



C&O Canal National Historical Park Canal Classrooms Education Program



Photo Courtesy of Mike Mitchell

Thanks to the generous support of park partners, grantors and individual donors, the C&O Canal Classrooms education program engaged tens of thousands of local K-12 students since 2013. Here's to many years ahead!






Together with professional educators, communities and partner organizations, the C&O Canal successfully completed a five-year strategic plan aimed at developing a park wide, curriculum-based education program based on sustainable practices and strong partnerships.

More than 65,000 local school children participated in the Canal Classrooms education program (2013-2019), many of these students were classified as Title I and represent both urban and rural communities.



A woman wearing a green bucket hat and sunglasses is looking down at a map on a blue table. A young boy with blonde hair, wearing a blue polo shirt, is also looking at the map. The woman's hand is pointing at a spot on the map. The boy's hand is resting on the map. The map shows a river and some buildings. The background is a grassy area. A text box is overlaid on the image.

For some it was a first time visit to the C&O Canal and a national park. Students left having a better understanding of how their “backyard” national park is relevant to the nation, the state, the ecosystem, as well as a vital part of their community, heritage and future.

Canal Classrooms Corps (CCC) Teacher Program, a flexible staffing model composed largely of local retired teachers and professionals, piloted in 2013 with 9 veteran educators who were recruited and trained to deliver park education programs to school audiences visiting the C&O Canal at Williamsport.





Today, more than 50 educators make up three teams, one at each of our primary education destinations – Cumberland, Williamsport and Great Falls. Without the CCC our outreach to schools would not be possible. Each school year, CCC teachers are collectively scheduled over 500 times, comprising over 3,500 service hours.



A Transportation Scholarship Program, created with park partners, has provided more than \$100,000 to local schools to help cover busing expenses for transporting students to and from the park. Nearly 60% of funding was allocated to Title I students.



External funding and support from park partners, private donors, education organizations, local communities, and National Park Service grants laid a solid foundation for establishing the Canal Classrooms program.

Partner support included the development of PreK-12 curriculum programs at three locations, in-class education programs, online education resources, staffing support, a flexible staffing model utilizing local professionals and teachers by trade, education internships, professional development opportunities, teacher workshops, bus scholarships, infrastructure improvements, historic furnishings, and supplies and materials.



In partnership with local school administrators and teachers, Canal Classrooms developed and implemented a suite of PreK-12 grade education programs at Cumberland, Williamsport, Great Falls, as well as in-school programming. All 20 curriculum programs identify with national and state learning standards, support learning goals identified by local school systems, incorporate STEM activities and include online extension activities.





During the summer, Canal Classrooms hosts Teacher-Ranger-Teacher internships and curriculum workshops, providing local teachers with great opportunities for professional development while they learn about the park. When school resumes, teachers return to their classrooms, sharing their experiences with students throughout the year.

The Canal Classrooms program supported numerous Education Internships through the Student Conservation Association. Interns, most recent college graduates, gained real-world experience while learning about the park, park operations, and interpretive and education techniques. They also conducted research on the following topics: African American History, Native American History, Women's History, Immigrant History and Oral History, Bats, Fossils and other natural resources.





Canal Classrooms developed and piloted a Citizen Scientist program with Washington County Public Schools' Fairview Outdoor School to engage high school students in real-world application of science and environmental education. The Citizen Scientist program pilot included all high schools from the school district and featured multiple park locations.



While in the park, Citizen Scientist students participate in water quality testing and environmental education by observing three bodies of water: a stream, the river and the canal. The program includes a service-learning component as students record their data to share with peers and teachers.

Canal Classrooms completed a multi-year project, the C&O Canal's "Adopted Class", with a 2016 graduating class from Seven Locks Elementary School, located in the East District of the park. As a result, over 500 students, grades K-5, experienced a specially-designed park program or a classroom program facilitated by park rangers and Canal Classrooms Corps Teachers. A special evening program was held by Seven Locks Elementary School in May 2016, where students shared special items they created to recognize their four years of studying the C&O Canal (i.e. songs, poems, artwork, etc.). Items filled a time capsule and will be on display at the school.



Canal Classrooms development of content and resources available to students and teachers on the Education section of the park's website. Additions included new curriculum programs, Plan Your Visit Guides, pre/post visit materials and professional development opportunities.



