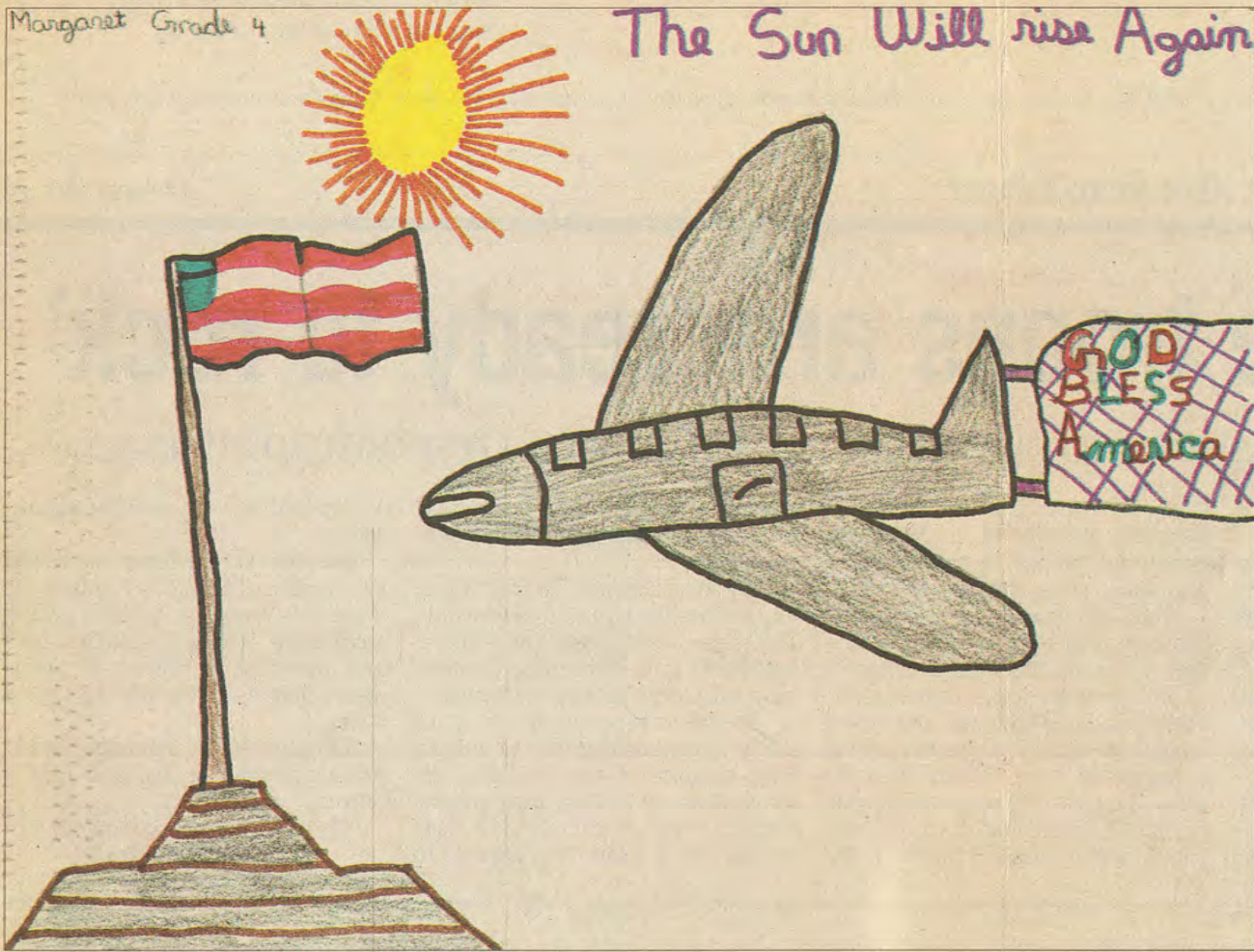


AMERICA'S RESPONSE | DEALING WITH DISASTER



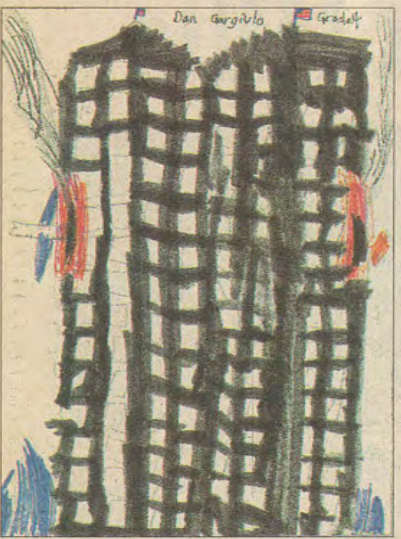
Margaret Ruchita, Grade 4, Jefferson School, West Caldwell



Dan Herman, Grade 4, Jefferson School, West Caldwell



Stephanie Mirabella, Grade 3, Warnsdorfer School, East Brunswick



Dan Gargiulo, Grade 4, Jefferson School, West Caldwell

Trying to understand through art

Getting a handle on what happened at the World Trade Center hasn't been easy for most of us. For weeks we have sought out conversations that allowed us to explore our feelings about the tragedy of that Tuesday morning and to vent them verbally.

Children don't have such a sophisticated coping tool available.

Instead, they often turn to other outlets, including art. "Drawing is the language of emotions for lots of kids," says Caroline Clauss-Ehlers, a psychologist who teaches at Rutgers University in New Brunswick and has a private practice in New York devoted to children.

"When a child draws a picture of the actual incident — of a plane headed for the towers or crashing into the towers — that very often is an attempt to try to understand how this all happened," she says.

