

Clear Creek Catastrophe





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*This book is dedicated to raising awareness
for pathogen pollution and supporting
water quality initiatives in East Tennessee.*



Clear Creek Catastrophe was written by Lindsey Rasnake and illustrated by Lisa Cicchetti. It is one third of a trilogy of children's books about water pollution created by the following CAC AmeriCorps Members:

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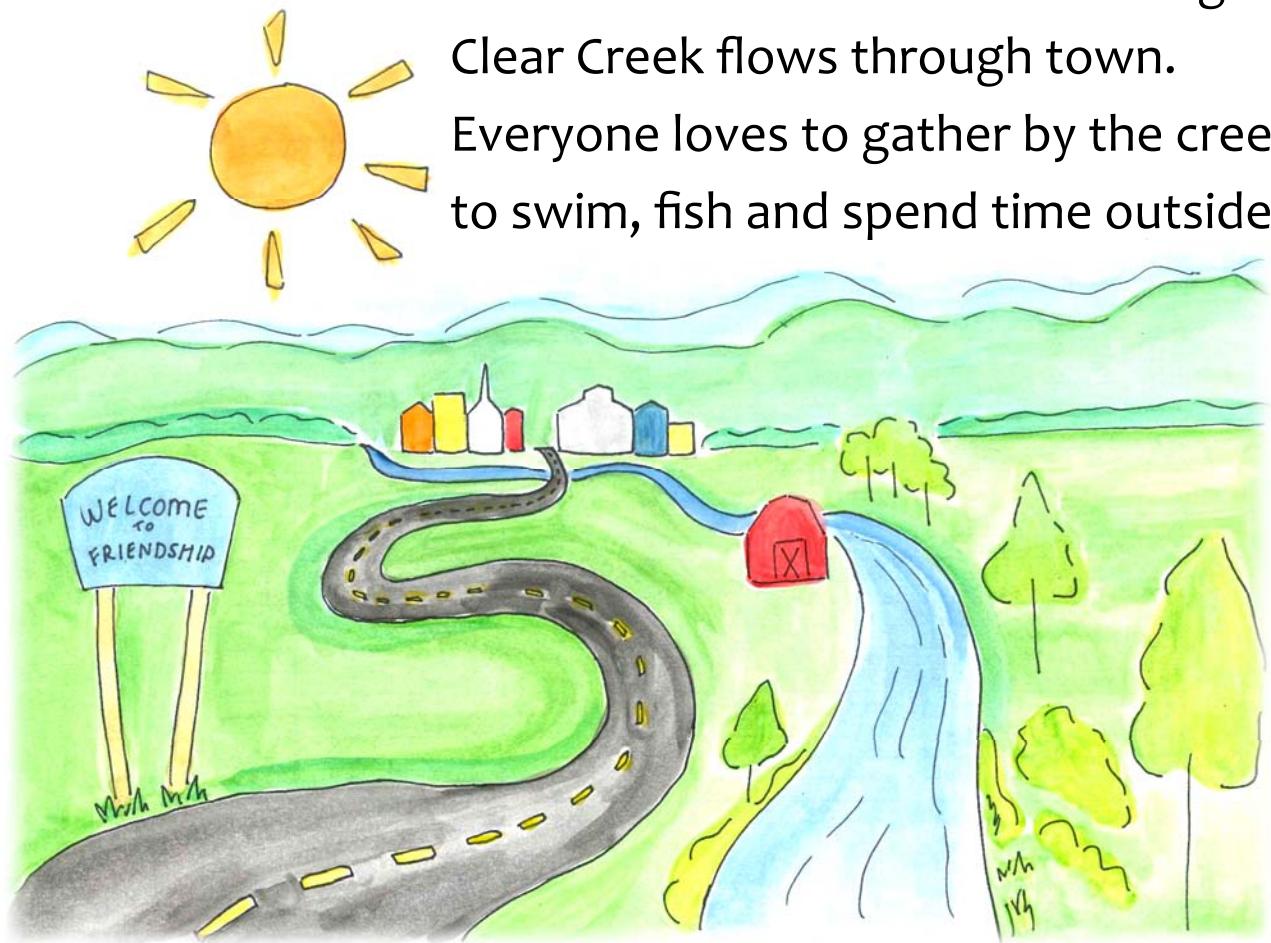
Alexis Jenkin, Knox County Stormwater '18/'19 AmeriCorps Team

Julie Elfin, Water Quality Forum '18/'19 AmeriCorps Member

These books were created to be free teaching materials to make water quality and environmental education more approachable topics inside and outside of the classroom.

