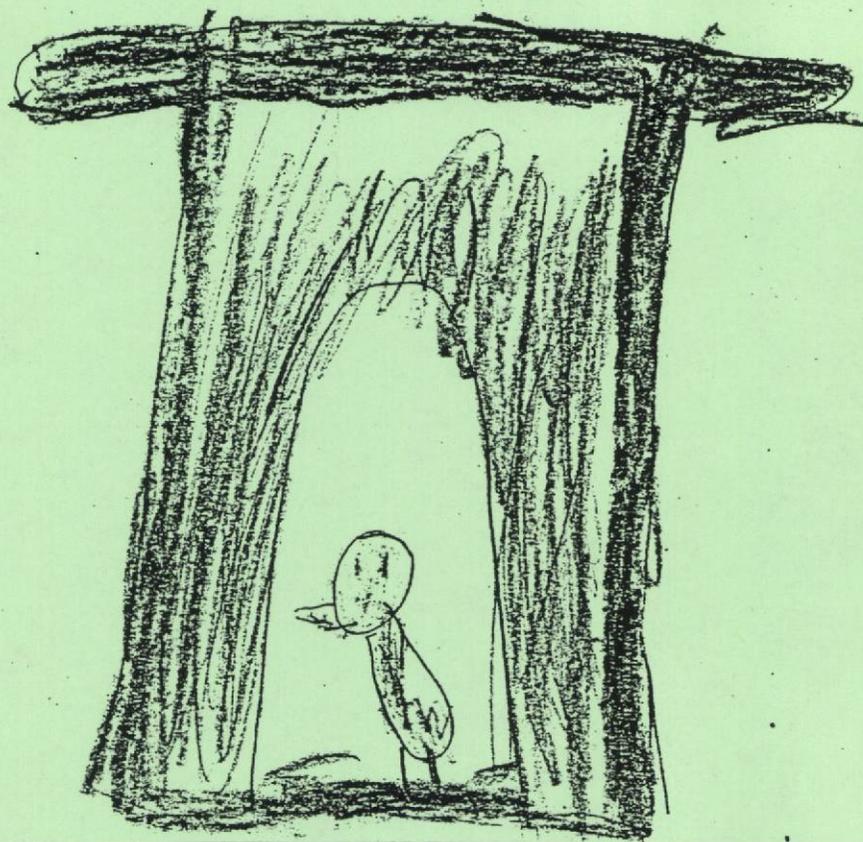
We made a research corner

in our class room to study

birds.

