

Night Sky Of Paris

Jaxon Courtney | Monett | B&W Photography | Gold

On a walk through Paris one night, one cannot simply avoid this beauty. With an amazing light show, I knew that I must try to capture the beauty. This picture doesn't give the Eiffel Tower justice.

Cover: Horseshoe Bend | Josh Leyva | Seneca | Honorable Mention | Color Photography

I've had this location on my "photo bucket list" for years. Finally, I was able to make it over to Horseshoe, and it did not disappoint.

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CROWDER QUILL HISTORY

The Crowder Quill magazine and contest was proposed and founded by Crowder College English faculty Dan Richard in 1980. With 38 years of publication, the Quill is consistently moving forward in producing quality content, which this year's cover symbolizes.

Initially, the *Crowder Quill* contest was open to students of Crowder College as well as high school students and community members. Nearly all entries were published, but winners received a "Gold Quill" certificate award and designation in the publication. The contest was expanded to include a "Junior Division," grades 1-8, starting in 1985.

The magazine was published bi-annually until 2006 when it was changed to a yearly contest cycle. At that time, the Junior Division was also removed. In its place was an annual K-8 fine arts day, held in the fall of each year until 2011.

The feather logo was created by Mark Hollandsworth and solely graced the cover of each publication from 1981-1989. The logo is still used as a symbol of the contest and publication today, present on all publicity materials and in the magazine itself.

Color was increasingly added to the cover and contents, prompting the addition of separate color categories for art and photography in spring 2003. Digital art was added in 2010 to reflect the new art of extensively altered photographs, particularly using photo-manipulation software such as PhotoShop, as well as computer-generated art. In 2013, the art categories were modified to reflect the academic departments at Crowder: 2D traditional media and 3D art. Also, \$500 scholarships were added to the prize for each high school gold winner. Each year, the contest receives around 1000 entries.

Dan Richard served as adviser until his retirement in spring 1988. David Sherlock took over the magazine in fall 1988 to spring 1990 in addition to his duties as adviser for the Crowder Sentry and director of the theatre department. Nina Gibson's turn was from fall 1990 to spring 1992, and Suzanne Woolever from fall 1992 to spring 1994.

Latonia Bailey has served as adviser since fall 1994. Bailey won a *Quill* gold award in 1987 as a high school student and then served as poetry editor as student editorial staff in spring 1989. As adviser, her works in nearly every category have been chosen for honorary publication through the years by faculty and students.



In 2017, The *Crowder Quill* was given the highest possible honor by the College Media Association: The Pinnacle for 1st Place for two-year literary magazines.

AWARDS from the American Scholastic Press Association, College Point, New York:

2013-2017 Best Community College Literary-Art Magazine

2010-2017 First Place with Special Merit

2009 First Place

1993-2008 Did not compete

1992 First Place

1988-1991 First Place with Special Merit

1988 Outstanding Service for the Community

1987 Second Place

CURRENT STAFF JUDGES AND CONTRIBUTORS

The primary task of the *Crowder Quill* staff is to produce the magazine from contributed contest entries, not produce the contents themselves. However, staff members are required to submit entries as a class assignment to demonstrate expertise in their field of judging.

Winning entries are honorarily published but do not receive awards. The staff entries published in this issue were judged by the following honorary judges:

- **Fiction and nonfiction entries:** *Quill* faculty adviser Latonia Bailey
- **Poetry entries:** Literature instructor Janet Reed and adviser Latonia Bailey
- **Art entries:** Art instructors Casey Smith, Josh Smith, and Josh Knott
- **Photography entries:** Photography instructor Stephanie Potter and students

Staff members publicize the contest, select winning entries, and design the magazine. A variety of majors are represented on the staff. See each entry for additional author/artist statements as well as biographical information from each contributor to the magazine.



Members of the 2018 staff (left to right): Back row - adviser Latonia Bailey, Goodman; Tana Burkhart, Joplin; Megan Murphy, Neosho; Dexter Ballay, Monett; Sam Hoover, Wyandotte. Front row - Emilee Kuschel, Monett; Jennifer Ishcomer, Granby; Kirby Reardon, Neosho; Kaitlin Barnett, Dora; Morgan O'Brien, Seneca; and Kenzie Kallio, Oologah, Okla.

Going Nuts

Hanna Schmit
Noel
Community
Sliver
Color Photography

Schmit has a love and passion for photography. She began snapping photos at the age of 15 and enjoys capturing precious moments and wonderful wildlife.



As I quietly stood, snapping pictures right and left of the chipmunks, two of these feisty creatures began to fight, or go nuts. I was overwhelmed with joy when this opportunity came to me.

Canon Rebel T3I - Automatic

THIS HEART WAS ONCE FREE

Riane Eads
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
Poetry
Free Verse

This poem represents how my feelings and hopes for the future.

Eads is a self-taught artist and hopes to one day get a career in animation and/or concept designing.

This heart was once free,
frolicking among green grass
and under blue skies.
No care in the world,
nothing to hold it down.
The sun always shined
in this place of paradise.
No rainy days or roaring thunder,
nothing but bountiful light.
The heart left reality,
desiring for fantasy instead.
Believing that everything
would stay the same,
nothing in the world would change.
But as time passed, reality grew stronger,
showing its true colors of gray.
The daydream shattered,
And all had fallen into darkness.
No sunshine now,
Nothing but gloaming shadows.

This heart had lost its way,
wishing for its make-believe world.
There was nothing but grim reality now,
devastating the once bright domain
The bright green grass shriveled and died,
the sky covered with black clouds
of raging storms.
This heart crumpled, having lost
its brilliant power,
Now just a shrunken husk of what it once was.
No hope,
Nothing but despair.
Despite the now broken land,
One day the storms will pass.
The landscape will once again
be green and lively,
And the sky blue and bright.
But for now the raging clouds roar with anger,
and this heart suffers silently.
No giving in to defeat now,
Nothing but the willpower to overcome.

THANATOPHOBIA

Savannah, wake up. Baby girl, wake up! Savannah, wake up. She's gone. Momma's gone. Savannah, please, wake up." I scream and cry, trying to contain all of my anger until I roll out of my bed and run into the living room to find my mother laying lifeless in her recliner. How ironic, a dead living room. Still screaming, I beg my mother to wake up. I beg for her to reach forward and tell me everything is okay. I long for her hug one last time. My father struggles to pull me off of her cold body. My mother has passed and she will never be back.

Oct. 31, 2010

Nearly seven thirty in the morning and we rush to the Aurora E.R. I'm not quite sure what is wrong, but Mom could hardly get out of bed this morning. Maybe she is just tired.

She goes back as soon as we arrive, and like lightning to a beach, she is struck with many IVs, looking like an oak tree. The doctor runs only a couple of tests before she informs us that a helicopter from Springfield is coming to take her. We race like NASCAR to Springfield and are directed to her designated room. Petrified from her flight, my wonderful mother reassures us that everything is going to be okay.

Nov. 25, 2010

Mom has been in the hospital for 25 days now. I feel like this family is drifting apart like waves descending from the shoreline. Today is Thanksgiving, and she is unable to come home. Usually she would be making dozens of her soft homemade rolls all night long for

[Continued to 8]

Savannah Burch
Purdy High School
Silver
Nonfiction
Essay

My mother is my greatest inspiration in my life. Losing her was the hardest thing I ever had to overcome. I hope I may bring inspiration to those who have lost someone close to them.

Burch is currently a senior and hopes to achieve a career in social services.



Dawn of Descent

Benjamin Fredric
DeVore
Cassville
Crowder
Silver
Color Photography

I looked upon the dawn and imagined its beauty, and desired its streaking flags of clouds to be in a picture. So, I took one. Iphone 6

DeVore aspires to be a musician.

[Continued from 7]

family Thanksgiving the next evening. This year, we buy Chinese food from her favorite restaurant and visit her.

Dec. 25, 2010

Mom returned home from the hospital a few days ago. The house itself longs to be taken care of like she used to do. Laundry looks lonely in the pile across the room, dishes are piling like Mount Everest, and the dust is having a family reunion. She looks so drained from her hospital admission and so distressed, seeing how poor this Christmas seems. My siblings and I are beyond grateful that our mother arrived home that we care less about the amount of presents under the tree, crying to be opened.

Jan. 2, 2011

Yesterday, Mom's vacation ended and she journeyed back to the hospital. We received a call from the hospital this afternoon with bad news. Mom's body is rejecting her chemotherapy this time. A hospital bed, ventilator, and a heartbeat monitor are being installed into our living room.

Jan. 26, 2011

With Dad always working, Deana always away, and Tommy always isolated, the Hospice nurse, when she is here, and myself are the only two people available to take care of my mother. The nurse has taught me how to give my mom her prescriptions and all the small tasks in between, like bringing a new glass of ice water every hour for her or warming a blanket in the dryer for her pale, little feet, that my mother will highly appreciate. I tucked a warm blanket around her feet, as snug as a bug in a rug, when she finally spoke up, "Baby girl, I've got to tell you something." I sit quiet, patiently waiting. "As you know, I'm sick and I don't seem to be getting any better. Honey, I want you to know that I am incredibly blessed to have lived the life I have given myself and if my God wants to take me home I am completely okay with it. Savannah, please do not be upset that I am content with this. I love you so much and you will always be my baby."

Crying, I hug her and murmured the only words I could, "I love you, too, Momma."

Feb. 13, 2011

"Savannah, wake up. Baby girl, wake up! Savannah, wake up. She's gone. Momma's

gone. Savannah, please, wake up." My father cries trying to wake me up from my slumber. I come to my senses as I scream and cry, trying to contain all of my anger until I roll out of my bed fast enough to start an avalanche and run into the living room to find my mother laying lifeless in her recliner. Still screaming, I beg my mother to wake up. I beg for her to reach forward and tell me everything is okay. I long for her hug one last time. My father struggles to pull me off of her cold body. My family silently watches, questioning my sanity. Minutes, though seeming like hours, pass before I grasp the concept that she is gone. My mother has passed and she will never be back.

Feb. 15, 2011

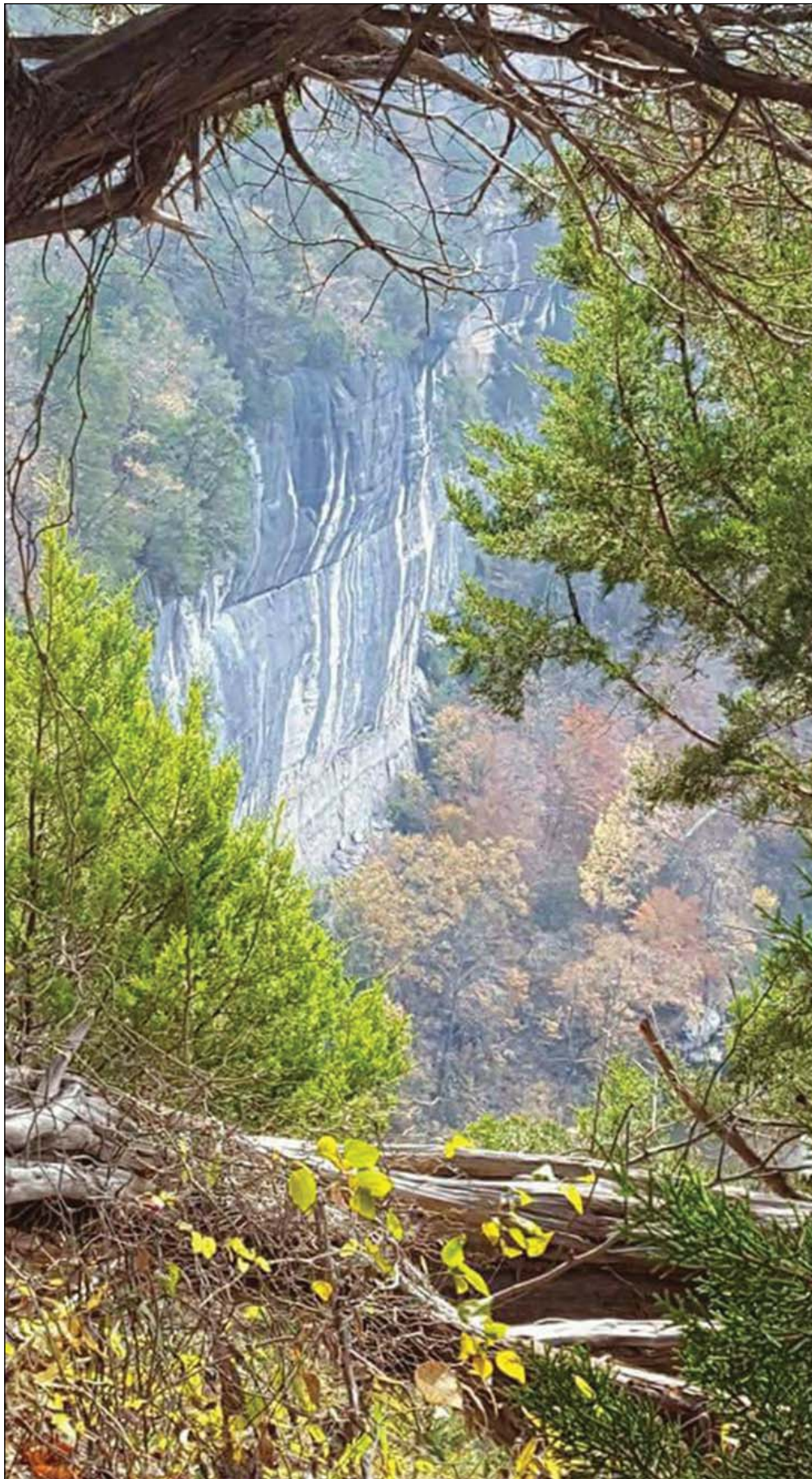
My father is not mentally stable enough after the passing of his wife that I am put into the care of the state of Missouri and am being housed with a classmate of mine. I am admitted to a psychiatrist to "talk about my grief."

March 29, 2011

Six weeks into my psychiatric visits and I am being tested for temporary insanity. My foster home believes depression is taking over my life as dark does light. I am seeing a doctor for an eating disorder and three different psychiatrists on top of that. I believe I am okay. I am not quite understanding their reasoning for these appointments.

Sept. 2017

Nearly seven years ago my mother was diagnosed with cancer. Over the years, my family has drifted apart like otters who forget to hold hands when they sleep. My sister left the house for her own well-being, my brother is joining the military, my dad works four days a week and sleeps the remaining three. I am enrolled in my senior year of high school, and I work nearly every night five to close. My psychiatrist believes my temporary insanity impacted my reality and my brain thrives on the idea of the love of a mother, so I try incredibly hard for every female figure in my life to admire me. I am growing up without my best friend, and I can only imagine how different my life would be if cancer never existed. Yes, I miss my mother like no other, but I have to remember that she would not want me to live my life mourning her. Everything I do I follow through with the idea of making her proud. ❧



View from Goat Trail

Latonia Bailey
Goodman
Staff Adviser
Color Photography

“Goat Trail,” also known as “Big Bluff Trail,” provides the highest drop off between the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains. Buffalo River lies below. Samsung Galaxy auto settings

Bailey, adviser since 1994, submits various works for honorary publication.

THE BINDING

Henri Whitehead
Anderson
Community
Silver
Fiction
Horror

I wanted to show an Old Testament story as a modern horror story.

Whitehead has taught english at McDonald County High School for six years and is currently writing a novel.

If you're gonna hoot with the owls, you better soar with the eagles." Isaac Babbit woke up bleary eyed from the jostling of his right shoulder and the sound of his father's unforgivably loud command to get up.

"I'm going..." Isaac groaned, pulling the thin cotton sheet over his head in a futile attempt to remain in the world of dreams. Isaac, of course, knew his father wouldn't leave the room until he got out of bed. Abe Babbit would stand there stroking his white beard in frustration while resting all of his weight on the old pine cane that never left his side. Isaac didn't have to open his eyes to see his father almost vulture-like perched atop the very object that had come to symbolize the impassable age gap that separated a teenage son from his 70 year old father.

"There is no way on God's green earth you're getting out of a father and son tradition that's been in my family for generations," his father said before abruptly pulling Isaac's sheet and comforter free of the bed. Isaac didn't think his father's words or even intent, for that matter, were truly malicious, but never could the man have ever used a more cruel method of torture than the way he had just ripped from Isaac's mind the beautiful image of Danielle LeGrande bare-breasted and alone in the back seat of his Thunderbird. Isaac's wonderful dream had dissipated into the cool air just as quickly as his warmth and comfort.

"I feel sick." Isaac grumbled, rolling away from his father as a final act of feeble defiance.

"You're not sick. Now get up." Isaac's father was of course correct. Isaac wasn't sick by any normal standards, but his throbbing head was still the one remaining souvenir left over from a late night of too many tequila shots with Sarah and David.

"Come on, Dad. It's the fucking weekend." Isaac felt a hard whack to his shoulder that instantly sent him scrambling to his feet in anger as he came to the realization that his father had just struck him with his cane. "What the hell was that for?" Isaac shouted, rubbing his shoulder.

"Get your clothes on, and meet me down at the truck in 10 minutes."

Abe Babbit wasn't a likable man, and as Isaac sipped his thermos of Folgers in the passenger seat of his father's old Chevy LUV, he couldn't remember a moment in his entire

17 year existence where he actually enjoyed his father's company. Now that didn't keep the old biddies at church from constantly reminding Isaac that he needed to be thankful from where he came because according to them and everyone else in town for that matter, Abe Babbit was Christ reborn. As mayor, he had led the town of Salida from the oblivion of the Rockies and transformed it into one of the most successful tourist stops in the state of Colorado, and now he was the only man who could lead this humble community through the terrible affront to morality that was the legalization of pot. Thus this town comprised of the rich, white, and elderly put his father on the same level as the Savior himself. He had led them from the bonds of poverty into the Promised Land, and as if it were written on stone somewhere, Abe Babbit would be the town's mayor for the rest of his life.

"You're awful quiet this morning," his father said, "Usually, you can't resist a time to barb your old man with your teenage rebellion shtick."

"Why waste my breath?" Isaac said, pulling his hoodie over his eyes. He didn't want to look over at his father, who was dressed from head to toe in camo, his long white beard looking quite out of place against the backdrop of fall leaves and twigs. "You're never going to change."

"You're right, son. I'm not going to change because I know who I am: a god-fearing man who has poured every ounce of my life into service for this town." The truck rumbled on in silence. Isaac never responded. He didn't want to fight. He didn't care. He just wanted some relief to this goddamn headache, which seemed like it would never leave. Unfortunately, his father clearly had something on his mind. For almost 10 minutes, he had been subconsciously fidgeting with the top of the gear shift.

"Something on your mind?" Isaac asked, watching his father twist on and off the knob of the gear shift for the hundredth time.

"Yeah, there is," His father said, turning the truck off of the highway onto an almost hidden dirt road named Temple Drive that Isaac had never been on before; however, before Isaac could ask where exactly they were going, his father continued talking.

"Son, I'm going to be real honest with you. I've been questioning my faith a lot

lately.”

“Th-that’s surprising,” Isaac said, stunned by the revelation. He couldn’t believe what his father had just said. The pride of Salida was as spiritually weak as some common laborer.

“Well, you already know how much I’ve given to God and this town over the years, and for many years, I had faith that as I gave I would also receive. And I did receive. I received so much.” Isaac’s father’s eyes seemed glossy as if their true focus was on something quite beyond the alien dirt road that the truck was currently traversing.

“All those blessings weren’t enough. The house, the money, the respect... nothing is ever enough... I had to ask for something more. I just had to ask.”

“Let me guess, you asked for a son,” Isaac said, disappointed at the realization that his father’s question of faith was no more than a ruse to get Isaac to listen to the same damn sermon that Isaac had the unfortunate pleasure of having already heard a thousand times over the years. He didn’t need his father telling him any more about how Isaac’s birth was a miracle and that he should be thankful for his life. Isaac didn’t need to hear it. He didn’t care.

“Yeah, I wanted a son. Your mom and I could never conceive when we were younger, and our advancing age hadn’t helped anything,” His father seemed close to tears as he spoke, but Isaac was only half listening. “I prayed every morning and night that I could have a son to continue building what I started. And you know what?”

“I was born,” Isaac said dully.

“Yeah.”

The truck stopped.

“Where are we?” Isaac asked, confused by the unfamiliarity of the surroundings. This wasn’t the usual path to the family hunting grounds. They usually went to Grandpa’s acreage, where deer always seemed to be plentiful. This was some empty field in the middle of God only knows where.

“You’re my biggest mistake, my greatest sin,” his father said, still staring forward even though the truck was no longer moving.

“Well, I love you too, Dad.” Isaac chided flippantly, but deep down, he felt uneasy.

“You know the town has been begging me to fix this.”

“Fix what?”

“The town... It’s going to hell. All these atheist teenagers moving here because they want to get high and snow-ski. We’re becoming another Sodom...”



His father turned off the truck. “I need you to get out, son.”

“What are you planning to do?” Isaac felt a sudden rush of fear and confusion rush over him.

“Get out of the truck, son.”

“Before I do anything, I want to know why we are in the middle of fucking nowhere instead of grandpa’s house?”

His father didn’t answer; instead, he produced a revolver from his breast pocket.

“Son, I said get out of the truck.”

On his knees in the shadow of Mount Shavano and its angel of snow, Isaac had a new appreciation for life. Isaac wished he knew God. Isaac wished he knew anybody that could help him survive the next five minutes, so he prayed to somebody, anybody that could help him survive his father’s insanity. All the while, his father stood above him, shouting Bible scriptures into the empty woods. His revolver pointed directly at Isaac’s temple.

“Don’t do this,” Isaac pleaded. “Please, Dad.”

“I have to make this sacrifice... I have to do something.” His father struggled to get every word out as if he was being tortured with each syllable spoken.

“Please...” Isaac pleaded, tears pouring down his cheeks. “Please, don’t kill me. Please, I’m your only son.” His father cocked his gun.

“I was never supposed to have a son.” ☞

Mariposa

Sarah Reynolds
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
Digital Art

*I constructed this piece to find the beauty behind a black and white image.
Adobe Photoshop*

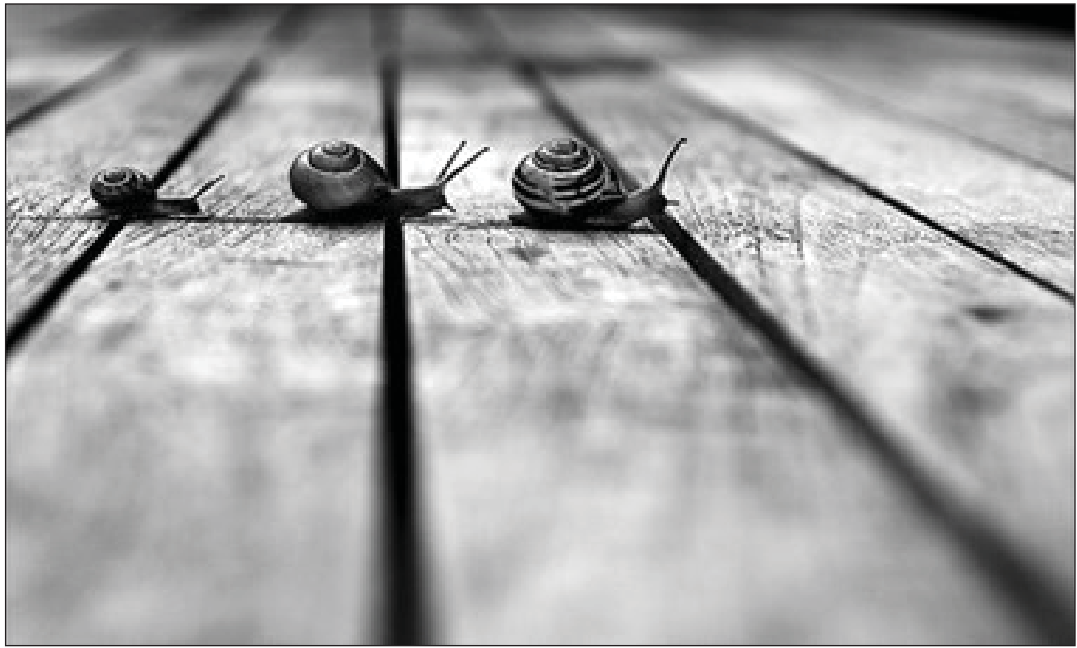
Reynolds, a senior, wants to be a landscape artist or greenhouse technician. She has been accepted for the fall 2018 term at College of the Ozarks.

Snail

Rainier Peña
Joplin
Crowder
Silver
B&W Photography

*This picture made
me stop and realize
that all life is special.
Iphone 6*

*Peña is
young, humble and
passionate.*



ALL THAT REMAINS

Megan Murphy
Neosho
Staff
Poetry
Free Verse

*Murphy is a
journalism student
who enjoys writing,
reading, and studying
history.*

Untested faith is meaningless;
To rise, one first must fall
For without faith in darkness,
There is no light at all
In doubt there is no solace
Despair brings naught but pain
Though hope seems far from flawless,
It strengthens all the same
Love completes the trio,
Greatest of the three
Enduring and unbreakable-
As mankind should strive to be.