There is a small town in Tennessee called Friendship. It is full of happy people who work together. They recycle and clean up their trash. They ride their bikes and have fun doing it!

Clear Creek flows through town. Everyone loves to gather by the creek to swim, fish and spend time outside.



Frannie the Farmer lives in Friendship and provides fresh food to her friends and neighbors. Everyone in the town loves her food so much that they gave her more land: a beautiful pasture right on Clear Creek.



Frannie added cows, pigs, and chickens to her farm on the new land the town gave her! Everyone in Friendship is so happy to have Frannie as a neighbor.

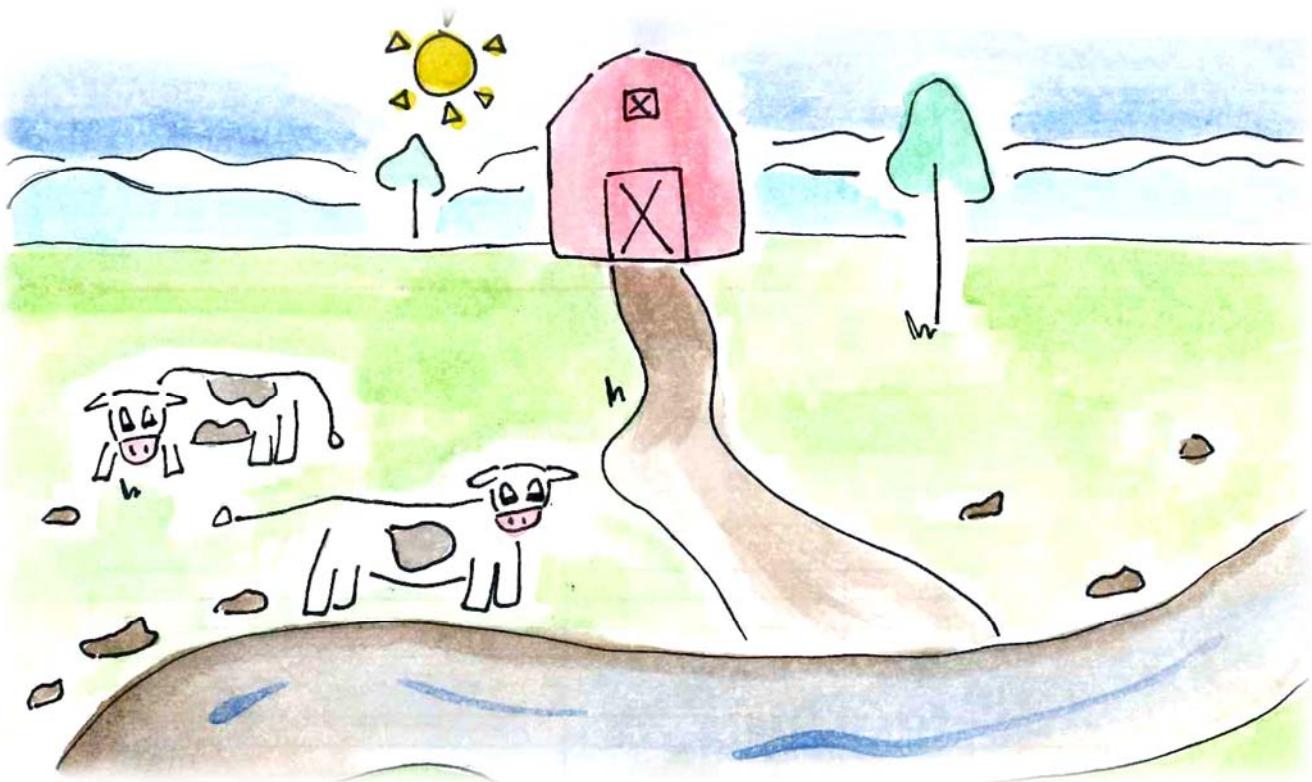
They love her fresh fruit and vegetables. They can't wait to try her eggs and meat.



