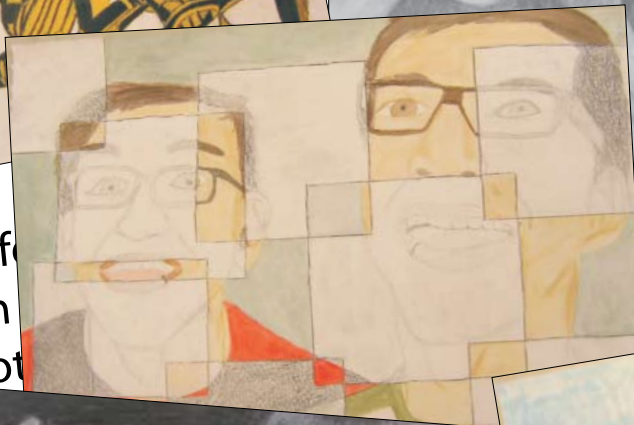
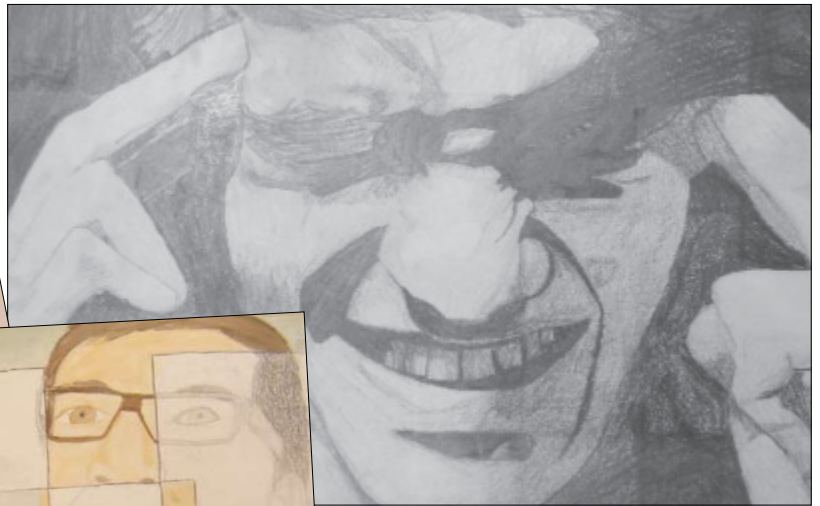


MOSAIC

See
geth
ally
are p
each
I thou
he ha
realize
the way I f
about him
Guess not



pasture grass upon the

I do
ous
tion
is
ge
If
n
the



fore
ory

the chert
is and to transfuse His
eens, and golds... vermillion

Wamego ★ Literary ★ Magazine ★ 2008

MOSAIC

2008

Wamego High School
801 Lincoln St.
Wamego, Kansas 66547
785.456.2214

This is the first issue of *Mosaic*, the official Wamego High School magazine compiled of essays, poems, short stories, artwork, and photography by students and faculty from WHS. *Mosaic* is intended for students ninth through twelfth grade to showcase their creations and see the efforts of their peers. Several faculty members also submitted their work. Choices were made by the Literary Magazine committee, which is comprised of a language arts teacher, two co-editors, and several other students representing all the grade levels.

Thanks to the students and faculty who were brave enough to submit their work. Thanks to Mrs. Goodson for her guidance with the committee and for helping to create this magazine. Thanks to Mrs. Workman and Mr. Stephan for their support of this publication. And a great thanks also goes to the USD 320 District Printing Department for being patient, giving us beautiful options to print, and for going through page by page to make it the best it could possibly be. Without all of you, there would be no *Mosaic*.

Staff:

Kim Lopez, co-editor
Laurina Hannan, co-editor

Kristina Baker
Lukus Ebert
Stephanie Haug
Kris Larson
Megan Salfrank
Melissa Slagle
Catherine Wethington
Jessica White

Cover Design:

Catherine Wethington

Mrs. Goodson, advisor

Table of Contents

<i>Fields</i>	Damon Irvin.....	1
<i>Artwork</i>	Starla Simmons	2
<i>Like A Whisper In a Noise-Filled Room</i>	Dr. Mary Kaye Siebert.....	3
<i>Photograph</i>	Dr. Mary Kaye Siebert.....	3
<i>Untitled</i>	Elizabeth Flanagan.....	4
<i>:(</i>	Jessica White.....	5
<i>Untitled</i>	Lotus Hazlett.....	6
<i>Artwork</i>	Lotus Hazlett.....	6
<i>Voice in the Storm</i>	Megan Salfrank.....	7
<i>Untitled</i>	Jessica White.....	8
<i>Artwork</i>	Eliezer Martinez.....	8
<i>On Bended Knee</i>	Megan Salfrank.....	9
<i>Photograph</i>	Maggie Clark	10
<i>Happiness</i>	Lori Stratton.....	11
<i>A Friend</i>	Vicky Adams	12
<i>Weather</i>	Michelle Steffens	13
<i>A Thought to Chew On</i>	Jessica White.....	14
<i>Kansas</i>	Olivia Parrish	14
<i>Artwork</i>	Riley Woodward.....	15
<i>Powerful Woman Warrior</i>	Diane Landon.....	16
<i>Artwork</i>	Sarah Hazelwood	17
<i>Feelings for You</i>	Michelle Steffens	18
<i>Artwork</i>	Eliezer Martinez.....	19
<i>Blood is Thicker Than Water</i>	Kim Lopez	20
<i>Leadership</i>	Mary Kaye Siebert	21
<i>Artwork</i>	Cassie Wolf.....	22
<i>Mind Therapy</i>	Kristina Baker	23
<i>How Old Are You?</i>	Laurina Hannan.....	24
<i>Artwork</i>	Jamie Clark	25
<i>I Dream</i>	Jessica White.....	26
<i>Artwork</i>	Ciera Conrad	27
<i>I Don't Know</i>	Melissa Slagle	28
<i>Bluestem Wabaunsee</i>	Charley Gann	29
<i>Artwork</i>	Zach Johnson	30
<i>Untitled</i>	Shay Hoffman	31
<i>An Earth Stained With Blood</i>	Melissa Slagle	32
<i>Stand Back, Leave Me, Goodbye</i>	Michelle Steffens	35
<i>Artwork</i>	Seth Klein.....	36
<i>The Woods</i>	Lukus Ebert.....	37
<i>Banned Books</i>	Laurina Hannan.....	39
<i>Artwork</i>	Starla Simmons	41
<i>The Great Escape</i>	Beth Lang.....	42
<i>The River</i>	Jim Page	43
<i>Learning</i>	Sarah A. Bischof	46

