

A Day in Star City



Illustrated and Inspired by
Kids at the COTS Family Shelter

Words by Julie Samara



Committee on Temporary Shelter

278 Main Street
The Daystation
Families in Transition
The Firehouse Family Shelter
Rental Opportunity Center
The Smith House
St. John's Hall
The Streetwork Program
The Waystation
The Wilson

PO Box 1616
Burlington, Vermont 05402

tel: (802) 864-7402
fax: (802) 864-2612
www.cotsonline.org



United Way



About Star City

I got to spend many afternoons reading good books and doing art projects with kids at COTS Family Shelter last summer. One day, the activity I'd planned was for the kids to design and map out their own city. When I arrived, a "Star City council meeting" was in progress out back by the sandbox. After watching the kids fill up pads of paper with characters and scenes they'd imagined — all the while playing cops, firefighters, elves, dragons, and super-heroes on the side — the kids' Star City game instantly struck me as the best way to capture the amazing spirit and creative potential they showed every day. I would like to thank all of the fantastic kids who responded to the idea of "the book" and made it happen — you're all stars!

— Julie Samara, COTS Intern
Summer 2002



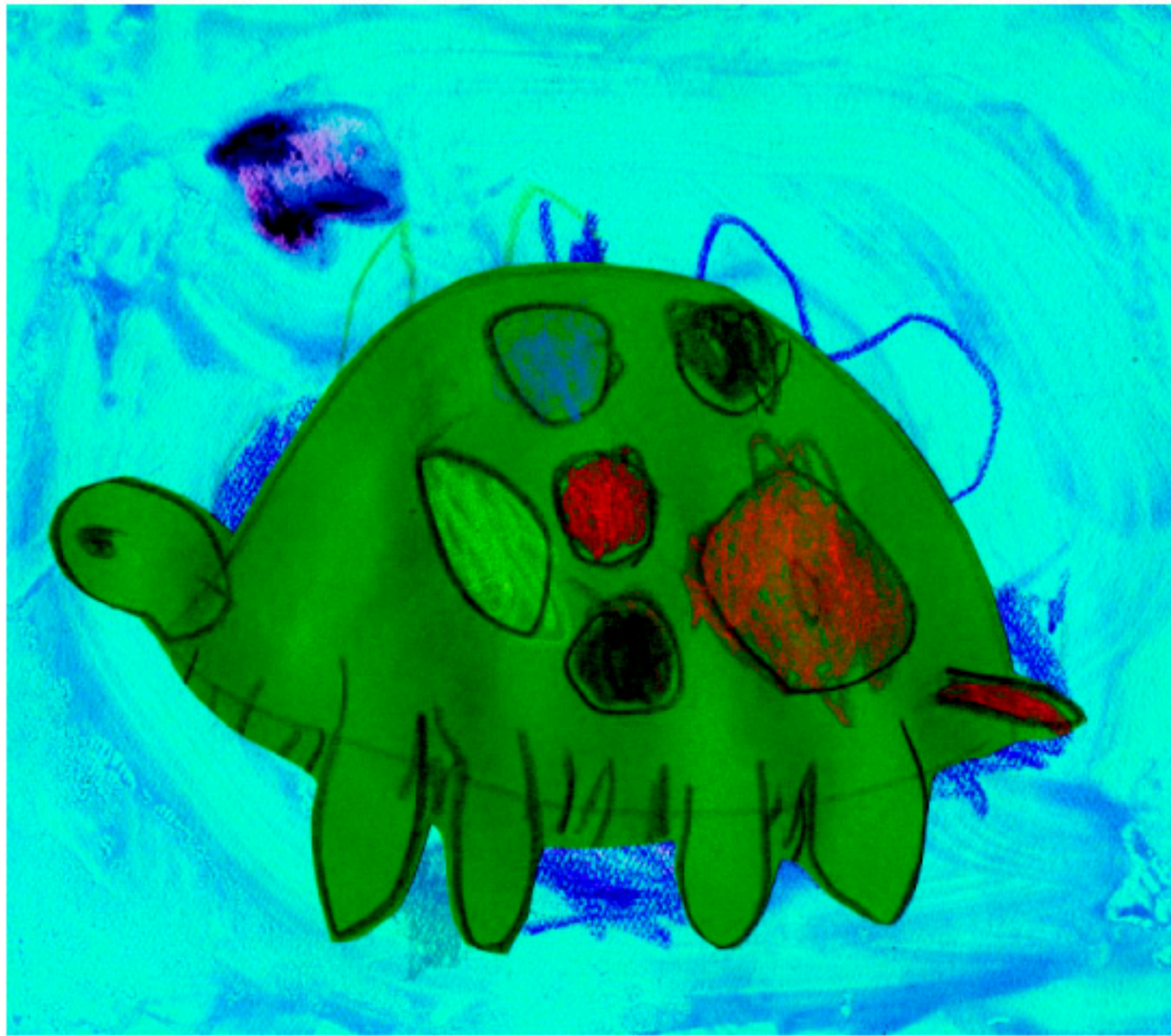
It's a new day in Star City, and everyone's going somewhere different.