Her food helps to keep everyone in Friendship very healthy.

Frannie works in the fields with her cows. She loves living next to Clear Creek. It is a clean place for her cows to drink water and cool off in on hot days. She also loves seeing all of her friends down at the creek!

Frannie lets her cows graze in those fields and drink in the creek for the next 3 years. Then she starts to notice the banks of Clear Creek becoming muddy and the water is brown. Frannie worries that the water in Clear Creek is dirty. She hopes the creek will be back to normal by summer.



Summer arrives, and Frannie is very busy with her crops and other farm work. She does not have time to check on the water in Clear Creek.

But one day Frannie's neighbor, Jeremy, does not come to pick up his fruits and vegetables. Frannie goes to his house to deliver a basket of food.

Frannie knocks on the door. She hears a groan from inside:

"Ugghhhhhhhh, who is it? Go away!"

Frannie frowns. "Jeremy, it's Frannie. I have your groceries! Are you okay?"



Jeremy opens the door and then plops down on the couch again. Jeremy looks sick. “Frannie, I feel terrible! I have a bad stomach flu!”

“Hold on, Jeremy, I’m going to get a doctor!” says Frannie.



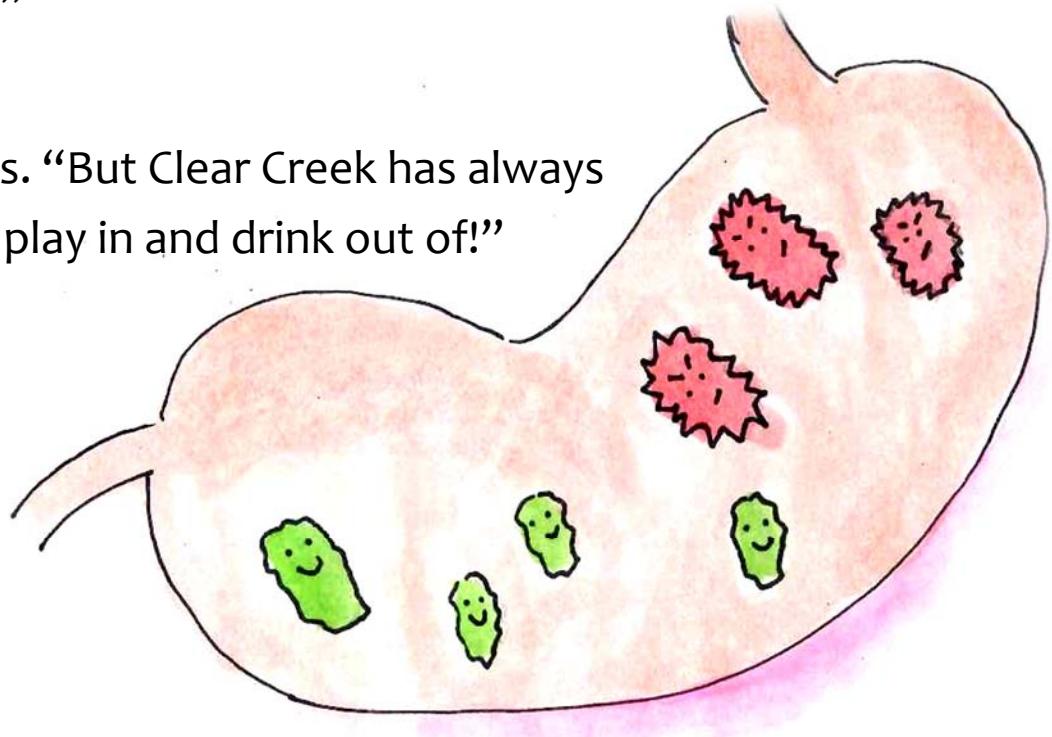
Frannie returns with the town doctor, Dr. Getbetter. Dr. Getbetter examines Jeremy by taking his temperature. Then Dr. Getbetter asks Jeremy what he was doing before he got sick.

Jeremy tells the doctor he went swimming in the creek, and drank some of the water in the creek before he went home.