<i>Photograph</i>	Megan Salfrank	47
<i>My Old Friend</i>	Catherine Wethington	48
<i>Artwork</i>	Kenneth Fowler.....	49
<i>Artwork</i>	Riley Woodward.....	50
<i>Just Weather</i>	John White	51

Fields

By Damon Irvin

See the flowing grass, my own ocean.

Waves caused by wind, its natural beauty captures me, now I'm trapped in.

There is now life in this desolate place. Warm summer breeze running its fingers

Through my hair, while caressing my face.

Mixtures of green and gold.

A world untouched and not scathed by industry.

Barbed wire barriers go on and on. A lonely meadowlark in a cottonwood tree sings

Its innocent song.

Dirt and rock roads stretch for miles and miles, as I look into the future all the

While, thinking of when I will forget these simple days, when will this place catch up with

the world and change its old ways?

But it is easy for me to love because I'm tied, bound, hypnotized by the fields'

Glorious golden blaze.



Starla Simmons

Like A Whisper In a Noise-Filled Room

By Dr. Mary Kaye Siebert
"Grandma Kaye Kaye"

*Like a soft whisper in a noise-filled room
it will come to you.*

*If you're patient and listen... it is
"Ellie's voice"*

*Like the sweet melodies
you hear when mommy sings to you.
It will harmonize in your heart
like angels in the sky... it is
"Ellie's voice"*

*Like the silly dancing
daddy does with you to music.
It will tickle your heart and
make you feel free... it is
"Ellie's voice"*

*Like the gentle breeze that moves you
to stick out your tongue
on long stroller rides to the park.
It will move you to giggle... it is
"Ellie's voice"*

*"Ellie's voice"
A voice like no other.
Leading to you.
Powerful, wise, strong, perfect, and
Yours, it is
"Ellie's voice"*



Photo by Dr. Mary Kaye Siebert

Untitled

By Elizabeth Flanagan

*A past, true is dark
Gets worse day by day,
That past leaves a mark
But lives fade away*

*Put it behind you
Think straight ahead
The good Lord beside you
This is where He led*

*Life goes on.
You're okay now
You don't have to run
It's their turn to bow*

:(

By Jessica White

*Seeing them together, they really
are perfect for each other
I thought maybe he had begun to realize
the way I felt about him
Guess not
I do not feel jealous, for my emotion
is not one of anger or hate
I feel only sadness and envy, that I
wish I could have the same
Such thoughts are accompanied by
questions
What about me is undesirable?
If I stand a little straighter, smile
a little brighter, reach out...
would they notice?
I think not, for I continue to slip
through like shadows and dust
Quietly, for to voice feelings is to
leave yourself open to rejection and hurt
And endanger what connections
already exist
So I go on as before and things
remain unchanged*

Untitled

By Lotus Hazlett

*I know what the little girl wants.
 She is a princess,
 It's obvious isn't it?
 Yes, I know
 One hundred friends
 One hundred ladies in waiting
 One hundred dresses...or more
 Yes, I know, Princess
 Because I know you.
 You don't want a hundred friends,
 Paid as they are.
 You don't want a hundred ladies in
 Waiting,
 Servants as they are, with a fear of death.
 Nor do you want a hundred dresses...
 Or more
 Rigid and heavy are they.
 It is fine, beautiful child
 With big eyes wide open.
 Don't cry.
 Don't cry because I know.
 Love
 Pure. Simple. Innocent.
 Love
 Love that only comes
 From one's parents
 Don't cry, Princess
 I always knew.*

*Yo sé lo que quiere la niña
 Es una princesa.
 ¿Es muy obvio, no?
 Si, yo lo sé.
 La vida es dulce en un palacio
 Cien amigos.
 Cien meninas.
 Cien vestidos...o más.
 Ya lo sé, princesa;
 Porque yo te conozco.
 No quieres cien amigos
 Pagados son
 No quieres cien meninas
 Sirvientes son, con temor de morir.
 Ni quieres cien vestidos... o más
 Rígidos y pesados son.
 Está bien niña bonita
 Con los ojos grande y abiertos.
 No llores.
 No llores porque ya lo sé.
 Amor
 Puro. Simple. Inocente.
 Amor
 Amor que solo viene
 De los Padres
 No llores, princesa
 Ya lo sabía.*



Lotus Hazlett

Voice in the Storm

By Megan Salfrank

*For years, oppressed, pushed away by the free.
They're segregated and considered flawed.
Yet they still dream of their children's liberty,
While faithfully singing praise to their God.*

*A small voice speaks out, hope in the storm—
But the words are stilled, threatened with their life.
Yet they triggered a cause; a new era takes form.
The oppressed trek on, taking strength from their strife.*

*Two birds roost in a peacock's nest,
Minding their own, eating their seed.
The peacocks mock, act the pest,
But the two birds refuse to leave.*

*A wilting Rose, come home for the day,
Taking root in the lily's bed.
The white flowers taunt, as they may,
But the Rose will not move from her sted.*

*A grand army marches, being led by their King,
Commanding the soldiers to fight and be heard.
At last! Free at last! Now with real reason to sing!
Birds and Rose no longer commanded to serve.*