C&O Canal Interpretive and Education staff participate in education-related development and training annually. This includes a variety of webinars, curriculum development teams, and workshops to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities of developing and delivering curriculum programs to students of all ages and backgrounds.



Now, a few words from our
favorite visitors...



“Thank you for teaching us how to use the locks at the C&O Canal” The Hickory Huskies 4th Graders





“My favorite was learning about, the mules they are strong animals, I liked it when I got to feed the mules.” Delene, grade 4

Photo Courtesy of Mike Mitchell



“Thank you power rangers”
1st Grader DCPS



“This was a great trip. We were extremely pleased with the teachers/rangers and the changes this year!” Washington County Public Schools, Grade 4 Teacher

Photo Courtesy of Mike Mitchell



“Rangers were great. Enjoyed the new tour. It was kid-friendly and supported the new curriculum standards.”
Allegany County Public Schools Grade 4 Teacher

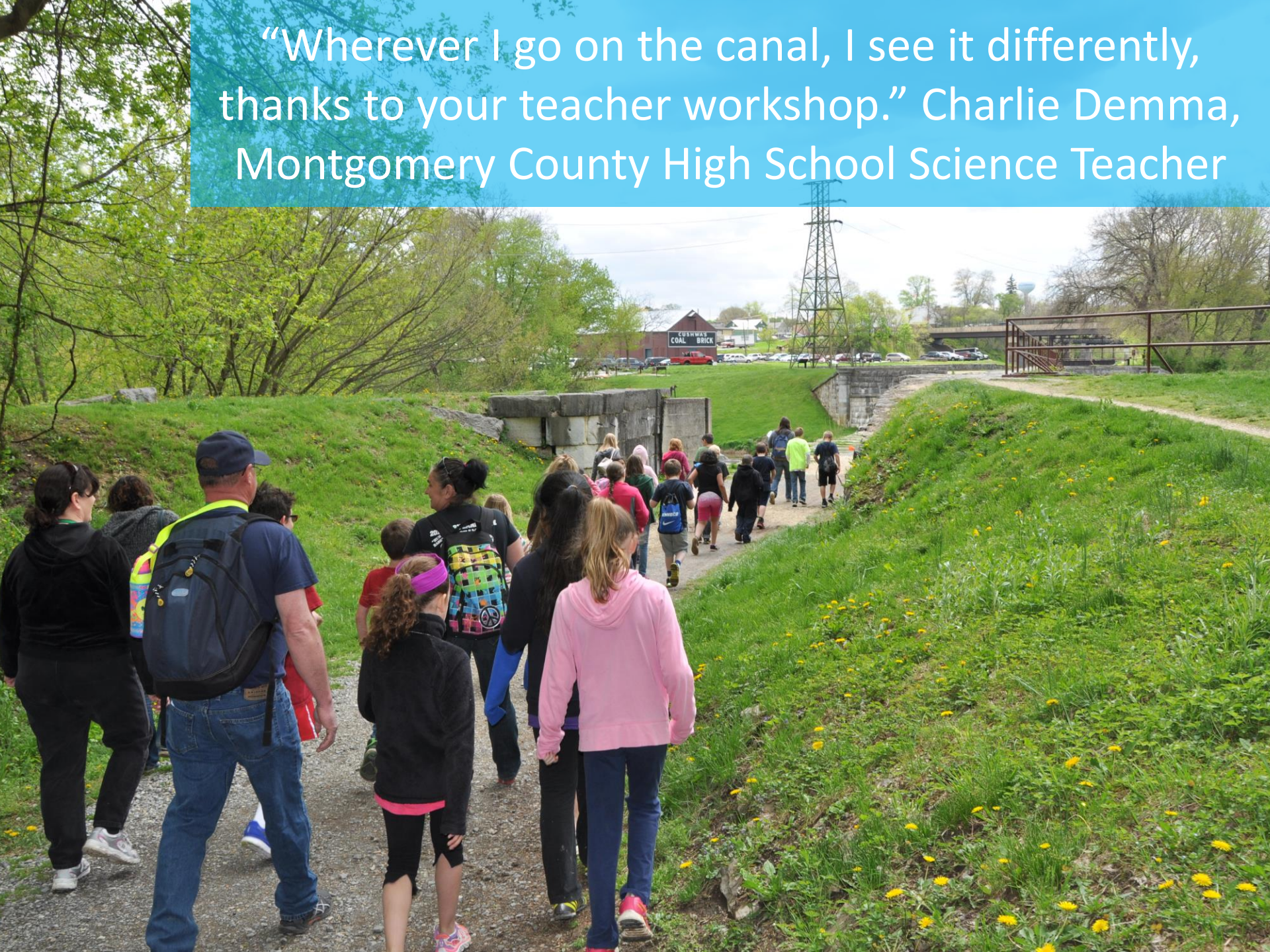


“Great staff – very passionate about working with the students and educating them on the canal” Montgomery County Public School Elementary teacher