Dr. Getbetter gets up and tells Frannie, “I think Jeremy may have a bacterial infection. It’s an illness in the body caused by a teeny tiny creature called a bacteria. Bacteria live in all humans and animals. We all have them in our bodies. Some bacteria are good and keep us healthy. But others can make us sick. I think when Jeremy drank water from Clear Creek, he drank some bad bacteria too.”

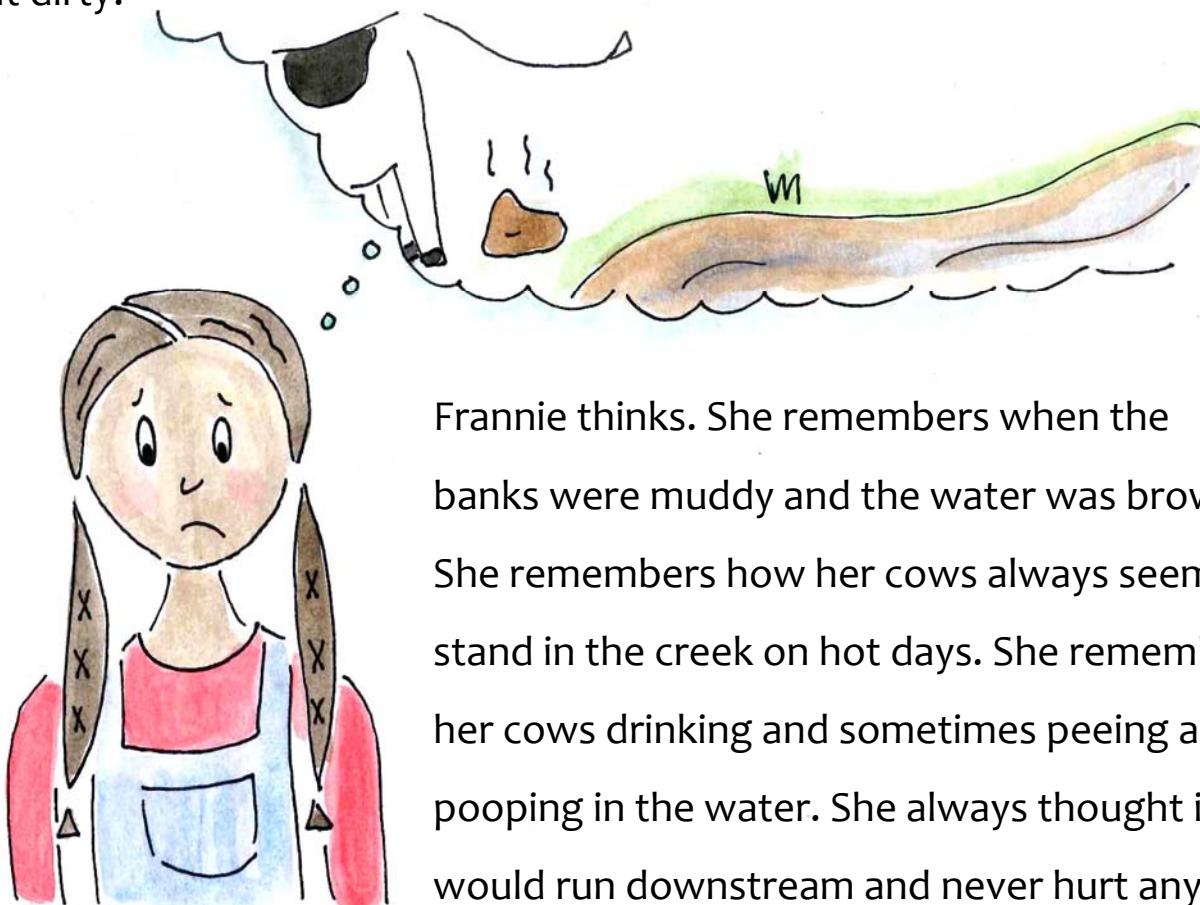
Frannie gasps. “But Clear Creek has always been safe to play in and drink out of!”



Frannie has heard scary stories of towns where people got sick from the water supply. People had to stop swimming in the creeks. Frannie can't believe it could happen here in Friendship, and so soon after starting her own farm right next to the creek!



Dr. Getbetter strokes his beard, thinking. "Maybe we are not taking care of Clear Creek as well as we should. How could we be making it dirty?"