Untitled

By Jessica White

*Sometimes I tire of this place
Of all the energy we waste
On all the scorn and pointless hate
It just seems to be wrong
How did things turn out this way
What happened to my yesterday
It seems to me humanity
Is pleading for its sanity
If you think you know what's wrong
Then tell me what is right
Why can't we just get along
Find a place where we belong
What happened to our yesterday
Can we still turn back and find our way?*



Eliezer Martinez

On Bended Knee

By Megan Salfrank

*Kneeling on the floor, I pray to God
With a crying heart and a repentant soul.
“I know my life and mind are flawed,
But becoming like You is my goal.”*

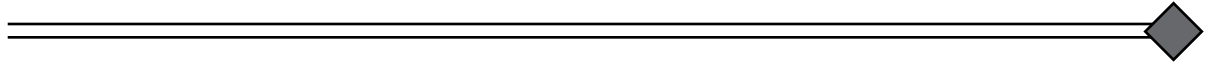
*I rest my head in my hands, and cry out—
“Lord, I need you. Lord, help me,” is my plea.
My crying heart is silenced, and I hear His voice without a doubt
Saying “My child, my child” and I fall again on bended knee.*

*The devil’s schemes are tricky, and I am soon snared.
So I call out once more on the Almighty,
My newfound Savior and the only one who’s cared.
“Lord, I need you. Lord, help me,” again is my plea.*

*“Satan tempts without ceasing, so I pray for your presence,
To guide me and protect me through the day.
My weaknesses come in all sizes and tints,
And without you, the devil will get his way.”*

*Kneeling on the floor, I pray again to God
With a loving heart and saved soul.
I hear him call, and let me know I did a good job,
But I will not lie in saying Satan’s tricks didn’t take their toll.*

Trust in me, my child, for My ways are higher than your own.



Maggie Clark

Happiness

By Lori Stratton

*Happiness comes not in the moments you expect,
the bride and groom exiting the church,
a baby's smile,
the warmth of a puppy on your lap.*

*Happiness is elusive – it sneaks up on you –
in the last crumbs of cake on the plate,
the cobwebs in the corner of the living room,
a hamster running toward nowhere on his wheel.*



A Friend

By Vicky Adams

*Sometimes I really need you
Just to walk along with me
I love when you're around
Knowing that I'm not alone.*

*I can always count on you
You've never let me down
Always so full of compassion
Couldn't find anyone with more care*

*Loving me for all I am
Not for the things I do
Or the people I'm around
You would never judge me*

*Always being an encouragement
You've pushed me through so far
And when trials become unbearable
You held my hand for comfort*

*I could never even imagine
Living my life without you
Or waking in a day of your absence
You mean so much to me.*

*I hold you up so high
Admiring all these great things
But I know you're always there
As a best friend, loving me.*

Weather

By Michelle Steffens

*Hill tops seeing from high to low
Trying to find the place where you're at home
Church bells ringing every Sunday morning
Thinking of all the pain, achievement and glory
Raindrops running down the window
Figuring out secrets, needing to be told
Listening to all the sounds, birds in the trees
Walking outside to feel the morning breeze
Flowers bloom at us every day
Expanding the minds and creativity
Chasing after your dreams like a butterfly
Fall leaves every single color
Watching every one another
One rain or tear drop land outside
Everyone goes inside
Because of the simple reason
One morning you wake up
And everything's frozen
Trees broken in everyone's yards--over six dozen
Look at all these limbs and trees
Indeed you are seeing what everyone else sees
Things ruined and diminished
Everyone thinks it's finally finished
No power or electricity
Needing something to go on
Look at all this weather to ponder.*



A Thought To Chew On

By Jessica White

What is real?

Is real what we can see?

And if we cannot see is it what we can hear?

And if our ears deceive us, is it what we can touch?

And if our hands are numb, is it what we can taste?

And if our mouths are closed then where has reality fled?

Is a state of mind reality; anger, sadness, joy?

Is knowledge what we know of reality, of what

We have perceived reality to be?

Do we exist merely because we believe it is so?

If we were to doubt our own existence would we cease to be?

No...that is just silly.

Kansas

By Olivia Parrish

The fiery sun glitters over the horizon. The light creates colors of the desert that radiate against the lush green hills. Golden prairies gleam as if they are treasure and whisper to the listening ear as the wind blows through, creating a golden sea. Winter is her most flattering style. Deer hooves trample the ground in the country, leaving their prints to be tracked. A blanket of white covers the ground to show Kansas off at her best. Once the snow melts, magnificent hills are revealed and come summer, grow wheat that sways in the breeze. Out of all the beautiful places in the world, Kansas is definitely the one place that I can truly call home.



Riley Woodward



Powerful Woman Warrior

By Diane Landon

She left me. This was a common happening, but something was different this time. A sadness, a calmness, a serenity was in the air. There wasn't anything I could do for her. I just needed to be here and take care of things, like I do so well.

It seemed like forever that she was gone. She had left before, but she seemed happier then. This time was different. I felt a sense of loss, and all I could do was stand next to her and offer my shoulder.

I waited patiently for her to return. Other times she left, I was forlorn and moped about hardly eating a morsel at dinnertime. I knew, though, that this time I had to be strong for her. I needed for her to know I was all right without her, and that everything would be okay. She obviously had a lot on her mind when she was packing and loading up her belongings into her pickup and didn't need anymore.

The days passed slowly. The weather was warm. The sun shone brightly. I was lying around soaking up the Vitamin D figuring I'd need my energy for more important responsibilities. There wasn't much else to do in the daytime. At night was when I was needed the most. Other people, who took care of things during the day, slept peacefully during the night, but not me. That was when I needed to be on the alert. That was when I was needed the most.