*And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)
One of my favorite Bible verses was the inspiration for this poem. When times are hard, sometimes it's
easy to doubt and lose faith, but remembering that I am never truly alone with my struggles always helps
give me strength to endure them.*

EIGHTEEN & COUNTING

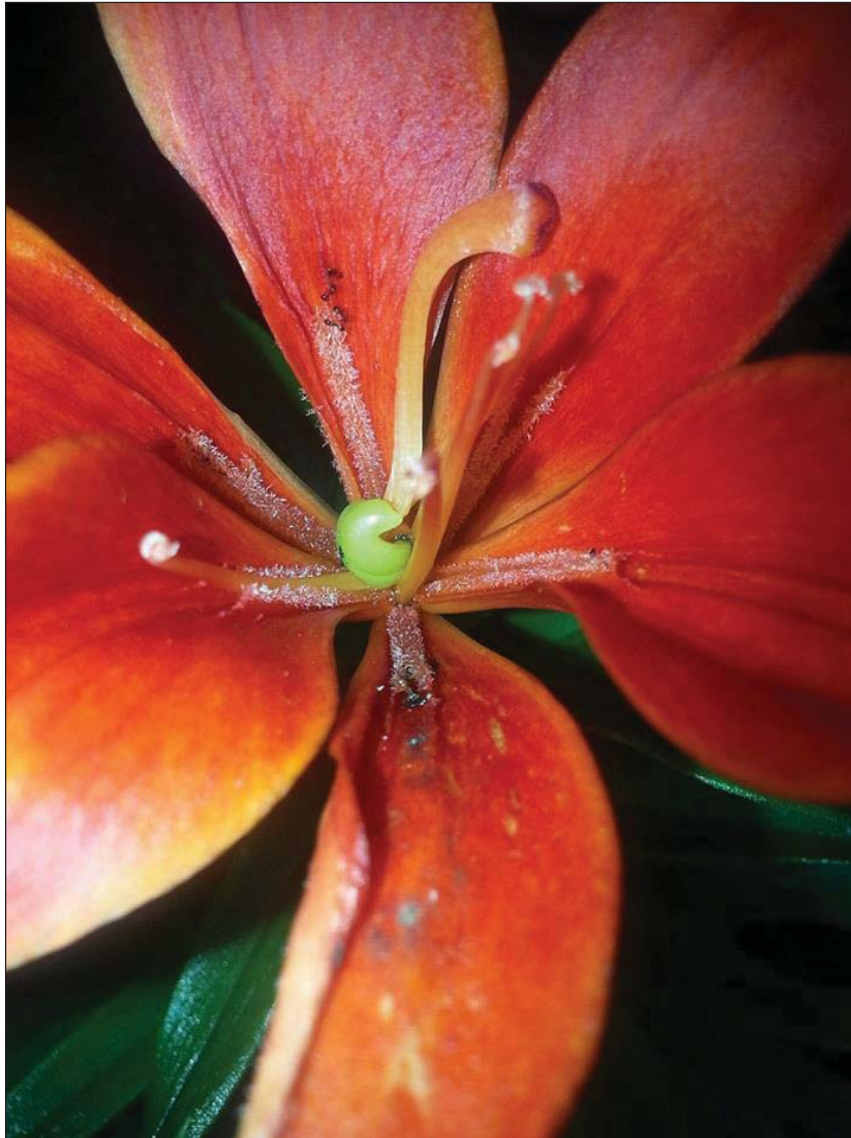
Eighteen and counting
Counting, counting, counting
Til our sweet sixteens
First cars and freedom
Driving, drowsy dates, dancing, dreaming
Under a million stars waiting
to be wished upon,
We dream
Of big houses and beautiful people
Eighteen and still counting-
Still dreaming
Of a few fun times
And a few good friends
A working car
And a modest home

And somewhere along that long road
Maybe meeting the one I will grow to love.
But my dreams seem far fetched
even at that they seem to have been thrown
into a deep bed of grey gravels
Maybe it will take me a few more years
to find them,
But I'm digging.
And when I find them, those glimmering
gems,
They might just blind those watching
As my hands blister and crack and bleed
Waiting for my failure
Only to find disappointment.

Samantha Gundel
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
Poetry
Free Verse

*This is the first section
of the poem I wrote
in response to reading
"Self Portrait at 28"
by David Berman.*

*Gundel is a senior
hoping to go to the
University of Arkansas
for engineering.*



God's Artwork

Megan LeAnn Arthur
Webb City
Crowder
Bronze
Color Photography

*I was out in my family's garden one day,
when I stumbled upon this beautiful flower.
I knew after laying eyes on this marvelous
artwork that I had to take a photo. My goal
was to capture "God's Artwork" in our
everyday life. Galaxy S3*

*Arthur is majoring in nursing. She aspires
to make a difference in the world by helping
those in need and spreading the Word of
God to everyone she meets.*

MARGARET

Jacqueline Cole
Granby
Community
Gold
Nonfiction
Memoir

Becoming a nurse has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life and has provided a wealth of experiences I wouldn't have had otherwise. This is the unaltered account of how I witnessed my first death.

Cole is a lifelong lover of art. She draws on life experience to discover universal human themes, and utilizes a variety of mediums to convey these expressions in their final state.

Her name was Margaret. She wasn't my patient, but when the code blue from her room flashed across my pager I responded to it with the rest of my coworkers, running the length of the hall to where the sky-blue light pulsed above her door. She was small in the bed, and impossibly frail as we crowded in around her where she lay, weak from flailing for air. There was a flurry of activity as we prepared to begin the code, until the nurse who was caring for her suddenly called out a phrase that stopped all of us instantly: DNR. There it was, a purple banner across the front of her chart with the words "do not resuscitate" written in bold black letters. A wristband wrapped around her bird-like arm confirmed it, and after a hurried call to the rapid response system, the code was cancelled.

We stood there, no one able to take a breath in the near absence of hers, and a knot formed in my stomach as I watched her emaciated chest flutter and twitch with her efforts. Almost without thinking, I reached over and turned the oxygen flow knob all the way open, air flooding into the mask that was stretched across her face. Her nurse looked over at me, an unreadable look in his eyes that both understood and thanked, and I nodded. There was, of course, no amount of oxygen that could help her now, but as far as I knew it would have to be more comfortable than starving for it.

People slowly started to shift away, leaving one by one with whispers of help if needed, until only him and me and the nursing assistant were left in Margaret's room. She was still holding on, dragging little gasps in and out, and the harsh rasp of her struggle was amplified by her rigid posture and the sheen of moisture that now covered her skin. Though we attempted to rouse her, she did not appear to have any awareness of what was occurring and did not respond to stimulus of any kind. Standing on the opposite side of her bed while the tech hooked her up to the vitals machine, I listened while her nurse left a voice mail for her family, letting them know the situation as compassionately as possible. He got off the phone at the same moment her vitals popped

up on the small screen. Her blood pressure, as expected, was alarmingly low, and I wasn't surprised to see that the sensor was having a hard time detecting a pulse. Her oxygen level was nearly undetectable as well, flashing in and out of existence with the waning efforts of Margaret's breaths.

The three of us, black-clad and sober, watched as the movements of her chest became smaller and less frequent over the next few minutes, and her skin pale to an almost translucent, wax-like state. Even inexperienced as I was, I could tell it would not be long. On an impulse I slipped my hand into hers and brushed the hair back from her damp face, because when two more calls to her family went unanswered, all I could think was that I

did not want her to die alone. That much I could offer, so I did. And soon, when I shifted my fingers to her wrist for her pulse, there was nothing.

Afterwards, walking back to my desk, I was thoughtful. As a nurse, death is something we brush up against almost on a daily basis. The balance of life can sometimes hang on the care we provide and the choices we

do or do not make, but yet, in the year since I had become a nurse and started working, I had never actually been with a person in the moment when life left their body. That time with Margaret, though one of many that I had served and will serve in the future, was a sacred event I felt awed to have experienced. I did not know her, nor was I one of the ones providing care for her that day, but humble and unknown to her as I was, I became the one to have her fingers in mine as she experienced her last moments before finding her final peace. Though death is the ultimate unknown, mysterious and untouchable except by those who are meeting it, that day it was tangible in the small room where we waited for it to appear. And somehow, witnessing the peace that it brought in the stillness of it all, I was changed. Margaret changed me. And I cannot help feeling that when I get the chance to hold someone's hand again, as I certainly will, that I will step closer, hold them tightly, and bring peace in a way I cannot and will not understand until I experience it myself. ✍

Death is the
ultimate unknown,
mysterious and
untouchable except
by those who are
meeting it.



Great Expectations - 1426

Barry Charter
Neosho
Community
Honorable Mention
Color Photography

Least Terns are not endangered, however, their nesting areas are the same areas loved by beachgoers. These little sea birds are so much fun to watch. The range of Least Terns runs all along the North American coast, from New York then south and around the gulf coast to Northern California. They are the smallest member of the gull and tern family. Courting usually takes place on a tidal flat or beach or in this case a heavy boating timber. The male will bring the female a tasty small fish in expectation of mating rights.

This photo was taken in the Davis Bayou portion of the Gulf Islands National Seashore in Mississippi.

Canon 6D with a Tamron 150-600 mm lens. 1/1250 seconds, f 8, ISO 400, Tamron 150-600 mm lens at 600mm

Charter is an amateur photographer who loves wildlife, nature and landscape photography.

He shoots locally in Newton and McDonald counties in Missouri.

He also travels with his wife and two small dogs in their motorhome to many national and state parks.

A CREEK, MY DAD, AND ME

Margarite R. Stever
Webb City
Community
Silver
Nonfiction
Memoir

I wrote this memoir about my last adventure with my dad to honor his memory. I think of him every time I'm in the woods.

Stever has recently been published in Grey Wolfe Publishing's 2017 Legends: Passion Pages and the 2016 and 2017 issues of The Crowder Quill.

Water Source

Latonia Bailey
Goodman
Staff Adviser
B&W Photography

This old pump can be found along the serene path at Walter Woods Conservation Area. Samsung Galaxy auto settings

Bailey, adviser since 1994, submits various works for honorary publication.

My dad loved many things, but being outside was really close to the top of the list. It didn't matter if he was mowing a field, planting trees, fishing for catfish, or hunting for deer. He just loved being in the great outdoors.

After his heart surgery several years ago, he decided that if he was supposed to walk around for exercise, he could do it just as well in the woods as he could on the treadmill. So, one day while I was visiting, we decided to go and get some heart healthy exercise. I didn't know that day would become one of my most cherished memories.

We hopped in Dad's truck and set out for our adventure. It was November. Winter hadn't hit yet, but the weather was brisk. We were bundled up appropriately and only planned to stay for an hour so we wouldn't catch a chill. We checked on the pecan and walnut trees that we had lovingly planted to make sure they were healthy. We took a few minutes to just enjoy the fall colors and the songs of late migrating birds.

We found several animal tracks. The animals had been active in the preceding days due to the relatively mild temperatures. We were having a very pleasant afternoon until Dad decided that he wanted to check the field across the creek. The creek is only a few yards across and usually not very deep. However,

we'd been experiencing a great deal of rain, which made the water fairly deep and swift. Dad, being a sure-footed country boy, hopped across the creek using some large rocks as stepping stones. He crossed quickly and without incident.

I am not the most graceful person in the world, and I have very short legs. I tried to follow Dad anyway. I hopped on one rock and then another. A few feet from the creek bank, I hopped on a moss covered rock that was extremely slippery. I could feel myself slipping off the rock, so I flapped my arms frantically fighting for balance. I fell into the icy water with a big splash and landed flat on my butt.

My jacket absorbed the water like a thirsty elephant, and within seconds it weighed a good 30 pounds. A look of abject horror crossed Dad's face until I finally stood up in the creek and told him that I felt like a water buffalo. He laughed so hard that I was afraid he might hurt himself. He laughed the entire time I fought my way to the bank and out of the water.

We took a quick hike around the far field that Dad was so keen on checking, and then found a narrower place to cross the creek on the way back to the truck. To Dad's credit, he turned the heater on full force and pointed all of the vents at me. He loaned me a pair of his sweatpants when we got back to his house so I could be a little more comfortable while my jeans were in the washer losing a healthy amount of creek mud.

Dad had the best time telling my husband all about our afternoon adventure. He laughed through the entire story. "It's a shame you had to work today because you missed your wife's swim in the creek. She couldn't keep her balance and fell right in! She looked like that coyote in the cartoons waving her arms around like she thought it would do any good."

While I didn't think the episode was very humorous, my dad had a great time. That day was the last time I went to the woods with my dad. He became extremely ill shortly after our afternoon exploits. He was too sick to walk around by the next spring. His kidneys shut down, and he passed on to that great wilderness in the sky five years later. I'm really happy that I took that accidental swim because it became my dad's favorite story. ☺





[Left]

One Small Step

Cathleen Bailey
Neosho
Community
Silver
2D Media
Screenprint

This print is of the step of our tractor that I used to stand beside my father.

Screenprint on American Stonehenge.

Bailey recently graduated with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from MSSU.

[Below]

Creekside Pasture

Samantha Gundel
McDonald County High School
Gold
2D Media
Ink

I used pen and ink to depict this scene found in a pasture near my home.

Gundel aspires to go to the University of Arkansas for engineering.



MY MORNING ROSE

Benjamin DeVore
Cassville
Crowder
Bronze
Poetry
Music Lyrics

I wrote this about a fictional gal named Isabelle, who is beloved by the song's protagonist.

DeVore attends the Cassville campus and aspires to be a musician.

Each velvet sunrise is decrepit and vanquished reflected by her,
A swan's sweetest song is a hollow shrieking pest.
Wealth's chosen few covet lustrous gold in her hair,
it traces bright canyons,
breaching shores to rest.
Gentle streams glide through her every word,
her footsteps are restful breeze in summer skies.
Her laughter spills sugar kissing autumn leaves,
caressing bliss nestled in her eyes.
Poets and philosophers knelt far beneath her,
masterworks were childish compared to her slightest sigh.
I met her in meadows of this sequestered train yard,
longingly held her in a locket of tides.
Her gaze enveloped despondency's slaves,
euphoria chased their mourning and sparked a new day.
Yet stars clung to envy as smothering winter fell,
her radiance wilted like roses of serene grace.
Woodland fog anoints the child she'd be cradling,
tinged with ice it illuminates my hair with grey.
I pled each cathedral to reclaim a glimpse of her,
but by your cruel season,
Isabelle was claimed.
My lovelorn prayers are but foolish ramblings,
catacombs of shame and eternal rebuke.
Years evermore spin on spiralling spindles,
and hope's bitter lanterns sleep in seas you've ensued.

Mountains

Haleigh Hull
Life Way Christian
School
Honorable Mention
2D Media
Watercolor

This is a watercolor painting based off of a photo taken in Glacier National Park. It was a gift for my older brother.

Hull will be attending the University of Arkansas this fall to get a degree in Art Education.





Eight-Point Pride

John Mills
Neosho
Community
Gold
2D Media
Oil Painting

Created as a commission work, I combined landscape with portraiture to celebrate the thrill and pride of a successful hunt.

Mills, a Neosho artist, creates landscapes, still lifes and portraiture, working exclusively in oil colors. He is especially challenged by custom commissioned works ranging from small paintings to larger murals.

Runaway

Tyler Langford
Joplin
Crowder
Gold
Color Photography

This was taken of my son for a birthday milestone. He was OBSESSED with trains. At this point, he was over having his picture taken and luckily it worked out. FinePix S on auto.

Langford is a first-year student who aspires to have her own photography business.



LOAFERS AND LIFESAVERS

Shawn Maxwell
Monett
Crowder
Honorable Mention
Nonfiction
Essay

I wrote this piece about my grandfather, a very memorable man.

Maxwell enjoys fine arts, fine music, and any literature with a story behind it.

My grandfather was an interesting, if not curious man; a time capsule all his own that told stories with a single glance. The poet Stanislaw Jerzy Lec once said, “Youth is a gift of nature, but age is a work of art.” If youth is wasted on the young, then those with the experience of age are kings and queens in their own right. In the following essay, one may learn the quirks, oddities, and wonders of my loafer wearing, candy hoarding, grease coated, glasses wearing antecedent Harland “Ray” Dotson.

For a fair beginning, my grandfather was a tall man who held his head high as long as his strength held out. Noble to others, they seldom got to see Grandpa Ray relaxed and reclined in that oil-stained armchair that held no upholstery in its arms.

When not wearing some frayed leather shoes that missed their last polishing before my time, he’d be sporting an equally old yet good enough pair of slippers that somehow managed to hold their stitching after generations of canines thinking they were a

chew toy.

As for the rest of his attire, one would never catch him out of a set of denims that never saw the light of day due to the heavy layers of motor oil and cigarette ashes and a sun-bleached button-up shirt, such as a dulled flannel or bowling shirt that has seen its fair share of strikes, over a starch white undershirt unless it were his “Sund’y Best” which consisted of a slightly less stained pair of slacks and yellowed dress shirt with an occasional stitch-out-of-place blazer or bolo tie. If it were cold, he’d slip into anything that was near, as he’d never be out long, then slip into a wool-lined jean jacket or a leather coat that seemed as if it had seen one too many bombing runs.

As soon as he’d see me walk into his aviator-enhanced sight, Grandpa Ray would always ask me “Whatchya think?”, his voice like sand paper over rust-pleated metal or a radiator boiling in a vintage car. Always with a tone of reason and thought, yet never revealing what he was thinking behind his copper-colored eye glasses with amber inlaid

lenses. Ray didn't talk much more when we'd come to visit, unless it was between him and my grandmother or "asking" none too elegantly "Make me a grill-cheese." One could see between him and Grandma that there was an understanding in it.

Grandpa's face foretold some anonymity in those time-pulled creases and wrinkles and the glare of any light of those glasses to conceal what thought he had in his eyes, be it from the flash of car lights or the gentle buzz-like glare of an *I Love Lucy* re-run. With his feet propped up in his chair and a hand digging through a jar of jelly-beans, he was always vigilant for the black licorice bean which he'd promptly toss away, knowing well that I'd never let him antagonize me with them again. Alternatively, he may tempt himself with a sweeter treasure and take up a cardboard box with timely fashioned designs and take a cocoa coated cordial cherry.

There were few mannerisms one could notice through Grandpa Ray's steely gaze and thorough grimace that warped his wrinkled mouth, caused from years of pursed lips that had once held a cigarette because that often melded into his normal looks. Whether it was eating, drinking, or watching, he did every activity stoically. In a rare occasion you may catch a quick, sly, smirk of a smile rise on the bottom of his ten-o'clock shadow and he may

bare some teeth.

Once in a blue moon, one could even watch that grimace grow from smirk to grin and then a smile. His crow's feet would rise with his cheeks as his face would lighten up. With it, he'd gift a short quiet laugh. With the gentle rise of his face, his head too would tilt back and you could just glimpse past his glasses' castle walls and see the happiness in his autonomous grey laughing eyes. As a lasting surprise, his grin would slowly relapse into that grimace of his though the imprint of his joy or glee would be a remainder in the air about the elderly gentlemen as his hands would collapse over each other as he'd return to his resting position.

My grandfather held a royalty and nobility in his stature and all actions he had ever come to do, like the kings that came before him. He was indeed a masterwork of art as if painted by the Masters of the Renaissance.

Harland Dotson was both a curious and interesting man; a fortress of past occurrences that will never be told, events that will never be heard, and songs of memories that will never be sung or any of such thought of again in a world like today where the young waste their youth and the elderly reflect what their youth was to them. ∞



Reminiscent

Latonia Bailey
Goodman
Staff Adviser
Digital Art

Remnants of former residents remain as a reminder of rural life along the Buffalo River in northwest Arkansas. Samsung Galaxy auto setting with vintage effect.

Bailey, adviser since 1994, submits various works for honorary publication.

Snow Day

Faith Curtis
McDonald County
High School
Gold
B&W Photography

Snow days are so peaceful and delicate that I had to take some photos. This one was my favorite.
Nikon DX

Curtis is a junior who loves photography.



DRIVING IN THE DARK

Octavianna
Hackett
Anderson
Crowder
Silver
Nonfiction
Personal Narrative

Finding a path through life is hard. Finding hope is what keeps me pursuing my goals.

Hackett, an aspiring writer, is studying to become a teacher. She wishes to teach others through her writing as well.

It is such a haunting experience to drive in the dark with a limited view of a narrow, slithering road hissing ahead of you, surrounded by nothing but open fields.

Everything else is a mystery.

Life is exactly the same as driving in the dark. Some days you spend your time in the left lane rushing along without a care. Others, you spend in the right lane carefully following the speed limit.

At times, there will be someone a few feet ahead of you in the right lane going at a slower pace that you feel is blocking you on your path. You are unsure if you are ready to keep pursuing your path or if you want to lag behind.

You know the slow drivers are holding you back, throwing their chains of hopelessness around you, whispering words of doubt into a radio you can't seem to shut off.

You cautiously make your way a foot or less into the left lane that turns into miles,

breaking a few links in the chains that have bound you.

You're scanning for obstacles left, right, and behind you, but all you can see with your dim lights is what's right in front of you. Black asphalt where white and yellow boundaries of comfort lay that everyone drives in, questioning if this is where you want to stay.

“You know the slow drivers are holding you back, throwing their chains of hopelessness around you, whispering words of doubt into a radio you can't seem to shut off.”

You then notice the open fields closing in on you but where do the fields lead? How will you know if you do not leave the comfort of the lines? Driving off the road is the biggest fear you face, but it may be necessary to leave behind the safety you once knew.

Take the unmarked path with no hesitation. Break free of the heavy chains that people have bound you to the right lane.

Let there be no more fear of the mystery ahead of us, because what more can we do than live for what we have now? ❧

THE NIGHT FIRE TOOK MY HOME

On the ice cold night of January 10, 2013, my life changed right before my eyes. My house was engulfed with dangerous flames and suffocating black smoke. My family lost our home and belongings.

I remember everything from starting dinner to running out of the house to watching the firefighters fighting the flames destroying my home.

Before the fire started, my step-mother, Johna, had just finished making dinner. The first thing that caught our attention was that the power had gone out. Johna told me to go wake up my dad who was sleeping in the next room. I ran and woke up my dad, who was also on edge about the power going out. My dad told Johna to check the power box outside. A few seconds after she went outside, she yelled that the house was on fire and that we needed to get out.

Kyle and I were the first ones out. We ran the opposite way around the house. At the front of the house we stopped for a second, still in shock and realizing how serious the situation was.

At that time, the instincts we were taught in school by drills and special speakers kicked in. Kyle and I both ran through the cold wet mud in our thin pajamas and socks to the nearest and only neighbor of ours. From our neighbor's house, we called the firefighters.

It seemed like forever, sitting in the chilly dark night, waiting for the firefighters to show up and help us.

As the fire was growing to engulf our home in flames, we could feel the heat radiating from the fire. We could hear glass breaking and the crackle of the fire sounded like an evil laugh, shattering our lives. We could see the fire licking up the walls as if it loved the taste of my family's despair.

Finally the firefighters showed up. There were seven fire trucks lining the road blocking my view of the house. After the fire was stopped, the firefighters said we could go in and grab some things even though everything was ruined by fire, smoke, and water. As I was walking in through the door into the kitchen, I could smell the smoke. I hated the way it

coated my throat and made me cough. I could see our melted dinner plates with our food still untouched.

In the living room above the couch -right where I was sitting before running to wake my dad- was a melted Christmas tree. I could see that my parents' bedroom was completely flattened.

It terrified me to think what would have happened if we had been sleeping when the fire started. Would we have been able to get out?

“We could see the fire licking up the walls as if it loved the taste of my family's despair.”

In the end, I was very thankful for the firefighters and the first responders who came out to help us. I was also thankful to my neighbors and my aunt

who let us stay with her until we had a new home. My family went through a tragedy but came out stronger than ever. ❧

Kaitlyn Moore
Monett
Crowder
Gold
Nonfiction
Essay

This essay is about losing my home to a house fire a few years back. I explain the details of the events that night.

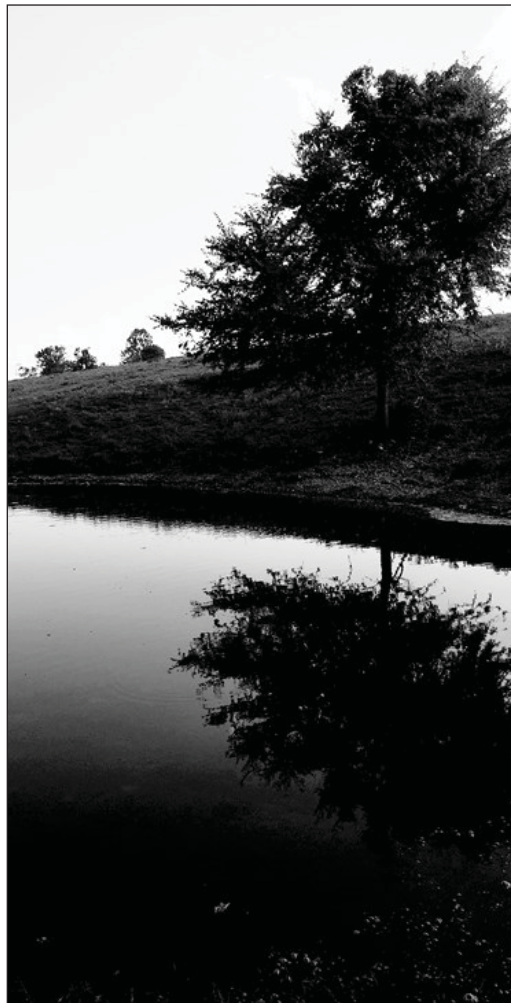
Moore is a criminal justice student.

Reflections

Mikinnley Colville
McDonald County
High School
Silver
B&W Photography

*This picture makes me realize that beauty is everywhere.
Samsung S8 auto settings*

Colville, 17, is a junior.



THE SKY KING

Glory Reitz
Homeschool
Silver
Fiction
Fable

In a creative writing class, I was challenged to come up with an "extended fable" based on a proverb. Using some pre-set stereotypes to compose a story, I picked a Biblical proverb.

Reitz is a dual-enrolled student studying at Crowder to become a vet tech.

The small, tawny cat sat atop the rock surveying the massive flocks of birds that covered the ground. When his gaze landed on the blue jays, he could barely resist licking his chops. Blinking hard, he shook himself out of any such hungry thoughts. He was here as a messenger from the King of the Beasts to host and judge the competition which would determine the new Sky King. His eyes darted between the different kinds of birds, each in their own flock. They were squabbling over who was to be the representative from their kind and have a chance to be the next Sky King. Finally, each clan had selected and sent forth their candidates. The cat stepped forward on his raised platform and yowled at the top of his lungs. Every feathered creature in the valley froze with their wings at the ready. They did not trust their judge. He was not to be trusted. Raising his head in acknowledgment, the cat began:

"Good birds, I thank you for your cooperation. This year, your Sky King will be determined not by strength, speed, or beauty, but by wisdom, so that it shall be said that the Sky King is the wisest in the land. And now, we begin." The cat's slit eyes slid like oil over the line of birds that stood before him, each hoping to be chosen. And then, with a mischievous spark in his eye, the King of the Beasts' messenger yawned, putting on full

display his rows of glistening, razor-like fangs.