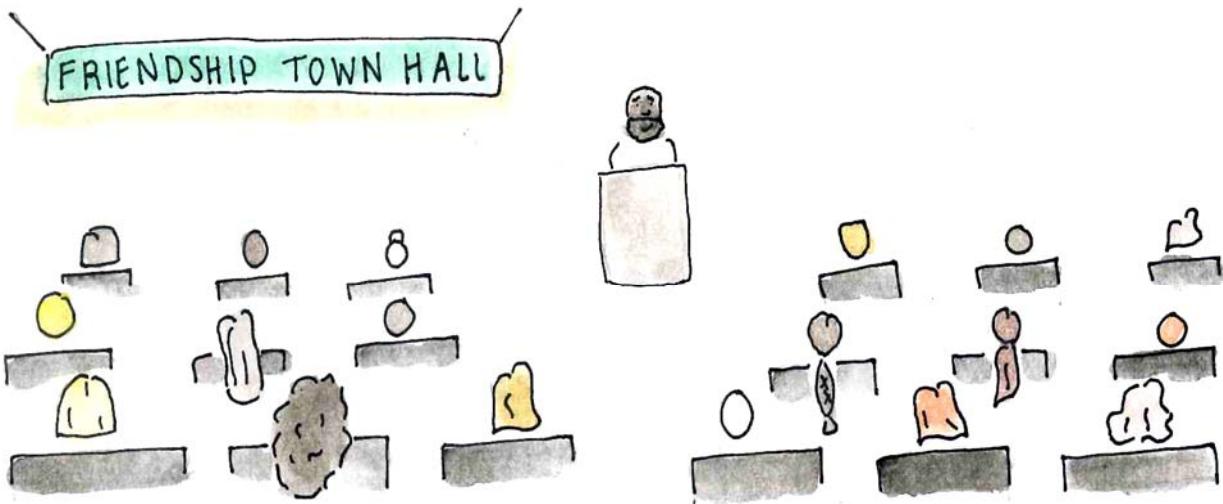


Frannie thinks. She remembers when the banks were muddy and the water was brown. She remembers how her cows always seem to stand in the creek on hot days. She remembers her cows drinking and sometimes peeing and pooping in the water. She always thought it would run downstream and never hurt anyone. But what if the poop had bacteria in it?

“Dr. Getbetter, I think I might be a part of the problem!” Frannie tells the doctor that her cows pee and poop in the creek. He says, “You know, when I visit Clear Creek with my family and our dog Aldo, I don’t always pick up his poop and throw it away. Sometimes he does it right next to the creek! I’m a part of the problem too. We should call everyone in Friendship together to talk about this!”



A few hours later, the whole town of Friendship is gathered in the town hall.



Dr. Getbetter says to the town, “Everything is going to be fine, but we asked everyone here to talk about Clear Creek being dirty. Jeremy has gotten a bacterial infection from the water.”

Someone calls from the audience, “But Clear Creek has always been safe for us--what changed?”

Frannie steps up. “I let my cows pee and poop in the creek. The bacteria in the poop stays in the creek and can get inside of us and make us sick.” Frannie is afraid everyone will be mad at her, but Dr. Getbetter raises a hand. “And how many of us let our dogs poop near the creek and don’t pick it up?”



Several embarrassed hands raise up from the crowd.

Mayor Santiago comes up to speak to everyone. “We are all causing Clear Creek to be dirty in some way. We pick up our trash and recycle our plastic, but we forget about other ways we can hurt the water!”

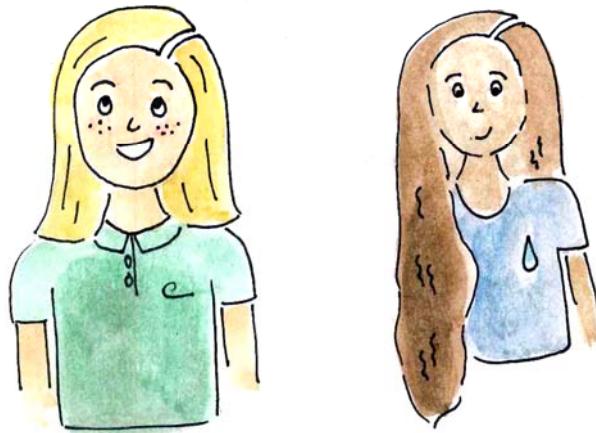


Frannie wonders, “How can we fix it, Mayor Santiago? Does anyone know how to keep my cows out of the creek?”

