

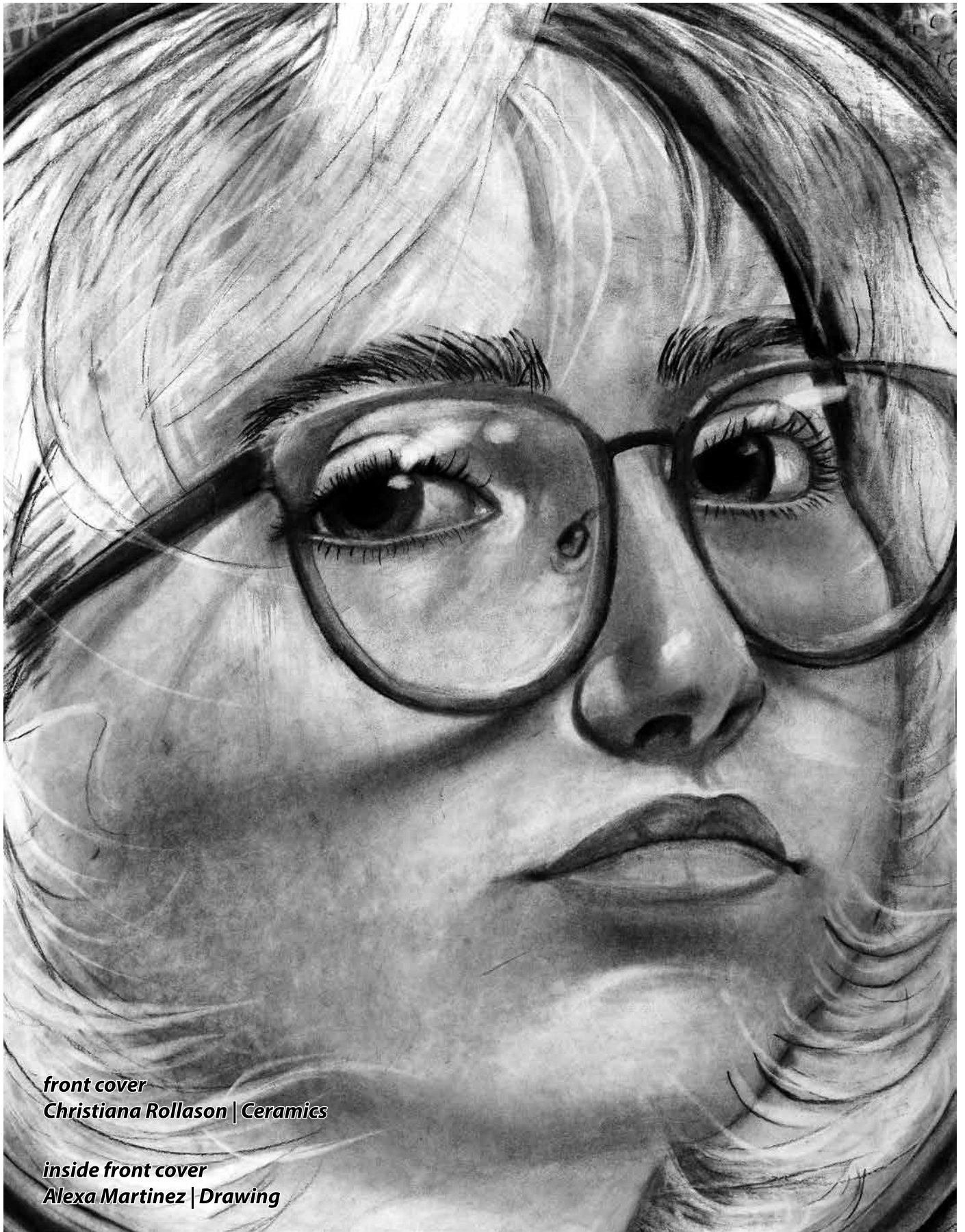
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2022/23
Volume 4

Literary & Art Magazine



Arkansas State University-Beebe
Division of Arts & Humanities



front cover
Christiana Rollason | Ceramics

inside front cover
Alexa Martinez | Drawing

LETTER FROM THE ASUB PUBLISHING STUDIO DESK

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 2022/2023 edition of *Uncharted*, the publication that Arkansas State University-Beebe utilizes to demonstrate student talents. This marks the fourth volume of the magazine and the third in print.