"First question: Do any of you assembled believe that you are not in danger standing here before me? Any unafraid warriors?" Several birds stepped back, but besides that there was no movement until the eagle shuffled forward, the hawk close behind. The cat nodded patiently.

"No others? Good. Hawk, Eagle: you are both..." He leapt from the rock, and the eagle's eyes widened as the cat landed on his back and clamped his jaws firmly down on the hawk. After a moment, the eagle collapsed under the feline's weight, and the cat climbed off spitting the hawk from his mouth as he clambered up the side of his rock.

"... eliminated. Now get out of here before I finish what I've just started."

Over the course of the next four hours, the number of birds before the cat was narrowed down drastically until only two candidates remained: the owl and the crow. The cat eyed the crow carefully. The words "crow" and "wisdom" seldom, if ever, belonged in the same sentence. And yet, here was this small black bird sitting quietly, practically radiating wisdom and patience. It simply made no sense. Shaking himself from his thoughts once more, the cat cleared his throat.

"Congratulations on making it this far, both of you. This next question is a scenario for which there are several solutions. You must each provide a different one. This is the question: If you were made King and two of your subjects came to you, each claiming that the other had stolen the vole he had caught, how would you handle the situation?"

The owl's voice, low and melodic, swept over all the assembled when he spoke.

"A simple solution to the issue presented would be to simply *look* at the birds. The one with blood on his beak ate the vole, while the one with blood on his talons caught it. Is this a satisfactory answer, your Grace?" The cat nodded his approval, then turned to the crow.

"And how would *you* react if these accusations were brought before you, Crow?" When the smaller bird cocked his head and eyed the cat, wisdom seemed to roll off of him in waves. But when he spoke, his scratchy voice echoed harshly.

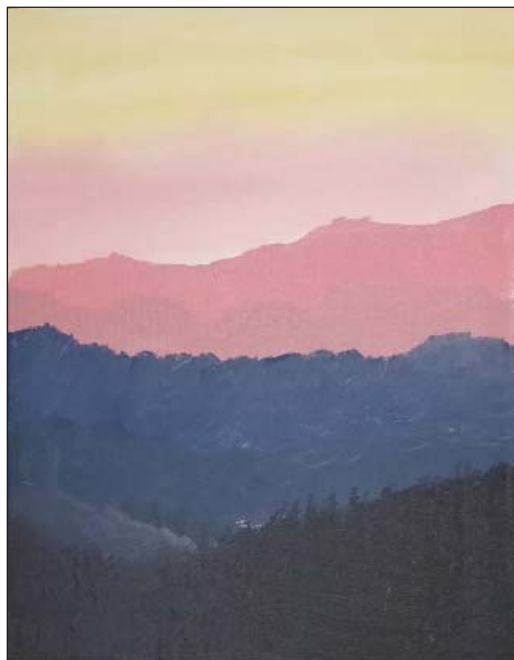
"I'd tell 'em both to go ride a Jabberwock. If they're hungry they can eat a woolly

Distant Sunset

Luis Linares
Springdale, Ark.
Crowder
Honorable Mention
2D Media
Acrylic

I created this piece to capture the colors and feeling of the natural rhythm the sunset creates.

Linares is studying pre-engineering and plans to transfer to pursue studies in technical science.



GRAVEL ROADS

Gravel roads and a vehicle flying 80-miles-per-hour is an obvious death bed, but he realized the danger too late. Until a few years ago I had never experienced the loss of a loved one, but that all changed one day and the pain came flooding like a dam when they first open the gates. At 17, my cousin Mikah was leaving church when her boyfriend asked to drive her home. Being underage, he showed off a little too much by burning out of driveways and fish tailing on gravel roads. Racing down the road and losing control, he smashed into a tree, setting the car ablaze. He saved himself but left her behind. She was killed. Three months later, her best friend who was also a family friend, went out for the night and was hit head on. They were killed instantly when a man started to drift off the road. A year later, the third crash in my family occurred. Drugs were in my cousin's system and he was late for curfew. He hit 90-miles-per-hour and spun out, rolling his truck three times and throwing him out the back glass.

Mikah dated a guy who was 15 and cocky. One Wednesday night they attended a church event where she decided to give her life to Christ. Excited of her accomplishment, she posted a quote on Twitter, "God's timing is perfect." An hour after the greatest decision she made in her life, she was killed. Her boyfriend drove her home in her Camaro, losing control after he reached 80 and peeled out eight and half seconds before he crashed. Being the coward he was, he woke up and ditched her, trapped in the seat next to him. I was asleep around twelve when my mom announced Mikah was in a fatal crash and killed. I lacked memory of the conversation. As I prepared for school the next day I noticed my sister crying. When I asked my mom why, she told me once more. Not knowing what I was supposed to feel, I dropped to my knees

with my chest hurting and my eyes misting over.

Many questioned my demeanor at school that day. I was asked what was wrong, but I was never capable of uttering the words. Few knew of the accident from the evening before. Unable to comprehend what happened, I searched the web and found the crash report. I opened the link to find out what had really happened, and at that moment anger hit me like a brick wall as I looked into the eyes of the one responsible. A face that has scarred us all, and a face of someone I had once been close with.

At the funeral, all I could think about was that I wanted to see Mikah one more time, but they closed the casket and the only face I saw was his. My family knew the incident was accidental. Each hugged him because even though he caused this, he was still a victim and will carry this on his shoulders for the rest of his life. In the past we had previously been friends, however since that day, I have never experienced so much hatred toward a single person, for he never will admit he was the one responsible for her death. Being close to my cousin this unexpected tragedy hit me like a train. I would never have guessed my time with her would have been cut so short. They played "Photograph" by Ed Sheeran at her funeral and it still has the capability to put me to tears. After this, I pushed everyone away and kept my space as I tried to hide the pain I endured every day. I still feel the pain when I think of her to this day. I ruined relationships I had but never regretted them, because from this I learned a lot about myself and other people, as well as how I react to these sorts of circumstances.

Three months after my cousin's death, her best friend and a close family friend going out for the night when he was hit head on by

[Continued to 26]

Joby Young
Purdy High School
Bronze
Nonfiction
Essay

The inspiration behind my narrative developed from the loss of several close friends and family members. Being told for months that I needed to talk about the anger and betrayal I felt, this was my way of expressing myself and exposing how these events affected me.

Young is a senior who plans to attend Crowder College after graduation to earn a General Studies Associates Degree and then transfer to Kansas State University to earn a degree in wildlife management.

mammoth. Them's all dead, so they'd be easy to hunt. So now you've seen how wise I am, and seeing as that makes me Sky King, I want pickles. Lots of 'em."

Needless to say the owl became Sky King that day. And the crow? He followed the cat home to complain of the contest results. He

was never seen again.

Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise:

And he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

Proverbs 17:28 ❧

When I Look at You

Grace Wormington
Monett High School
Gold
Color Photography

*This sunset reminds me
of "When I Look at
You" by Miley Cyrus.
Canon EOS Rebel T5*

*Wormington is a
16-year-old junior.
A few of her hobbies
include traveling and
photography.*



[Continued from 25]

a man not paying attention. Once again, the innocent individual of the crash was taken from us and we were left with the instigator. He was taken by a careless driver, as if my family had not been through enough already. Personally, I was never close with him. He was close to the parents of my cousin, Mikah, and almost considered a son. After this accident, we started to recover from these two deaths. Things in our family returned to normal and we started to see light again.

A year later we were back to normal when my third cousin was late to curfew. He sped down a gravel road at 80-miles-per-hour, lost control, and rolled his truck three times. He was thrown out the back glass window because he forgot to buckle-up. He was air lifted to the ICU where they said he only had a little time left. They also found traces of drugs in his system. He spent weeks in the hospital and recovered over time. This was a clear reminder of our previous losses, but most importantly of the short amount of time we have with our loved ones.

Although these events were tragic, I learned a lot from them. As a child, I always wondered if God existed because I had never witnessed His grace as a clear sign of existence. However, with Mikah's death

“As a child I always wondered if God existed because I never witnessed His grace as a clear sign of His existence...”

right after her post on Twitter saying, “God’s timing is perfect”, I saw His sign I was looking for. His timing for her was literally perfect. I still get chills like a cold winter day when I read those four words because of the truly incredible message she put out to others. My cousin who rolled his truck and was thrown through the back glass should have been killed almost instantly, but I believe he was given a second chance to put his life back in order. This was another clear sign of God watching over us and showing mercy. Growing up in

church they always taught me about forgiveness, but being capable of forgiveness toward my cousin’s boyfriend was one of my hardest battles I’ve had against myself. Some nights, I laid

in bed cursing his name and others I would work on letting it go, but I never could. As time went on, I started walking closer to God. Forgiveness became easier and the anger I once felt melted away just like snow in the sun. The most important lesson I learned from this tragedy was one that I was never capable of until this time, forgiveness. Forgiveness has never been an easy task but without it everyone would carry a burden until they’re gone. If you carry hatred long enough you will never find light, and therefore die. ❧

SMALL TOWN STATE OF MIND

Wheels up at 9:45 A.M. Mid-morning flights are like drinking a cup of coffee with an ocean view. I anxiously wait to pass through airport security and search for the American Airline terminals. Actually, I think I will search for something to eat before I hear what sounds like an ogre in my stomach again. As my mom, grandma, and I sit down at the terminal waiting to board, I think about how our clothes, accents, and sense of humor will stand out like a city boy in the country when we walk the streets of New York. After boarding the plane, I watch the two hour flight time dwindle just as fast as the clouds roll by. I already reminisce the quiet attributes of home as they will not be heard for another five days. Upon the horizon, the Hudson River flourishes as we descend to the airport. The skyscrapers begin to multiply as the landing wheels hit the runway strip. I have landed at Laguardia Airport in Queens, New York, but I left my heart in small town Missouri.

The taxi ride from the airport to the Belvedere Hotel felt similar to a 45 minute roller coaster that never stops. While the bellhop retrieves our luggage, I notice the main topic of conversation among tourists in the hotel lobby is the Empire State Building. We have reservations to view the New York City sunset from the top at seven. We store our belongings away and change our shoes before walking a few blocks to the Empire State Building. We arrive to the historic building and the line to enter looks like the whole town of Purdy stretching down a block and half. Luckily my grandma reserved VIP tickets, allowing us to feel like celebrities skipping the line and having our own tour guide. We set foot in the elevator that shoots up to the 82nd floor faster than I can count to ten. Our tour guide, John, begins to talk, but I race to the window instead. Shades of red, orange, and yellow trace the skyline as the sunset fades below the river. The view took my breath away but some aspects of home still outshined. I return back to John as he explains every detail about the building, from the lines on the outside to the tiles plastered on the floor. Prior to easing our way to the next elevator that ascends to the 102nd floor by man power, I walk outside to the outlook area. The temperature dropped and my legs cursed me for wearing denim shorts. John

patiently waits next to the elevator for me and my family as we return from outside. The preservation of the antique elevator allows visitors from all over the world to experience a flashback from the past. The viewing space (as well as the number of people) at the top shrank immensely from the 82nd floor. The sun has set, but Time Square still lights up the sky. After witnessing Times Square from the Empire State Building, I knew where my next destination would be.

Lit up like Silver Dollar City at Christmas time, a dim cast of light did not exist in Times Square. Giant screens wrap around the entire square flashing NBA stars, models, celebrity endorsements, and stock market prices across the bottom. Without the approval of the pedestrian signal, locals walk across the road as drivers lay on the horn the entire time. Guns hang off the sides of New York Police that closely watch the crowds gather around street performers. Most small towns back home employ two city police officers if they are lucky. Big brand companies shape Time Square: American Eagle, H&M, Ray Ban, Ralph Polo, Fossil, Levi. Within minutes, I hear "excuse me" in five different languages as I squeeze into every tiny space, trying to keep up with my mom. Although my surroundings are unfamiliar, I do not feel like I am in a dangerous situation. Tourists from all over the world possess the same intentions as I do, to explore what the beautiful city has to offer. I am in awe of the bright lights, thousands of people, and hectic lifestyle of the city. However, nothing can quite compare to the peacefulness of my back porch at home. Times Square is a portion of the city that never sleeps.

We decide to catch a taxi this morning to

[Continued to 28]



Layne Skiles
Purdy High School
Honorable Mention
Nonfiction
Essay

I fell in love with New York and wanted to share my adventure.

Skiles plans to attend Missouri Southern State University on a basketball scholarship to major in pre-medicine and become a physician's assistant.

Result of the Storm

Jacqueline Cole
Granby
Community
Honorable Mention
B&W Photography

After a bit of wild weather threw the waves high onto the shore in the middle of a Florida winter, several unique shells were uncovered by my sister and me.

Cole is a life-long lover of art who draws on life experiences to discover universal human themes, and utilizes a variety of media to convey these expressions in their final state.

[Continued from 27]

the 9/11 Museum and Memorial since our legs felt like we ran a marathon from the day before. I cannot remember any of 9/11, for I would turn two just a few days after the devastating attack. I hope to walk away knowing how the people not just of New York City, but the entire United States were impacted. Strolling towards the memorial, there is an emotional and speechless atmosphere that surrounds the area. People of all cultures honor those who lost their lives in the tragic act of terrorism. White roses rest beside the names of victims, symbolizing birthdays. Water effortlessly falls from the edges of the memorial where the towers once stood. Inside the door of the museum, security orders me to store my belongings in a plastic tub while they scan for weapons. I quickly found out that ever since 9/11 happened, they treat everyone like a threat until proven otherwise. Nobody fights commands, for they know the intense security is for good reason.

We glide down the escalator towards a mob of people that stand silent, observing the first of many walls displaying emotional pictures. My heart rips in two as I

“My heart rips in two as I acknowledge the audio tapes of bystanders playing on the speakers.”

acknowledge the audio tapes of bystanders playing on the speakers. Smashed fire trucks, cars, and building skeletons precisely how they were found on 9/11 fill the lower level of the museum. After developing heavy hearts, the museum ends with a Matt Lauer news clip streaming nationwide that Bin Laden is dead.

As I board the plane to return to Missouri, I reflect on the time spent with my family and all the memorable experiences. New York City does not compare to home. The urban sunset

lacks the uniqueness of the country sunrise peaking over the hay field. Christmas time at Silver Dollar City cannot be beaten by the beaming lights in Times Square. I hold the family-like community of barely a thousand people near to my heart. I remember how comfortable I am wearing my denim shorts and T-shirt out

in public knowing my friends are dressed the same. I appreciate the security of home around trustworthy people. I will not miss the traffic jams on every street while the only congestion in Purdy happens when the last afternoon bell rings at the high school. The captain reports we will begin our descent, and I smile as I see glimpses of home through the window. ☺

Feeling Crabby

Stormi Norton
Carl Junction
High School
Silver
Color Photography

Norton has loved art and literature her whole life. To her, art is a way to capture the feeling being experienced in the moment and keep it forever. She hopes to continue becoming a better artist as the years go on.



I went on a trip to Florida to see some family. As we were walking along the beach we ran into this little guy and I just had to get a picture. He was quite the little model.

Nikon D3400 on auto



Ebb and Flow

Jessica Sellers
Carl Junction
Community
Gold
Color Photography

*I spent a day at the Omaha Zoo and Aquarium and was drawn to the vibrant colors and movement of the jelly fish.
Cellphone (iPhone 7)*

Sellers says nature inspires and influences her art. She has been in previous issues of the Quill as well as had her work exhibited in local and national venues.

THE BEACH HOUSE

The wind coming off the waves was a live thing, clawing at the house from where it perched on its stilted foundation. A storm, unusual for this time of year, had been brewing for the last day and a half with promise of vengeance when it broke, and now it was delivering on its word. Inside the house was warm and quiet however, and though I could almost see the walls shuddering from the violent gusts, the worst of it was evidenced by the rain and muffled roar of the surf.

We had a fire going, fake flames licking over wood that never burned, but still, it was something to brood over. I absently rolled my loose hair into little knots against the nape of my neck, thinking. It was warm in front of the flames, but I shivered regardless as the tearing of the wind peaked and died as if it

was crawling into my throat and snatching each breath that I took along with it.

I jumped when I felt a tentative hand on my shoulder, though I knew it was only Blake and I in the house. His arms started to go around my waist and then he paused, hesitant, as if asking permission. When I didn't object he continued to encircle me. I did not turn around.

"Hey," he said, voice low in the subdued atmosphere.

"Hey." I tried to relax into him, to breathe normally, but the reality was this was the closest we'd been since arriving to our rental beach house early the day before. To avoid meeting his eyes in the mirror above the mantle, I looked down, but this, too, was a mistake. I could see the reflection of the weak flames in his black wedding band, and I felt

[Continued to 30]

Jacqueline Cole
Granby
Community
Bronze
Fiction
Short Story

Real life is complex, messy, and worse than we could ever imagine at times. Though fictional, this story is an example of one brief snapshot into the realm of painful reality, and echoes experiences of betrayal, anger, and shame that we all feel.

Cole is a lifelong lover of art who enjoys the process of catharsis that results from creativity. Cole draws on life experiences to discover universal human themes, and utilizes a variety of media to convey these expressions in their final state.

[Continued from 29]

a spike of guilt course through me, hot and quick. I had stopped wearing mine weeks ago.

He shifted a little, trying to find a position that felt less stilted, but when there wasn't one he gave up and released me, taking a step back. I didn't have to look to know he was standing with his head down, hands stuffed into the pockets of his jeans, and shoulders rounded, as if pressed down by a great weight. I supposed I was the one who had placed the weight on him in the first place, but he had never said so out loud. He hadn't said anything in fact, since he found out: just silence and stiffness and ragged, muffled breaths at night when he thought I was asleep.

"So," he said, attempting conversation again. I cringed, because the topics he probably wanted to discuss were ones I had been painstakingly skirting around since the horrible night that had started everything weeks ago.

But after a long moment, all he said was, "Want to watch a movie or something?"

I was sure he could see my shaking exhale as the tension temporarily leached from my posture, but if he did he said nothing. That had always been his favorite and most frequently used coping strategy: say nothing, and hope it goes away on its own. I smiled bitterly. That had been working out for us so well lately.

Wordlessly, I broke my stance and stepped over to fold myself into the wide, faux leather couch.

"Sure." I smiled for good measure, and he smiled back, but his face was stretched all wrong and he kept his distance as he settled an arm's length away from me. Clicking the remote, he didn't even bother asking what I wanted to watch, since recently my reply had become a disinterested shrug, and settled on an action movie being played on one of the late night channels.

As the light of the flames reflected dimly off the fogged windows where the ocean would be in the daylight, I pulled my legs up around me, carefully cradling my middle as if I might be sick. This place and this weather were unfamiliar, and it was impossible to focus on the screen in the heavy air.

We sat in silence, because it was better than the alternative. The violence on the screen continued, trope plot movements paired with substandard acting, but neither one of us were really paying attention anyway. It was simply a distraction, and a poor one at that it

seemed, because halfway through he paused it mid-scene to walk into the kitchen.

"Wine?" he asked. I nodded my assent. I wanted the whole, miserable bottle if I could get it. When he set my glass down by me on the side table, he sat closer than he had been before getting up. Tentatively, he laid one hand on my knee where I sat Indian-style against the cushions, but he did not restart the movie, and as the time stretched longer and longer I could feel fate approaching, stiff and cold where it crawled up from the grave that our marriage was buried in. I could tell it was eager to snatch up the pieces we were trying to salvage, hungry but hesitant just as we were.

When his wordlessness persisted, I thought backwards to distract myself. This retreat had been his idea, an effort to rekindle the scraps of what we still had left, and I had agreed. But that had been before one little blue line had changed everything, and though I had to tell him, my throat was thick and it was hard to breathe every time I tried to force the words out. He would have to start it. I needed him to. I couldn't do it, and if he didn't we would never have the conversation.

So I sat there, averted my eyes, and did little else. He took a breath and as I turned towards him in a rush of anticipation I opened my mouth, only to find he had thought better of it and allowed his words to die stillborn on his lips.

The wind battered the house, and with every venomous hit my nerves stretched thinner. I sipped compulsively from my glass, but there wasn't a drink in the world to numb what was coming. The rain, the wind, his oppressive silence... it was killing me. I could stand it no longer.

"We have to talk." My voice came out in a rush, breathy and already sounding exhausted from the strain we had been living under.

He nodded, saying nothing, and I was frustrated. "Well?"

"What do you want me to say?" he growled at last, still not meeting my eye.

I found myself twisting my hair again, knotting it into a hopeless mess of snarls all around my face. When I was silent he finally looked up at me, adopting a humorless smirk at my nervous habit.

"So much is different now, and yet you still have the same old tells."

I swallowed hard, immediately pulling my fingers out of my hair and forcing them into my lap. I tried again. "Do you want to talk

then or no?”

And suddenly he was snarling, eyes digging into mine and white knuckles on the edge of the couch. “Do I want to talk about it? What part of that do you want to talk about Ellen, because if anyone has something to say it should be you.”

I flinched then swallowed hard, once, and dropped my eyes. I could not meet his face in the pressure of what he was saying. I was crumpling in on myself, the weight of my shame a burden that was too heavy to bear. I worked around the lump in my throat, trying to speak. I was unsuccessful for several seconds, struggling to find words that were equal to the situation.

“I’m sorry,” I whispered. It sounded half-hearted even to me, but I realized that unfortunately no amount of words would ever be equal. “I’m sorry.”

“Well I am too, but that doesn’t change anything.” I was shaking now, tears brimming and threatening to fall. “There’s something else.”

He dropped his hands into his face and snorted. “What else could there possibly be?”

I stopped, feeling panicked, because I realized I couldn’t do it. It felt like he was taking up the entire room. Every corner was filled with his voice, every ounce of air was being sucked away from me and into him. He was expanding, and I was getting smaller and smaller just by existing in the same space.

I heaved a breath that did nothing to satiate, and covered even further into myself.

“Blake, there is something else. You have to know. There’s...there’s something else.”

His head whipped up to look at me, an expression of absolute hatred painted across his entire face, and his muscles rigid with fury. “What do you mean there’s someth...?”

And then he saw the fingers over my belly. My face turned towards them.

He saw the way I curled inward around myself, protective and knowing. He saw and jerked away, and in that nonexistent amount of time, every single part of him stopped moving and seemed to implode on the reality of what he had just understood.

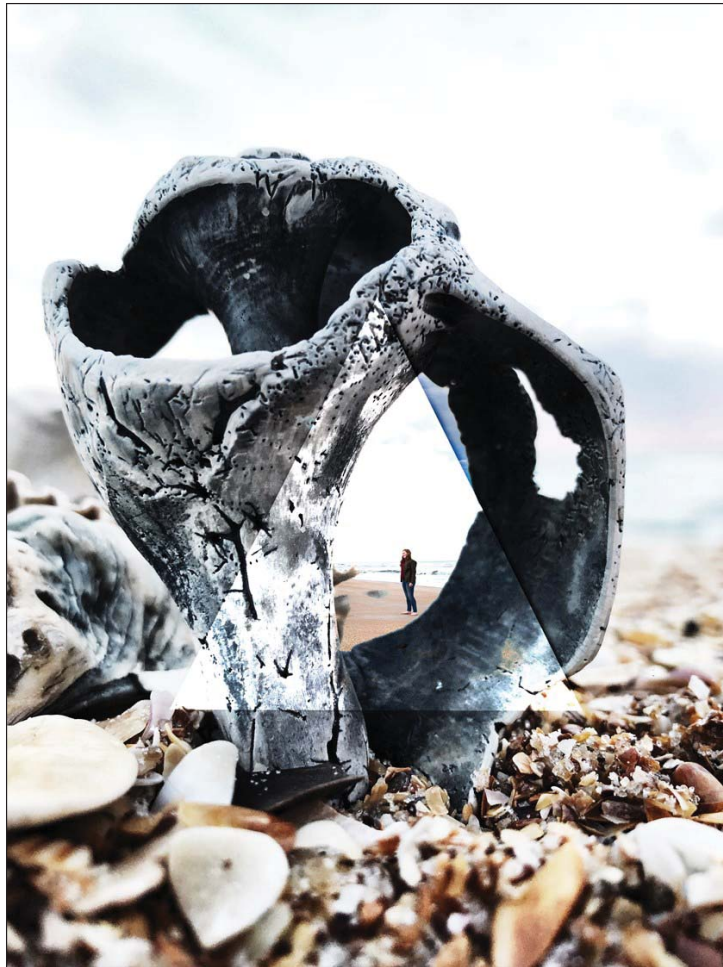
“No.” His fingers twisted in front of him, making my gut wrench with every spastic movement. “No.”

“Yes.” I was gasping now, fat tears staining my face, the couch, and the poor excuse for a nightshirt that I was wearing. I felt naked before him, empty and dead in the face of the betrayal stitched into every line of his body.

“No,” he said again, mechanically shaking his head. “It’s impossible. We haven’t...” and then his eyes widened, then hardened, and died.

In that moment I knew more than anything else that our marriage was over. There was only one thing left inside me as the life drained out and made me an empty, screaming shell. I said it because I had nothing else to say.

“I’m sorry.” ❄



Hidden Vision

Jacqueline Cole
Granby
Community
Silver
Digital Art

I absolutely loved the view through this broken shell against the backdrop of the ocean, in combination with its unique perspective. With the addition of the model, it's as if it's a completely new world.

Cole is a lifelong lover of art who draws on life experiences to discover universal human themes, and utilizes a variety of media to convey these expressions in their final state.

Lost Battle

Hanna Schmit
Noel
Community
Bronze
B&W Photography

Schmit is a 19-year-old freshman attending Missouri Southern State University. She has had a love and passion for photography since she was 15.