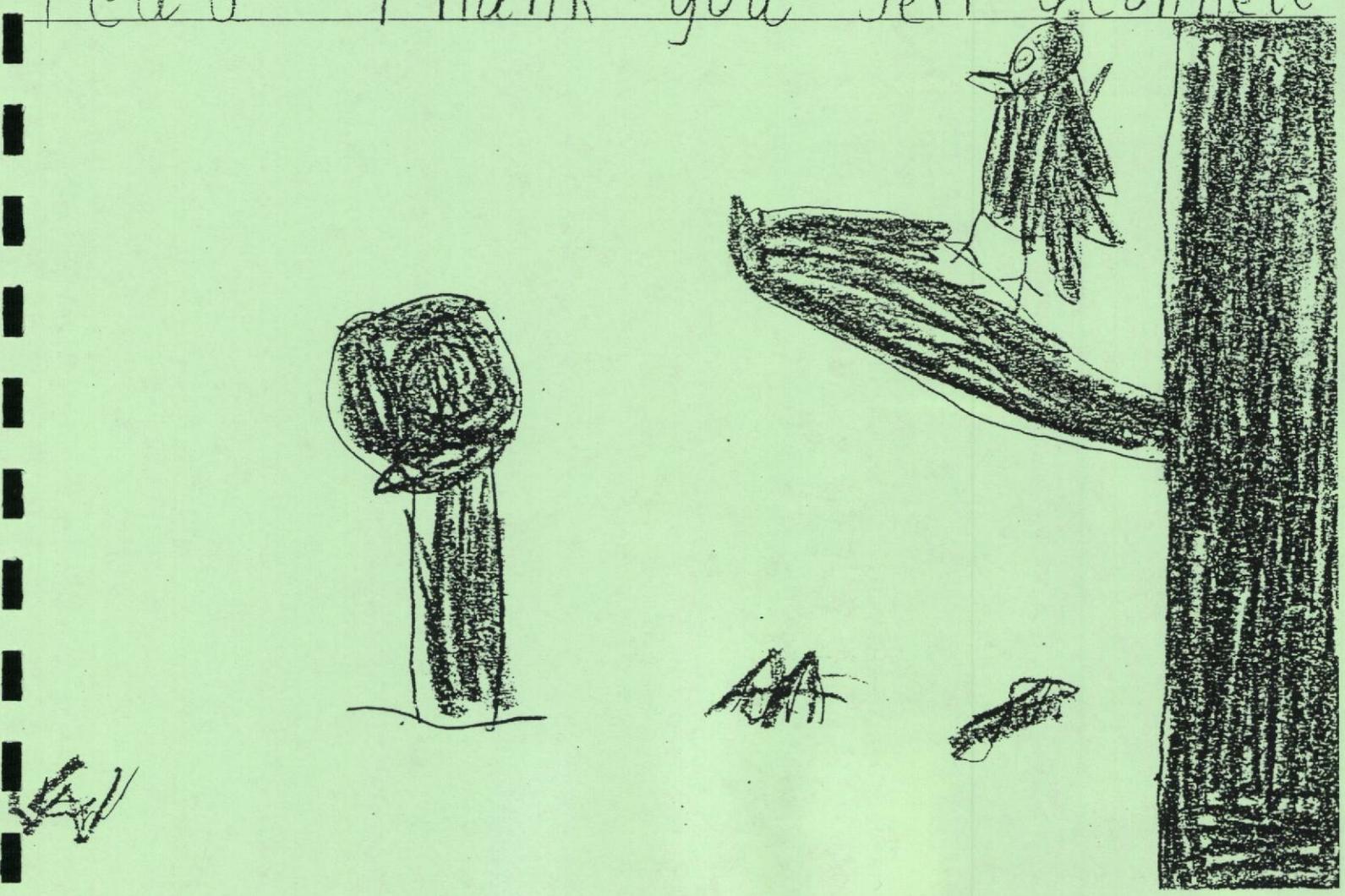
Thank you

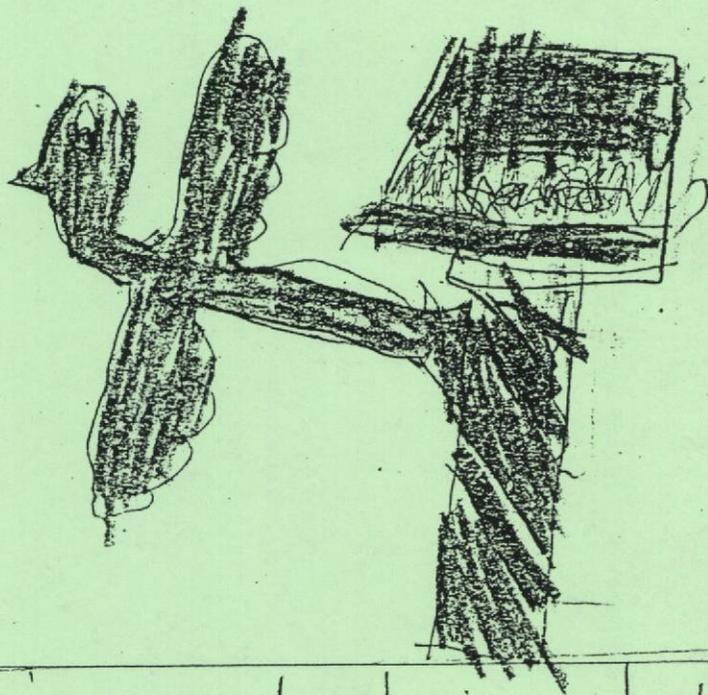
Wyatt Kammerer



I thank you for the bird bath and
the bird feeders. We saw birds
eating from the feeders
out side our window. Thank you
verey much. John Schofield

We have seen robins. We know what color they are and we have a map of which state has certain birds. Thank you for the bird bath and bird feed. Thank you Jeff O'Connell





I enjoy studying birds. I like
bird very much. Since the
birds have migrated back
we watch them at our bird feeder.