This year's publication was only possible because of the dedication of the ASUB Publishing Studio members, the magazine faculty advisors, and the administrators who consistently support our efforts.

The purpose of *Uncharted* is to showcase the literary and artistic talent running through Arkansas State University-Beebe. In April 2022, a poetry contest was held in honor of National Poetry Writing Month. This edition includes a special section featuring the prize-winning poems from that contest. Along with the poetry contest, the magazine features an essay by Peeraya Peters. This composition won first place in the "Think Globally, Act Locally" essay contest sponsored by the ASUB Global Awareness Committee.

A number of topics are covered in this edition — from bounding over seemingly insurmountable obstacles to using music to heal the soul. In addition, it boasts of our learning community's expressiveness and parades writing and the arts in numerous ways. This publication also features three pieces by guest writers who share their creative journeys and provide advice about writing and publishing for budding writers at our college and beyond.

Our ASUB Publishing Studio is responsible for reviewing all submissions for the magazine. We also host events on campus to highlight writing and art. Through our participation with *Uncharted*, our members gain hands-on experience with the publishing process. Along with this, students benefit from becoming published artists and authors through our publication. As you peruse the pages, we hope the value of our work will become evident.

We hope the fourth edition of *Uncharted* cultivates creativity and inspires you to embark on your own imaginative journeys. Thank you for your time and encouragement with our fourth publication.

Bailey DeVore and Sierra Miller
ASUB Publishing Studio



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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IN THE SWAMP

Tara Forste | Poetry

Cypress swamp, showing some knee,
Immemorial forest unbridled and free.
A face ornamented in old man's beard,
The camouflaged bull, his bellows heard clear.
Thriving cemetery trees and teeming still waters,
Witness to both explorers and marauders.
Home of the hunting heron and the ill-fated frog,
Where new life can be found upon each fallen log.
For the flourishing fern, the hospitable wax myrtle.
The ancient gar and the wily snapping turtle.
Where the immoral and awestruck both do wade,
And the observer finds it's himself that's on display.
Through the muddy beds where the swamp bucks do tromp,
In the eerie comfort of the cypress swamp.



Irina Fernandez | Photography



Austin Brackenridge | Photography

MY HEART'S MELODY: A RONDEAU

Sierra Hurley | Poetry

The music of my heart calls longingly
Beating with the angst of a timpani.
The lone violin strings ache with sorrow,
Flutes whisper the promises of tomorrow
Trumpet blasts burst light, energetically

Rage, the crescendo of a roaring sea
Crippling doubt a low bass, taunting me
The cello's contented sigh, a warm glow,
The music of my heart calls longingly

The maestro drips my passion. Unity.
Bodies sway- tears glisten unknowingly.
Then, musicians still, backs taut as their bow
Contented peace quiets down the tempo,
The last note echoes silent. Hauntingly.
The music of my heart calls longingly

PEANUT BUTTER

Savannah Garringer | Creative Nonfiction

I open the pantry door to locate the peanut butter, the one constant in my ever-changing life. This scene is as familiar as the comforting taste of the very peanut butter for which I was searching. When my parents divorced, my life spun into a whirlwind of change with a revolving door of new houses. Seven houses and six schools in five years made life seem unstable, but no matter what, there was always peanut butter. The day this became a tradition, I asked my mom if we were poor. I'd always been an intuitive kid, picking up what the grown-ups discussed despite their best efforts to keep me blissfully unaware of the situation. Rather than

// Rather than crying or saying that yes, we were poor, my mother smiled at me and told me, "As long as we have peanut butter, we are rich." //

crying or saying that yes, we were poor, my mother smiled at me and told me, "As long as we have peanut butter, we are rich." That moment started my love for peanut butter. It became a comfort food and centerpiece for many pivotal moments in my life. Peanut butter was my constant.