My brother headed out to the woods on a chilly November evening. As a couple deer made their way into the kill zone, one was not lucky enough to make it out. Once the mount was finished, I decided to take it out to the woods to photograph. Canon Rebel T3I automatic

I'M DONE

I'm done with all the faking
I'm done with all the lies
I'm done with all the heartache
And the midnight cries
I'm done with all the pain
And the sorrow deep inside
But there's nowhere to go
There's no place to hide

Sierra Wilson
McDonald County High School
Honorable Mention
Poetry
Musical Lyrics

This poem was inspired by pain. I wrote this poem because I was done with all of the pain that I felt in my heart. It has positively affected me by reminding me that writing is always a way to cope with pain.

Wilson is a high school student with a passion for music. She plans to attend college with a degree in music or music therapy.

FINGER LICKIN' CHICKEN

Chicken is my favorite food
I just don't know how to make it dude
I ate some the other day, and it was the best
I ever had
I tried to make it on my own, but it tasted
really bad
Chicken chicken chicken chicken, it's so good,
so finger lickin'
Almost as good as the bars I'm spittin'.
Chicken chicken chicken chicken
Women women women women love me when

I buy them chicken chicken chicken chicken
I love chicken, there is no question, I just can't
cook it, but I ain't stressin'
I eat the eggs, I eat the breast, I eat the legs,
I eat the rest.
I couldn't live without my chicken,
when I eat it I am grinnin'
Chicken is as sweet as pie, that for sure
ain't no lie
It's so good, so finger lickin',
chicken chicken chicken chicken

Aaron Allison
McDonald County
High School
Silver
Poetry
Rhymed Verse



Grazing

Morgan O'Brien
Seneca
Staff
Color Photography

*I took this picture
one evening when my
grandpa told me he just
got four new calves. I
took my stepsister to
see them and the sunset
turned out beautiful
that night. This photo
has no filters or editing.
Cellphone auto settings*

Machine

Maxwell Mitchell
Joplin High School
Silver
Digital Art

*Artist Tsutomu Nihei.
has a series called
“Blame”, which was the
inspiration for my piece.*

*Mitchell is an aspiring
graphic and horror
artist.*



BAKUDAN OME MASKA

Christopher Doyle
Neosho
Crowder
Gold
Poetry
Free Verse

*Having visited
Hiroshima's Peace
Park during my time
in the Marine Corps,
I was struck by the
overwhelming madness
of nuclear weapons
and their promulgation.
This poem was written
many years ago as the
70th anniversary of the
dropping of the bomb
was approaching.*

*Doyle is currently
taking theatre arts
courses.*

(Remember the Bomb)

The day the sun came down from heaven
To blaze in a cloudless sky
The children, their hands grasped by
Mothers (a morning like any other),
History books tied securely
In their satchels, soon became
Part of it themselves.
Some also carried the leaflets
Of the past few days stuffed in
Amongst their exercises—
Had not their emperor explained:
More propaganda from the Western
Dogs to try to frighten the
People of the Sun.
Many looked up that August morning,
Curious at the sound of a lone airplane,
Engines vibrating the stillness.
Of the sky, a shadow
Fore-shadowing their doom.
And in this land of the rising sun
That morning It fell.

It burst upon them in an instant,
Dispatching some to become one.
With their morning prayers,
Still echoing on the wind,
Leaving only their shadows behind—
Spirits burned into the glassy sand.
Others ran, hair aflame, from this
Incarnation of their native land,
Choking the seven rivers
With their bodies, their tears
Adding to the flow.
All chorused together,
Scalded voices harmonizing
In a symphony of screams.
Hands, or what had once been hands,
Groped in anguish to remove
Their searing tatters,
Finding skin had become
Fused into the weave.
Silently, they had been given
Genetic legacies to reap
In their adulthood
And bequeath to their own offspring.

Today, their children's children
Perch prayer-cranes in branches
At Hiroshima and learn a lesson:
Bakudan Ome Maska.
They pray that tomorrow.
The world will learn another:
Hei-wa - no war.

LIBERTY

You are the desire of every heart,
You are the desire of every nation.
You are the why for many battles,
You are the why in many speeches.

You, so powerful!
You bring dignity and honor.
You lift up the head of the oppressed,
You break the shackles.
You satisfy the thirst of the broken,
You, so triumphant!

*I based myself in the speech "I Have a Dream" by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Liberty is first conquered in one's self, then it grows out to others, then to the nation.*

Corina Rodriguez
Monett
Crowder
Honorable Mention
Poetry
Free Verse

Rodriguez was born in Mexico, but has lived in the USA for 18 years.



The Iron Throne

Anna Snuffer
Verona High School
Honorable Mention
3D Art
Assemblage

My inspiration for this was watching and reading Game of Thrones.

Crescent Moon

Anah Dover
Purdy High School
Bronze
B&W Photography

*I wanted to take
this picture because I
wanted to see what
the crescent looked like
up-close.*

*Canon Powershot,
ISO 1600*

*You will always see
Dover with a smile on
her face.*



COLORS

Ruby Palomo
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
Poetry

*This poem is about my
biological father, who
is not exactly a father
figure. However, he
is one of the biggest
influences I have ever
had.*

*“Just a small town
girl, living in a lonely
world. She took the
midnight train, going
anywhere.”*

All around, all I saw was grey.
Everywhere I went, grey.
Cannot find the saturated sunrise.
Nowhere in sight.
When the days were dark as night,
Your light was never there to guide me.
You were red and I was blue.
When you hugged me, I was a lilac sky.
You decided purple, wasn't for you
You pulled us apart at the seams,
Ripped every edge of the masterpiece
we called a family.
I now have a masterpiece of my own.
You are only a speck.
Now, I see the saturated sunrise.
Your light cannot compare for you
are a mere flashlight.
Your colors only darkened mine.

I no longer see those vivid beautiful colors
in you I once did.
Now I am grown and I see you
for what you really are.
As the years went by,
I have grown into every color
of the rainbow spectrum.
Thanks to you, I am no longer afraid
of the colors.
Those beautiful colors you never had
to fill that empty hole.
My masterpiece is not yet finished,
but I hold the brush now.
I will complete my masterpiece,
But you will only be a speck.
I am at peace now.
I forgive you dad.
I no longer see the shadows you have cast.
All that lies ahead is the saturated sunrise.

I BECAME YELLOW

I used to be red, a ball of disaster.
I used to be blue, a pool of sadness.
I used to be grey, a shell of emptiness.
I used to be black, a hole of loneliness.

I used to be red, I used to be blue,
My life had been a vacant house.
I used to be grey, I used to be black,
My heart had been an open wound.
I was home alone until I found yellow.

Yellow gave me hope,
Yellow felt like heaven.
Yellow made me healthy,
Yellow was my harmony.

It seeped into my red,
It flooded into my blue.
It danced into my grey,
It flew into my black.

I was no longer a disaster,
I was no longer sad.
I was no longer hollow,
I was no longer alone.

I am now yellow, I am now youthful.
I am now bright, I am now bubbly.
I am now happy, I am now hopeful.
I am now myself, I now walk my own path.

Living the life, I own my life.
Right as rain, I am fit and well.
Good as gold, I'm on the right track.
Home sweet home, I am now at peace.

I am now myself,
I am now myself.
Be who you are,
Be who you are.

Mallory Carpenter
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
Poetry
Free Verse

*I expressed my emotions
and really brought
myself out in this poem.
It got me thinking more
about myself and who
I am.*

*Carpenter is a junior
who plans on going to
college for nursing.*



Through the Looking Glass

Anah Dover
Purdy High School
Bronze
Color Photography

*I wanted to take this
picture because the red
lens inspired me to
capture the view.
Canon Powershot,
ISO 1600*

*Dover lives on her own
in Purdy, and enjoys
writing, photography,
and reading.*

Welded Shark Jaws

Daniel Percy
Carthage
Crowder
Gold
3D Art
Metal Sculpture

My inspiration was going to several aquariums and then the Gulf of Mexico in 2015.

Percy is a young man that was taught not to let schooling get in the way of education. As famous Missourian writer Mark Twain once quoted, "I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."



PAPER CUTS

Stormi Norton
Carl Junction
High School
Bronze
Poetry
Free Verse

I brush my fingertips over the memories of us tenderly, like the old books on my bookshelf at home. It still hurts sometimes. Little paper cuts cover my heart from the pages of us. It seems that those paper cuts will rip me apart one day.

I don't know why I reread all the stories. I already know what the heartbreaking ending looks like. I guess I keep hoping that the ending will be different this time.

Why would you reread a story you know by heart?

Sometimes memories hurt too much to think about. For me, writing about them is much easier.

Norton has loved art and literature her whole life. Writing is a way to remember the feeling you were experiencing in that moment.



Nap Time

Cade Lyerla
Neosho
High School
Honorable Mention
2D Media
Scratch Board

I really like how the picture looked and transferred to the scratch board.

THE MONSTER INSIDE

I know about a monster.
A truly hideous being.
He lives in deep dark places
Where no one want to be seen.

He lurks beneath sweet smiles
And behind innocent eyes.
His voice is soft and pleasing,
But his words are full of lies.

His mind is filled with evil:
Dark and impure desire.
His heart rages in anger,
It burns stronger than a fire.

He wraps his victims with guilt
Until all they feel is shame.
And when he's accused of wrong
He finds someone else to blame.

He whispers doubt into my ear
'Til I question all I know.
I listen to what he says
Forgetting he is the foe.

He laughs at all my attempts
When I try to do some good.
He tells me I'll never be
Any of the things I should.

He is full of arrogance
But there is one he can't beat.
A knight with nail-scarred hands
Shall bring about his defeat.

You might say monsters aren't real
No more than a gnome or elf.
But you will find a monster
If you look inside yourself.

Bonnie Ray
Neosho
Homeschool
Gold
Poetry
Rhymed Verse

*We all have a monster.
Most of them are pretty
subtile, but they are
there. The only way to
fight your monster is to
recognize you have one.*

*Ray is a homeschooled
junior, who also does
dual credit at Crowder
College.*

DEAR HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE GRADUATES:

Kim McCully-
Mobley
Aurora
Community
Bronze
Nonfiction
Essay

Each year, I write a letter to my high school and college students. It is full of wit, wisdom, and insight I have gained since my own graduation.

McCully-Mobley is a cowgirl, pirate, gypsy and rebel with a cause. She is known throughout the Ozarks as an educator, storyteller, historian and writer. She makes her home on a small farm in Barry County, with her husband, Al, and dogs--Polly and Otis.

Every year I write a letter to the seniors. Sometimes I read it out loud to my students in class. Often, I turn into a blubbering mess. I think the reason I get so emotional is because I take ownership in each student who passes through these doors. I do not take my role here lightly. I feel honored and blessed that my job puts me in touch with such great people on a daily basis. This is a special place where joys, sorrows, victories, losses, hopes and dreams have been shared. Learning becomes a lifelong adventure inside these walls.

I love being from Aurora. I have always loved being a Houn' Dawg. I cherish the 1970s when I graduated. My class of 1979 was not so different...despite the decades that separate us. We were loyal. We loved our hometown. We wondered what the world would hold for us. We treasured our friendships. (We also loved disco, tie-dye and 8-track tapes, but that's another letter!)

I try hard to give each class my best advice, a little encouragement and some ideals to hold onto as opportunities and choices begin to land at your feet.

Love deeply. When you are committed to something and passionate about people, they usually rise to your expectations.

Be kind. You will never regret it. You will, however, regret harsh words said in anger, mocking someone who looks up to you or projecting your personal disappointments about yourself onto someone else. Don't do it. People remember kindness and generosity. Those traits will start a ripple that could change the world.

Take a few risks. Change is hard and taking risks is scary. But a few, well-planned, calculated risks can reap huge rewards. Get outside of your comfort zone. We learn when we squirm.

Laugh often. Humor is magical medicine. Learning to laugh at ourselves and chuckle with others is good for your soul. That doesn't mean you have to be a clown or that you need

to make fun of others; it just simply means to look for the humor in every situation.

Be relentless. If you want something bad enough, find a legal, moral and ethical way to get it. Apply for that dream job. Get certified and qualified for everything you think you may want to do someday. If you get rejected, try again. Being able to land on your feet with resiliency brings on a layer of determination. Timing is everything. Never quit. Challenges just tell us how bad we want something.

Know when to compromise. I'll be honest. I grew up thinking that compromising makes you weak. As I've grown older, I have come to realize everything I feel strongly about is not worth an all-out battle. You have to pick and choose your battles. Sometimes a slow, genuine compromise can save a relationship, a friendship, a job or even a marriage.

Never compromise your faith, your family, your friends or your integrity. Those are the deal-breakers. A good friend gave me that simple advice one time when something painful was about to happen to me and I knew I had to take a stand. Her advice made it simple. That rule helped land me here at Aurora High School---where I hope to be for several more years to come.

Pay it forward. Service to others is one of the most rewarding things you can ever do. Get involved. Make a difference. Do things for nothing. Pick up some trash. Join a civic organization. Pay for someone's drink in the drive-thru line. Hold the door open for someone. Look around you for someone in need. Find a way to help them without them even knowing it. Make a promise every day to do one simple act of "paying it forward."

Forgive...as often as you can. Holding on to baggage and grudges will eat you up and destroy the good things you have going on in your lives. Forgive yourselves. Forgive others. Let it go. You can set boundaries to keep people from taking advantage of you, but hating on them takes up way too much time and energy.

**“Never compromise your faith,
your family, your friends
or your integrity.”**

Have fun. Working hard is a great trait. There is nothing wrong with being a hard worker. But, before you know it, the decades will have passed. Kick up your heels. Play in the yard. Go barefoot in the grass. Slow dance in the garage. Have some fun.

Bask in the joys of your accomplishments today and in the days to come. There will be a few setbacks, a few surprises and a few disappointments along the way. That's okay. That's what life is all about. We get to find out who we really are in the way that we respond to those things.

Know who you are. You are strong. You are going to be just fine. Remember to be safe. Surround yourselves with people who believe in you, people who have your back and will lift you up. Smile and walk away from those who don't. I will be here cheering you on, praying for your protection and hoping life makes your dreams come true. If you need a shoulder to cry on or some sage advice from someone who has been in your shoes, I'm here—loving each and everyone one of you with all of my heart.

Congratulations. Embrace the journey—but remember ALL ROADS LEAD HOME.

Good Luck & Godspeed. ✨



Lone Wolf

Regan Eads
McDonald County
High School
Gold
Digital Art

*I play Overwatch from time to time, and the game always inspires me to draw. I decided to draw Hanzo Shimada in his Lone Wolf +skin. It made me feel as if I could draw anything after I was done.
Gimp Using Smudge*

Eads is a senior who loves to create artwork, write stories, and play games. He has dreams of becoming a popular artist.

Little Dog

Kelli Brennand
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
B&W Photography

*I love this dog a lot. He
went through quite a
few struggles but still
remained happy.
Cannon*

*Brennand loves to take
photographs and play
volleyball. She hopes to
go far with those two
things.*



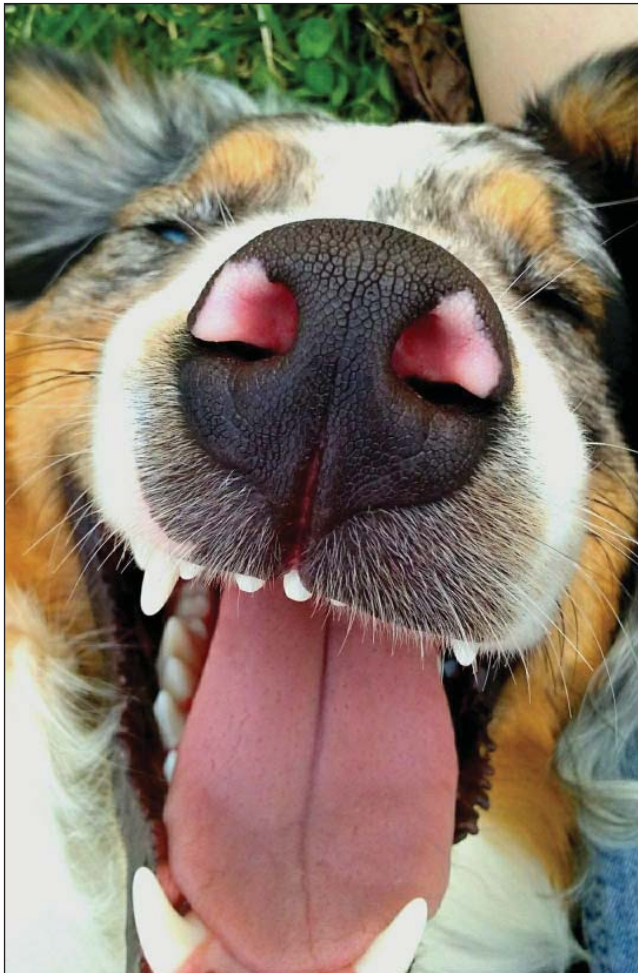
Eye of Blue

Cathleen Denise
Bailey
Neosho
Community
Gold
B&W Photography

*Bailey began her
college career at
Crowder. After
graduating, she took a
couple years of a break
and then went on to
MSSU. She recently
just graduated with
her Bachelor's of Fine
Arts.
Nikon D90*



This is the eye of the partner's photographer's horse, Blue. This horse was so steadfast the entire weekend of this field trial and his steady eyes kept catching attention.



Smiles

Saige Bennett
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
Color Photography

*I find this dog extremely unique because it has one blue eye and one brown eye. I also love how his nostrils have perfect outlines of light skin.
LG Fiesta*

Bennett sees simple photographs as inspiration to strive to be a part time traveling photographer.



Eyes of Sadness

Jennifer Ishcomer
Granby
Staff
Color Photography

*This was a dog at the animal shelter I was helping at. I fell in love with her eyes and got the greatest picture of her.
Cannon*

Ishcomer is a photographer who loves what she does. She decided to go to school and get a degree to go behind her name.

Moon

Juliana Varghese
Life Way Christian
School
Bronze
Digital Art

*I was inspired by
the moon. The
constellations
surrounding the moon
are my own creation.
I have never heard of
any like them in our
solar system.*

Krita 2.9.9

*Locked and overlay
layers with a soft light
layer*

*Varghese hopes to
become a freelance artist
and graphic designer.*



NOVA

Citizens flocked to the instillation on transport ships, warships, and the wealthier via transport. Excitement, nervousness, and scared were the feelings everyone felt. All were members from different nations, but now they were united together as S.W.A.N., the Society with Allied Nations. The Klahtion Empire had ended all pretense of individual nations. The million-mile empire, named due the amount of land and people, had a thirst for war and land. They said that Klahtion women had gestation times of 2 months, and each citizen grew full-size by ten years old, this led them to having a massive army feared by their enemies. The S.W.A.N. coalition had something going for them, Valedors, gifted beings that appeared once in 1/100,000 births. These beings could take on armies unscathed, unfortunately even they weren't a match for the Klahtion Empire.

The talk around the instillation was a mixture of worry and excitement about the enormous event that was about to take place.

"Man! I can't wait for the Valedor to arrive" exclaimed one man to his girlfriend.

"You mean the failed Valedor?"

"What? He's not failed, he's a real-life

Valedor."

"I heard he's only a partial Valedor. That he's not nearly as strong as he should be, thus a failed Valedor" replied the skeptical girlfriend.

"No way. They are guaranteeing us 300 years of full protection, followed by 250 years of partial, and then only the pod," explained the boyfriend, he was very excited to be in a city with a Valedor.

"Whatever. That's not really very long you know?" his girlfriend was skeptical, she didn't think anything would be able to stop the Klahtion Empire. It was an opinion shared by a lot of people, even councilors in the alliance themselves. The Klahtion Empire had run roughshod over everything already. Why did the shielded cities survive?

"Not very long! That's more than any other Valedor can give, usually they only guarantee 200 years. That's why this will be the capital. A new home for everyone who lives here, finally a safe home."

As they talked, a metal box was traveling down main street. Everyone made way as they pointed. They all knew what was inside it, the last hope, a Valedor. Two people walked along

Jacob Walker
Neosho
Crowder
Honorable Mention
Fiction
Fantasy

*I wrote this after a
dream, and love how
resilient it proves
humans are.*

*Walker has published
both short stories and
poetry. He is working
towards getting his
Masters degree, a
book published, and a
Broadway play.*

the edge of the crowd, keeping pace with the box, not drawing attention. One was a tall man, his face chiseled and edged with dignity, poise, and a little bit of skepticism. Hanging at his side was a silver double edged sword, the sheath leather, lined with red velvet. Next to him walked a woman of strong character, dignity, and commanding presence. The look on her face was one of pride, but also anger. Armed as well, with a silver broadsword strapped to her back, her sheath was lined with gold indicating a position of command. The metal box came to rest under a clear orb. The two people broke off into a back alleyway arguing.

"I don't like this, he deserves to be out there fighting with us!" argued the woman, her fists were clenched, and her deep purple eyes flared.

"You know he can't. He can only take on two platoons by himself before he needs back up, that's of no use to us." stated her companion, his green eyes were cold and piercing.

"He is a full-fledged Valedor, he saved my life, he saved yours, and countless others! Without his shielding abilities you would be a bloody pulp on the fields of Jane."

"Yes, he's very well versed in shielding abilities, I won't deny that, which is exactly why he was chosen to come here to the new capital. Do you want him to end up like the others? Keaton, Luke, Eas, Newton, Donny, Jim, Eander, I can continue. All failed Valedors, all dead at Khlotion's hands."

"He has my sword and power to protect him, and he's not as stupid as Keaton or Luke, to go behind enemy lines without support. He is a strong ally Daton, you know that, you just resent him."

"You are letting your emotions cloud your judgment Ceres!" replied Daton angrily, his eyes turning a dark green with his mood. Ceres gasped at his words, her purple eyes going almost black as she smacked him, her arm moving so fast Daton didn't have time to react. Catching him perfectly on the chin with the heel of her hand. Daton flew down the alley, slamming into a wall, causing a shower of bricks to fall on his head, crumpling to the ground. Ceres turned her palms downwards, and effortlessly lifted herself a foot off the ground, floating down the alleyway to stop before him.

"Don't ever utter such nonsense again. Don't forget I took over leadership after Eas died, and you failed to do so twice beforehand.

Don't forget that I have led countless victories in the field."

"You may be leader, but the council's word is important." Daton shook his head, pushing the bricks off, standing up to face her. All his anger left, he had no intention of challenging Ceres in combat. She was a better leader than anyone else and infighting would ruin them, Khlotion didn't need any help.

"Which is why we're here, to see him put into that orb, against my wishes."

"He will do well here Ceres, many Valedors have already done so. TB has her Battlefield, Omega has his Omega Relay, Ratt has his Goodman." The two walked back towards the end of the alley, back to the crowd. "This will be the capital of our new nation. Who would have thought that all we had would be reduced to this, small installations hiding behind protective barriers."

While the Valedors had their confrontation, the metal box had been opened in front of the crowd, and a man stood in the orb. The so called failed Valedor stood looking out at the crowd through the purple tinted orb. His bearing was one of pride, dignity, and a little annoyance. People were running all around the orb making sure everything was hooked up, with more people inside the building next to it in the control center. The Valedor reached up, connected a tube to each temple, then inserted his earbuds.

"Press play, then log out" stated a general, looking over at someone sitting at the main console. The man nodded punching in the code, before hitting play. One of the councilors came up behind him looking at the screen, a look of shock and confusion on his face.

"What was that? Music?"

"Um yes Sir, it seemed to be something called Gladion's cool stuff playlist, a lame name."

"He can't listen to music in there! Sign back in, turn it off." The councilor slammed his fist down on the console as his subordinate tried. Someone else in the room asked, "Who's Gladion?"

"His sword," a woman across the room replied, she was smiling while connecting the power supplies that would keep everything running for years.

"I'm sorry councilor but it seems that I'm banned from logging back in." The councilor looked at the Valedor in the orb, and thought he saw a slight smirk on his face. Reaching

[Continued to 46]

[Continued from 45]

out, the Valedor grabbed two metal handles sticking out from the wall, with a sharp twist, metallic plates started running up his arms, attaching themselves to skin. The metallic plates formed a solid tube from his shoulders to the walls. As the metal connected to the skin, the two Valedors behind the crowd rose up above the crowd, offering one last goodbye. Seeing them he smiled, memorizing their features, finally finding Ceres's eyes. As they looked at each other, both gave the other a look filled with love, pride, sorrow, and determination. Neither one broke their gaze, even while thick green liquid started to slowly fill the orb.

"What's that pouring into the orb?"

Someone asked.

"It's ether, it will fill the orb completely.

It is designed to enhance the Valedor's powers tenfold, as well as induce a coma like state an hour after submersion."

The crowd watched as the orb slowly filled up, submersing his body, the metal encasing on his arms shining through the thick gel. As the gel reached his groin area, his eyes snapped open in shock and looked straight up, as if he was trying to look through the very heavens. The crowd followed his gaze, but were unable to see anything, until someone let out a piercing scream. Coming out of warp, a Khlation warship appeared above the instillation priming its weapons to unload its payload.

Ceres and Daton knew what they had to do, and wasted no time in doing it. Both shot up into the atmosphere, to meet the war ship. They both spread about a mile apart, and erected barriers of red webbing, designed to cover the sky between them. The energy fire from the ship's cannons hit the barriers, lighting it up with sparks and explosions, causing it to look like fireworks. After the first barrage, the scared crowd let out a sigh of relief and awe, no damage was done to the barriers, and no energy blasts had made it past. The Valedor in the orb, knowing his brethren had the issue in hand, closed his eyes to focus on feeling the ether around him, encasing his body and slowly soaking into his skin. The metal sheathing started to glow showing its full potential, allowing him to channel his power further than the orb. Everyone was frantically trying to get everything finalized.

The orb descended into its metal room. In the air, the battle was progressing, and stretching further and further out. Daton took over control of the barriers, while Ceres had taken up position above him, darting through the sky with sword drawn. Khlaction had scrambled their fighters, and Ceres was meeting them in the air slicing anything her sword could connect with, to protect the instillation. S.W.A.N. fighters had been scrambled as well, and were engaging any that got past Ceres.

The citizens below watched in shock and awe, most having never seen a Valedor at work and these were the absolute best. The Khlation's were many however, and alarms sounded as the fighter jets passed the warning distance. The crowd screamed knowing that for all of the pomp and circumstance, the end had finally come. As the crowd was ready to die, suddenly a webbed barrier shot out from the ground. It expanded until it engulfed the entire instillation stopping 3000 feet above the atmosphere of the instillation. The two Valedors hovered in the air, looking up as the red barrier absorbed enemy fire, even taking a from the cannon without faltering.