Two strangers stand up from the crowd. “We can help with that!”

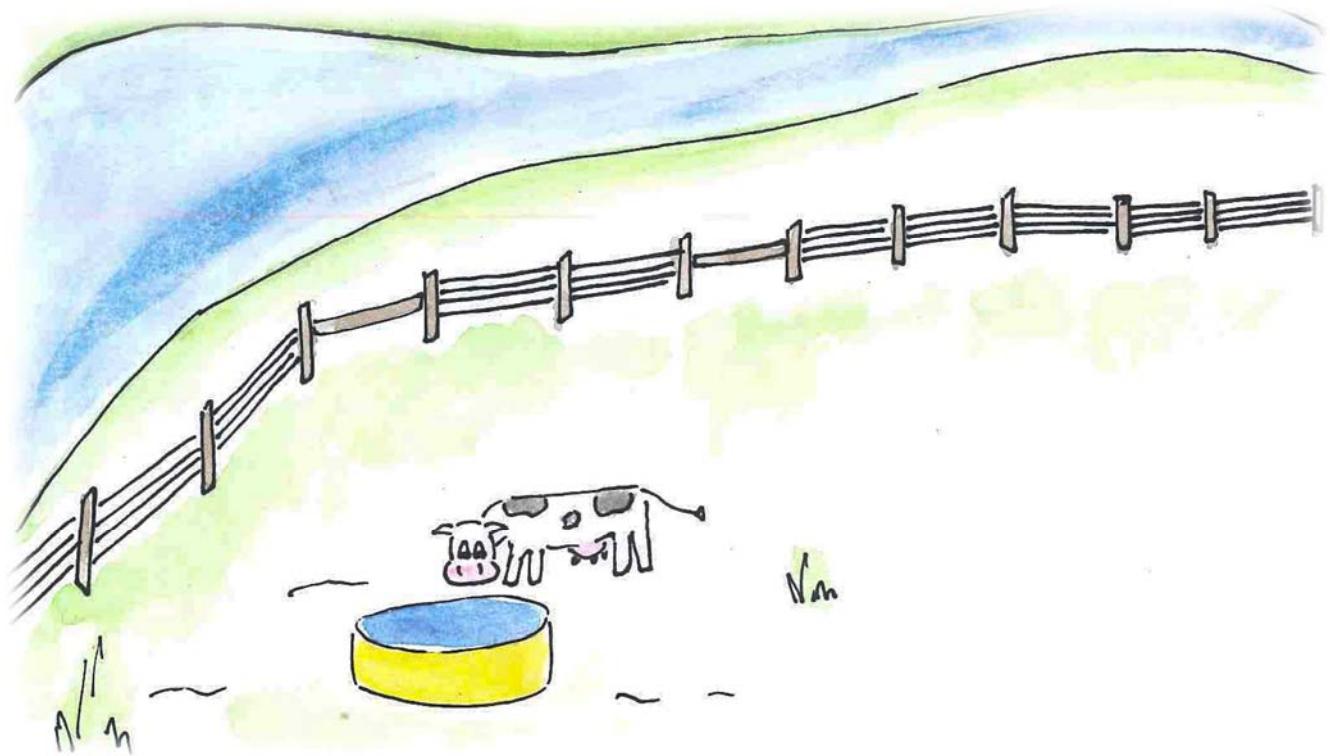
“I am Julia, and this is Eve! We are your soil and water officers. Just like your police officers protect you, we help protect the soil and water from things like bacteria, so you don’t get sick and can play in the creek. We can help you build a fence and watering trough, so your cows have clean water but won’t make Clear Creek dirty!”

FRIENDSHIP TOWN HALL



The crowd cheers. They know it will take some time, but they are excited to help clean Clear Creek and be the best neighbors they can be!

Julia helps Frannie build fences and water troughs. It is hard work but they want to keep Clear Creek clean, so they work all summer and fall!