“I love it. I get to keep my hand in teaching and enjoy the interaction with the students.” recently retired Canal Classroom Corps Teacher



“Wherever I go on the canal, I see it differently, thanks to your teacher workshop.” Charlie Demma, Montgomery County High School Science Teacher



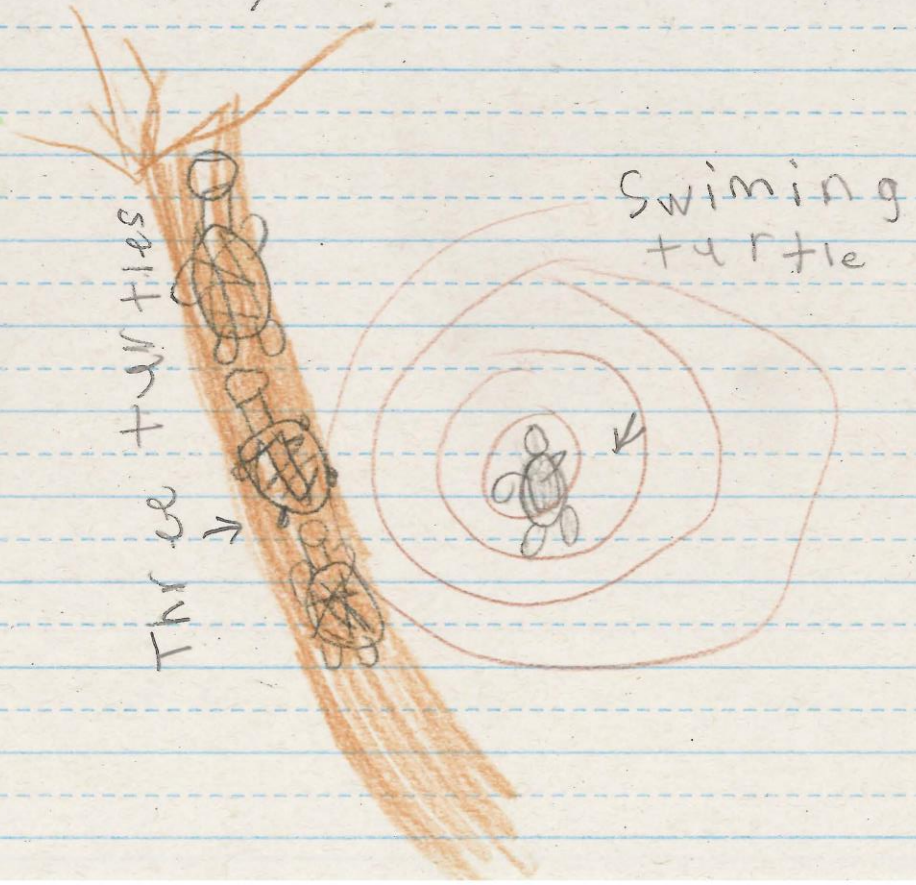
“I can’t believe we hiked 2.5 miles! It was muddy and fun.” Penelope Grade 3