"What will they call this place?" asked Ceres

"Novaport," said Daton, "You know how much he loved pirates and ships." ❧

Yin Yang Shattered Image

Nicole Danner
Neosho
High School
Honorable Mention
2D Media
Pencil

*I used cubism to
separate the image with
dark to light shading.*





Wisdom

Meredith DeNisco
Joplin
Crowder
Silver
Digital Art

Since I read Proverbs I've had this image in my head. I loved how wisdom was personified as a woman. I came across another wording of verse 8:23: "She is woven into the fabric of the universe," which was my inspiration for this piece.

*Paint Tool Sai
Wacom Intuos Creative
Pen Tablet*

DeNisco is working on getting her degree in graphic design, and plans to work as a graphic designer/illustrator in the future.

FLYING

Soaring with angels,
Look at you go!
Scaling the sky
with wings white as snow.
I dreamt you came down,
we danced in the clouds.
Then you flew away
and I was awake.
I wish it were real,

I wish I could know
If you're flying with angels
or you're there all alone.
But for now I'll just dream.
I'll dream of flying.

Emilee Kuschel
Monett
Staff
Poetry
Rhymed Verse

This poem is from the perspective of a person who has lost a loved one and wonders what happened to them after.

Kuschel is a student at Crowder and will graduate in May.

ON THE SOLAR ECLIPSE

Brandi Unruh
Neosho
Community
Bronze
Poetry
Free Verse

The day we watched the solar eclipse made me thankful for the wisdom that comes with age, but at the same time wistful for that feeling of invincibility that disappears too soon.

Unruh teaches classes at McDonald County and Crowder College.

“We have to sign a waiver to go outside?”
they ask.
I repeat the instructions that I’ve been given
and watch two dozen pairs
of teenage eyes roll in unison.
The truth is I have no idea what is going on.
I don’t most days. But all the same,
I pretend to be knowledgeable,
rattle off terms like
prominence, totality, and solar retinopathy.
But I suspect that some of them suspect.
Question my science, see through my
confident superiority.

“Don’t be dumb—don’t look at the sun,”
I tell them

and soon the rhyme picks up steam
as silly phrases
said half-serious, half-true tend to do.
And when we come back in, there’s one,
then two, then three
who quietly confess, “I decided that it was
worth the risk.”

And even while I shake my head
and repeat that stupid phrase
(as if it will do them any good now!),
I can’t help but envy them,
just a little.
What kind of stupid bravery does that take?

“Don’t be dumb, don’t look at the sun,”
I tell them.
It is far too late for me to do the same.

Judging a Book

Tyler Dallis
Exeter
Community
Bronze
2D Media

This piece is about judging a book by its cover. You never know what you are going to get unless you open it up and go on an adventure.

*Collage
Ink washes with
photo, book pages, and
embroidery on paper,
12x12*

Dallis is a Crowder College alumni currently obtaining his Bachelor of Fine Arts.



DREAM CATCHER

Rose had a simple kind of beauty, the kind you noticed right away. You could always find her dancing around with a delicate combination of flowers and feathers in her hair. They looked so perfectly construed, as if they had been intentionally placed as to not disturb the wild mane of curls framing her face. The teenager had a sweet, old soul, resulting from the years of unconditional love and support that radiated from the Pearl family.

She was never much of a fighter; she had known pain that rested beneath the surface and would never wish it upon anyone else. Tattooed on her soul were the scars of a past not forgotten. Rose wasn't bitter about her struggles, however, because she saw them as an opportunity to grow.

Rose and her brother, Ren, floated from foster home to foster home throughout their childhood until they were introduced to their forever home. Daisy and Poppy Pearl were an eccentric and spiritual duo who believed firmly in reading the stars and sacred rituals. Many in the town were not fond of them, accusing them of being "mental", "ill", or even going as far as trying to call them "witches." However, they simply let it roll off their backs, as they were a happy pair.

The siblings would wake up screaming with nightmares of horrible flashbacks from their father. Rose would remain unsettled until daylight. Since Ren was much younger than Rose, he would normally cry until she finally rocked him back to sleep.

Daisy and Poppy tried every remedy and concoction they could to calm the two, but nothing seemed to soothe them.

Poppy was becoming desperate one day. Her heart tore every time she heard the sobs of young Ren. She began weaving and tying feathers, beads, and strings together one day. She dried flowers and carefully tied those around the outer circle of what she hoped would be a token for resting peace. She carefully placed the dream catcher at the head of Ren's bed and waited for nightfall.

Rose awoke one night to a crashing noise coming from the kitchen. She wandered in there without fear, assuming it was just Daisy making some kind of late-night snack.

Where there should have been the tall, frail woman Rose had grown to love was the strict

and rigid man she had tried so hard to run from her whole life. She didn't feel as though this were a nightmare. Her nightmares never took place in their own home.

Rose's father quickly stood. He was perfectly framed by the moonlight shining through the shattered window he had busted through. He grabbed a knife off the counter and pointed it at Rose.

She yelled for help, trying to wake up anyone that could come to her rescue. Her father chased her around the kitchen island and up the stairs as she frantically ran for Poppy's room. She burst through the door, only to find an empty bed. Her father was hot on her tracks, so she locked the door behind her and looked for any other escape route.

She glanced at the window and decided to climb onto the roof. Her father busted down the door just as she scrambled through the small window frame. He followed her to the roof, the knife still gleaming in the moonlight.

With the angle the roof was, it was hard to keep her footing as she looked for the softest target to jump onto. She felt something just barely touch her hand and glanced down long enough to see the blood oozing.

Whether it were the sight of her own blood or the rush of emotion and adrenaline coursing through her, something had made her suddenly very dizzy. Rose lost her footing on the roof and began falling to the ground. As she fell, she looked up at her sick, grinning father.

She braced herself to hit the ground hard, but suddenly jumped in her bed as she woke up.

Rose took a moment to collect herself, then figured her brother would probably soon be experiencing the same familiar dark emotions as she. She trudged down to his room, exhausted from her frantic dream.

As she approached Ren's door she saw him resting peacefully, smiling in his sleep. Above him, a beautiful dream catcher shone in the moonlight.

She crawled into bed with him, holding him close. It brought her comfort knowing her brother wasn't suffering, but she felt a twinge of resentment as she realized she wouldn't get any rest for the night.

Just as she was wondering what it was like to get a good night's sleep she drifted off, just as peaceful and calm as her brother. ❧

Kaitlin Barnett
Neosho
Staff
Fiction
Short Story

I really struggled trying to find something to write about, but used my tattoo as inspiration for the characters.

Barnett has her Associates Degree and in the fall will be pursuing her Bachelors in Communications.

ESCAPE

Tana Burkhart
Joplin
Staff
Nonfiction
Short Essay

Hopefully one day I will be able to have an escape like this.

Burkhart is a single mom hoping to earn her AA in journalism.

I wish that when I opened my sliding door, I'd walk into a magnificent escape. I could take a step into the lush, green wonderment and leave my stress far behind.

While standing in the center of a terraced, mahogany deck, I'd look to my right and see plenty of comfortable seating for the guests I would entertain. As I peer left, I could scan the perimeter of the yard, and would see it lined with lush trees and a gorgeous wood fence.

Taking the steps down into the yard, I'd follow the stone walkways around the spacious property, taking in the beauty from each perfectly manicured garden leading all the way to the back. There I would find a charming pond with a splendid fountain and an elaborate fairy garden surrounding.

Each ornamental design, flower, and detail would allow me to imagine serenity. I'd breathe in the wonderful aromas of nature and feel light and peaceful.

In my backyard... I would escape. ✨



Nourishment

Mandie Dawson | Mount Vernon | Community | Bronze | Digital Art

I love the painted style and try to use it to turn my subjects into beautiful painted art. This mommy is a fairy and she wanted to capture the moment of nourishment of her child. This moment will be in their lives forever. Lightroom and Photoshop

Dawson was a Crowder student and is now the proud owner of a photography studio.



Foxes with Blue Feather

Tiffany Blevins
Anderson
Community
Honorable Mention
2D Media

This piece is actually a gift for a romantic interest. Foxes are my favorite animals and the blue feather is a representation of love.
Color pencil
Graphite
Baby oil

Blevins is an artist with an A.A. in Graphic Design and in Theater.



Lost by the Shore

B.L. Reeves
Anderson
Community
Honorable Mention
2D Media

A landscape done in acrylic paint.

Reeves is a community member and McDonald County High School alumni.

LIGHT WILL LIVE ON

Mary Calhoun
Joplin
Community
Silver
Poetry
Free Verse

*I wrote this poem about
feeling a sense of
urgency to figure out the
future -- for myself and
for the world -- and
how passing on love and
strength to children can
bring us hope for the
future.*

*Calhoun is an English
teacher at McDonald
County High School.*

Some nights
I sit on my bed
Miserly calculating every day lived
And every day left,
With eyes like a hunted animal
And a claw-like hand
Searching my lips for direction
Searching my mind
For some time that I've missed
In the glow of my bedside lamp.

How many days are left
To skip across mountains?
When is the deadline
To declare the meaning of my life?
How soon will I be confined
To hands that need mine?
How long
Until my lamp goes black?

I don't know.
I don't know.
I don't know.

But each day
I get on my knees
And hold the tiny hands
Of children
Who have hardly learned to count.
I look into their eyes
Where fear and disappointment
Are only flutters between
Bright laughter
And pure wonder.
I look into these eyes
And I tell them,
You are good.
You are strong.
You are loved.

And I remember,
I believe,
That light will live on
Beyond days that are counted.

Eyelet Light

Jaclyn Kidd
Neosho
Community
Silver
B&W Photography

*I was happy to achieve
softer shadows for
comparison. Overall,
I favor this image's
feminine softness.*

Nikon D50, Photoshop

*Kidd is a senior at
Missouri Southern State
University, pursuing a
BFA in Graphic Design*



TYPE-A(NXIETY)

This is a story about (my) anxiety. The annoyingly-inconvenient, ever-so-debilitating, disgustingly-detrimental, high-functioning kind of anxiety.

For those of you who have not suffered the burden of anxiety, let me fill you in: you know that feeling you get when you pull out of your driveway and for a few seconds you feel as though you left on the coffee-pot? And for a few moments you feel a kind of nagging sensation, but it eventually wears off as your attention alights on that great song now playing from your radio (“*The Cardigans?! Whatever happened to them?*”) and instead focus on your drive?

Yeah, anxiety is kind of like that except instead of a coffee-pot it’s this constant plaguing fear that you’re not good enough, and instead of the length of your driveway, it’s your entire life. It’s like heartburn that cannot be remedied, but instead of centralized in your chest, it is a pain that radiates through every ligament and limb.

It’s a constant jaw-clenching, brow-furrowed headache.
It’s sleepless nights and strung-out mornings.
It’s huddled in the shower.
It’s mindlessly staring at the ceiling.
It’s irrational and inconsolable.
It’s imagined yet real.

One time I had a panic attack because I didn’t want to go to lunch with a group of colleagues.

Lunch.

I *love* food. But the anxiety produced from having to conversationalize left me crying in my car.

And throughout my life it has spoken in different voices, at different levels. But it always says the same thing: *you are not enough.*

As a young girl it was the constant, plaguing fear I would upset parents. As a young girl, I was dumped far too much responsibility at far too young of an age. More often than not, I was responsible for caring for my younger brother while also maintaining the demands of house and home. My anxiety shouted out orders: “Do this!” “Don’t forget that!” “Be good!” “Be right!”

As a chubby adolescent, I found myself dejecting my body and self-image. I felt as

though I was different and ugly and stupid and fat. My anxiety constantly kept pointing out my chubby thighs and encouraged me to not eat so much bread.

In high school, I was further ostracized into the ‘goodie-goodies’ or ‘high-flyers’, which in of itself was a blessing; however, brought with it all-new expectations that further crippled my anxiety-riddled brain. My anxiety now loomed around every corner demanding that I study, focus, succeed.

My young adulthood was punctuated with an acute sense of anxiety and depression solidified by an abusive boyfriend. He fossilized any and all paralyzing doubt I had about my own identity. My anxiety took the shape of his fists and rage and destroyed any confidence that may have lingered.

The latest and last saga of depressive episodes occurred throughout my late 20’s. There was this moment when I realized I was no longer happy in my first marriage. That, quite frankly, I had never been happy with my marriage.

When I realized I no longer wanted to be married, my anxiety transformed into imagined outcry. From those that might say: “What are you thinking?”; “Just try harder to be happy”; “You are so selfish”.

I feared disappointing my parents, disappointing God.

I feared losing friends, losing family.

I feared, if I did leave him, I realize, one day, I made a mistake.

I feared, if I didn’t leave him, I’d realize, one day, my life had been a mistake.

And the anxiety embedded in my DNA led to a complete mental breakdown.

Even now, as I reflect on this very dark time, I don’t know how I survived.

This isn’t to say that during this episode, or throughout any of my anxiety episodes, friends and family ignored my troubles. The thing about high-functioning anxiety is: we know how to hide it. We can easily go to work, take care of our families, move through our day. In fact, we kick ass at those things.

Outwardly we appear normal, obedient, organized.

Inwardly, we are screaming.

Too often, those with high-functioning

[Continued to 54]

Leandra Toomoth
Anderson
Community
Honorable Mention
Nonfiction
Essay

This short essay was my attempt to explain what it is like to live with high-functioning anxiety. Furthermore, my hope is that I may inspire others who, too, suffer from high-functioning anxiety in finding ways to balance the disorder of their own minds.

Toomoth is a high school English teacher at McDonald County High School in Anderson, where she also resides. She earned her B.S.Ed and M.A. from Missouri Southern State University in Joplin. She is currently working on an anthology of poetry and a debut novel.

[Continued from 53]

anxiety get passed over as ‘Type-A’ (which I am) or those hard-workers willing to sign up for any task (which I do). Our annoying ‘habits’ (nail-biting, knuckle-cracking, hair tweezing) are seen as only that – not coping mechanisms. Our incessant need to Google any/all medical symptoms is passed over as a quirky trait, not agitated obsession.

We’re the ones filled with the constant dread our loved ones – those that have given us no reason to believe so – will one day think the worst of us. Avoid us. Abandon us.

We have become so attuned to compartmentalizing our emotions that instead of healthily processing the stress in our lives, we simply bottle it up and hide it away, left only with the plaguing fear it will unavoidably spill out. And when it does, the crumbling exhaustion it leaves in its wake.

People see us as dramatic. Not desolate. People see us as stoic. Not spiritless. As annoying, overly sensitive, bitchy – not the desperate, hopeless, frail waifs that we are. But despite everything, I have survived. I am a survivor.

Not only have I survived the cruel and caustic actions caused by others, but I managed to survive the dark and twisted forests of my own mind.

This is because, no matter how incredibly awful anxiety is, it can and should be managed.

For me, this takes shapes in many ways. Anxiety is remedied by a good book; a Netflix series; a glass of wine paired with a bubble bath.

Exercise. Yoga. Meditation.

Dinner with friends, even with the constantly plaguing fears that one day they’ll wake up and decide they no longer like me anymore.

Sleep. Sleep. And more sleep.

Writing. I feel that writing more than any other practice has helped me with forgiveness. Forgiveness of others.

Forgiveness of myself.

And, more than anything, my anxiety has been lifted by making the decision that I want to be happy for no other reason but than to be happy. (Such a novel idea, right?)

And in deciding to be happy, happy in the ways that make sense to me, it has further tucked away that ugly monster that has forever resided in the dark crevices of my mind. No longer is he hissing in my ear, sneering those snide comments that leave me seeking out the security of some crawl space. No longer is he dancing on the tattered pieces of my sense-of-self that I often tore apart in the face of some stressful situation or difficult decision.

No. Instead I’m vibrantly singing every morning; peacefully sleeping every night. I breathe in. I breathe out.

Enslaved by my anxiety felt as if I was wading through life in nothing but wet sand – leaving me to clumsily stagger along a treacherous and tedious plane. Learning to live with my anxiety felt as if, finally, a kind of pathway leveled out, firm underneath my feet, allowing me to sprint, skip, dance, float.

I cannot deny I do not fear that one day my anxiety will take hold of me. Again. Pulling me down into the dark abyss. Screaming in my face, tearing at my eyes. But I recognize through my own personal liberation and through my own acceptance that my happiness is *my* choice.

Not yours.

Not my anxiety’s.

Mine.

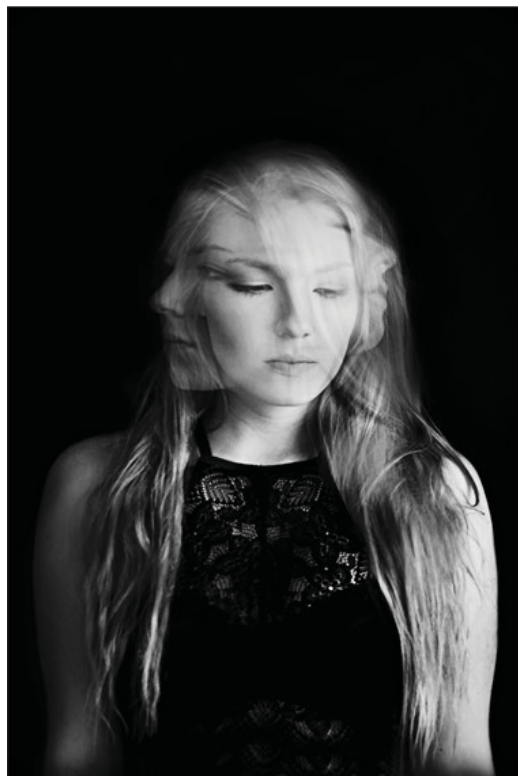
And mine alone. ✨

Untitled

Jaclyn Kidd
Neosho
Community
Honorable Mention
Digital Art

*I wanted to convey this
outer-body movement
that was up for
interpretation.
Nikon 3300, Photoshop*

*Kidd is a senior at
Missouri Southern State
University, pursuing a
BFA in Graphic Design.*





Chocolate Factory

Skylar Howe
Neosho
Crowder
Gold
2D Media
Acrylic on paper mache

I am a HUGE fan of Lucille Ball, and the episode, "The Chocolate Factory" is one of my all-time favorites. First I started with a stretched canvas, ripped pieces of newspaper and placed them on the canvas with water and flour. After that dried, I used pencil to sketch the image, and then used acrylic paint to create the finished product.

Skylar is a sophomore and plans to graduate with a teaching degree. Art is one of her hobbies.



Boyfriends and Baseball

Kirby Reardon
Neosho
Staff
B&W Photography

I chose to enter this photo because it was out of my element. I don't normally choose to take pictures of sports, but I couldn't resist when I had this subject to photograph. I really enjoyed capturing all of the action shots. Sports mode, 200 shutter speed

Reardon is a freshman majoring in communications and minoring in journalism with plans to become an event planner.

SEEDS OF TRUTH

Lily Monroe
Homeschool
Bronze
Fiction
Short Story

In this story, I describe the experience of a 14-year-old girl as she tries to uncover the truth about a thievery that threatens to take away her job, while also facing the premature responsibility of helping support her family. Her place of work was inspired by a small local business.

Monroe loves to write, bird-watch, and play the violin. She is currently homeschooled and in high school. In the future, she hopes to publish a book and obtain a music degree.

I stepped back to admire my work. The tomato vines were now neatly tied up, and I was happy and tired. There was something very satisfying about pulling and twisting the green twine into place. I wiped my brow, straightened my dusty-brown ponytail, and walked out of the greenhouse towards the break room. I sat down at a table next to my coworker Kayla, with whom I'd become fast friends, and started eating my tiny lunch.

It had been two weeks since I started my summer job. Mr. Thomason, the owner and manager of the upscale greenhouse and market shop, was an old family friend and had offered me a position that was much higher-paying than an inexperienced 14-year-old like me would have otherwise gotten. We needed every penny I could earn. Even with Dad desperately working two jobs and all my paychecks going towards bills and expenses, it was simply not enough. That meant that other things, like food, suffered. But I knew and believed with all my heart that it was an infinitely small sacrifice to have a little less if it meant getting Mom the cancer care she needed.

For the past week, rumors had been floating around that the greenhouse was losing money due to thievery. Kayla had filled me in on all the gossip the moment it started. Yesterday evening, Mr. Thomason and his new fiancée gathered the employees in the breakroom and told us that the greenhouse was losing money. He didn't specify if it was due to thievery, but did tell us that we were all to receive a small pay cut. Today, everyone was talking about it.

"I heard Mr. Thomason and Valerie say that they think one of the employees is stealing. Can you believe that? One of *us!*" said Kayla.

"You were eavesdropping?" I asked, appalled.

"Well, duh. How else would I know this?" she asked, tilting her head so that her oversized knot of dark brown hair flopped over. Then she smiled her unfailing smile. Even on the dreariest days when Dad's face looked continuously more wrinkled and drawn, I could always rely on Kayla's smile.

"Oh, Kayla," I smiled, amused. Coming from the somber silence of my house,

talkative Kayla took quite a bit of getting used to.

The supposed thievery did concern me, though, and I worried about it all day. If money was disappearing and I'd just been hired, I'd look like the most likely suspect. Surely Mr. Thomason would know that I wasn't stealing. Right?

At lunch the next day, I noticed a girl in a Greenhouse uniform sitting in the corner with a meal as small as mine, just a few slices of cheese and an apple. I'd been told her name was Sydney, but I hadn't worked with her yet. Kayla had turned up her nose and said that she was "on probation." Sydney seemed aloof and introverted, but Mom taught me never to take things at face value. The truth has always been one of the most important things to Mom. As I observed Sydney, I perceived something like kindness and loneliness in her eyes that made me feel sorry for her.

I went to the bathroom, and when I returned, Sydney was gone and a small apple sat in my place at the table.

The employees talked about "the thief" all week. Kayla thought it was Sydney, but I disagreed. How could someone kind enough to share half her lunch with a stranger be a thief? I thought it was more likely Rasha Richards, the mother of our supervisor, Casey Richards. Rasha was known for being rude with the workers and unhappy about her daughter's employment at the greenhouse. Someone so bitter and upset at the store would have motive, and she might have access to her daughter's key. I thought of Mom's frail figure and Dad's tired face, and I knew I had to figure out the truth. They were relying on me.

I tried telling Mr. Thomason my suspicions concerning Rasha, but he just said he'd mention it to the police, and nothing happened.

That night, I went through everything in my room. Anything I thought might be worth a little money, I put up for sale online. It was a desperate effort to help with bills, and I winced as I took a picture of my expensive "Australian Outback" poster that Dad had bought special for me. He knew I had wanted to visit Australia since I was a very little girl.

I smiled dolefully as I put it away, hoping it wouldn't hurt Dad's feelings if it sold.

On my way home Friday, I realized that I'd left my ball cap at the store. It was my cherished ball cap that had been a gift from Dad the day we found out about Mom's cancer. I couldn't stand the thought of it sitting in the store all weekend. I turned around and pedaled back, hoping that someone would be there to let me in.

I knocked on the glass door and saw Valerie's head peek up from behind the counter. I rapped harder on the door, and I thought she looked my way, but then she walked away into the break room. So much for getting my ball cap back.

Thankfully, on Monday, it was still right where I left it. Relieved, I snatched it up lovingly and settled it safely on my head.

On lunch break, I decided to thank Sydney for the apple. "Hi, Sydney?" I asked gently, approaching her from behind.

She spun around, eyes wide. "Are you talking to... *me?*" she asked in a quiet voice.

"Um, yeah," I said, nodding reassuringly. This girl *was* shy. "I just wanted to thank you for the apple. That was incredibly kind."

"Oh, yeah. You're welcome," she said.

I smiled, and Sydney looked at her shoes. There was an awkward silence. I tried to think of a question to ask her about herself, so I wouldn't be doing all the talking.

"Well, this thievery thing is kind of nerve-racking, huh? I wonder who it is."

She glanced at me, nodding, but said nothing. I started to walk away, discouraged.

"Wait," she said. She looked around and whispered, "I think I know who it is."

"The thief? How do you know?" I asked, bewildered.

"I -- I overheard Valerie on the phone one day. She said something about 'faking the ledgers' and 'getting rich off her fiancé.' She had to be talking about stealing, but no one would believe me if I told them." She met my gaze for the first time, and looked me right in the eyes as she spoke.

I believed her. I shook my head in shock and frustration and tried to think of a way to prove Valerie a thief.

"What if... we put a camera in the store and then watched the tape to see if she was stealing?" Asked Sydney.

"Is that illegal?" I asked.

"I don't see what's wrong with just *leaving* a personal item in the store temporarily."

I contemplated it. We had to find the

truth for my sake, for Mom's sake, and for everyone at the greenhouse.

"Okay," I said.

"I don't have a camera, though," said Sydney.

"I know someone who does," I said.

Kayla was reluctant to work with Sydney at first, but as I explained, she quickly got on board with our plan. Her small video camera was the perfect inconspicuous size to hide on a shelf facing the cash register. After we set it up, I felt that a tense seriousness settled on the three of us. Now, we had to wait.

We left the camera for a full day, and then Sydney retrieved it and dashed back into the break room where Kayla and I waited. On her way, Sydney knocked over a purse that was sitting on a table, and its contents spilled out. When we all hurried to put it back, however, we stopped short. Strewn across the floor were bundles of dollar bills, tucked haphazardly into torn envelopes.

"This has to be some of the stolen money!" whispered Sydney.

Kayla picked up the wallet to look for identification, and her eyes widened. "Valerie Fenton!" she read.

Mr. Thomason's fiancée *had* been the thief all along. I could hardly believe it, and I felt terrible for Mr. Thomason. How could I not have seen it sooner? No wonder she hadn't opened the door for me when I came for my cap. She was probably in the process of stealing right then.