Thank you

Zane Pekron



In 2 grade we are learning about birds and the color of a robin.

Thank you for the bird bath and bird feeder. Some times we look for my bird that is enjoying the bath and bird feeder.

Thank you!

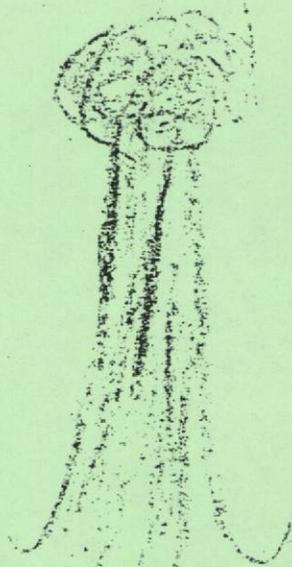
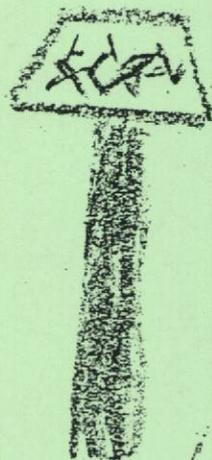
Molly & Cole P.

Alyssa Jirsa



~~Thank you for the bird feeders~~

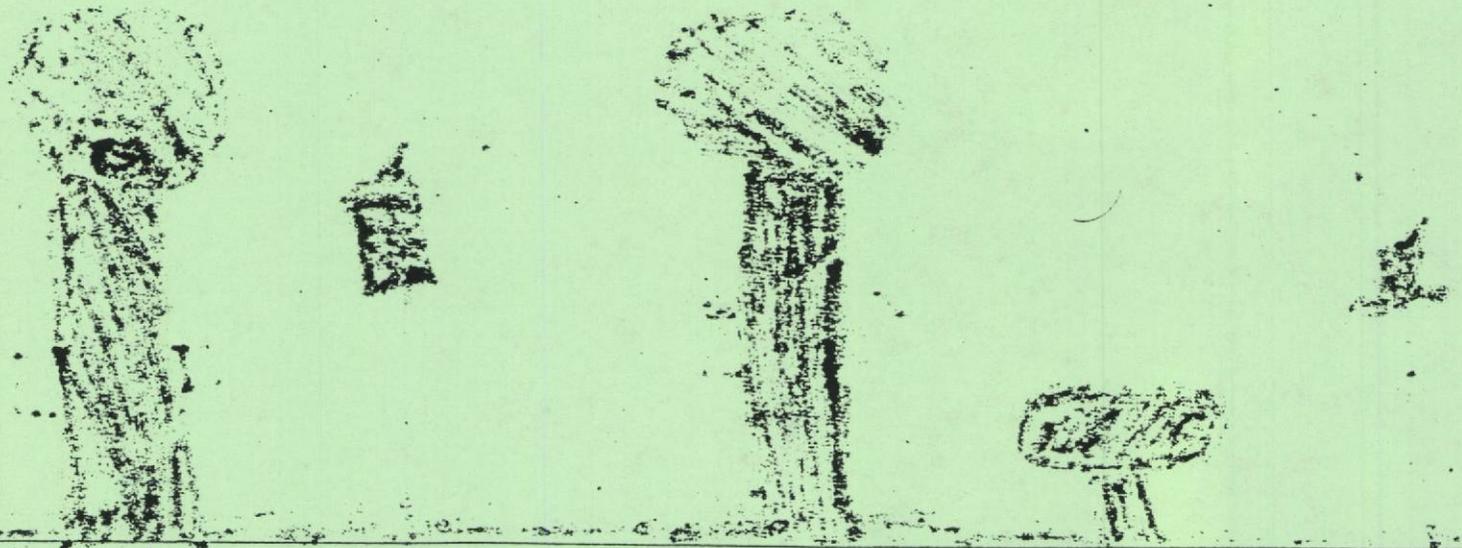
Thank you for the bird feeders
 and bird bath. I saw a
 sparrow. I love them. We
 watch them out our classroom
 windows. It helps us figure
 out which kinds of birds
 there are. Alyssa Jirsa



We are studying birds in school. Our class really enjoys all of the birdfeeders and birdbaths. We really enjoy studying birds. We have seen a lot of birds on the school grounds.