During the fifth move, after my mom married my amazingly supportive stepdad, I turned into a sort of "latchkey kid." Both adults would be at work when my stepsisters and I came home. Unsurprisingly, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches made for excellent safe meals, making them a staple snack after schools most days. One day as I was fixing a sandwich and spread the peanut butter, I made a vow. While I don't think anything ill of my mother because I know she has always done everything she could for me, I knew that I wanted something more for my future children. I became more determined

to devote myself to my schoolwork, bringing my grades up and keeping them high. Though I appreciated my mom's hard work and guidance, I didn't ever want my children to have to wonder whether or not there was going to be a parent home when they arrived. I didn't want them to sneak peaks in the pantry to make sure the jar of peanut butter was still there. After a few years, I had to move to my next school, Beebe.

Upon beginning to attend Beebe, I got involved in more activities that were less academic and more fun, namely theater. With the drama troupe, I became more comfortable in my own skin and more outgoing and eventually rose to become Vice President of the drama troupe. It was nice

to find something that was genuinely fun for me rather than just focusing on the future, even though the future is important. Beebe marked a new beginning, a new normal, and a restored sense of stability, and of course, I still held my love for peanut butter.

One day, after a five-hour after school rehearsal, I was in the kitchen searching for a jar of peanut butter for a sandwich. At that moment, I realized that I was the same peanut butter loving person, just in a new situation. My ability to adapt and adjust had afforded me the opportunity to be in the current situation making a PB&J to relax after a strenuous rehearsal with a group of people who will, just like peanut butter, be a constant in my life through its uncertainties.



Tamara Towns | Photography

SARAJEVO, LJUBAVI MOJA (SARAJEVO, MY LOVE)

Natascia Mansur | Creative Nonfiction

Oprah says that everyone has a story. Some stories are romance novels. Some are Stephen King books. Some are beautiful poems. Some others are plain texts. Mine does not fit in any of those categories. As a matter of fact, it more resembles a Google street view map. Like the little yellow man dragged and dropped on the wrong road who still ends up making it to the destination, or at least “a” destination, I have moved from place to place following the arrows.

One of the arrows brought me to the United States. I moved here as an adult from Italy, but I grew up between two cultures. Like those heart-shaped charms that are split in half and each half belongs to a different necklace, so my life was split between Florence, the cradle of the Renaissance, and Sarajevo, the cradle of the Balkans. Florence’s beauty is almost unbearable. However, it is Sarajevo that is in my blood. Growing up, I spent all my summers and all my

winter breaks in Sarajevo visiting my mom’s family. It was the only extended family I really had. On my dad’s side there was only an uncle with whom we had barely any contact. On my mom’s side, I had my grandma, uncles, aunts, and cousins. It was a big family full of love, laughter, and fights. In Sarajevo I played a million hours with the kids that lived up and down the street where my grandma lived. I gazed a million times at the big tree in front of one of her windows. I loved staying at that window, watching life happening outside.

Sarajevo is magical. It is the point where multiple cultures converge. It is where the Roman, Austrian and Ottoman empires meet. Unlike the American cities I have seen, the modern skyscrapers are on the outskirts of the town. As the downtown approaches, the surroundings morph into Austrian austere buildings and then into one-floor homes and stores of the downtown area. The size of the buildings is more manageable, more visually pleasant,

warmer. Mosques, churches, and synagogues are sprinkled throughout the city, as are those who congregate within them to worship their god.