One day I heard a pickup coming down the road, and I quickly raised my head as I was lying relaxed in the sunshine. It was easy to hear cars coming from far away when one is out in the country. I have really good hearing, and it sounded just like her pickup; however, as it got closer and drove on past the house, I realized I had risen in vain. I let my head fall back on my pillow.

Occasionally the cat came by me and would lean her head against me and tickle me with her tail, but I just opened my eyes, blinked at her and shut them again. It was pretty obvious the cat was missing her too, for the cat usually had nothing to do with me.

I had all but given up hope for her return. The sadness that had come over her when she left made me feel like this may be the time she wouldn't return. One day, I heard a familiar sound and soon her pickup turned into the driveway. I lifted my head, squinted my eyes, and turned toward the sound of gravel popping out from beneath the pickup tires. I saw her face through the windshield. I ran over to the truck just as the door opened. I stepped up onto the running board and put my head on her chest. She reached down and hugged me tightly.

"I missed you, my good, big girl," she sighed as she patted me on the back. "I see you took care of things while I was gone."

I could have leaned against her all day and received hugs and attention from her, but she had to unload the pickup.

Ah, it was good for her to be home again. I didn't know why she left, but then it wasn't for me to know, and I'm sure I wouldn't have understood if she told me.

I trotted back over to my bed, laid back down, and watched the unloading. She seemed happier now, and I knew things would soon be back to normal.

When she had gone inside the house with the last load of luggage, I let out a heavy sigh and laid my head down on my paws, satisfied that I had taken care of things as she knew I would.



Sarah Hazelwood

Feelings for You

By Michelle Steffens

*I feel like I'm standing in a pasture all alone
With no one around and no one to hold
Many days and nights go by slowly
Wondering when we'll be together again
I don't know what you want me to do
I'm so lost, depressed but more confused
I don't know how you feel about me
Anymore
All my feelings are just all wrapped
And screwed up
I don't wanna give up, I can still fight
But you gotta tell me if what I'm
Really doing is right
Too many emotions and feelings shock
Through my body
I would tell my feelings about you
To any and everybody
I don't know how long I can run
And chase after you
But I'm willing to do it, as
Long as it takes
Because I'm in love with
You for heaven's sakes*



Eliezer Martinez



Blood is Thicker than Water

By Kim Lopez

Trying to relate when you're related is relatively hard
Which means it is difficult in a sense that there is a difference
Solving your differences is harder than solving equations
Making sense of one means making cents of the other
Which is just as complicated as complex quadratic formulas
Whatever that means, meaning ask your teacher for help
With the problems with numbers, not your problems with family
Because not even the most intelligent intellectual can interpret this mess
So hire a maid to sweep the secrets and fake smiles underneath the store-bought rug
That's where these things are kept, to keep away from the curious public
Your neighbors aren't nosy enough to know your nuisances
But aren't you satisfied with these situations, in which you can say with sincerity
These are the relatives you are related to for the rest of your life

Leadership-The Wizard of Oz Connection

By Mary Kaye Siebert

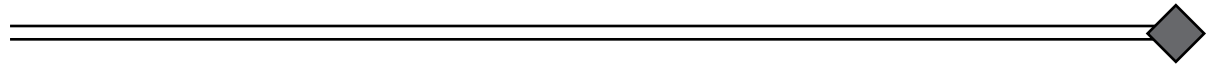
When I think of leadership – what it is and what it is not, I am drawn to one of my favorite movies, *The Wizard of Oz*. I must have seen that movie now more than 20 times in my lifetime, but the lessons it continues to provide me about leadership, and life in general, are both simple and profound. While what I know about leadership is embodied in the main characters and their experiences throughout the movie (Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Lion); it is important to remind myself that it is in the context of important and meaningful relationships with people in my life that I make the closest connections.

Brains. To be an effective leader, one must have wisdom. This doesn't necessarily mean you have to know everything there is to know about a topic, an organization or a process. But effective leadership necessitates the willingness to seek the knowledge and information necessary to lead others in some kind of direction. When the Scarecrow announced to Dorothy that he was unhappy because he didn't have a brain, she asked him just how he could talk if he didn't have a brain. The Scarecrow's response speaks eloquently about what leadership is not—that is, talking about things one knows little about! The Scarecrow's response was, "Some people with no brains do an awful lot of talking." At least the Scarecrow recognized his need for a brain, and was willing to seek it out in the journey through Oz. Any good leader is willing to do just that—seek information and wisdom so as to make right judgments based on truth. Leaders are those who are willing to say they "don't know it all" and are willing also to do what it takes to learn that which is necessary to know.

Heart. An effective leader leads not only through skill and smarts, but by connecting with others using emotional intelligence competencies like empathy and self-awareness. While the Tin Man believed he didn't have a heart, he displayed many of the key characteristics of an individual with a great deal of it! While he found himself rusted solid when Dorothy came along (stuck, so to speak), he aspired to be "tender, gentle, and sometimes sentimental." Emotional intelligence—being intelligent about emotions—matters so much for leadership success. Great leaders move us and ignite our passion and inspire us to be the best we can be. Great leadership works through the emotions, and if leaders fail to do this adequately, nothing they do will work as well as it could or should.

Courage. All great leaders are courageous. It takes courage to believe in your ideas, step up to the plate, and put them out for others to scrutinize. Great leadership cannot be reduced to technique; great leadership comes from the identity and integrity of the person. It takes courage to do the inner work necessary to develop that integrity, and it takes courage to really see oneself as a leader of others. But like the Lion in *The Wizard of Oz* movie said, "Sometimes I'm scared of myself"—we, too, are sometimes fearful of the leadership qualities that we have to offer others. We too, like the lion, must learn to "get out of our own way" so that what we have to offer is not squelched because of inner fear and self doubts. No doubt, great leadership demands courage to assert the self.