Dear Rangers

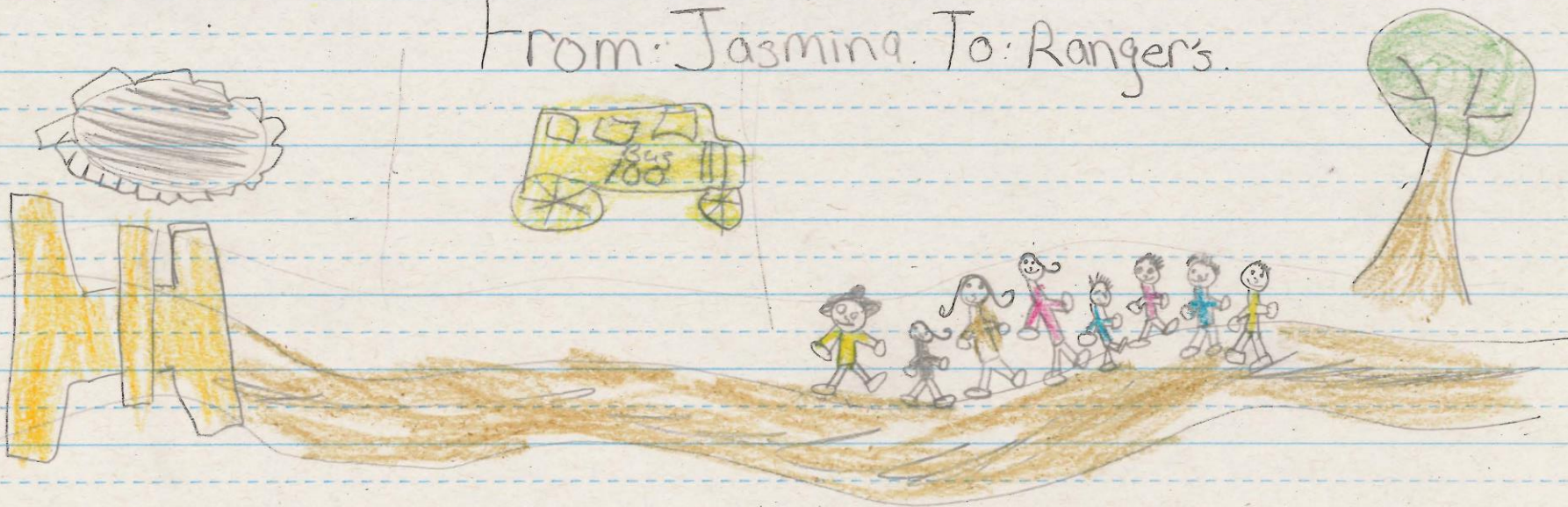
Thank you so much for the experience
on the canal I really enjoyed the game
we played were awesome. I really want to
come back soon. sincerely Bailey



Dear rangers

Thank you so much for the experience on the canal. I really enjoyed
the hike doing the games measuring the trees the height how big is the tree
seeing the animals like the weeds the birds the worms the locks that were
locks for the canal. We will come back soon!

From: Jasmina To: Rangers.



Dear Canal Rangers, May 1, 2014
Thank you so much for the terrific field trip
to the canal. It was so awesome! I like
when we went into the canal lock and
saw the mini C&O canal, I also
liked learning about how the canal worked.
I also liked when we went on a 2nd
hike, I was exhausted, but it was worth
it! But the best, was being with really
nice teachers, and having fun with them.
I think the C&O Canal is cool. I want
to know more about the C&O canal.
I wanna go again.

Sincerely,
Emma Mortar



Dear canal Rangers,

Thank you for the best field trip
ever you guys are the best canal rangers
in the world! Thank you for doing this
for us you're the best!

Sincerely,
James

we are on a hike! that I almost died
on lol!



I liked when
we made the
fossils.