Sarajevo taught me inclusion, tolerance, and acceptance of those who are “different.” And yet, one day, all that stopped. Nobody believed it could happen in Sarajevo, but it did. (Never underestimate human cruelty.) The city I so love was ravaged by war. It was under the longest siege in modern times. My soul was under siege then too. For the first time since I lost her, I was glad my mom was not around to witness what was happening to her country and her family. The cultures that had coexisted peacefully and harmoniously up until then, became enemies, each asserting their ethnic superiority. I managed to go to Sarajevo during a truce. Bulletproof jacket on, I flew on a C-130 military airplane into the city on what they called “Maybe Airlines.” I witnessed firsthand the devastation. I saw bullet holes on every

side of most buildings and the marks of the mortar shells on the streets now known and memorialized as the “Sarajevo Roses.” I heard snipers shooting in the middle of the night, and I kept my calm when I saw my aunt’s concerned look, worried that I would panic.

The war ended in 1996, the same year I moved to the States. Like the yellow man in the Google map, I was once more put in a different place. Most places I landed on have not even been physical ones. They were learning experiences. The war in Sarajevo was the place where the notion not to take anything for granted was cemented. It taught me that things change in a split second and that you cannot only survive, but also become stronger. And, no matter where I land on the map, there is always an arrow that moves me forward, even in the harshest of situations.

NIGHT BY THE RIVER

Wei-Cheng Grant | Photography



THE FORGOTTEN HUMAN COST

G.P. | Nonfiction

The strangest thing about trauma is the deep mark it leaves; in the deepest sense, it seems to burn a scar straight into the victim's soul. A man can move past it — his body may leave that moment, he may grow older through the years, he may obtain new trophies and accomplishments that cover over the old wounds, but it never leaves him. Therapy can help one accept what cannot be changed, but it is that: unalterable. These memories are a new fact of one's life.

// I share my story to highlight that in a nation which prides itself on being the leader of the free world, nearly triple the population of all of Arkansas comes of age amidst missing meals and worn-out shoes. //

For me, that wound came early. At the age of four, my parents divorced. This is typical — everybody's heard a million times that half of marriages end in divorce. But my mother was mentally ill and a drug addict. On more than one occasion, she would sleep for three days straight — from the time I was dropped off at her house on Friday, to the time I was picked up on Sunday — and I would be left to fend for myself.

Trauma is strange. It's episodic. It's vivid. A man can forget a lot, but some strange force compels him to remember seconds and minutes in such clear detail that it feels as if it's happening all over again upon recollection. I remember opening that dirty refrigerator and seeing her box of white Zifandel wine; I remember crying when the neighborhood kids told me that their parents had told them to "avoid that dirty kid in the trailer." I remember looking into their homes as they went inside, that briefest of glimpses into a home life that I wanted more than anything else and feeling so empty at the thought that this was

not — could not — be me. That my life could not be one of family dinners and familial love.

Most saliently, though, I remember the feeling of hunger.

My mother was not one for forethought, and I was too young to fend for myself. No neighbors cared to help me, and so, when my mother hadn't bought food, I simply went without. This happened often enough that I began to hide food in my room, so I had already begun to adapt. One weekend, though, I found myself

unprepared: mom was asleep again, and all I had hidden was three-fourths of a bag of stale Rold Gold pretzels. It and tap water (from the Jurassic Park glass that was mine and mine alone) was all I had to eat for those 72 hours. I was stuck. (We were out of dog food as well, so I shared what I could with Bunnie, the mangy white stray that was my dog. My mother later gave her away.)

I share my story to highlight that in a nation which prides itself on being the leader of the free world, nearly triple the population of all of Arkansas comes of age amidst missing meals and worn-out shoes. They skip their morning shower because their parents could not afford the water bill, and they wear what ratty clothing they've received in hand-me-downs over the years as they salute the flag alongside their classmates. They say the words "and justice for all," yet they are the victims of this widespread atrocity that America would collectively rather ignore.

It's in every town. This horrific crime against God's

children happens while those that proudly say to “fear God” watch on. It’s amazing that they did not learn the morals of a book they claim to love with such fervor.

Most importantly, this is not a problem without a solution. The solution is easy — spend money; we are the richest country in the history of the world.