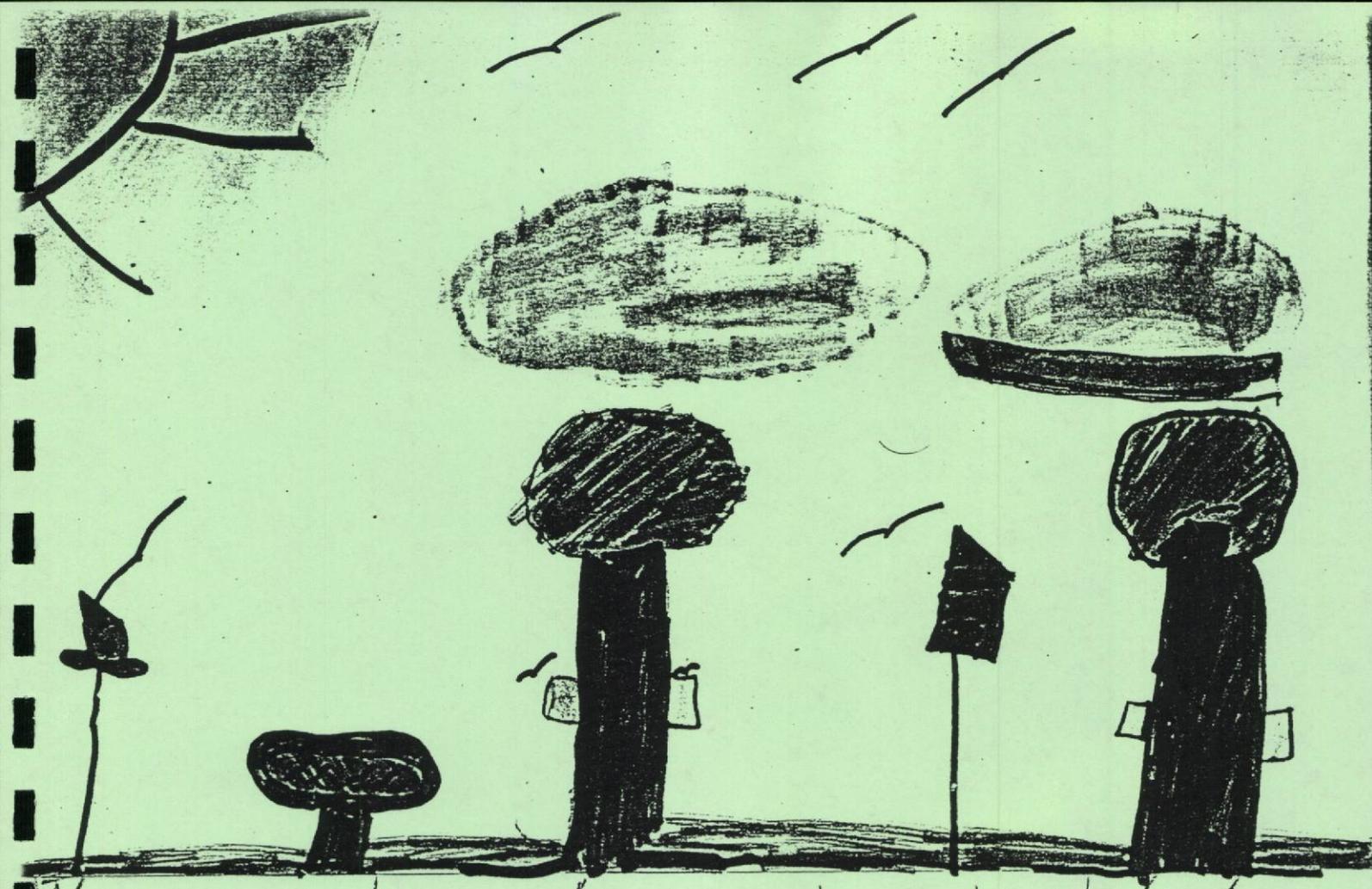
Thank you,

Bethany Kretsch



school. We got to see
robins, sparrow, house finch,
cedar wax wings. Thank
you for the bird feeder
and the water feeder.