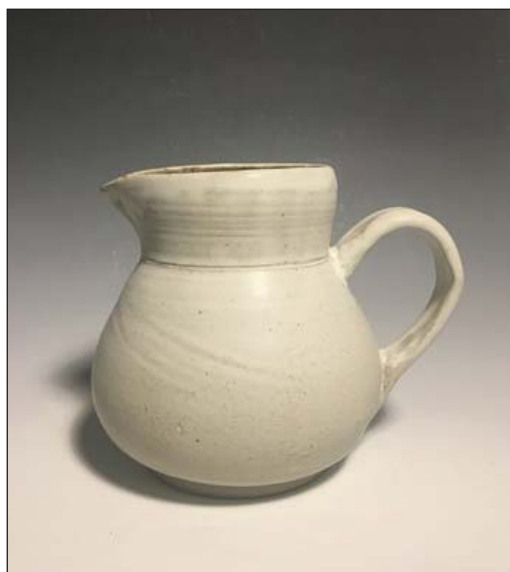
"We have to do something!" I whispered frantically. I thought quickly. "We should have the proof on the video! Let's take it to Mr. Thomason right now." [Continued to 58]

Yer Ol' Milk Jug

Cathleen Bailey
Neosho
Bronze
Community
3D Art
Pottery

*In making this pitcher, I was aiming to create a pitcher like what would have been used by the pioneers.
Reduction-fired stoneware, wheel-thrown with white glaze*

Bailey recently graduated with her Bachelors of Fine Arts.



[Continued from 57]

The sight of all three of us scurrying into his office probably contributed to the baffled look on Mr. Thomason's face when we got there. As we talked over one another to explain, his face clouded. We hooked up the video camera to his computer and watched the footage, which confirmed Valerie's guilt. Mr. Thomason looked pale and deathly serious.

"I'm really sorry," I whispered, aching inside. I had done the right thing, but it felt wrong.

He looked at me. "It's okay, Emory. I'm glad you all told me about this," he said gravely.

"What happens now?" asked Kayla.

Mr. Thomason smiled grimly. "That's for me to worry about," he said.

Mr. Thomason never spoke of Valerie after that, and I never saw her again. To thank the three of us for solving the thefts, he generously gave us each a pay bonus. I carried

my check home proudly, and it made me feel accomplished when I could finally contribute significantly to our expenses.

In retrospect, the whole ordeal was stressful, but worth it. I gained Mr. Thomason's trust and two loyal friends, not to mention the extra money. Most of all, I uncovered the truth and helped my family.

Today, I still work at Thomason's Greenhouse and Fresh Market. I've since been promoted to assistant manager, and I still give every check to my parents. Kayla and Sydney still work alongside me, and we've become the kind of friends that are always there for each other. There are still lots of bills, and I don't know what's going to happen to Mom in the future. I hate uncertainty, but I've learned to accept that there are some things you just can't control. In the meantime, I keep dreaming of Australia and doing my best to be the truthful, responsible person I know Mom can be proud of. ✨

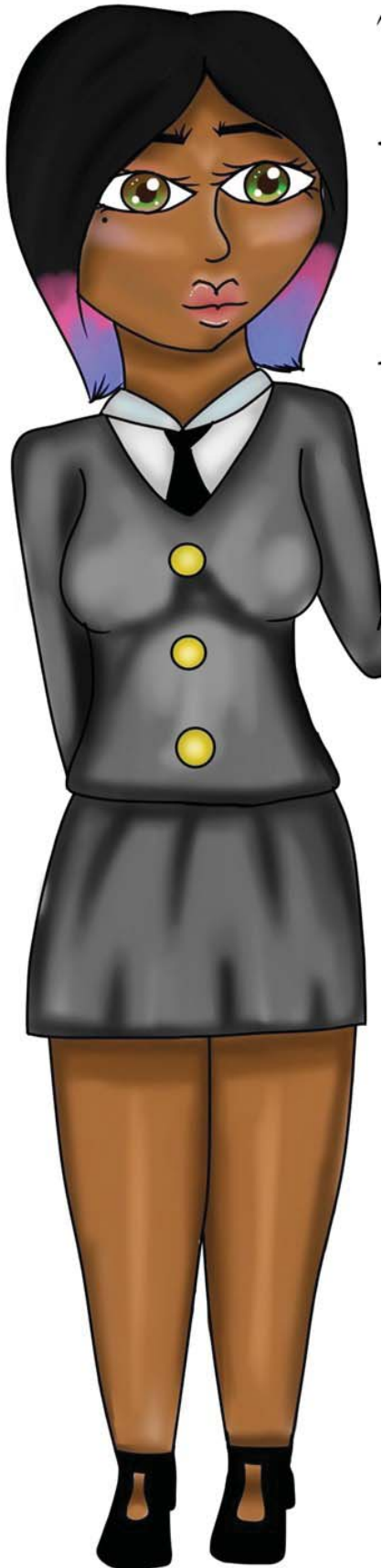
Trippy

Kenzie Kallio
Oologah, Okla.
Staff
Digital Art

*I edited this picture to seem like tie-dye because that style was popular in the 70s, and that time period was very inspirational to me.
Adobe Photoshop*

Kallio plays on the Crowder College softball team. She is majoring in journalism and public relations and plans to be a sports reporter in the future.





Autumn for repub

ifunny.co



[Left]
Autumn

Jessca Raney
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
Digital Art

This entry was a quick 2 hour drawing. I wanted to make a character that would be like a "mom" but didn't have children. That she always wore some kind of business suit.
Media Bang

Raney is a student in the 10th grade. She uses art to express herself but has gotten into more writing.

[Above]
Parallel Lines

Natalie Staib
McDonald County
High School
Honorable Mention
2D Media
Colored Pencil

This drawing began as my first attempt at making a realistic face with colored pencils. The coat she is wearing was very entertaining to color. I named this piece Parallel Lines in honor of Blondie's album, it being the inspiration for the background.

Staib, a junior, is a member of National Honors Society and McDonald County cross country. She hopes to design clothes for a living.

Contemplation

Megan Hibbard
Purdy High School
Honorable Mention
2D Media
Acrylic

*While creating the piece
I was contemplating
my future and where I
was wanting my life to
lead me. I had to make
a decision on where I
wanted to be in the next
couple of years.*

*Hibbard is a current
high school senior
looking to pursue
a career in child
development. She hopes
to become successful in
her job and love her life
wherever it may lead.*



TEACHER'S LOUNGE

Lenna examined the teacher's lounge much like that of a research scientist.

This was done not only to improve the banality of the inevitable pithy conversations, but also done through the eyes of an observer - keenly (and often painfully) - aware of her own surroundings:

The chipping paint, revealing layers of equally boring color.

The metallic sink, often filled with spoons and forks still spattered with yesterday's food; this same food would later be munched on by cockroaches silently hiding away in cabinets and walls.

The meager lounge area comprised of a few chairs and a couch whose shitty, cheap leather lining cracked enough to expose the tattered stuffing beneath.

This teachers' lounge looked more like a commons room for the poor and lonely. And each detail was the sick reminder that Lenna was exactly where she should be. Exactly where she did not want to be.

It was almost unimaginable for Lenna to remember that her time spent eating lunches

previously were shared over lighted rooftop lounges and under umbrella-street canopies.

It was during these lunches she and her colleagues would languidly share in emerging ideas and burgeoning contacts; the warm summer sun beading up on the smalls of backs and necks. And it was not uncommon for her lunch party to share in pitches of sangria or discussing this month's numbers behind crystal-clear martini glasses; ideas that became increasingly more flamboyant and fervent as the afternoon waned.

One memorable lunch in particular (that now seemed further away than ever), Lenna was assigned to convince an up-and-coming author to sign with their publishing firm. In an attempt to instill this new client with as much confidence as possible, the firm allowed Lenna to take them to one of the finest restaurants in the city. Even then the cost of that meal seem a bit ostentatious; now it well exceeded Lenna's current rent. But that afternoon remains fixed in Lenna's mind as a mirage of caviar, cabernet sauvignon, truffle, risotto, and pistachio pudding; all

shared among brilliant conversations from everything to Kafka to Salvador Dali to Hunter S. Thompson and all those other glorious beatnik writers.

It was days like this one that made such mirages all the more fantastic, forlorn and fragmentized. It was one thing to be surrounded by a lackluster meal or too-short respite, but the conversations of the teachers' lounge - its true defining feature - were just as sickeningly devoid of intellect and charm. Conversations usually shared in these four, unimaginative walls were generally composed of rants about someone in the school. Typically these rants were about students who displayed a lack in respect or deference for this teacher or that. Sometimes they were, for those teachers made confident by their tenure, about the principal and his refusal to speak and/or refusal to listen. While at others, depending on who may be around, these conversations were filled with the newest gossip or salacious commentary. At the same time, these conversations may simply be filled with annoyances about the weather/food/prime-time television/president...but each rambling on each varied subject was the same boredom laced trite speech made by the unsatisfied, unhappy, unfulfilled.

Although Lenna forcibly emitted timid laughs and casual concern to such disagreeable conversations (for fear of being ostracized), she predominantly spent her outrageously short lunch period focusing on the food presented before each person.

There were those that followed the cafeteria train and devoured whatever was on the menu that day, typically something fried and disgustingly overcooked. There were others who took lunch to be a kind of class-allegiance, bringing in overpriced, whole-food items that sought to intimidate with its organic, vegan, whole-grain and impossible to pronounce superfoods. While others, much like Lenna, saw lunch as a rerun of last night's dinner.

Many of the men clearly took up what they could find or in some cases what may have been packed for them. In cases like Mr. Nelson, his dear wife had been packing his lunch for nearly forty years, and would often leave scribbled notes amidst turkey and cheese.

Lenna found it both appalling and endearing.

Others like Coach Rackett, newly divorced, typically ate whatever frozen dinner

he passively grabbed at the local grocery market. Today it was frozen Salisbury steak with gravy that looked closer to bile. Lenna stared bemusedly towards the contents contained within the lumpy, off-colored gravy that sat placidly within its defined container and could not help but sympathize, perhaps even envy, with Coach Rackett's new-founded singledom even if brought with it its own kind of tasteless sufferings.

The irony of the teachers' lounge, of course, was the fact that the students saw it as a kind of prized oasis. This was on account of its possession of the only vending machine that served items other than water and diet soda - because "you know kids, that sugary soda is bad for you!". Additionally, it served as the mostly easily accessible microwave. Its insides often splattered by Rackett's meal-choice-of-the-day.

Students saw it as a place where schemers schemed and intellectuals dreamed. Especially when it came to the group who coined themselves the 'Calton Consorts'. These ladies were the ones who had been dragging Lenna along since her first day at Calton High, nearly nine months prior. It was difficult for Lenna to have imagined that it was only the end of her first year of teaching. To her, it seemed ages. And the Calton Consort didn't make things any easier.

But what Lenna painfully realized more and more day in and day out was these individuals - with their overpriced lunch boxes, manicured nails, and spoiled speech - were far less superior than they would like to believe and certainly would like the students to believe.

As Lenna's daily routine of lunch-analyzing developed into the intricate study of cutlery placement, she found her food-induced fog interrupted by Livia Christensen: "Did you catch last night's episode, Lenna?"

Livia - or Livy as she annoyingly preferred to be called - is what one would consider Calton High perfection. Not only was she currently the school's secretary, but she was also married to the superintendent. Her position at the school seemed to conflict with her position as the superintendent's wife, but no one seemed to notice or seemed to care. She and her husband were basically goddamned royalty of this one-horse town. To fulfill all necessary Hollywood-type tropes, both Leroy (or Dr. Christensen in more formal settings) and Livy had been the

[Continued to 62]

Leandra Toomoth Anderson Community Honorable Mention Fiction Short Story

This is a chapter from my upcoming debut novel. Having said that, I did find it interesting and, thus, wanted to illustrate the strange juxtaposition between how students over-romanticize the teacher's lounge and the true realities of it.

Toomoth is a high school English teacher at McDonald County High School. Toomoth earned her B.S.Ed and M.A. from Missouri Southern State University in Joplin. She is currently working on an anthology of poetry and a debut novel.

[Continued from 61]

star quarterback and cheerleading captain, respectively. They capped off their senior year with matching prom king and queen crowns followed by a raucous celebration at the nearby lake that ultimately resulted in an unplanned pregnancy and shotgun wedding.

Despite the scandalous nature of their nuptials, they had sidled into one of the most successful, wealthy, and envied couples of this town. That is the way with towns like this one: you can be however disgraceful you want to be, but you better just have the right last name.

Leroy had become the youngest superintendent of this school - only second to his own father. Livy's family had owned a successful farm, allowing Livy to drift through her young twenties between raising her children and wistfully finding "careers" when the humdrum of raising her children became too much. From the conversations Lenna had shared with Livy, it had been determined that she had - at one time or another - taken a stab at real estate, managerial work, nursing, teaching, entrepreneurship, and (for a short time) singing - and all had resulted in complete failures (more or less).

"Um, what show was that, Livy?" Lenna mumbled as she awoke from her mid-day reverie.

"Why, *The Bachelor*, you silly goose! It was only the season finale."

Livy's voice had this perpetual mixed tone of both southern and pretentious charm. This was made especially annoying considering Calton High was the central point of this Midwestern state.

"Oh, yeah. Um, no, I didn't catch it. I hung out mostly at home and just read and stuff. What happened? Who did uh, wha what's his name pick?"

Livy pulled her delicate gel-polished nails close to her chest and said, "Well, I didn't watch it personally, it was church night after all, but I did overhear the scuttlebutt this morning and it seems that Adam picked Emily!"

This statement erupted in a burst of squeals from both Livy and the fellow Bachelor fans in the room as they caught on to the nature of the new, equally asinine, conversation. Once Lenna's mind had finally regained full awareness, her eyes were full of Livy, whose hands maintained that prayerful pose close to her chest, and her stare and her smile emitted that signature quality of both superiority and geniality.

Lenna only realized after that she had fallen into a trap. The trap of the righteous. The trap of the judgmental. It had not been an exploration of Lenna's television viewing history that Livy sought after but her morality. Lenna - after her nine month tenure - should have been wiser to her ways, but found her usual mindfulness deluded by her white-washed boredom.

Without much to say nor an opportunity to recover from her failed social interaction, Lenna quietly and quickly excused herself, throwing away the remnants of her leftover lunch atop Nelson's note and Rackett's refuse, as the squeals of her colleagues, her equals, her "friends" abandoned her with each swift step. ↩

Photographer Tae

Alyssa Logan
Webb City
Crowder
Gold
Digital Art

I thought it was cute they way Taehyung was holding his camera. Autodesk SketchBook

Logan is a student at Crowder College. Drawing is a way for her to cope with many health struggles. She wants to be a kindergarten teacher and have a degree in animation.



THE END?

Cold hands shoved Hannah down the steep, winding staircase. Her head seared with gut wrenching pain as it cracked on the edge of the stairs. Her vision blurred, but she remained conscious. Thick velvet curtains hung at the edges of her mind, waiting to end the show. She dared not cry out, for the glint of metal in the man's hand warned against it. She landed on the blue and white marble floor with a notable thud.

She blacked out for a few heavenly minutes, only to be pulled away from the light and back into reality, distorted as it was. She had yet to realize that it was her blood soaking into the finely woven oriental rug. She stood up on shaky limbs and ran right out the door. She didn't care that her finest muslin dress had just ripped, or perhaps didn't know. She didn't know why the red stains marred the once perfect white. Some were her own and some were not. Whose? She didn't know. Maybe she did, but she couldn't see through the fog in her brain.

Her feet crunched on the gravel path as she scurried away, hairpins falling to the ground went on barely registered if at all. This abstract world, was so new, and yet vaguely, eerily familiar. Shadows that loomed nearby lashed out at her. Hannah began to sway and shake as the metallic sense of fear took over. She collapsed in the muddy road unable to get back up. Blood and mud ran together as one. Finally, the show had come to an end and the curtains slapped closed with a swish. But was it the end? Or just the halfway point?

Hannah's eyes blink open as she groggily takes in her surroundings. Then surprise makes her blink again. Surprise that she's still in this world. She has yet to realize it's not only her own world, but her own house, her own room.

Her plump house-keeper waddled in. Hannah winced at Ms. O'Malley's shrill Scottish lilt.

"Oh Mistress you're awake! We were so verra worried about you. We were worried at several points that you had left us! What

a mess it was; your newest dress, so blood stained and tatted'ed. Absolutely ruined! The doctor nearly hit you in his buggy after I called him to check on your mother, bless her soul, she had been gone for at least an hour by the time the doctor had arrived. Taken out by a nasty bullet, she was. You've got a bullet wound yourself. You're lucky to be alive! I hope the man who murder-

Her voice drifted off as Hannah's thoughts took center stage. "My mother was murdered and I must've been there. Did I see the murderer? Think! And yet nothing came, the fog had only become more dense. The doctor stalked in holding a cup of tea. He held it up. This will make her sleep."

"Oh, but she just woke up! Does she have to sleep now?"

"Sleep is the best medicine for her at this moment."

"Verra well, then I will administer it."

She fled from the room stopping at the stairs, there were no lamps lit at this hour. She would risk it, she would simply feel her way down. She turned to gauge where the man was. She miscalculated. He was right behind her! He reached out and Hannah caught a glimpse of his hand. He shoved her; his hands were cold.

Cold hands shoved Hannah back to reality. He's back to finish! She panicked.

"Shhh. It is only I, the doctor." He was removing the bandage, Ms. O'Malley handed him a fresh linen.

"Try to speak for me."

She wet her lips and opened her mouth, but nothing came. Nothing, but a slight wheeze.

"It's alright; you will be able to speak again soon. Now, do you remember any of what happened?"

She shook her head. There were no memories, nothing. Again.

"She might not ever remember."

The doctor reached up to scratch his cheek to hide what looked like a slight grin. It was then that the memories came gushing forth like a flood, swirling and dipping throughout her mind. Then she knew. ❧

Camrie Houck
Neosho
Homeschool
Gold
Fiction
Short Story

I actually jotted down the beginning of this short story as a book idea, but I like it better as a short story. I love the way it leaves people hanging at the end. Will Hannah survive? You'll never know. (Insert evil laugh).

Houck is a homeschool student who is currently working on her first book.

A RARE FIND

Miss Vogel, have you confirmed they are coming?”
“Yes, Dr. Miller. A patrol car should drop them off any time now.”

Sitting at the desk in his office, Dr. Miller smiled upon receiving this news. He thanked Miss Vogel, his assistant at the Delphi Parapsychology Institute, and began to flip through the two charts in his lap. Although he had read the information they contained many times, he wanted to review the counselor’s reports from the juvenile detention center one more time: “parents deceased,” “several foster home placements,” “just turned fifteen,” “Stanford-Binet IQ Range 150-160,” “antagonistic to authority figures.” As he reread these notes, he wondered: *Could they be the ones?*

Through the window in his office, Dr. Miller saw the patrol car pull up. A deputy got out and escorted two girls into the building. Within minutes, they entered his office.

Dr. Miller thanked the deputy and dismissed him. Still seated behind his desk, he studied the two figures standing in front of him: *shoulder-length blond hair, green eyes, identical physically, but one has a worried countenance, while the other wears a defiant scowl...neither seems like they know how to smile.*

“Good afternoon. I’m Dr. Miller. We’re glad you are here. We don’t have any twins at our facility.”

“It’s not like we had any real choice, did we?” challenged the girl with the scowl.

Having reviewed their records multiple times, Dr. Miller immediately decided this one must be Madison, the leader of the two.

“You must be Madison, I presume,” he said, standing and extending his hand. When she did not reciprocate, he turned to her twin.

“And I guess that makes you Morgan.” Morgan did not respond either, but Dr. Miller continued. “As the executive director of the Delphi Parapsychology Institute, which we often refer to simply as DPI, I want you to know we are glad you are here.”

“I don’t see why we had to come here,” challenged Madison.

“You know very well, Madison. The court gave you a choice because of your age,” answered Dr. Miller. He paused to let it sink in that he had read the court records and knew their situation. “You could sit in confinement—and be separated, while they investigate your teacher’s death...or you could come here for observation and testing—and be together.”

“What exactly are these tests, and how long do we have to stay here?”

“Well, you’ll stay as long as it takes to decide what’s best for you. The tests and observations relate to your behavior and skills.” Dr. Miller answered.

Dr. Miller pressed a button on his desk, and Miss Vogel joined them. “If you would accompany Miss Vogel, she will take you to your room. I will see you in the morning for our first official meeting.”

Miss Vogel led the two girls down a hallway.

“Your room is number 124,” Miss Vogel informed them. “New residents stay in their rooms, unless an attendant comes to get them. You will find your uniforms, which are to be worn at all times, in your room. Breakfast will be brought to you at eight in the morning. After you have eaten, I will guide you to Dr. Miller’s lab.”

“I like to sleep in,” Madison said. “Eight o’clock is early.”

“Schedules are important here,” Miss Vogel responded, “and need to be followed.”

They arrived at room 124. Miss Vogel opened the door, and the two girls looked inside at the meager accommodations: a wooden table, two chairs, and two canvas cots.

Elbow Brain

Rebekah Burchfield
McCleary
Joplin
Community
Gold
Digital Art

I encountered this quote in Edith Wharton’s collection of short stories, “The Greater Inclination.” It seemed fanciful and ambiguous.

McCleary attended Crowder College from 2002-2004.



Draped over the back of each chair, there was a white, short-sleeve shirt and a white pair of pants. On the chest pocket of the shirt, the letters *DPI* were stamped in black.

"What kind of place is this?" questioned Madison. "This room is practically a jail cell. There's no television. They took our phones. What are we supposed to do?"

"You're supposed to put on your uniforms and rest. I will see you after breakfast."

Miss Vogel left, closing the door behind her.

Madison heard the lock click automatically, but she still ran to the door and tried the handle. She pushed, then pulled, but there was no movement.

"They're going to find out," whispered Morgan.

"They know nothing," Madison answered, "and they will know nothing if you keep your mouth shut. Put your uniform on. I figure we go along with this for a few days, until we can figure a way out of here. There has to be less security here than in that detention center."

"What if they find out?" asked Morgan.

"They won't. Who'd believe them anyway? There's no proof of anything. It just happened. They think we're freaks, and that's fine with me."



True to her word, Miss Vogel arrived right after breakfast. She escorted both girls out of their room and motioned to them to take a right down the hallway. They walked through an arched foyer that opened up into a big room: Dr. Miller's lab. Almost everything in the room was white—the chairs, shades, walls, and carpet. A white table stood in the center of the room with a metal spoon and a red pencil on top of it. Dr. Miller sat behind the table in a white chair.

Miss Vogel pointed to two white chairs on the opposite side of the table and indicated they should sit down. Once they had taken their seats, she left the room.

Before Dr. Miller could speak, Madison abruptly questioned, "Why is it so white in here?"

"Some believe white surroundings help to clear the mind," Dr. Miller answered. "The lack of color helps people to focus. You know, with less distractions."

"What are the pencil and spoon for?" Morgan asked.

"You tell me," answered Dr. Miller. "Your classmates say you can do things. Can you do anything with the spoon or pencil?"

At this point, Madison became concerned, but she refused to show it.

"You've got to be kidding me," she scoffed. "All this because you think we can do things. You honestly want us to bend a spoon with

our minds. We've seen *The Matrix*. Pretty old school, don't you think? Really! No one believes in that crap."

"I didn't ask if you believed it. I

asked if you could do it," responded Dr. Miller.

Dr. Miller's challenge irritated Madison. Her irritation turned to anger. She focused on the metal spoon. Within seconds, the spoon bent at the handle

"Do you have to be angry to take action?" asked Dr. Miller.

"Not necessarily," Madison sneered.

"Morgan, can you do anything with the pencil?"

Morgan nodded, and almost immediately, the pencil rotated on the table.

"Impressive," said Dr. Miller.

"So, we can do a few parlor tricks. Mind over matter. What of it?" asked Madison.

"You both exhibit psychokinetic powers," Dr. Miller answered, "but we have many here at DPI who can do such things."

"You mean," Morgan asked, "there are others like us here?"

"I suspect," Dr. Miller answered, "they are not exactly like you...but do you even understand what psychokinesis is?"

Neither twin responded.

"Psychokinesis," Dr. Miller went on, "is the ability to move objects using the power of the mind—to act upon an object without touching it. Many people can do this with small inanimate objects. A few can actually stop electrical and mechanical devices. Even fewer can implant ideas in the minds of others and get them to act on those ideas."

Madison gasped at this point. "It was you. You put the idea in my mind to come here. You wanted us...at DPI."

"Yes. It was my suggestion because I feared you were on your way to being incarcerated and wasting your talents forever. Let's be honest with one another, shall we?"

[Continued to 66]

Billie Holladay
Skelly
Joplin
Gold
Fiction
Science Fiction

I had read several articles about psychokinesis and Nina Kulagina, and I wanted to incorporate both into a story. I wanted the reader to wonder about the power of the mind.

Skelly worked as a Clinical Nurse Specialist providing postoperative care for cardiothoracic surgery patients. As a nursing educator, she has written several health-related articles for both professional and lay journals. Now retired from nursing, Skelly enjoys focusing on her writing.

[Continued from 65]

There are many people who can use their minds to act on inanimate objects, but it is quite rare for a person to be able to act on living beings.”

Neither Madison or Morgan moved.

“I think,” Dr. Miller continued, “you two can affect more than spoons and pencils. Tell me what happened to your teacher.”

“Her heart stopped,” answered Madison. “She just died.”

“Your classmates said you both were staring at her. You didn’t like her because she criticized you frequently and made fun of you. Can you really influence living cells, tissues, and organs?”

“That’s crazy,” said Morgan. “No one can do that.”

“Of course, they can,” said Dr. Miller.

“Have you never heard of Nina Kulagina?”

“Who?” both girls asked at once.

“She was a Russian woman who had psychic powers. Around 1970, she caused a

frog’s heart to speed up, slow down, and finally stop. Her powers have been well-documented. Is that what you did to your teacher?”

“Why should we tell you anything?” asked Madison. “Besides, even if it is true, who would believe you?”

“I don’t care what people believe,” answered Dr. Miller. “I care what they can do. If you have special powers, we might be able to find a home for you here at DPI. If you can do nothing but bend spoons and twirl pencils, I’m afraid you may end up in jail.”