Furthermore, for a moment, we had implemented this exact fix: the child tax credit passed under the latest round of COVID bills, \$3,600 a child. Child poverty was projected to decrease by 51.1% under the plan (Parolin et al., 2021). Overnight. In one year. The misery I knew in my youth was gone for some eight million children with a stroke of a pen. It astounded me then and now that the solution was so simple.

Unfortunately, that solution is gone. The Child Tax Credit was set to be temporary, and its permanent replacement was included in the Build Back Better plan that died in its crib. Go figure as to why Washington does what it does.

The thing is: we don’t need Washington. The recent tax cut passed in our state is expected to reduce revenue by nearly five-hundred million dollars a year by 2026 (Herzog & Wickline, 2021). In human terms — because numbers are vague and statistics are sanitized — that’s over 138,000 child tax credits, at \$3,600 each, that we could fund ourselves. According to the U.S. Census (2021), we only have approximately 106,000 children living in poverty in the state.

The argument is this: Arkansas, until a few short



CREEPING

Ethan Nguyen | Photography

months ago, had enough money to reduce child poverty inside its borders in half, with some cash left to spare. Could the clock be turned back? Why could Arkansas not have spent that money instead to fix this very real issue?

First comes the question: Is it the place of the state to maintain such a welfare program? If it’s agreed on what the solution is to be, then it’s necessary to figure out where in the chain of government we put it. Isn’t this more of a problem for the federal government?

The answer to that is “yes, but they’re not doing it.” Furthermore, it’s important to remember that national change in America often begins at a local level. The point is that change starts wherever it can, and it can happen here in Arkansas.

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A NOTE ON MOLLY GRACE

Skylar Turney | Poetry

The party mood was ecstatic.
You should have seen her.
Every chance I had... I was giving her a glance.
Her eyes.
They lit the entire room.
There was no other girl like Molly Grace.
And it was at the faculty party that I really had my chance to say "hello."
It was finally time for Tom Handler to get a handle on his life.
Don't laugh at me like that.
Yes, my name is Tom Handler.
A capital T all the way down to my handle on reality.
But how could I approach this doll?
This vixen... who had made me feel she personally built the sun in a tool shed for me out behind her old house.
And so when my chance finally arose, I would thank a box of glazed donuts for the rest of my life...
"Hello, Molly Grace."
Her smile began to peak through.
"Oh, Just call me Molly, Tom. You know I'm just plain old Molly."
But she wasn't just plain old Molly to me.
She was a book I could read over and over again.
Never truly finding the ending.
Never wanting to find that ending.
Wanting to be a part of her story if it meant crossing through hell fire.
I pushed a glazed donut toward her, blushing intensely (praying she wouldn't notice my flushed cheeks).
"Molly, I uh, I chose this one just for you. It has the most glaze and by far is the prettiest donut I've ever seen."
Man was I not thinking about donuts.
But being washed away in her eyes.
Molly.
Grace.
Poetry on the lips of a lover.
Molly straightened her back up as she adjusted in her chair.
Oh no.
She doesn't like me.
She doesn't like donuts.
What do I do?
The thoughts rushed into my mind and wouldn't stop. Each one going off at 110 miles per hour. Why 110? Well hell I don't know!
And then she finally spoke.
"Tom, I want you to have it."
Simple.

To the point.
 But those eyes said something else.
 I leaned in closer.
 "Are you sure, Molly Grace? I, uh, mean uh Molly uh.. ma'am."
 Damn it, Tom! Get it together! The thoughts began to rush again.
 They were quickly dismissed by that beautiful voice.
 "Tom, you deserve nice things too. And while I appreciate you choosing this donut for me, Well I can't quite explain it... But you see I want you to have it. I want you to enjoy a perfect donut."
 She giggled.
 I died.
 "See Tom, I may sound silly. But if I can give someone a chance to have something as simple as the perfect donut. Then haven't I made them feel special? Haven't I shown them the adoration I feel towards them?"
 She began to blush slightly.
 And that's when I understood.
 Molly Grace liked me back.
 I swallowed hard.
 "How about we share it" I barely choked out.
 She smiled a smile as warm as the fires of hell.
 My heart raced and raced and raced and —
 "Sure thing, Tom. And maybe after this party we could have a real meal? I make a mean meatloaf. It is my mama's recipe, but I promise it's my own. I promise and..."
 She continued to talk of her mother's meatloaf recipe and how she did special things.
 But I couldn't quite focus on what all she had to say.
 I had died and went to heaven.
 Tom Handler finally got his grip on things.
 I listened to Molly Grace the rest of the evening.
 And there are two things I can say I'm grateful for.
 Donuts and meatloaf.