Sincerely,
Morgan Frein

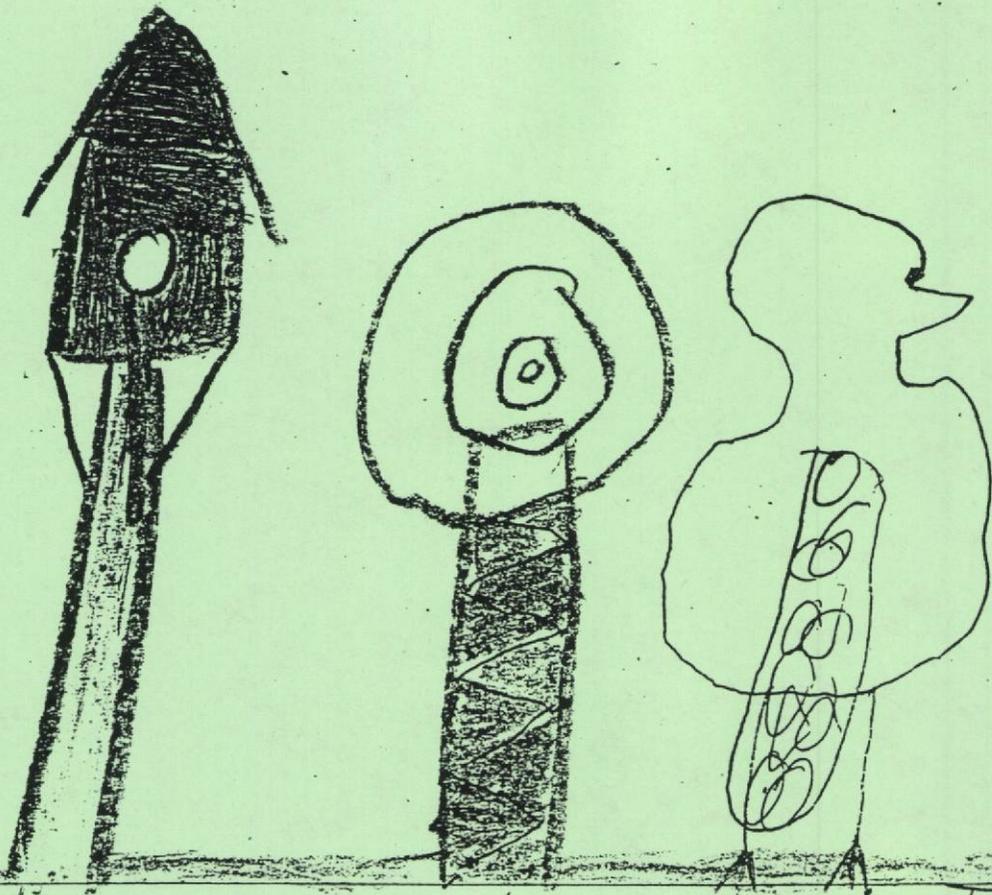


We are learning about birds.

We like the bird feeder and waterfeeder that you got us for our birds. I like to

study about birds. I

read books about birds at my house and at



I am learning about birds. I've seen robins and a bird with black and white feathers outside our class room windows at the bird feeders.

Thank you for getting the bird feeders and bird bath for us.

Richie Baye

Thank you! Bradly Richard

Arthur



Like the bird feeders and the
bird bath and the bird feeder
on the ground. And I am
interested in birds. I see
robins, sparrows, house finch,
cedar wax wing. Eat the food
and get a bath from the

bird bath. I like what
you do for us?

Love,

Desirae
Lynn