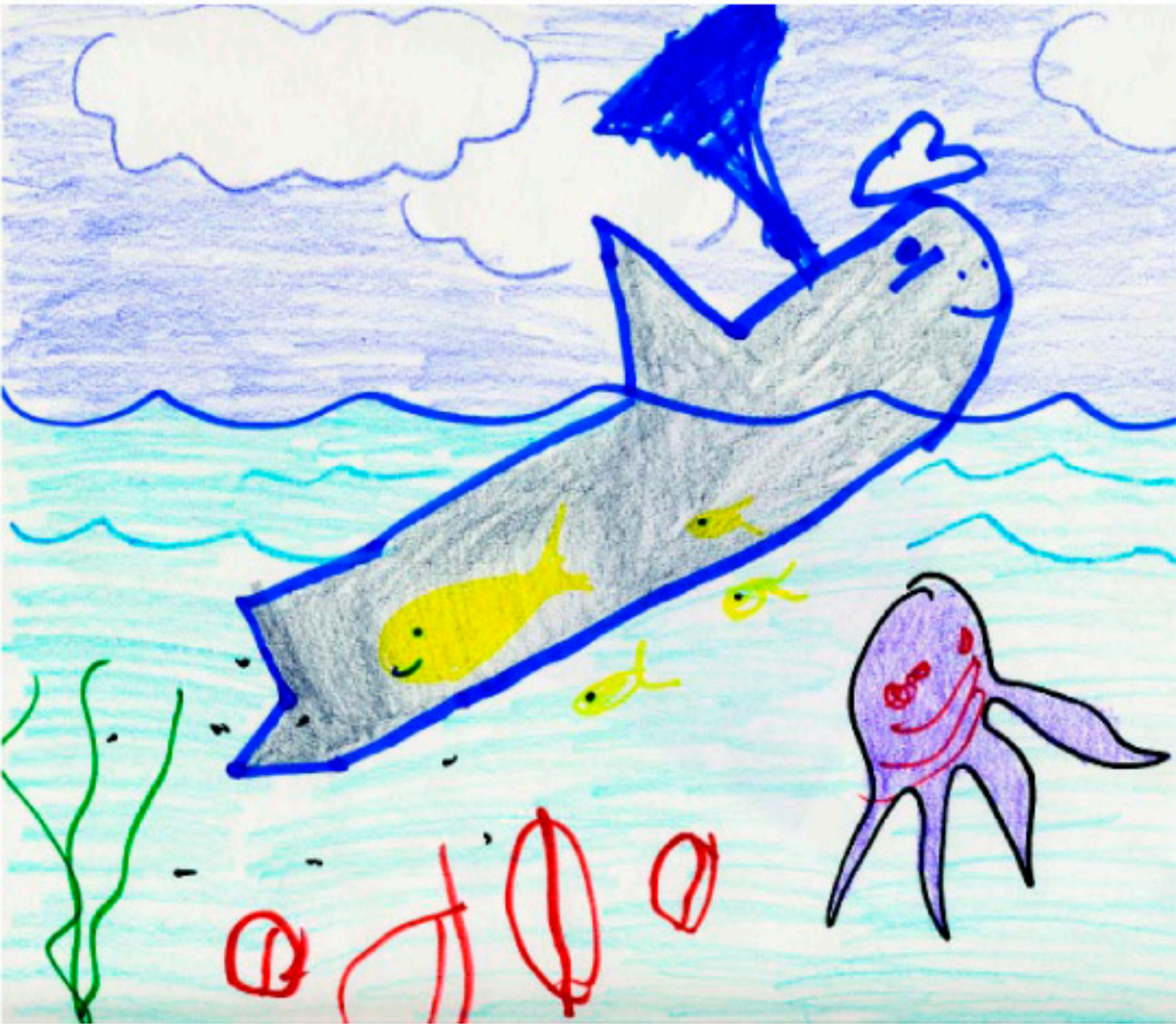
The butterflies are going
to Star City Garden,