In sum, leadership is both simple and complex, but it definitely is something each of us can aspire to. Dorothy searched for home by way of the yellow brick road; the journey was often treacherous and frightening, and it eventually took her and her friends to a false wizard, who didn't really have the answers they each needed. As leaders, we would do well to learn from Dorothy and her friends—the lessons they learned the hard way. Instead of searching outside of ourselves for what we need to lead others, it would be wise to remember that our inner voice often speaks the best truth. As Dorothy said, "There's really no place like home."



Cassie Wolf

Mind Therapy

By Kristina Baker

*I kept waiting for the day
That I would be set free,
Because in my mind
There was finally
A place to start again.*

*I'm carefree
No need to escape
From this place I'm in
'Cause there are no more tears.*

*My fear has gone, my pain abated,
For I now hold no more hatred.
As I remember the old life,
I take all the happy memories,
Knowing they were few and far between.*

*Being here has made all the difference
Because my mind no longer suffers
Under mental abuse.
The only pain I have now
Is from working at my job*

*I will continue to pray
That these happy times
Will never fade away,
Because the tears fallen today
Become the gentle laughter of tomorrow.*



How Old Are You?

By Laurina Hannan

*She's old enough to be sad.
Her father died when she was three.*

*He's old enough to be proud.
His math test has an A on it.*

*They're old enough to be sneaky.
They're planning a friend's surprise birthday.*

*He's old enough to be anxious.
He's meeting a girl on a date.*

*She's old enough to be scared.
She's meeting a boy on a date.*

*They're old enough to be angry.
They were drenched from a passing car.*

*She's old enough to be worried.
She hasn't been home alone before.*

*She's old enough to be filled with a void.
Her boyfriend broke up with her.*

*She's old enough to remember.
Her husband just passed away.*

*I'm old enough to be happy.
No matter what happens.*



Jamie Clark

I Dream

By Jessica White

Of werewolves and crowmen

Of moonlight and shadow

Of starlight and mirrors

And deep pools of black

Of friends and of lovers

Of cool wind and rain

Of valleys and mountains

And bedazzling sights

Of children and laughter

Of beyond ever-after

Of magic and marvel

I dream



Ciera Conrad



I Don't Know

By Melissa Slagle

*I don't know what I can say
That will please You to hear
Nothing except, "I love You."*

*I don't know what I can do
To convince You of my love
Nothing except, "I serve You."*

*I don't know how I can serve You
When so many others don't
So I simply say, "I obey You."*

*I don't know how to obey You
To follow in Your example
Except to read Your Word.*

But this, I do know how to do.

*My mind is small,
My hands are weak,
My soul is unworthy,
You saved me anyway.*

*Your love is boundless,
Your grace is beyond comprehension,
Your son is the Savior of my life,
I worship you alone.*

Bluestem Wabaunsee

By Charley Gann

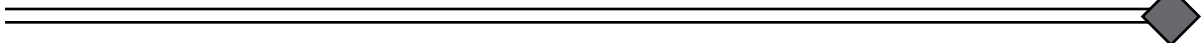
*In Eighteen Ninety-Six John Muir extolled
The “preaching of the (pine) trees” and
“their sermons on the mounts.”*

*I cannot disagree and would not press
to find a thing “more lovely than a tree,”
but the trees have never better praised the dawn
than bluestem pasture grass upon the hills.*

*The bristle cone, a pine, has stood before
A million dawns to welcome God’s glory new,
but bluestem grass has borne His Pentecost.*

*From fire, reborn to stand upon the chert
and limestone hills and to transfuse His grace
through greens, and golds... vermillion hues..
lush browns in a seasonal rhythm.*

*Wabaunsee: Dawn of Day....
A bluestem homily expounded on Flint Hills*



Zach Johnson

Untitled

By Shay Hoffman

*The smell of the seasoned salt
And raw steak in the air
The flames of the grill going
Higher as more propane is released into the air
Family sitting at the table
Joking and laughing
Loving the outdoors and the
Beautiful sky listening to my
Little brother in his toy car crashing
It's been a while since
My whole family has been together
I look around at all of our faces
And wishing this moment would last forever
My Dad, Mom, brothers and friends
I love it so much
I hope it never ends*



An Earth Stained With Blood

By Melissa Slagle

The whip fell to the ground with a soft thud, out of Turner's trembling hands. His brow caked with sweat and dust and his mouth lined with blood, Turner hurt to every bone in his body. A balmy October day steamed the ground, parched the crops and withered the plants that Turner needed to survive. His vast North Carolina plantation, of almost 1000 square miles, stretched further than the eye could comprehend. Small brick houses, numbering probably twenty, sat on the outskirts of a larger, white house, fortified with stone with a huge chimney built on one side. Turner had inherited all of this twenty years ago from his father, Marcus Turner, who had owned the land and all of its vast properties for years before that. The war was now in its low point for the South, and Turner was getting fed up.

The only problem was, he wasn't sure what exactly he was fed up with: the South losing the war or the scary realization of the South actually winning it.

The young Turner had grown up in North Carolina, had spent his entire life around his father's slaves, and had always known he would someday own it all. Marcus Turner had been known for being harsh with his slaves, and young Turner had tried to be no different.

Turner's oppressed, the young man cowering, faced away from him, shuddered a bit, but not a mumbled complaint came from his lips. The sun beat down upon the mostly empty field, the blood pouring from the young man's open wounds—deep, long, straight gashes in his back—staining the dry earth.

An earth stained with blood.

Yet Turner's rage was beyond that. Far beyond it.

"I should kill you for running away!" Turner screamed at him, hair wild and teeth chattering with rage. "I told you!" he fumed, now not just talking to the other man but to God himself, "I promised you if any of them ever ran away, I'd kill them!" The autumn wind picked up his words and carried them around the stubble field for a bit before letting them die off slowly.