- ▲ **FLOWERS** Shyanne Chism | Photography
- ▶ **LATE** Katie Beavers | Photography
- ▼ **Tamara Towns** | Photography



HOW COLOR CAME BACK INTO MY LIFE

Grace Adams | Creative Nonfiction

I was diagnosed with depression and anxiety at the age of either fifteen or sixteen. I really don't know how long I had those illnesses before I got a diagnosis. It felt like they were always there with me. My family life wasn't the best at that point, and school wasn't helping either. It seemed like I just couldn't get better.

Sure, I had ups and downs. Everyone does. There were times where I saw the world turn bleak, or even gray. I had people who listened to me to ease the pain, but it just wasn't enough. It felt like nothing would be enough to help me. Everyone else saw color, but I didn't have the strength to pull through to see it.

However, in the midst of this raging storm, I found them — Green Day. I had seldom listened to them before I was diagnosed, and I never really paid attention to what their songs had to say since I already had music — The Beatles, 5 Seconds of Summer, and the Dave Matthews Band (fun fact, I got my middle name from their song "Grace Is Gone").

One day, I was just in such a rut, and I decided to listen to music to see if it would help me. I only saw gray. The posters on my wall were so dull and lifeless, but when I played some of Green Day's songs, I slowly had color come back. Splotches of red, jolts of blue, and everything in between came flooding back into my vision. The once boring pictures on my walls seemed



DROWNED

Ethan Nguyen | Photography

to come alive. With every beat, my vision had become filled with beauty from the colors that I could now see. It was at that point that I finally found someone who understood how I felt.

I began to see the world for how it was: colorful, rejuvenating. Most importantly, it made me feel like I wasn't alone. Their songs had such meaningful lyrics that I could use as a kind of therapy or just something to use as background noise so that I couldn't hear the silent darkness going on around me. Nothing seemed so dull and lifeless; my life was beautiful again, and I can only thank Green Day for that.

I couldn't believe that I had something to ease the numbness. They metaphorically took me in as soon as I listened to their music. I felt like I

was safe, comforted, and out of harm's way. One song that really helped me through a lot of the negativity was "Give Me Novocain/She's A Rebel." This song has such a beautiful melody, along with soothing acoustic guitar. The second, more upbeat, section of the song talks about this girl who is given the name of "Whatsername." They describe her as "singing the revolution" and that "she brings this liberation that I just can't define." Those are powerful words. When it's late at night, and I listen to this song, I imagine myself as Whatsername: a strong individual who survives everything terrible and makes it through life. Someday I hope to meet the members of Green Day to tell them how they brought color back into my life and made me feel like I'm home when I listen to their music.



COLORS

Mauritana Duff-Griffith | Poetry

Today I feel like the color beige
 I am not super bright
 And I am not dark either
 Today I am nothing
 I am the color painted on a living room wall
 I am the color that is neutral
 Today I am not happy like yellow
 Nor am I sad like grey
 I am not angry like red
 Or calm like green
 I am not vibrant like purple
 Or beautiful like blue
 I am just simple and plain
 No distinct mood or exciting complex
 Today I am just nothing
 And oddly, it's comforting

IN GREENERY

◀ Emma Wilborn | Painting

DIVERGENT

Kyle Clevenger | Poetry

Light beaming through the window
dust swimming through the rays.
An image painted colorless
trapped in a picture frame.