“We didn’t mean to do it,” Morgan blurted out. “We just wanted her to stop criticizing us.”

“Shut up, Morgan,” snapped Madison. “If he tries to tell the police we used our minds to stop our teacher’s heart, he’ll be the one they lock away.”

“I have no intention of telling the police anything,” said Dr. Miller. “I appreciate your abilities. Being able to act on living cells and living tissue with your mind is a rare and special gift. How did you do it?”

Madison realized he meant it. He wanted it to be true.

“It was easy,” she answered. “I constricted one coronary artery, and Morgan tightened the other. We just stopped the blood from reaching her heart muscle.”

“Ah,” sighed Dr. Miller smiling. “Your secret is safe with me. If you truly can do what you say, I’m sure we can find a home for you here. You will become part of our family. I’ll teach you to harness your abilities—to focus your mind to crystal clarity so that you have absolute control. We will help you realize your potential. You have a rare gift.”

Madison and Morgan smiled.

“Yes, you will be most welcome here,” continued Dr. Miller. “Now return to your room, and tomorrow I will introduce you to our other residents.”

As Madison and Morgan left, Miss Vogel entered the lab.

“Can they do it?” she asked.

Dr. Miller smiled and nodded yes.

“Think of it, Miss Vogel... what a power to possess. The possibilities are endless. No one can get in our way now...because DPI has a remarkable new weapon in its arsenal.” ☞

Wonder Woman

Jose Perez
Purdy
High School
Bronze
2D Media
Pencil

I’m amazed with the movie and Gal Gadot herself, so I had to do my own recreation of Wonder Woman.



FINAL DAYS OF AARON CARTER

This is a national alert directly from the U.S. military. Our current war with North Korea has escalated to nuclear level warfare. Kim Jong Un plans to launch Taepodong-4 missiles this time Tuesday in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. We advise, if possible, to evacuate the area. Unfortunately, due to the size and population of LA, it will not be possible for everyone to escape. Please stay calm. The entire military is working hard to keep this threat from becoming reality. Pray to whatever god you worship and keep your families close. No one is sure—

My father turned off the television. No one in the living room could believe what we heard. Our death certificates were just written. Three days from now would be our last and there were so many things running through my brain. I never asked her out. I never had my first drink. I will never get married. My adulthood was stripped from me. The great life I had dreamt for myself would never happen. It was not fair. My brother came up to me and broke my trance.

“Aaron are you okay?” his face had lost its color.

All I could say was, “I need to live.” I had made up my mind and planned to do everything I wanted to do before I didn’t have the chance.

My family was shocked by my blunt and selfish response. My father was the next to speak.

“We all want to live Aaron, but we need to accept the truth—”

“No dad I need to live life to the fullest. I won’t let this missile take everything away from me.”

“What do you plan to do?” My dad seemed concerned that I was having a breakdown.

“I’m going to go find my friends, and we are going to live our last days to the fullest.”

I didn’t know it then, but those would be the last words I said to my family.

My best friend Chris Kane was the definition of a jock. He was 6’5” and weighed a hefty 240 pounds of pure muscle. However, due to many injuries, his face was scarred and overall was not attractive. Under his manly demeanor he was a man of few words. Unless he was around me of course.

Chris lived three houses down from mine. That was my first destination. When I arrived I saw Chris in the backyard sitting in the large oak we played on as kids. There were tears on his face. This was not common for my stony-faced friend.

“I’m guessing you heard the news.” Chris looked up at me and nodded.

“Well I made a plan. You, me and Carly are going to have the best three days ever and complete our bucket lists. I think it could be really fun.”

Chris sat for awhile before he finally smiled and said, “I can’t think of a better way to go out. I’ll drive us to go get Carly.”

Chris went inside to get his keys and said his final good-byes to his family.

Carly Brooks was our friend from school. She was the total package. Carly was the top of our class and played every sport. Her thick and naturally curly hair fit her dark complexion. She never wore makeup because she didn’t need it. I had always had a thing for her. She was the one I had hoped to get my chance with before the end.

As we drove to her house I watched the sun set on the horizon. Beautiful purples, oranges, and blacks were painting the night sky. Los Angeles was such a beautiful town. All the lights and the people created beautiful chaos. However, I looked towards the highway and witnessed thousands of cars all going south out of town.

“I bet the traffic goes on for miles. Millions of people panicking in unison. Imagine all the damage and anarchy going on.” I said this to no one in particular. I was thinking out loud.

“That’s what happens when people hear their life is over. I’m surprised that me and you aren’t joining the confusion. I guess we can accept defeat.” Chris sounded sad.

“You’re wrong. We are doing this because we won’t sit idly and let our future be taken completely away. This is how we fight back,” I said with pride.

“Maybe you’re right. The Koreans might kill us, but we won’t die sad and scared but with happiness and friendship.” Chris was beginning to get as excited as I was.

Our drive finally ended. Carly’s house was two stories tall. Both of her parents were lawyers and owned a firm.

[Continued to 68]

Seth Williams
Lockwood
High School
Honorable Mention
Fiction
Short Story

I wrote this story to inspire people to live for today. Most people miss out on their chances to do things they want in life because they are too scared or think they have time. Nothing is promised. Carpe Diem.

Williams is a senior at Lockwood High School. He will be majoring in Physics at Arkansas Tech University.

[Continued from 67]

Carly would have had a very successful life. As we pulled in Carly met us in the driveway with the remnants of tears on her face. Chris and I got out and embraced her.

“Why did it have to be us Aaron?” Carly’s words were soft and almost inaudible. Her question was so full of sorrow that tears began to form in my eyes as well as Chris’s. I told Carly of our plan and she was ecstatic. Carly invited us inside so we were away from the cold winter night. She took us upstairs to her balcony. Up there we could see more than we had seen on the road. Fires had broken out and the smoke was filling the air. My friends and I looked in horror. The Koreans had turned our great city into turmoil with just a threat. They didn’t even need to send a missile. Los Angeles was dying already.

“I don’t know if I can watch this any longer guys” Carly said covering her face.

I went to her and did what I planned doing the last day but I felt like right then was the perfect moment. I kissed her. It was one of those kisses you see in the movies. She didn’t pull away and her trembling body

began to calm down. Finally, we both pulled away and smiled. Our smiles were followed by disappointment as we had both realized that our relationship was short lived. We wouldn’t be able to be married or have children or do anything normal couples do. Chris spoke and broke the somber silence.

“Took you guys long enough. Now it’s too late morons.” He laughed and put his arms around us. He continued, “It’s too bad that it won’t last forever, but I’m glad we had a life together.”

We looked out toward the night sky and looked at the stars. There were few but the brightest ones shone through the smoke and we appreciated their beauty. One was bright in particular. I pointed it out to my friends and we looked in awe. The light grew brighter and brighter until it seemed that the star was right above the town. Then the light blinded us. White was everywhere and then it went to black. We never had our last three days.

Life can end at any moment. Don’t leave things for the future. Do things in the moment. Treat people with kindness. Everything you do could be your last. ❧

AMERICAN DREAM

Sam Hoover
Miami, Okla.
Staff
Nonfiction
Essay

People believe that the American Dream is dead or that it never even existed. I believe that it is very much alive.

Hoover was born in Oklahoma.

Many people in today’s generation believe that the American Dream is dead or that it never even existed, and some are uninformed on what the American Dream really is. For many, the concept of the American Dream became clearly established and implicitly defined through famous phrases such as “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” “there are no gains without pains,” and through the ideas of self-reliance, determination, and perseverance. The American Dream has always been present in the foundation of the United States and continues to thrive today.

The American Dream first began with the birth of the United States when the colonies declared their independence from Britain on July 4th, 1776. With the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the founding fathers showed the colonists they had a right to separate from the king and form their own government. This document is still important to this day, this document gives the belief of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Thomas Jefferson powerfully argues for a separate American government away from

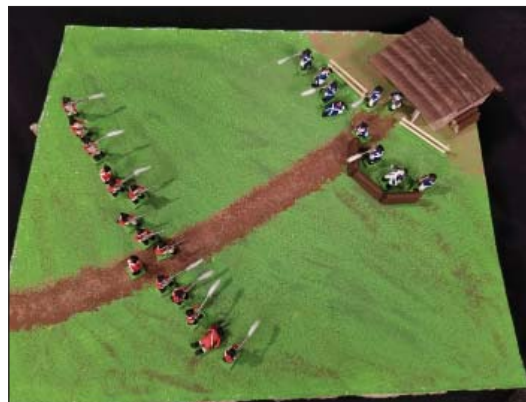
Britain’s tyranny.

He also argues to protect the “inalienable rights” which as stated earlier are “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The famous parallelism emphasizes the fact that anyone in America has the right to live, be free, and the opportunities to be happy. This has become an important part of the definition of the American Dream.

Benjamin Franklin was one of the greatest minds of his time. He came from the Enlightenment era. From this era comes the phrase “Dare to know.”

Benjamin Franklin’s *Poor Richards Almanac* has also contributed to the American Dream through aphorisms such as “There are no gains without pains,” and “Speak little, do much.” This phrase applies to today’s society. Many people will talk about the American Dream, but few will act on it. These thoughts could be a possibility as to why people think the American Dream is dead. The people of today lack the motivation it takes to achieve one’s dream.

Another famous saying in *Poor Richard’s Almanac* is “Content makes poor men rich;



Washington's Men

Dalton Epperson
Goodman
Crowder
Bronze
3D Art
Sculpture

I made the soldiers and ships because I love the 18th-century style battles.

discontent makes rich men poor." Everyone has their own idea of the American Dream. Many use this statement to define their American Dream. Many believe that they have achieved their dream if they are doing what they love. Benjamin Franklin's idea of the American dream was far different than that of many others. Franklin was a free white man, but the American Dream was a little different for slaves of that time.

In the book "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl," the first ideas of the American Dream start to form. In Harriet Jacob's diary entries, she writes about the horrors of slavery that she has witnessed firsthand. She tells how these people on the plantation dream for a better life not only for themselves but also for their families, and how they dream

to one day finally be free. The first instance in this book is in chapter four, "The Slave Who Dared To Feel Like A Man," in which Jacob tells the story of her Uncle Benjamin and the events that leads to his eventual escape to New York. It began when Benjamin gets into a quarrel with his master and runs away. Ben ends up escaping a total of three times before he finally makes it two New York where he can be free. In these events, we see Benjamin's passion for his American Dream.

One of the most twisted and heartbreaking incident in which someone is trying to achieve the American Dream is in the Margret Garner Case. In 1865, Margret Garner escaped with a total of eleven people, four of which were her children. This family

[Continued to 70]

[Continued from 69]

had planned to use the Underground Railroad to escape up to Canada. They were held up for the night in former slave Joe Kite's home. The sheriff and other law enforcement soon caught up with them. The "The Anti-Slavery Bugle" gives a detailed account of the incidents that unfold.

Officers storm the house to see "Simon and his wife, young Simon and his wife and four children of the latter, the oldest near six years and the youngest a babe of nine months. One of these, however, was lying on the floor dying, its head cut almost entirely off." Margret Garner's dream was to give her children a better life in Heaven than to go back into slavery. She stated, "I would rather watch my child die in love than for them to be slaves." Dec. 6th, 1865 was a big event for believers in the American Dream. This was the date that

slavery was finally abolished. Now former slaves could go and seek their American Dream.

In conclusion, there are many different ideas of the American Dream. Many believe that the American Dream should be handed to them, but this is not the case. The United States took time and effort to get to this point today. The nation was built on many dreamers, and if one were to put time and effort into their life, they too might one day achieve the American Dream. ❧

Works Cited

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- Declaration of Independence*
- Poor Richard's Almanac* by Benjamin Franklin (1739)

Fragile Reef

Tiffany Durbin
Joplin
Community
Silver
3D Art
Sculpture

I wanted to recreate oceanic elements and combine them in this piece.

Durbin is currently studying to become a director and personality in the film industry.





Crochet Jewelry

Abigail Tolentino
McDonald County
High School
Gold
3D Art
Crochet

I was inspired to create these jewelry pieces after being challenged to do so by my art teacher. She saw that I could crochet and asked me to find a way to create something with what I knew how to do already. My mom, who is very good at crochet, helped me refine my skills a lot.

Tolentino is a senior at McDonald County High School.

[Left]

The Girl Who Called Rape

Tyler Dallis
Exeter
Community
Honorable Mention
3D Art
Ceramic

This piece is covered with facts and statistics about rape culture. The black are those facts and the red writing is derogatory sayings that a female rape victim might hear about themselves or the situation.

Dallis is a Crowder College Alumni currently obtaining his Bachelors of Fine Arts at Fort Hays State University in ceramics. He plans to continue his education to graduate school to become a college professor.

PATIO FURNITURE

Leandra Toomoth
Anderson
Community
Gold
Poetry
Free Verse

*This poem is a reflection
of my first marriage
that ended in divorce.*

*Toomoth is a high
school English teacher
at McDonald County
High School.*

Martha Stewart convinced us
to buy the patio set.
Because, *obviously*, couples cannot fully enjoy
Sunday afternoons
without an all-weather, resin wicker patio set.

I remember staring at the picture in the
magazine: manicured, polished, perfect teeth.
And in them I yearned for the same kind
of hollowness:

No time for want.
No space for questions.
No desire for desire.

I was convinced our happiness,
witnessed in the loving couples
from the magazine,
could only be completed
with the all-weather, resin wicker patio set.

In it, I saw warm Sunday afternoons filled
with mint tea and lemon cookies.
Dandelions brushed by the gentle wind.
Every petal floating
higher and higher in the air until blending
into the whiteness
of the foamy clouds. A blue sky, a mild
temperament; the
soft purr of our fat cat lying in the window;
amiable banter; quiet contentment.

Instead, you sit in the living room
yelling at referees.
I sit in the office typing away in avoidance.

All the while -
the all-weather, resin wicker patio set,
dusty and ignored,
sits outside for the neighbors
to pass and smile at
in reassurance.

Leaf Pottery

Theresa Walthall
Goodman
Community
Gold
3D Art
Pottery

*These creations
represent what I
consider to be my finest
work from this past
summer.*

*Walthall shows and
sells her work at
various arts and craft
venues as well as online
under the business name
Soil Pottery. She is a
full-time art teacher at
McDonald County.*





Broken Rainbow

Junioe Monares
Rogers, Ark.
Crowder
Silver
3D Art
Clay

I made this piece because I wanted to make something unique. I also made it because I am going to start a theme with my pottery based off my life.

As an artist, Monares wants to express his emotions and past through his art work and show people anything is possible if you try your hardest.

ASPIRATIONS OF A TEACHER

We are all rooted in the same Earth
As we walk along the same green grass
our roots start to intertwine
Our roots are creating a masterpiece
We sketch tall hardy evergreens
with vivid needles
Color deep soft soil
Paint bringing hope to an old canvas with
every brush stroke of new life
Mold lumps of clay into powerful thoughts
What is mine becomes ours
We use these talents to teach others
To chisel into hearts of stone
releasing a passion

We use our tools to help minds blossom
We show others how to succeed
We want to clear hazed eyes
To help them see a bright future
To see the possibilities
of climbing life's mountains
Because on the other side
is a whole new valley
Yearning to be turned into a masterpiece
We help others prosper
Because in the end we are all teachers
What more could a teacher want
Than to see a change in others

Octavianna Hackett
Anderson
Crowder
Silver
Poetry
Free Verse

Hackett is an aspiring writer. She is a Crowder College student studying to become a teacher. She hopes to teach others through her writing as well.

This piece describes the impact I want to have on others as a teacher. I have always been a teacher at heart and this is a small explanation of my passion for teaching.

BOY

Bayleigh Schad
Purdy High School
Gold
Nonfiction
Essay

I found inspiration from a relationship with a boy whose parents, mainly his dad, had abandoned him for drugs which influenced a big part of his life.

Schad, a junior, enjoys hanging out with friends and working towards her future.

I found comfort from his eyes. The kind where I opened up to him differently than others. The kind that left me to be myself to my full extent instead of hiding in my silent shell. The way they burned with amber and a muddy brown in the sun. A strong outline of eyelashes framed his eyes, as if he wore eyeliner. A burrow of eyebrows rested above them; they always reminded me of the black, fuzzy caterpillars that crawled around in summer. His eyes were his trademark. Oh, Ethan. The one with the eyes.

I'm not sure what his reason was but he found comfort in me as well.

"If you live with your grandparents, what happened to your parents?" I asked with hesitation. I could hear the gears in his head turning. When he didn't answer for a while, I turned to face him. He turned away from me. "You don't have to tell me. I'm sorry."

He hesitated for a second more. "No, it's not that I don't want to tell you. I want to tell you. I don't know how to tell you." I remained silent as that seemed to be what he needed. "They made mistakes," he started slowly, easing his way into it. "Don't get me wrong, I love my mom. I would do anything for her. Her and my dad both made mistakes, but she's clean now, has been for a while. However, he just got out of prison a few months ago. He will be going back soon enough."

I was at a loss of words. I don't know what answer I had expected. "I'm so sorry, E," I whispered, my words strangled in my throat, caught on uncertainty.

"I was around six or so. DFC, DFS, whatever, they came and took me from my house. I remember throwing a fit. I didn't want to leave my parents, but I guess I also didn't understand what they were doing wrong." He began to talk slower, coming up with what to say. "They placed me with my cousins. I caused a lot of trouble for them." He laughed at that. I didn't see the humor in it, my mind searching for what a boy could have done so his own family couldn't handle him. "After that, they moved me to live with my grandparents and I have been there ever since then."

"What about your brother? How did he end up there too?"

He laughed. "Cody isn't biological. He went through a lot with his family. So I asked my grandparents if he could move in with

us, not expecting them to say yes. He's been here ever since. I call him my brother because that's what he is to me now. He turns 18 in December and will be moving out then."

"How does that make you feel?" I felt like a therapist. How is the medication I prescribed working for you?

"I don't know. I get the whole upstairs to myself when he moves out. That makes me happy. Also, I won't have to drive him places anymore."

I decided to move to the original topic. "So if your mom's clean, is there any way you could live with her?"

He didn't hesitate, fast to answer even. "No, but I can see her whenever I want to. The court says my grandma can't keep me from seeing her. She has to say yes even in the middle of the night."

"How often do you see your mom?"

"She comes up often, and sometimes I go down to see her. I have two real brothers. Colton and Christopher. Christopher lives with my mom and her boyfriend, Josh."

"Do you like him?"

"I like them both, they're my brothers."

"Sorry, the boyfriend."

"Yeah, he's okay. He's good with my brothers."

"But do you like him? Is he good to you?"

"He's good with my brothers. That's all I care about. Do you want to go to Arkansas with me? I'm taking Colton to see Mom then we're all going to the mall."

"Uh, sure," I hesitated, having never met his mom. "Wait, do you not want to be alone with your family?"

"No, I want you to meet my mom."

I eventually agreed. Almost an hour later, we sped down a backroad. Often times we raced unsuspecting cars. Oh, he just made eye contact with me. He's agreeing to race. I see you, bro.

The road we traveled along, full of curves and hills, led to a steep hill. I felt us struggling to reach the top, like a roller coaster lurching forward to reach the peak of the ride. Clank... Clank... Clank.

Walking into the house, I noticed buds of cigarettes scattering the ground outside. However, upon walking into the house, the harsh smell never reached me. They didn't smoke in the house. The thought of that



Wishful Dandelion

Mandie Dawson
Mt. Vernon
Community
Color Photography
Honorable Mention

The sun was setting quickly and we just had moments. After this shot was taken, I was amazed by the dandelion who stood tall. It was glowing in the sun never to be noticed by others. Just a happy accident.

Dawson, a former Crowder student, now owns her own photography business.

provided me with comfort.

“Mom, this is my girlfriend,” he said. His announcement distracted me from examining the house. On the inside, the house appeared polished and neat from an unemployed mom looking for something to do during the day. I switched my eyes to his mother, and I smiled softly.

“Hi,” she said. She talked loudly without being too loud. It was the kind of voice that drew attention when needed. “It’s nice to meet you.”

“Next is meeting my dad,” he whispered.

My stomach churned at the thought of meeting the one person who made Ethan’s life the way it is now. Ethan lived with everything he would ever need or want due to his grandparents’ wealth. However, money couldn’t make up for the one thing he desired most of all, parents.

“No way,” I whispered back. “He scares me.” Growing up in the typical, normalized household, I had never been exposed to the harsher realities of the world.

“He’s not a bad guy,” he reasoned. My eyebrows raised in response.

“He abandoned you for a life of drugs.”

“Look, he did bad stuff but he is a good guy.” He paused, still waiting for my response as I remained silent. “Mom, tell her my father isn’t a bad guy.”

She placed her hands on her hips. “Well,

no. He’s not a bad guy. Bad decisions only.”

“What are we doing here?” I asked, terrified. He turned into the sketchy gas station which is widely known for its involvement in drugs. The appearance of the place radiated a suspicious vibe. The windows of the building were hazy and cluttered with tobacco product signs, as if to cover the activities occurring inside. On the outside, many straggler cars and bystanders waited around with no true intentions.

“I’m going to talk to my dad,” he stated. He parked next to a vehicle which remained hidden in the blanket of the dark night. “Stay in the car and lock the doors.”

He opened the car door and walked around the car. As he approached the truck, the darkened window rolled down to reveal a man who was only a shadow in the dark. Before Ethan’s larger body could stand to block him out, I turned away and hid my face from him and everyone at this gas station. Everything is pretty and lovely.

About ten minutes later, a rattling occurred on the door handle causing me to jump. I realized the person attempting to enter the car was Ethan. Still shaken, I reacted slowly to unlocking the door. When he settled in his car seat, I grabbed his hand in an attempt to comfort him.

“We’re meeting again tomorrow for lunch,” he stated, joyous.

[Continued to 76]

[Continued from 75]

"He lied to me," his voice woke me on a Saturday afternoon.

"What?" I asked groggily, full of sleep and surprised they already finished lunch together.

"He didn't even remember most of the conversation from last night. At lunch, we just repeated the same conversation from last night. He's still on drugs. He lied to me." I could feel him on the verge of crying. I could hear the lump in his throat.

"I'm so sorry, E." Unsure of how else to comfort him over the phone, we agreed to meet later that day.

"Should I report him to the cop at school?"

"What?" I responded, shocked.

"I mean, I don't want to get him in trouble, but he's good in prison. Right now, he's homeless and living in his truck. He would have a better life in prison. That's where he belongs."

"I don't know," I stumbled on my words, shocked at what he was saying. Everything seemed more mature than what he could handle. "It's up to you." He seemed to have already decided.

I was giddy with the thought of him finally talking to me. He shut me out and distanced himself from me. Two days ago he broke up with me, but there was more to the decision than he let on. He needed a friend. He agreed to meet up with me.

He exited the door of his house, approached my truck, then got comfortable in

the passenger seat. After that, we sat in silence; I didn't know what to say. I decided it would be best to comfort him than to get answers. I reached across for his hand. He discarded my hand, moving to lift the console between us, a sign for me to sit next to him. I moved to the middle seat, making a lot of noise as my legs moved around the cup holders. Graceful.

I reached my arm up to run my fingers through his hair, my way of comforting him. He turned his head to look out the window and I took his movement as a sign to stop. However, he grunted, telling me not to stop.

"My dad sent me a letter from prison," he broke the silence. "He doesn't love me. He doesn't claim me as a son. He said he's not even my father." This time I stayed silent only because I didn't know what to say.

"When he got out of prison the last time, he said he would be a dad and stop doing drugs. He said he would go to my baseball games."

Seeing the tears in his eyes, I felt something in me break. "I'm sorry, but I'm going to be straight up. He's your father, not your dad. No matter how much you want him to be your dad, he won't be your dad. He made his decision." I felt him tense at my words. "But that's okay. You're doing okay without him. You have your grandparents, your mom, your friends, and baseball. You have a future. Don't let his decisions hurt it. He doesn't deserve to have you as a son."

He relaxed. "Okay." ❧

I chose this picture, because it was the first time I'd ever worked with this kind of lighting. I chose this pose and location because it gave the appeal of something very modern. Because of this specific picture, my photography business has really shot through the roof.

Reardon has been in the photography business since December of 2015. She is a freshman in college, who plans on majoring in Communications with a minor in Journalism.

Lighting, Love, & Lots of Memories

Kirby Reardon
Neosho
Staff
Color
Photography





A New Skyline

Amy Sampson
Monett
Community
Color Photography
Bronze

Monett's downtown has a new skyline thanks to generous donations of Bob and Debbie Berger and their renovating of the state bank building where the Monett Historical Society and Museum now resides.

Sampson is a teacher at Crowder-Monett and Monett High School. She takes photographs around the world.

MY INNER PEACE

Many people have different ideas of peacefulness. When looking it up on the internet, it lists the “most peaceful places” such as Iceland, Denmark or Scotland. However, some might say it is when they are doing something they love or they are in a quiet space. Everyone eventually in his or her life will experience their peaceful place. For five years I have known my place of peace: the Catholic Church in my hometown.

When glancing at the church it seems like any other church. The view from the outside steps is of a simple, brown bricked, stained glassed, medium sized building with a steeple. The size reflects the simplicity of the Catholic look on life. As people enter the two glass doors, they greet one another with smiling faces. Everyone is wearing nice Sunday clothes and the elderly ladies are sprayed with extra perfume, so it wavers into the air. Young and old people casually chat amongst themselves before passing through another set of wooden doors into the quiet sanctuary.

Tall ceilings that make the sanctuary seem more spacious, while the sun filters through the tall stained glass windows, throwing colors of the rainbow against the long pews. The surrounding walls contain

fourteen etched glass pictures of the Stations of the Cross. Each beautifully depicts the travels of Jesus from his arrest to his death. The area is silent besides a few small children whispering to their parents or elderly people talking louder than they think they are. When stepping in, I turn to my left to receive Holy Water to perform the sign of the cross: Up, down, left, and right.

Soon after, I continue down the rows of hard wooden pews to where we eventually sit. I genuflect before entering the pew. A hint of incense lingers in the air from previous masses. Before praying, the kneeler is pulled down to rest upon. The teal cushion is not too soft, but not too hard on my knees. Leaning against the smooth wood of the pew in front of me, I say my prayers. Then settling in the seat another cushion is waiting for me to sit on, this one is almost like burlap cloth, which buffers the hard woodenness.