Turner had discovered one of his slaves missing yesterday morning, after he'd gone into

town to get some supplies for Mrs. Penelope, his housekeeper, so she could make apple cobbler for dessert after supper. He'd just gotten back when Mr. Daniels, his overseer, had reported a young slave hand missing. So, with Marcus Turner's harsh words ringing in his ears, Turner had sought the man, recovered him earlier that day, and was now beating the man within an inch of his life, as he promised all the slaves the day they came to work for him. His father had told him to always treat the slaves as nothing more than dirt—if they disobeyed, you could whip them, or even kill them. Although, in Marcus's words, using a gun on them was a "waste of precious bullets that could go to the war effort." And in all his life, Turner had never once thought his father's words outlandish or strange.

So he beat the man, his turmoil and rage burning his skin from the inside out. The younger man moved, his frail legs, hungering for meat and fat and starved by both, pushing his upper body to a standing position. Though he dare not turn to his oppressor, he spat a mixture of spittle and blood from his dry mouth and said bitterly, "Then why don't you? I promise myself, sir, that though I die not free, I do not and will not die on my knees. That even you cannot take from me: my honor."

Sluggishly, with a quivering, frail hand, Turner stooped to retrieve his dropped whip. He was tired, and so was the man he was beating, but Turner was determined to beat him until he could not lift his arm another time, and three or four times beyond that. After a few, maybe two, maybe two hundred, Turner screamed in rage and hatred and flung the cursed lash far from reach to the blood-stained dirt. "I should! You know I should!" he cursed the man.

"Kill me," the man said, almost taunting, mocking the very man he'd worked under for so many years. "Kill me and get it over with. I want to die!"

With that, the whip was back in his hand, and he beat the man a hundred times more before once again hurling the instrument of torture down, and let loose a scream that would curdle your ears to hear it. He screamed and cried and wept and begged and pleaded and cursed and cried and screamed some more, pausing now and again to get a breath in. He cursed everything under the sun; life, freedom, pain, suffering, death, torture, health, curses, sickness, disease, cruelty, and even jealousy. He shouted at the moon and the sun and the South and the North and himself and all of his household and everything he owned and loved. He cried for his sister, who



was dying, and his father, who was dead, and his mother, who was still living, and anything else he could think of. This went on for many minutes, all the time the man he'd been beating was cowering in his own pool of blood, wincing now and then but not uttering a sound.

Finally, a pause, and Turner said one word. "Gone."

And he hated himself for even thinking the word, let alone saying it aloud, and he screamed a bit more on the subject, incoherent words, syllables, not actual sentences but rather choppy bits of consciousness that streamed from his mouth to the wind. The autumn air was chilly, but Turner didn't notice now. Heat came from inside, heat fueled by anger and stupidity and remorse at a situation and not being able to do a damn thing about it. Ignorance and bliss.

Turner was no longer ignorant...or blissful. His heart had turned to stone in his chest and he tore at his hair and beat himself now with fists that bruised his fair white skin. He ripped at his tattered clothing and shouted so God Himself could hear him, and God would plug his ears before hearing more than a second or two of this mortal man's suffering.

After many minutes of this, Turner calmed himself a bit and, standing in that open field, face wet, clothes in shreds, he choked out, "Get you gone from here. I'll see you no more and have nothing more to do with you."

His companion, still bleeding, face covered in dirt and grime, made a circle in place to look to Turner. A stare of disbelief was in his face and on his eyes, and his mouth was open in shock.

Now Turner was blubbering like a baby might, sniffing a lot and trying not to cry but failing quite miserably at it. "Just go. Never return. Do you hear? Are you deaf? Run, man, and may no man catch you with your speed!" Turner dropped to his knees and cried a bit more, screaming and cursing, but still with an eye for the other man.

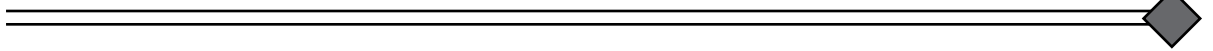
Before he knew it, his companion was sprinting barefoot across the stubble field, away from his own blood in a trampled-down clearing in an out-of-the-way part of North Carolina. Running, just running now, letting the wind cool his face and feeling its sting across his back, but loving the thrill of the run so much he didn't much care. He was free, and freedom felt good.

Stand Back, Leave Me, Goodbye

By Michelle Steffens

Stand Back
Let me fucking be
Stand Back
Cuz I can do better you will see
Stand Back
Tired of waiting on you
Stand Back
Your feelings for me weren't true
Leave Me
That was your choice
Leave Me
I don't wanna hear your voice
Leave Me
I'm not playing games
Leave Me
You're out of my picture frames
Goodbye
You're finally gone
Goodbye
Cuz I think it's finally done!

*"Don't leave the person for the one
you like, because the one you like
will leave you for the person they love!"*
Goodbye



Seth Klein

The Woods
By Lukus Ebert

She runs through the woods crying. The trees weep, weep with her. She cries and tries, tries to escape. Escape! Escape, from everyone, everything. She must escape, escape from it, before it is too late. It hurts! Hurts to think, run, cry, and remember. She tries to forget him, what he did to her. How he took her innocence. Scream; that's all she wants to do, but nothing comes out, she can't, can't scream. She stops, her lungs are hurting. They burn, as if they are on fire, like a burning torch charring her insides.

Her tears slowly fall out of her eyes streaming down her cheeks. Her tears caress her cheeks as they roll down her soft face. She waits until once again she cries herself to sleep. Right as she closes her eyes, she wakes up. She wakes up from her dream only to realize that her dream is reality. Her dream is a flashback. She remembers the times he said he cared for and would love her forever. He said this every time he touched her and told her to touch him.

"Now, don't you tell anyone about this cause, you don't want to know what will happen if they find out," he would say to her.

She knew it was wrong and she was wrong, but she hurt so much because he said he was the only one who loved her and would ever love her. She was hurt and confused about everything. No one would love or accept her for she was a he.

She remembered when she would dress-up like a girl and her mother would rip off her clothes, smear off her beautiful face, and hit and yell at her.

"You're a boy. What is wrong with you, you're not a girl!!" her mother would say.