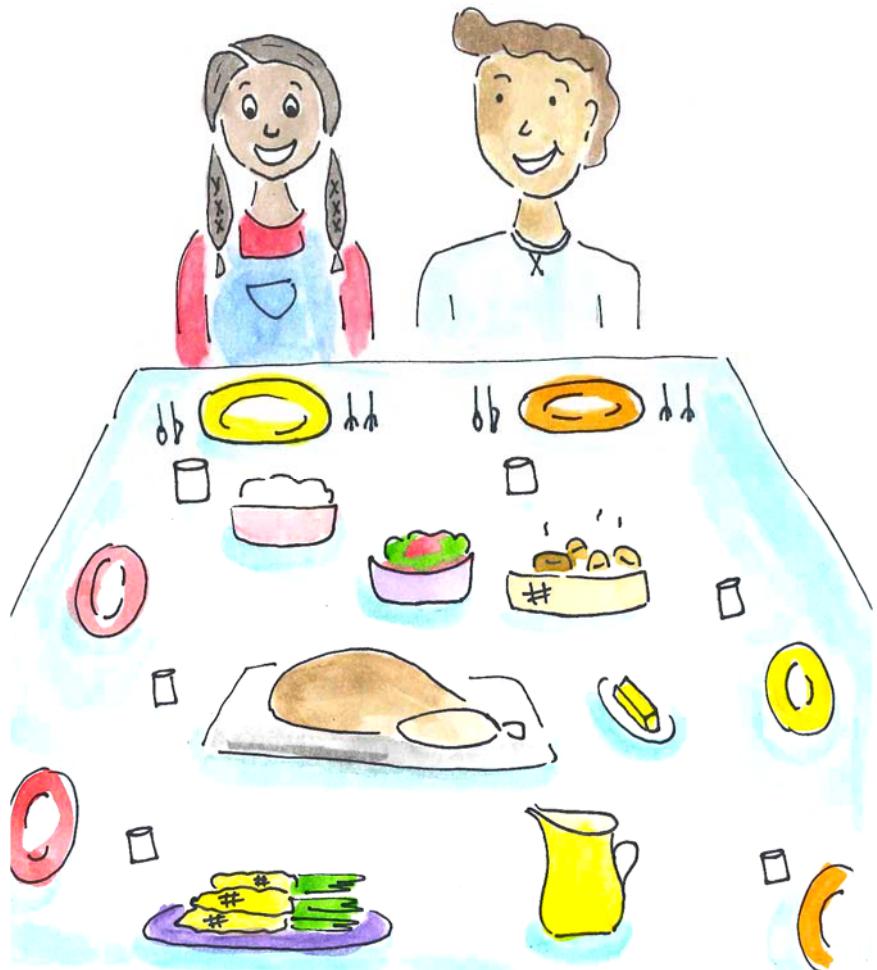


Frannie is finally finished. She invites the whole town over for a farmer's feast!

Everyone comes and enjoys the fresh food Frannie worked so hard to grow and raise. Jeremy is there, all better from his bacterial infection!

At the end of the feast, Eve announces that they've finished with all the dog poop stations. Those stations will help keep dog poop from flowing into the creek! She says it will take time for the water of Clear Creek to be completely clean again, but that Friendship is on the right track to having a clean, healthy creek once again.

Everyone cheers!



Frannie loves to work on her farm with the new fences and water troughs. When she is out in the field she looks over at Clear Creek and sees the people of Friendship playing in the clean water.



Sometimes Dr. Getbetter walks by with his dog Aldo and waves, poop bag in hand and a smile on his face!

After all, the people of Friendship know now that friendship belongs in Clear Creek, but poop doesn't!

The end.



Friendship, Tennessee is a town full of happy, healthy people. Everyone in Friendship is kind to their neighbors. But catastrophe strikes when people start to notice that beautiful Clear Creek is becoming brown!

When someone gets sick from the water in Clear Creek, everyone in Friendship decides to make a change. Local soil and water experts teach the people of Friendship about pollution from animal waste.

Will the town be able to make changes to help the water? And, more importantly, will Clear Creek ever recover?

This book was written to be read aloud to 2nd and 3rd graders. It is one third of a trilogy aimed at making water quality and environmental science more approachable topics inside and outside of the classroom.