Pictures of the Stars and Stripes are something else. "A drawing of a flag or some other American symbol can be a way of expressing hope this won't happen again or of feeling that the country will be protected in the future," says Clauss-Ehlers.

And those surrounding themselves with the red, white and blue of the flag by wearing that type of clothing are conveying a sense of personal safety. "They're telling others within their personal sphere that we're going to be okay," she says.

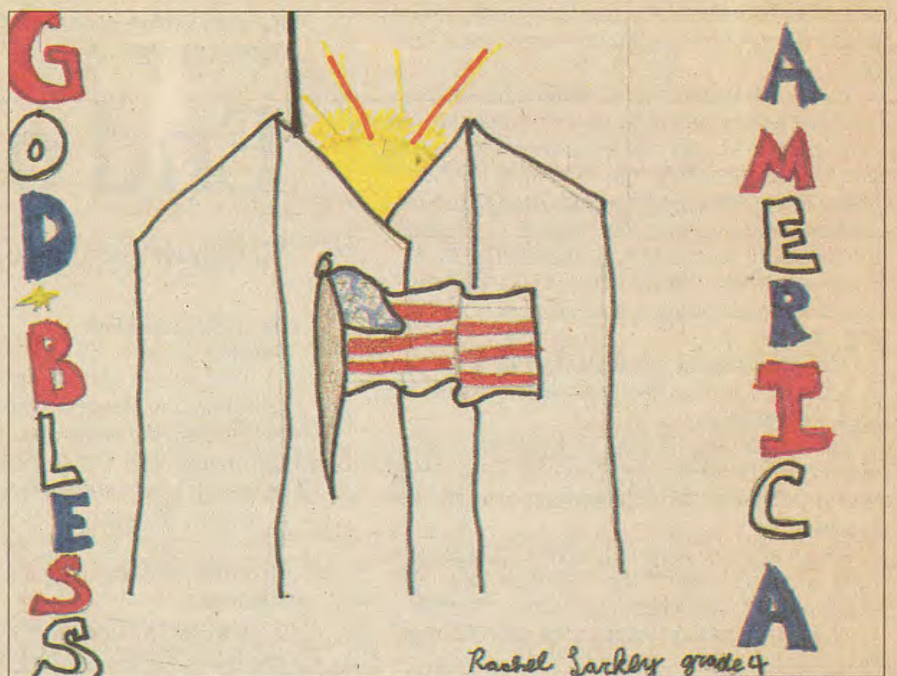
On this page are examples of how some children dealt with the tragedy artistically.



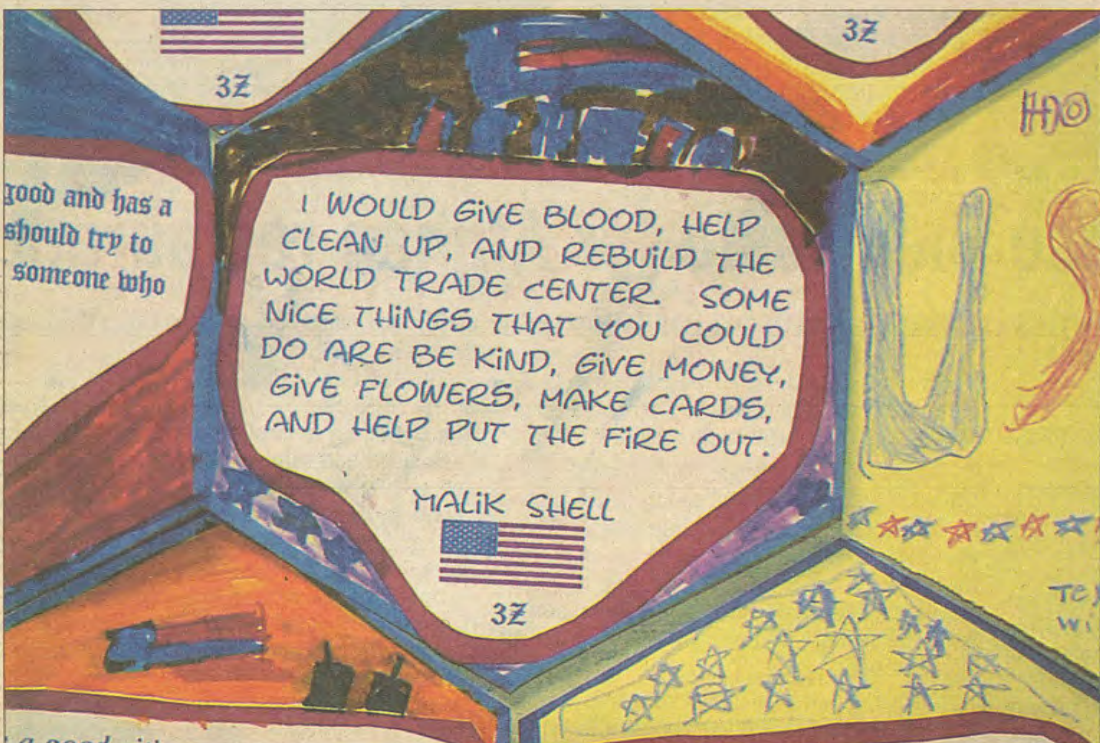
Vanessa Wilson, left, and Somali Abdus-Salaam, Grade 5, Cleveland School, Rahway.



Iyah Martin, Grade 5, Cleveland School, Rahway



Rachel Larkey, Grade 4, Jefferson School, West Caldwell



Malik Shell, Grade 3, Cleveland School, Rahway



Kristen Warvel, Grade 2, Cleveland School, Rahway