Nov. 19, 2013

Dear Mr. Fred and Ms. Ann,

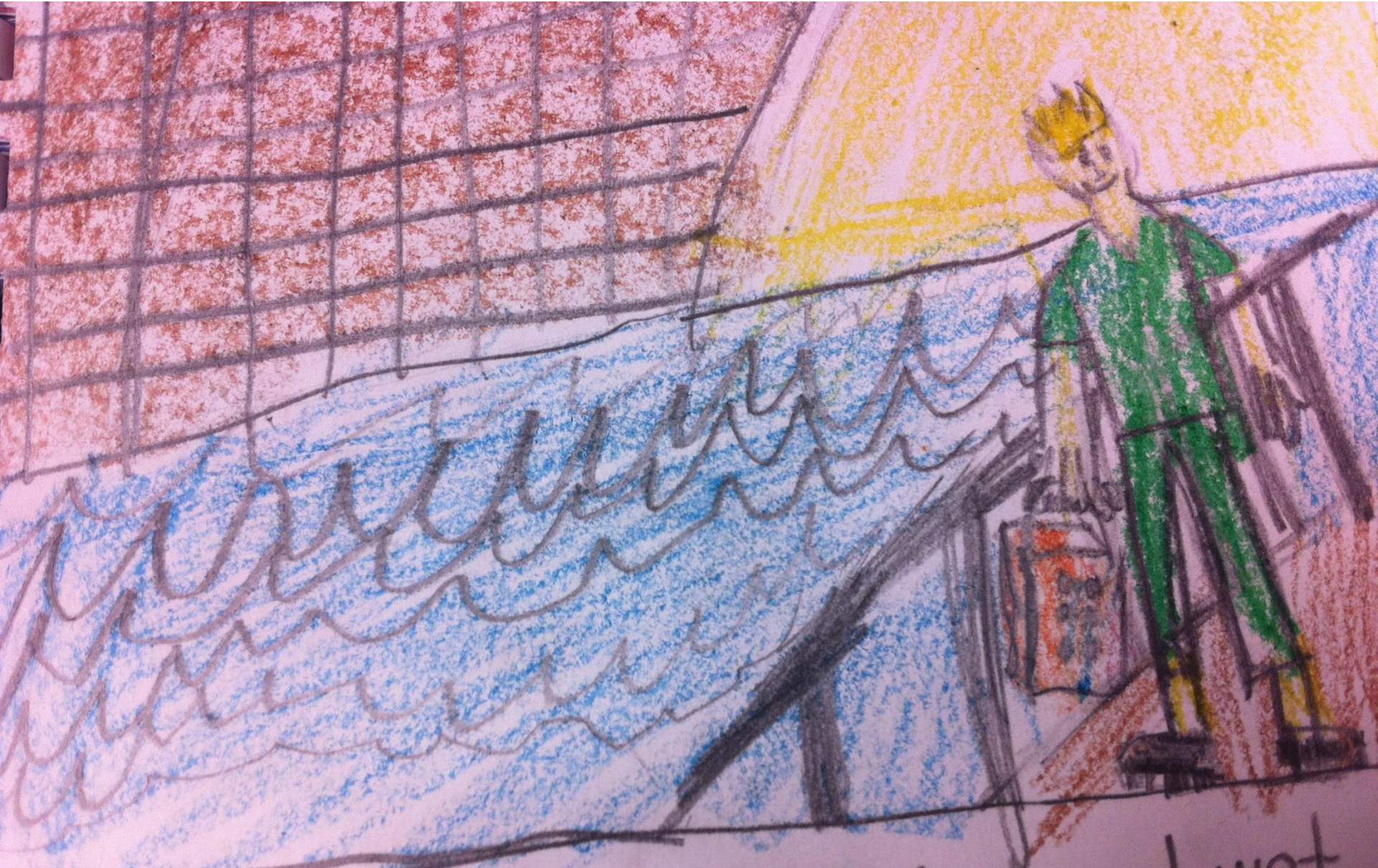
We appreciate the the time you took to show us around the canal. Thank you for teaching us alot I really had a fun time.

My favorite part was going into the lock house. It was cold in there. The house was really old. My second favorite thing was operating the lock.

Three things I learned was that there were alot of floods, there was alot of erosion, they transported lots of goods on the canal.

Thank you for the great time!