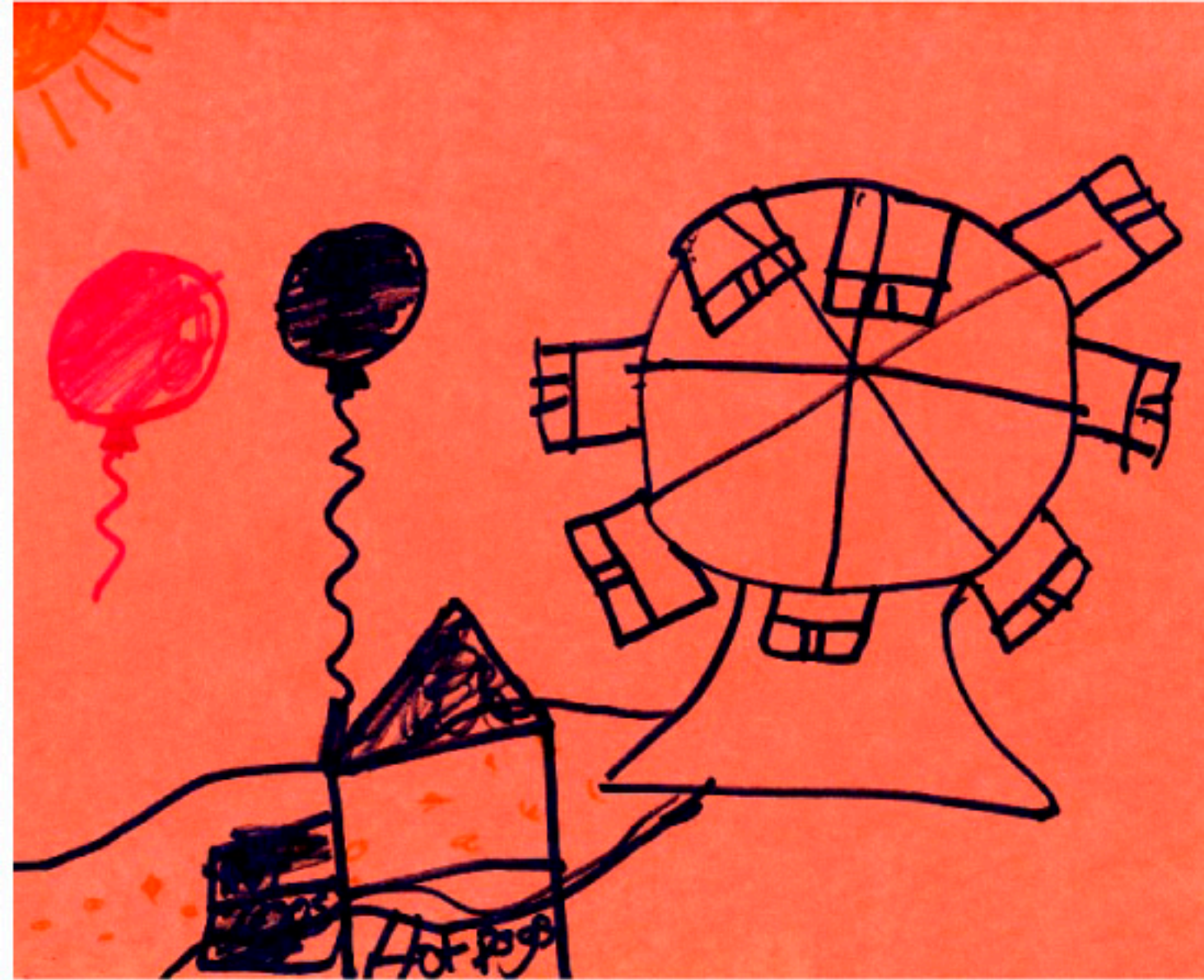
where the flowers are friendly,



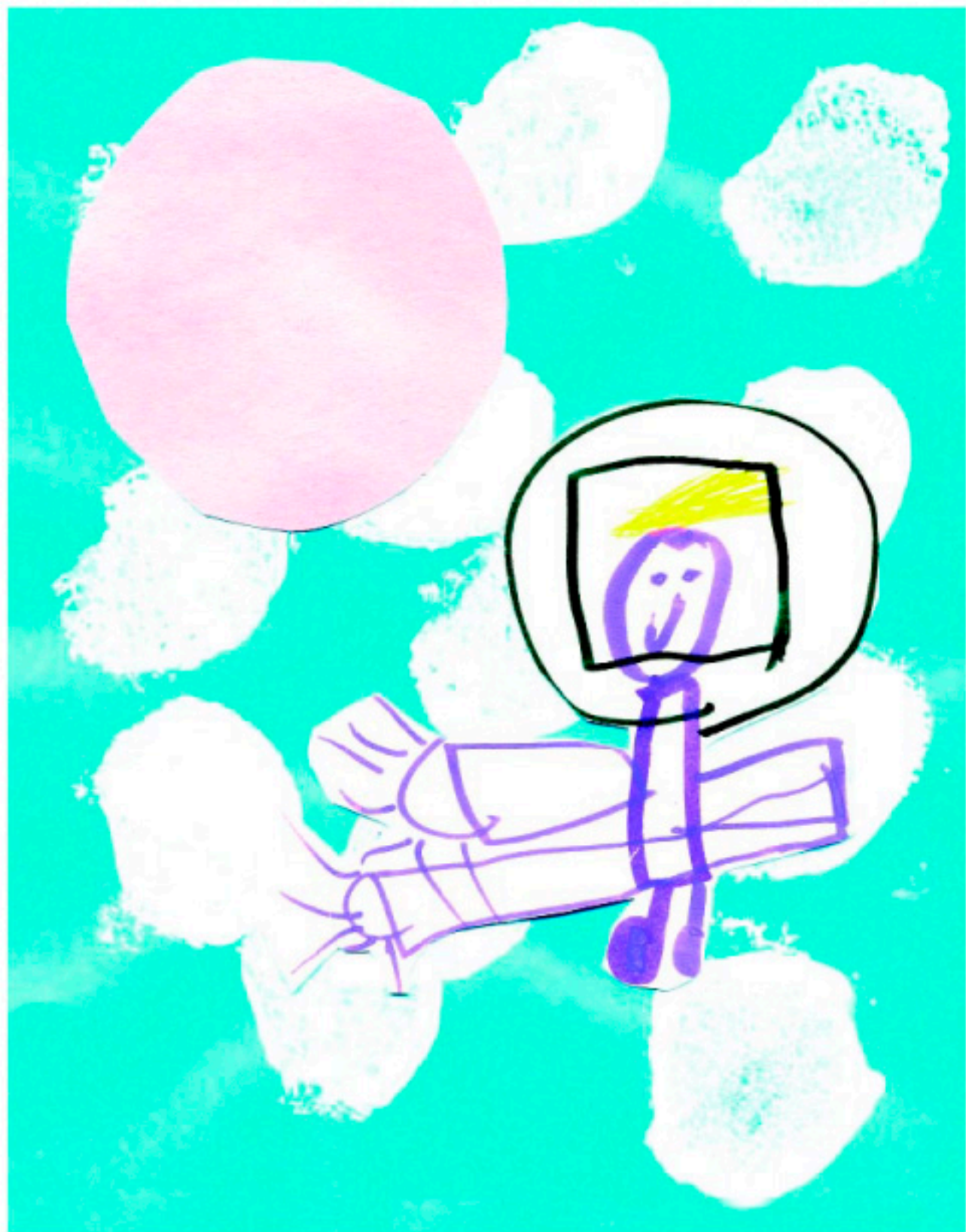
and Rainbow Turtle is going to the beach,



where the water is nice and cool.