* * * *

She got in her favorite dress, it was her sister's. It was the first time wearing the dress. She put on her mother's best make-up, then she put on the heels she had stolen from the thrift store,

when the manager wasn't looking. She climbed onto the two-story house. The rain had finally started to fall. It had waited all day.

Then, she pulled the trigger.

* * * *

Only after their daughter had taken her life, and they saw their baby dressed like an angel lying in the casket, did they realize that they had caused the death of their child. Also, they realized their son was a girl. They therefore let her be buried in a new dress, heels, and make-up. As they said their piece and gave her their love and blessing to take on her journey to the after-life, they saw a faint smile grow on their baby girl's face.

Banned Books

By Laurina Hannan

Not allowed. Teens are not allowed to do many things. They can't vote for political issues, can't give blood, sell real-estate, or even drive a car without restrictions. Public high schools' libraries ban books so students can't read them. The top four reasons why books are banned are that they're "sexually explicit," they contain "offensive language," they're "unsuited for age group," and they are "occult/Satanic" (Hull). If a student wants to read a banned book, that's stored behind the desk, they might be able to check it out with a parent release. It just depends on the library's policy. They should not ban books in a high school library for reasons including that the application of the text for each book is different and that students need to have the opportunity to read different ideas.

Opposing advocates say that they wouldn't want the students to read and adopt the views expressed in the book. Novels, including The Diary of Anne Frank and Animal Farm, by George Orwell, are banned for being unsuited for the age group (Doyle). The books were banned in elementary schools. Those who read the books would have felt uncomfortable with the conflicts of the stories, as they were written for a more mature audience. Other books like Dracula, by Brahm Stoker, and Macbeth, by William Shakespeare, are banned for containing material involving vampires and witchcraft (Doyle). Some find this offensive. However, if the reader doesn't feel at ease with the material presented, he or she doesn't have to continue reading the book.

The context of each book can be applied differently for each book and those who read it. Everyone's interpretation of "inappropriate" is varied. What one person believes is "lewd" or "provocative" can be another's normalcy based on what they're exposed to in music, TV shows, and video games. If a person perceives that what is in a fictitious story should be taken from a student's presence, they would also have to prevent the student from seeing their peers and friends. With teenage hormones in overdrive, it is not unlikely that there is teenage romance within the halls of the school. This arrangement would only work if they were taken out of public school and started homeschooling. That would be excessive and overdramatic. When a book incorporates a witch or a specific spell into the story, it's to add tension or release to the conflict. The author didn't write it so the reader would join a coven of witches. Even if a student wanted to adopt the views

in the book, he or she should have the chance to view the various opinions expressed in the books.

In high school, students need to have the opportunity to be exposed to a wide variety of ideas, so they can make their own educated opinions. As children, an individual's opinion is their parents' opinion. The parents raised the child to believe some things were "bad" and other things were "good." By reading many books, they can experience other opinions and decide which they prefer. The more you read, the more you learn. A student can learn what to do, or what not to do, given the situations the character faces in the book. People get their wisdom from past experiences. When the student experiences a new problem and doesn't have any real-life experiences to contribute to their choice of what to do next, the student can resort to the book character's decision. It gives the student opportunities to gain life experiences without experiencing it in real life.

Public high schools should not ban books from their libraries. The diverse interpretations of the books along with the chance to view different opinions and see which ones they prefer are reasons to why they shouldn't be banned. A student goes to the library to check out a book that was recommended by a friend. The student was unable to locate it and asked the librarian for help. The bookkeeper claimed it was a banned book. When a student wants to read a book, but is unable to even read the synopsis on the back of the cover, it is because someone believed it was not age appropriate.



Starla Simmons



The Great Escape

By Beth Lang

i.

*A mother unfolds a lap
to welcome her young
for a journey to a place
with a cat in a hat.
The voices change with
each turn of the page,
and the expectant eyes grow wider.*

ii.

*A knock on the door
tells the culprit she's caught.
The crime—
a light peeping
from the crack of a closet door after bedtime.
Just a few more flips
until the love story ends...
but it must wait until tomorrow's light.*

iii.

*"Open your books to page 533.
We're about to experience
the greatest love story ever told."
Sounds trite,
but everyone else seems to like it.
Maybe it won't be that bad.*

iv.

*The light glows from under the door yet again.
This time—
not a closet,
not a mother to find out.
Just a reveling in the stories
of someone else's life.*

The River

By Jim Page

. . . the river water turned a murky brown around the canoe. Although taking notice, the occupants of the small craft paid it little attention. After all, an underwater current, or stream, a rain up river in some distant tributary often turned sections of the river darker than others.

But this time the water was almost too dark, like it had been stirred up from the bottom by some giant hand. The father of the group yelled, "Brace yourselves!" as he caught a glimpse of movement in the water.

Almost in the same instant the water exploded underneath the canoe. Giving off a sound of splintering wood, and water showering back into the river, the noise echoed off the trees that lined the banks.

The lone dark rider was awakened from his daze by the echoed sounds. He rarely had the time or need to acknowledge the pitiful existence of others, especially when he was in one of his brooding moods, and this one was one of his worst.

For some reason the burden of his curse weighed heavily upon him lately. The curse, or gift as some called it, of immortality. Immortality, it may seem like the best gift one could have, but for Nokes, it was heart numbing. To live for centuries, and see everything you loved, or have loved, die.

One benefit of Nokes' centuries of life, though, was that he had almost mastered the art of shape changing passed down from his ancestors. That ability was truly something Nokes enjoyed. When the strife of humanity got to him, or humans themselves, he would shift into an animal form of his choosing, usually a great wolf, and live for sometimes days or weeks, until this, too, grew tiresome.

As the native family in the canoe splashed into the murky water, Nokes could see that they were instantly in danger. A large river crocodile, maybe the largest he had ever seen, was thrashing its head through the water.