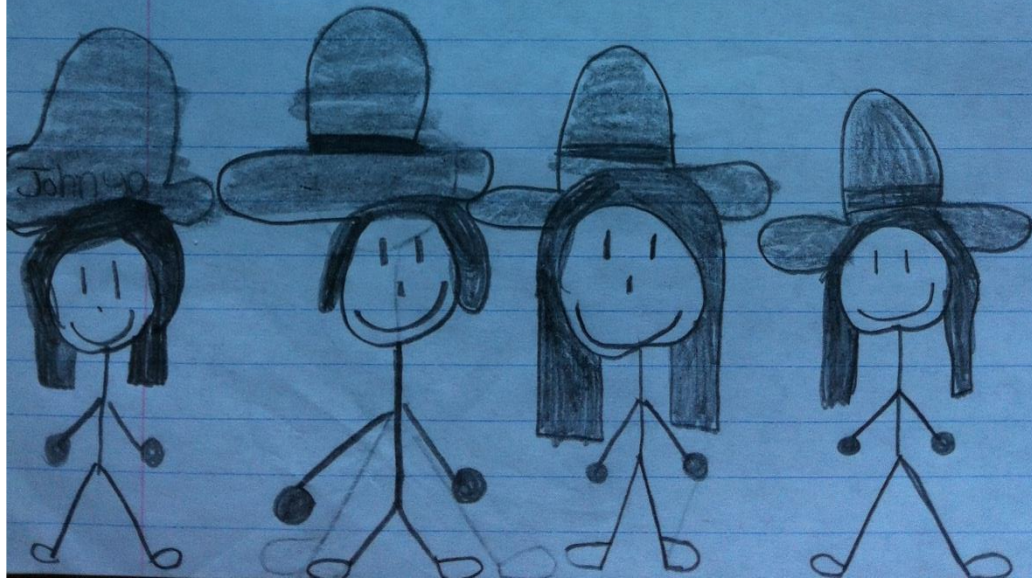
Thanks again,
Olivia



The tunnel was very dark and wet.

May 1st, 2014

Dear Canal Rangers Thank you
So much for the terrific field
trip to the Cando Canal
I want to come back some
time but when my mom lets
me can you teach me
more about the Cando Canal and
next time I want to walk
the path more next time and
that was a very far way.
Sincerely Johnya B.



Dear Canal Rangers

Thank you so much for

The terrific field trip to

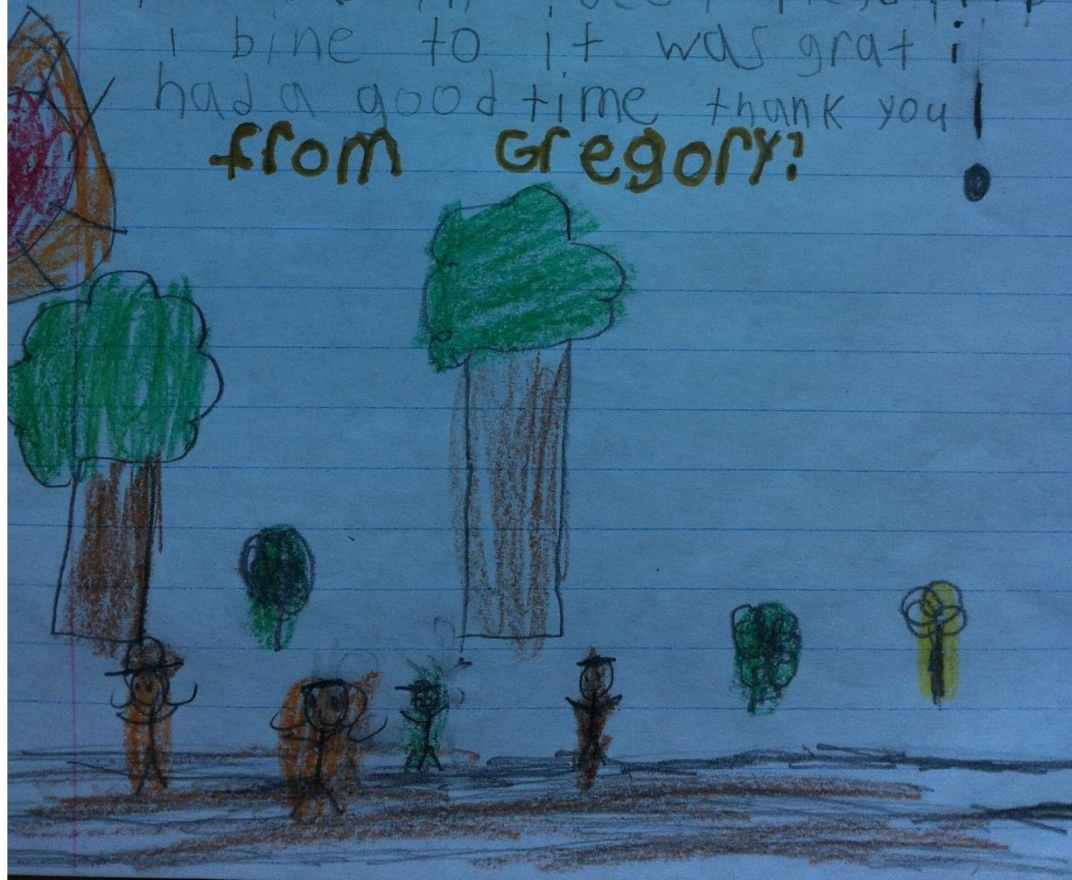
the canal it was fun

it was the best field trip

i bine to it was grat i

had a good time thank you!

from Gregory!



I + was a great
field trip





Thank you!