The view from my seat consists of a white cloth covered altar adorned with pale colored flowers. Behind the altar there is a golden box placed in the wall called a tabernacle, where Jesus's body is held. Above the tabernacle is a wooden cross that is center to the altar, which is a depiction of the crucifixion. To

[Continued to 78]

Sydney Thompson
Mt. Vernon
Crowder
Bronze
Nonfiction

I feel the most peaceful when I am at my church.

Thompson is a member of St. Susanne's Catholic which is what inspired her to write this paper.

[Continued from 77]

the right of the tabernacle stands a tall red glass candle holder where a candle burns as a reminder of Jesus's presence. To the left and right of the altar stand two tall wooden carved statues of Mary and Joseph. More flickering candles surround the altar, the cross, and the tabernacle, creating an animated glow to the already lit room.

As the mass begins everyone stands to sing the entrance hymn from the hymnals in the pews. The pages make a soft ruffling noise. When the first notes on the organ are played, they echo through the room. All the singing makes the room feel so light and happy. The altar boys glide down the center isle carrying a single glowing candle in their hands, followed by Father Corey in his flowing white robes. After the song ends,

Father Corey prays and the room draws even more silent. The Lector rises from her chair to stand behind the pulpit to read the daily Bible readings. I quietly follow along, tracing the words with my finger in my soft bound book, pondering the meanings. Father Corey then starts the homily with a joke to make sure everyone is alert and listening. He then continues to describe and teach the congregation about how the readings are relevant to our everyday lives. When he is finished, everyone stands to recite the creed as one, to profess our Christian faith. As the creed is recited its strong words ring through the church with such strength from the peoples' united voices. An offering is then taken. Two men walk the center isle with long handled baskets to catch the envelopes. This money will go to help our food pantry and keep the services alive.

Following the recitation we all sit and watch the altar boys prepare the altar for the transubstantiation, which is the climax of the service. The boys bring golden chalices, red wine, and bread wafers to the altar. When they are done preparing, we all stand while Father Corey says a prayer. Then we kneel as he prepares for the consecration of the body and blood of Christ. The room is as quiet and still as a snow fall, yet his words are as penetrating as the strong rain. All of a sudden we hear three strikes of the chiming bells that fill the

silent air. Muuhhrrr. Muuhhrrr, Muuhhrrr. We then arise from the kneelers and join hands to recite The Lord's Prayer together. Following this we turn to greet, shake hands, and offer peace to our neighbors in other pews. This is a joyous and friendly time to share love with one another.

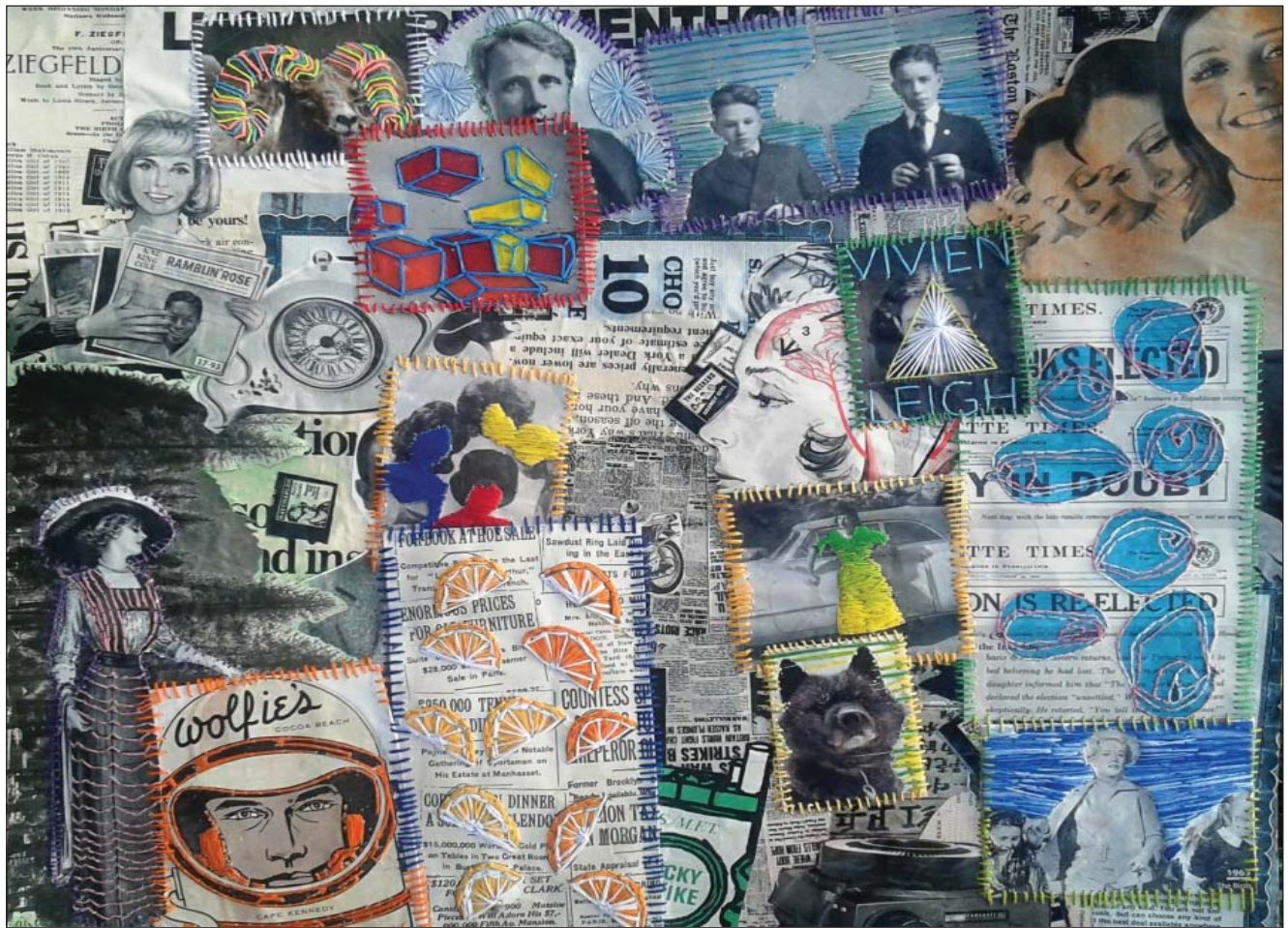
Next, we kneel to finish the prayers of the Eucharist and form two long lines down the center isle to receive the Holy Communion. As we advance to the front of the line, we almost walk in step with the Communion hymn the choir is singing. We then stretch out our cupped hands to receive the Host which is the Body of Christ. Then proceed over to the chalice to receive the Blood of Christ. Both of these fill my heart with joy and jubilation, for Christ is in my body and I feel holy. After receiving Communion we walk back to our pew, than continue to pray upon the kneeler. After everyone has received Communion, Father Corey washes the chalices with Holy

Water and special cloths. He always keeps his fingertips together to make sure he doesn't drop any of the Body of Christ. We all remain kneeling until he is finished and then we all sit at

“The room is as quiet and still as a snow fall, yet his words are as penetrating as the strong rain.”

the same time. After the hymn is finished, the room is silent for about ten seconds before we all stand to say the last prayer before leaving. The choir then sings one more song, during which the altar boys get their still lit candles and glide back down the aisle to the open doors, following them is Father Corey who is singing along joyfully with the choir. This cheerful tune brings the Mass to a close.

Once the song has ended, people start to exit the packed sanctuary into the gathering space. Long, white tables with chairs fill the length of the room. People stay around to visit; the old ladies gossip and the doughnut and coffee line quickly forms. The front of the line always consists of eager children searching for their favorite donuts, while trying to balance a glass of juice. While families sit at tables, conversing about family stories, the children run around consuming donuts with a bottomless stomach. The men stand around the coffee pot engaged in stories of the week or news of the day, each wearing



Vintage Quilt Collage

Makayla Stone
 McDonald County High School
 Silver
 2D Media

*This collage was inspired by Maurizio Anzeri's work and process.
 To give it a vintage feeling I use old photographs from 70's TIME Magazine.*

Stone, a sophomore, hopes to go to Rhode Island School of Design and aspires to be an artist.

a colorful and sometimes festive tie showing their different personalities. Slowly the families leave one by one, knowing they will return the next Sunday.

Everyone in life will stumble upon his or her peaceful place. Although I didn't have to travel to far off lands to find my place, it still holds a strong meaning to me. This

place is where I can escape to weekly and be at peace. It may be simple, but it fills me with an overflowing glass of sanctuary. As L. Frank Baum wrote in *The Wizard of Oz*, "If I ever go looking for my heart's desire again, I won't look any further than my own back yard. Because if it isn't there, I never really lost it to begin with." ☞

ABOUT THE CONTEST

Art and literary submissions are accepted at CrowderQuill.com from May 1 to Feb. 1 each year. Mostly an online contest, 2D and 3D art may also be hand-delivered; contact Quill@Crowder.edu to make arrangements. The maximum number of entries per category per person is four. Only one award per category will be allotted per person. Entries are judged by staff members. Divisions are high school, Crowder College students, and community members.

The *Crowder Quill* is a literary-art magazine published annually by the Magazine Production class at Crowder College. The mission statement is “to encourage and showcase the creative abilities of local writers, artists, and photographers as well as provide a cultural and link between Crowder College and our surrounding communities.”

Disclaimer: Some content may be inappropriate for younger audiences.

For more details about the contest guidelines and an entry form, go to www.CrowderQuill.com.

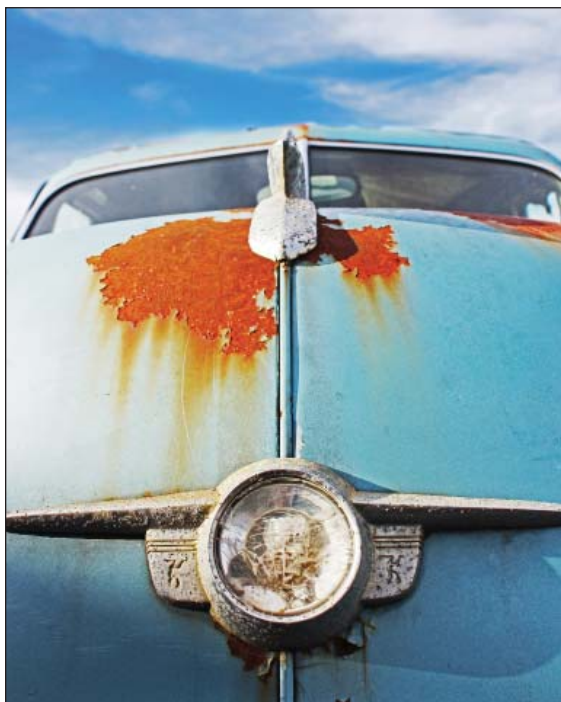
COLOPHON

This publication is designed annually by Crowder College students enrolled in Comm 111, Magazine Production. Text was set in Bell MT 10 point regular. Story titles were set in Kozuka Gothic Extra Light. Other fonts used include Arial and Myriad Pro.

The *Crowder Quill* was produced using Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign CS5. The magazine was printed in the Crowder College print shop on the Neosho, Mo., campus. The cover stock is Sappi Flo Gloss Digital Cover 11 x 17 80 lb. 7TP coated, and inside pages are on 11x17 60 lb. white Husky Opaque Offset Domtar.

Funding of the publication comes from the college as a means to provide a cultural link with the community and for an outlet for creativity and expression.

For the 2018 contest, 915 entries were received, and 107 awards were presented in a public ceremony and poetry reading May 10, 2018 on the Neosho campus of Crowder College. Award winners were published and received certificates to be recognized as part of the 38th annual publication.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Janet Reed, Literature Instructor
Stephanie Potter, Photography Instructor, and students

Archive 2015 winning entry

CONTEST CATEGORIES

The magazine is a compilation of winning entries in the following literary and art categories.

Various forms of each genre are welcome as publication submissions. The following are common terms and explanations within each category. For more detailed contest guidelines, see CrowderQuill.com.

Nonfiction

Essays, character sketches and other true-to-life writings should be limited to 1,800 words.

Essays – a short piece of writing that is based on one certain subject in which the author normally states and details their opinion on. There are four types of essays in literature: expository, descriptive, narrative, and persuasive.

Biography – a piece of literature that has been written about someone's life.

Autobiography – when the biography is written by the subject of the story.

Character sketch – a short piece of writing that details a certain character.

Memoir – a written work similar to a biography but focuses on a specific time in a person's life.

Historical narrative – a narrative that was written for the general purpose of recreating historical events and characters.

Satire – a piece of writing that ridicules mankind's downfalls and corruptions.

Political satire – a piece of literature written for the purpose of mocking the government and its members.

Commentary – writing that is generally used for records. The author, having been a part of a certain experience, details what occurred.

Journal/Diary entries – a written record of a person's thoughts, opinions, and activities.



Archive 2012 winning entry

Fiction

Clear plot development and well-defined characters are expected; also limit of 1,800 words.

Short stories – a brief story that, while it does come to completion, lacks complexity and in-depth character development.

Plays – a written piece presenting a story that was created with the intention for the piece to be acted out on a stage.

Fables – A short narrative that is used to teach morals and commonly uses animals as characters.

Folklore – a piece of literature that preserves the traditional customs and tales among a certain group of people.

Parody – a piece of literature that closely imitates an author or another piece of literature, most often for comedic purposes.

Fantasy – a literary genre that is comprised of things that cannot occur in the real world, such as magic and mythical creatures.

Science fiction – a literary genre that has a story line that is based off different views on what science and technology will be like in the future.

Poetry

Whether free verse, blank verse, rhymed or metered verse, poetry should make a point, state emotion, or relate an experience.

Musical lyrics – poetry that is paired with instrumental sound to create a song.

Free verse – a verse that does not have a steady rhythm.

Blank verse – a verse that does not rhyme and is most commonly written in iambic pentameter.

Rhymed verse – a verse in which the words at the end of each line rhyme.

Metered verse – a syllabic rhythm recurring throughout a verse.

Ballad – a type of poetry that is used in dance songs, they often tell a story with the themes ranging from comedy to romance.

Sonnet – a poem in the fixed verse form pattern of fourteen lines that are generally iambic pentameter rhyming agreeing to a specific design.

Haiku – a type of verse, originating from Japan, that contains three lines with five syllables in the first and last lines, and seven syllables in the second line.

Sources: Information is paraphrased from a variety of sources. For a complete bibliography, see www.CrowderQuill.com in the post titled "Contest Categories."

Credits this page

Archive 2017
winning entries



Water Color

2D Media

Original two-dimensional art may be black and white or color. Entries may be scanned and uploaded online, hand-delivered, or mailed. Art should be created based on real life (still life, landscape, or live model), memory, or imagination rather than copied from published materials. If a source is referenced, credit must be given. Model consent required. See entry form on pages 87-88 for more detailed information.

Hand-made prints – artwork created by hand.

Monoprint – a single print created by applying ink or paint to a smooth surface and then transferring it to paper; may have a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd monoprint, each with a specific process.

Etching – a print produced by etching with acid into a piece of metal, then applying ink and pressing paper to the inked metal.

Screen print – silk-screen printing; a process that uses stencils on screens to layer different colors of ink onto a

print.

Charcoal drawing – a drawing using sticks of charred wood.

Oil painting – made with oils; takes longer to dry and is used in layers.

Colored pencil – similar in shape to a graphite pencil, each colored pencil has a different shade or color, and the lead contains wax.

Pastels – similar to a crayon; made out of powdered pigment made into a binder.

Graphite pencil – a pencil whose lead is a mixture of powdered graphite and clay; easily erasable.

Marble texturing/brush – applying a pattern to an object by transferring oil paints floating on water.

Pen & Ink – A drawing or sketch done in pen & ink. Often incorporates the methods of stippling and cross-hatching (as a variety of media do.)

- **Stippling** – created by drawing or engraving a detail or an image in either small strokes or dots.
- **Cross-hatch** – creating an image with series of lines that cross over each other.

3D Art

Qualifying art must include a relief that protrudes at least 1/8 inch off the surface. Photographs of the art (front and side view required) may be uploaded online instead of bringing the art for judging.

Pottery – objects that are wheelthrown with clay and fired to cone 02-10. They can be altered, added on to, or detailed.

Ceramics – all things made in clay and fired; it is also possible to make from a mold; not thrown on the wheel.

Sculpture – 3D objects that can be created from a variety of materials, through various processes, such as carving or welding.

Assemblage – a piece of art that is created with different sections or pieces that are assembled to create a whole piece.

Recycled Material Art – artwork that is made of recycled materials or trash.

Relief art – a sculpture that has been made to give the impression that the carved image is above the background plane.

Fused-glass jewelry – created by selecting pieces of glass and arranging them to be fired in a kiln in order to fuse the pieces together.

Stained-glass mosaic – decorative glass pane that is created by cutting and arranging pieces of colored glass connected by strips of lead; color enhancements may be added with stains and paints.



Sculpture



Digital Art

This graphic art category includes computer-generated art or extensively manipulated photographs in order to create special effects. Photography with only minor adjustments should be entered in one of the photography categories. Digital art, photography, and literature entries should be uploaded online. See CrowderQuill.com for more information.

Common Photoshop techniques – a few of the most commonly used Photoshop techniques are the ability to manipulate photos, create textures, alter hand-drawn images that are scanned in, add layers to create more dimension, and alter the lighting on an image to make it brighter or darker.

Photoshop layers – different sections of the same image that can be altered and moved separately to give the image more dimension.

Photoshop filters – an effect that can be used to imitate photographic filters, correct a photo, or apply special art effects that give the image a unique appearance or appear to have been created using a different medium.

Sumo Paint software program – a website with a downloadable program for image design, photo editing, and making digital art.

InspirARTion software application – an application that allows users to utilize various brushes of different styles, sizes, and colors as well as different symmetry modes to draw or create digital art.



B&W Photography

Black and white entries may be reproduced from film or digital files with only minor corrections and adjustments.

Color Photography

We seek film or digital files that emphasize vibrant color. Files should be uploaded online. All photography is judged on originality, contrast, composition, and artistic merit.

Aperture setting (f-stop) – f-stops are the size of the aperture and corresponds to how much light is allowed in the lens. Larger f-stop numbers result in a darker image. Smaller f-stop numbers result in a brighter image.

ISO (film speed) – measures how sensitive to light the camera sensor is; the lower the number, the less light sensitive and less grain on the photo, and the higher the number, the more light sensitive and more grain on the photo.

Shutter speed – how long the aperture exposes the sensor to the light, the faster the speed of the shutter, the crisper the picture.

Automatic setting (Auto) – the automatic setting controls aperture, shutter speed, and ISO for the user.

iPhone lens attachment – smartphone attachments that helps the phone and user to produce a higher quality photo.

Film processing – a series of chemical baths that develop a photograph, requiring control over the environment, especially light. With digital printing, images from digital cameras can be printed directly from the computer.



Archive 2014: B&W Photography and 2012 Color Photography

2018 CROWDER QUILL CONTRIBUTORS

The magazine is a compilation of winning entries in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, photography, and art from aspiring authors, artists, and photographers. Entrants



Archive 2014
winning entry

generally reside in the communities within a 100-mile radius of the ten Crowder College campuses in southwest Missouri, including Cassville, Neosho, Nevada, McDonald County, and Webb City. They may be high school students, Crowder College students, or community members. The employees of Crowder College are classified as “community” in order to avoid competition with Crowder students.

Each entry includes an artist/author statement, which is a short reflection from contributors about their goals or reasons for writing a particular piece as well as insight into the creative process, inspiration, or subject matter of their entries, as well as a biographical statement. For graphic entries, the technical process is included, if provided. There were 86 individuals published, including staff entries. The contributors hail from the following cities and high schools:

CROWDER STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Anderson | Aurora | Bentonville, Ark. | Carl Junction | Carthage | Cassville
Exeter | Goodman | Granby | Joplin | Lanagan | Lockwood | Monett
Mount Vernon | Neosho | Noel | Oologah, Okla. | Pineville | Powell | Purdy
Rogers, Ark. | Seligman | Seneca | Springdale, Ark. | Stark City | Stella | Verona
Webb City

HIGH SCHOOLS

Carl Junction High School
Houck Homeschool
Joplin High School
Life Way Christian School
Lockwood High School
McDonald County High School

Monett High School
Monore Homeschool
Neosho High School
Purdy High School
Ray Homeschool
Reitz Homeschool

2018 TRAVELING AWARD

This special award is presented to the most-winning high school for its entries in this issue. The award is calculated on points: gold winners count as four points, silver as three, bronze as two, and honorable mention as one.

- **1st Place: McDonald County High School**
- **2nd Place: Purdy High School**
- **3rd Place: Carl Junction High School**



Division:

High school, grades 9-12 only

School _____

Teacher _____

Crowder student Community

Category: 2D Traditional Media 3D Art

All other categories should be submitted online, except with permission from the Quill office.

Title _____

Source of inspiration for creation of art:

Memory Imagination Real life

Real life includes still life set ups, live models, landscapes, and building interiors or exteriors.

If you used a live model, check the box to indicate obtaining permission of the model or parents/guardians if the model is a minor.

Medium: (pencil, pastel, woodcut, sculpture)

Artist's statement: Write 1-3 sentences explaining THIS art's purpose, process, inspiration, or effect. _____

Biography: Write 1-3 sentences about yourself. _____
_____ *Attach additional paper.*

Date _____ Phone _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Email _____



VISUAL ARTS

Artwork, photography, and digital art

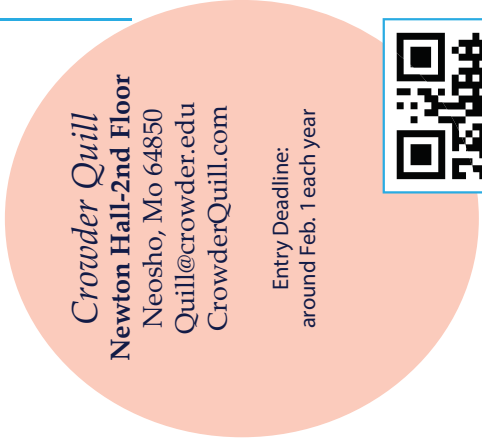
- Digital art is extensively altered digital photographic images and computer-generated art.
- 2D traditional media includes both black & white and color two-dimensional entries. 3D art has been added for three-dimensional entries. Photographs of 3D art may be submitted online.
- A model consent form must be submitted for photographic or art entries of live models.

- Art should be created based on real life (still life, landscape, or live model), memory, or imagination rather than copied from published materials. On the rare occasion that an artist alters a previous work of art, credit should be given. For example, an alteration of the *Mona Lisa* could be titled *Mona Lisa's Smile* with source credit given to the original artist: *The Mona Lisa* by Leonardo Da Vinci. "Copy art" used as learning exercises will NOT be accepted as contest entries.

- 2D media should be mounted, matted or placed in clear plastic sleeves for their protection. Please do not send entries in frames or with glass. Attach entry form to the front left-hand corner with single-sided tape.
- 2D media may also be scanned with a high-quality scanner and sent digitally.
- All photography and digital art should be submitted online; see general guidelines.

Literary & Graphic Arts Competition

Winners published in the *Crowder Quill Magazine*



Crowder Quill
Newton Hall-2nd Floor
Neosho, Mo 64850
Quill@crowder.edu
CrowderQuill.com

Entry Deadline:
around Feb. 1 each year



Entry guidelines for contest

WHAT IS THE CROWDER QUILL?

The *Crowder Quill* is a literary-art magazine published annually by the Magazine Production class at Crowder College. It is our goal to encourage and showcase the creative abilities of local writers, artists, and photographers as well as provide a cultural link between Crowder College and our surrounding communities.



All entries should be uploaded online as digital files at CrowderQuill.com.

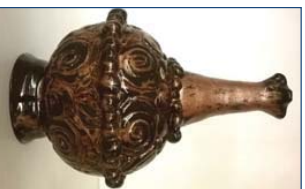
Exception:

2D traditional media and 3D art may be entered by hand, mail, or online as scanned files or photographs.



GENERAL ENTRY GUIDELINES

- All entries except traditional 2D media and 3D art should be sent online at CrowderQuill.com.
- Postmark deadline for art: Feb. 1
- Deadline to be announced for online submissions and hand-delivered art entries, usually a few days after Feb. 1.
- Email Quill@crowder.edu or call 417-455-5410 to make arrangements for hand delivered entries, if you have difficulties with the online submission process, or do not have internet access.
- Individuals may submit up to four entries per category in every category.
- Failure to meet all guidelines may result in disqualification.
- Entrants give their express permission that winning entries will be published in the magazine and may also be used for promotional and educational purposes.



CATEGORIES

Accepted by mail **OR** hand delivery with an attached entry form **OR** online:

2D Traditional Media: original paintings, drawings and hand-made prints including pen, pencil, woodcut, etching, screen print, charcoal, oil, colored pencil, pastels, and acrylic creations, both black & white and color. Entries may also be scanned and uploaded.

3D Art includes pottery, ceramic, sculpture, assemblages, recycled materials and reliefs that protrude at least 1/8 inch off the surface. Photographs of the art (front and side view required) may be uploaded online instead of bringing the art for judging.

Categories to be uploaded online:

- **Nonfiction:** Essays, character sketches and other true-to-life writings should be limited to 1800 words.
- **Fiction:** Clear plot development and well-defined characters are expected; also limit of 1800 words.
- **Poetry:** Whether free verse, blank verse, rhymed or metered verse, poetry should make a point, state emotion, or relate an experience.
- **Digital Art:** This graphic art category includes computer-generated art or extensively manipulated photographs in order to create special effects. Photography with only minor adjustments should be entered in one of the photography categories.
- **Black and White Photography:** Entries may be reproduced from film or digital files with only minor corrections and adjustments.
- **Color Photography:** Film or digital files that emphasize vibrant color reproduction are sought.

Carefully read the descriptions of each category to avoid disqualification.

See more details online at CrowderQuill.com.