Tyler is taking a walk to the fair,



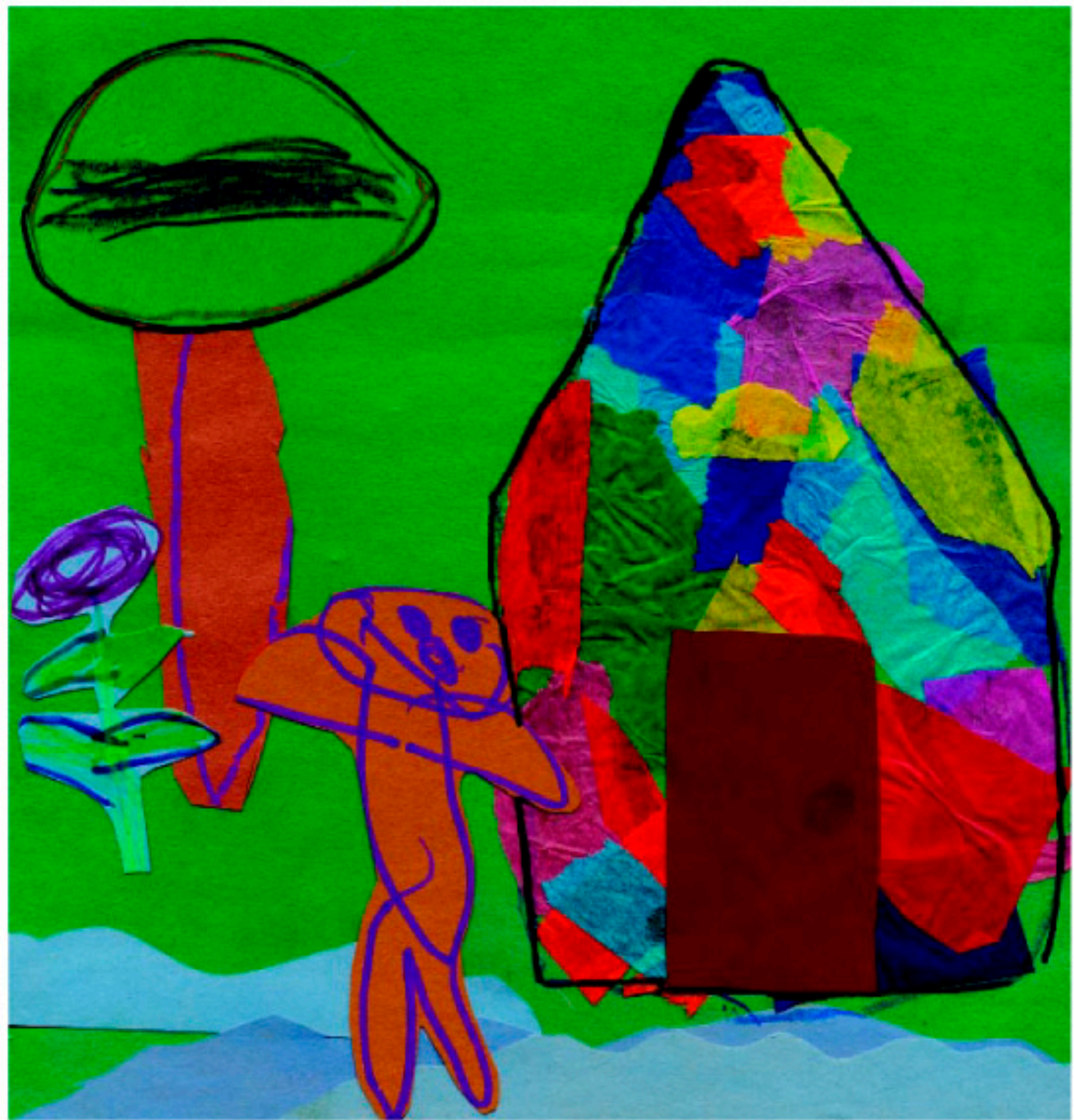
and Justin is taking a walk on the moon.



Super Girl is going to protect Star City,

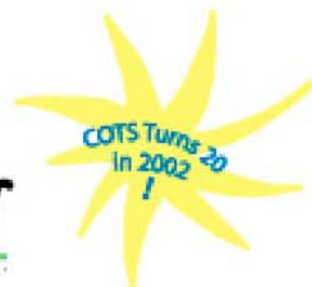


Corey is going to climb the tallest tree...



and I'm going home.

The Committee on Temporary Shelter



1982 Many citizens are worried about the growing number of homeless persons in Vermont. A group of community leaders and organizations, calling themselves the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS), joins forces to help.

With the initial goal of providing overnight refuge during the harsh winter months, the committee opens the Waystation Emergency Shelter on Christmas Eve, using Burlington's Sara Holbrook Community Center space for six months to shelter a total of 94 people.