The armored beast was as wide as a man's arms across its back. The head was almost the height of his war horse. Instantly, Nokes drew his broad sword and kicked his mount up river. As he reached the chaotic scene, he could tell that the water was too deep for either he, draped in chain mail, or his horse, laden with packs.

Nokes knew his only hope of saving the family from being eaten by the gargantuan reptile, was to shape shift. Without regard for his clothes he disrobed hurriedly, sending clothes flying in all directions.

Planting his feet firmly in the mud and bracing himself for the pain, he began to change. He let out a primeval yell. He began to grow in size, at first slowly, then more quickly. His tendons and bones popped as many doubled or tripled in size. Fur began to grow all over his body. He drew energy from the earth; how this happened, he did not know, but it was instinctive.

As his body mass increased almost exponentially, more and more energy was required. The only danger here was, that as he gained size, he was beyond his normal human weight. He actually became less and less human and more of the animal. His body weight leaped up, from his normal 220 lbs. to 300, 400, 500 and to a full 600 lbs. The alternating orange, black and white stripes shined brilliantly in the mid-day sun.

With a roar the tiger he had become sprang into the water. Would it have a chance against the forty-foot creature in its own environment?

Just as the scaly monster was about to close its jaws on one of the children from the exploded canoe, the tiger reached the side of the beast. It clawed its way on the armored back. The crocodile hardly noticed, until the tiger sank its claws into its more fleshy side and its teeth into the back of its neck.

Instantly, the creature rolled and headed for the bottom, leaving the family to gather its wits and swim to shore. The man-tiger began to rake furiously, tearing huge chunks of flesh and hand-sized scales away, leaving exposed, gooey flesh.

At the river, croc and still attached tiger reached the bottom. The croc began to roll, pounding the tiger against the bottom and anything that lay there.

It seemed minutes, but surely it was only seconds. Time was lost. The tiger's lungs burned, about to burst. As the croc continued to roll, the tiger dug deeper with both its teeth and claws, but there was no giving in to the croc.

The tiger's eyes were about to go shut from lack of oxygen. Every muscle burned, and it almost went limp. With the tiger's last bit of strength, and Nokes' last dying will, it squeezed harder, with all its might.

Suddenly, there was a loud resounding crack as the croc's spine snapped under the pressure. The tiger released the beast and used its dead body to push with anything it had left toward the surface. The tiger broke through the surface and gasped, filling its lungs with life-giving oxygen.

Once its lungs were filled, the heat of battle and smell of blood began to overtake any human thoughts still remaining.

The tiger swam toward shore. The horse retreated up the bank and into the trees. The pitiful humans were huddled together on shore, not quite knowing what to do or what was happening.

Once the tiger's legs reached ground, it bound through the water and to shore. It stalked toward the human family. Prowling and shaking as it moved along the shore, it let out a deafening roar. Something inside the tiger heard the roar. Nokes heard it, almost like in a dream. It took Nokes several seconds to realize where and what he was. The tiger's eyes blinked and its head shook, as Nokes' mind began to return to humanity. How close? A millisecond? He had come to attacking the humans and finishing the job of the croc. How close?

Once again Nokes was in a fight. A fight against himself, for himself. At times it was tempting to let it all go and become the creature. How easy that would be. What possibly could he ever miss? Nokes turned and walked down the shoreline and up into the trees.

Once inside the tree line, he lay down, and willed himself back into his human form. Finally, again a man. Without even a look back, Nokes slowly walked to where his clothes lay. He saw his mount grazing down stream. Nokes dressed, walked to his horse, climbed into the saddle, and



Learning

By Sarah A. Bischof

*In our time here on Earth,
We must learn to live.
We must learn to love.
We must learn to fight.
We must learn to be
What we have never been able to be.
There is no end
To the learning
And changing.
As we grow older,
We must learn to provide.
We must learn to conquer,
Or we will be conquered
By life and learning itself.
There is never time to stop learning,
For if we do,
We will be overcome
By fear of what we do not know.
This keeps us from finding who we truly are,
For if we are so consumed with learning,
We begin to learn how to be someone we aren't,
And we forget to remember who it is we truly are.*



Megan Salfrank



My Old Friend

By Catherine Wethington

Dedicated to my boy, Mavrick

*My wonderful friend and companion
His bright eyes and beautiful fur
He loves me with all his heart
As I do him.*

*My boy can't run anymore
He can barely walk
But the playful pup he used to be
Still survives in him.*

*When he leaves me, I know I'll cry
My boy will go on without me
And he'll leave this earth
And cross the bridge to the heavens.*

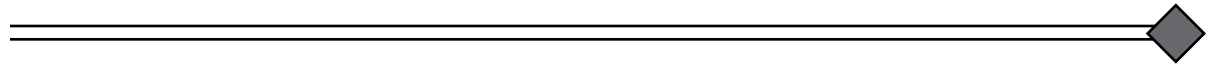
*He'll be happy there
And he will be his usual fun and playful self
When my time comes, and he sees me
Coming on the horizon, I know what he'll do.*

*He will race, across the vast plains of clouds and sun
As will I and we'll meet in the middle
For the reunion of kisses and hugs;
He'll lift his paw for me to shake.*

*Then I'll cry again, but with tears of joy
That the two of us are together again
Then we'll walk toward the pearl gate,
My boy and I.*



Kenneth Fowler



Riley Woodward

Just Weather

By John White

*He's the American cowboy
THE one in saddle out in the rain
Toughs it out no matter the pain
Fixes the fence and tends sick cattle
And does it all for little pay
Just to get up and do it the next day
Loads them doggies up into the Pete's
So everybody can have their meat
Treats his horse better than his wife
But that horse just might save his life
Not many left of the rare breed
They all live by an unwritten creed
Not all are rough and mean
Kind and caring wherever they go
They fight the cold, wind, and snow
Most people could not last
A cowboy is becoming a thing of the past*