1983 COTS opens the Waystation Emergency Shelter on lower Church Street in Burlington.

1984 Realizing that a bunk bed and blanket are not enough for people to make the transition to independence, COTS volunteers and staff launch the Streetwork Program to help people find housing, jobs, and medical and mental health services. COTS purchases the Wilson Hotel to serve as a single-room-

occupancy facility for formerly homeless adult men and women.

1986 A shift in housing needs becomes evident with a number of *families* seeking refuge at the Waystation. Community leaders and local organizations work together to establish a shelter specifically for homeless families.

1988 Renovations are completed at a vacant Burlington firehouse, which begins serving the community as the COTS Firehouse Family Shelter.

COTS helps establish the Homeless Healthcare Project, bringing medical and mental health care services to COTS's newest facility, the Daystation. The first one-stop model in Vermont for homeless services, this collaboration has since been replicated in other communities. The COTS vocational program is added several years later as an effective link with employers.

1990 About 1,000 people take part in the first COTS Walkathon. This annual event becomes a cornerstone of COTS community education and fundraising efforts.

1991 COTS creates 22 units of affordable housing for formerly homeless men and women at St. John's Hall in Burlington's Old North End.

1992 COTS receives the *Maxwell Award for Excellence* from the Fannie Mae Foundation for developing St. John's Hall.



Continued on next page...

1996 Burlington's "Families in Transition" program moves under the COTS umbrella. Through this program, 10 single-parent families receive apartments and support services for up to two years.



1998 COTS receives a *Blue Ribbon Best Practice Award* from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in recognition of the successful outcomes of COTS programs.

1999 The housing market in Chittenden County is so tight that shelter stays have doubled for adults and tripled for families. In response, COTS works with the support of the Burlington Housing Authority to open the Rental Opportunity Center — a collaboration with apartment owners recruited

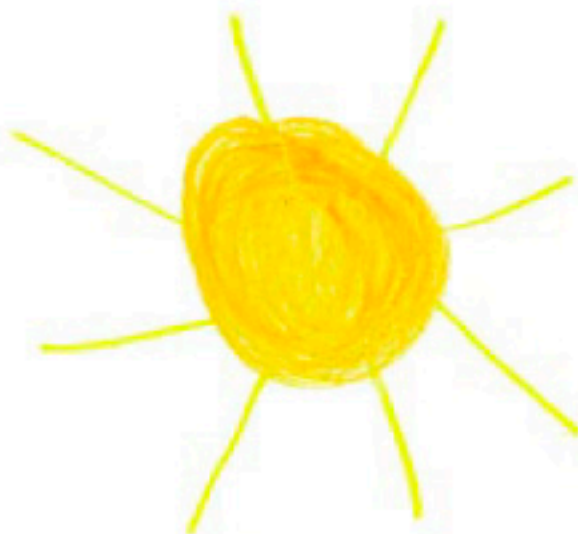
through service clubs, community groups and churches — which works to secure housing for families and adults.



COTS receives the national *Gunther Award* for developing innovative, effective programs that are models for other communities.

2000 The First United Methodist Church of Burlington donates a building, the Smith House, which COTS renovates to provide nine units of housing to formerly homeless adults and families.

2002 In its 20th year, COTS responds to the unprecedented number of families in need by purchasing and renovating a 200-year-old brick building from the



YWCA at 278 Main Street. This facility has been renovated to provide transitional housing to homeless families with children, serving 10 families at a time.

TODAY COTS has grown into a vital network of services and support for people without homes. With the help of others in our community, COTS continues to set families and individuals on the road home.

Artist's sketch of 278 Main Street, which provides transitional housing for 10 families.



Special Thanks to all the “Star City” Artists

and to...



COTS Family Shelter Staff

Rita Markley, COTS Executive Director

Sally Ballin, COTS Community Service Coordinator

Deborah Bouton, dba communications

Hard Copy

Felton Family Summer Internship Fund at Middlebury College

The Samara Family

The Uprooting Racism Task Force of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ

First Congregational Church of Burlington

The Every Monday Thrift Shop at the First United Methodist Church of Burlington

The Women’s Fellowship of First Congregational Church of Burlington

Linda Cloutier-Namdar

Barbara Carter

Boutilier’s Art Center

Ben Franklin

**HARD
COPY**
Real Copies • Real Prices
863-1200



The Committee on Temporary Shelter

P.O. Box 1616

Burlington, Vermont 05402

(802)864-7402 *cotsonline.org*