I've tried to open doors
prepared for finding something new.
I enter just to find myself
in the same old empty room.

My only friends speak through the winds
their leaves dance through the night.
The déjà vu sets in
my comfort by the moonlight.

I'm lost within a place
distinct yet unfamiliar
The only sense of home I know
is within the reminiscence
So very close to home
but so far from what I know.
I think it's safe to say
that it's an enigmatic distance.



▲ Camryn Smith | Painting

▼ Alexa Martinez | Drawing



A SHADOW'S TOUCH

Deann Roberts | Poetry

He is me and I am his shadow in the morning light.
A shadow follows, connecting here and touching there, never leaving, ever watching.
I follow him, silent as the night, watching although I'm seldom seen.
I have lived the tones, the rhythms, and the flow of his music,
But I've never known the sweetness of his sweat or the ache of the hours.
I am a figure with a past that few have seen, a present no one knows, and a future yet
to be determined.

He is more than the image of long dead dreams cast aside and buried long ago.
He fulfills dreams, heals unseen wounds, and mends the hearts of the inauspicious.
He breathes the air shared by few, coveted by many.
His power is within him, a conjurer of other souls and prophet of a writer's vision.
He must smile, for without a face, mine cannot be seen.
He is me and I am his shadow in the morning light.

TIMELESS

Ethan Nguyen | Photography



NOT SOCIETY'S MONSTER

Sierra Miller | Poetry

Knowing right from wrong,
They choose to do wrong.
Using violence, malicious language, and manipulation
To appeal to their own devices.
Society blames the monsters under the bed,
The creepy crawlies and the depiction
of scary fuzzy beings.

While the man standing with you in the store
Could be the real monster.
Fear will well up inside,
Tears could fill your eyes.
The monster that surrounds you
Could claim to love you then betray.
The wounds cut deep
From their selfish intentions and personal gain,
But you are stronger than you think.
Their expectations are an enemy,
Not the failure you obtain.



HONEY EYE

Maira Pacheco | Photography

YOU ARE THE UNIVERSE

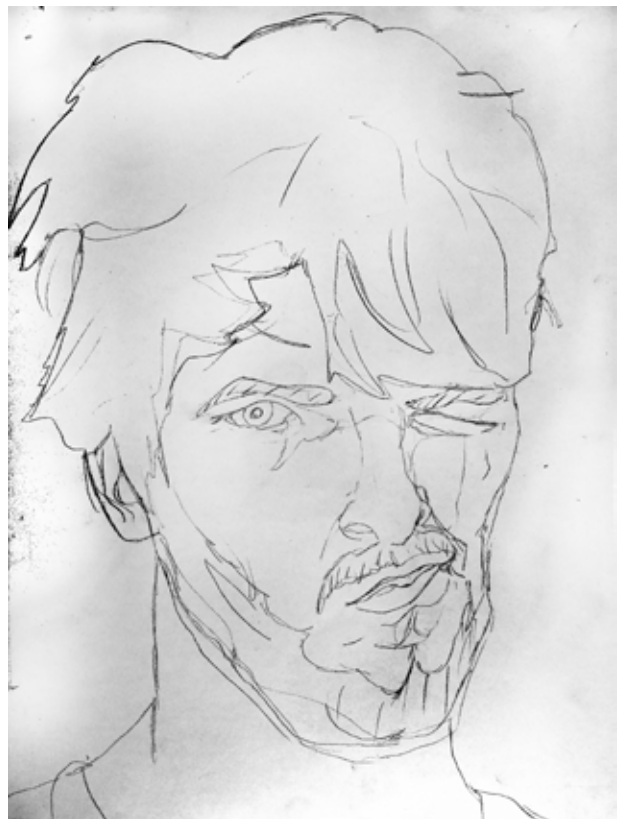
Caiden Clement | Poetry

You are the night sky
twinkling, tranquil, thriving
Your eyes as entrancing as stars

You are the planets
dauntless, dignified, diverse
And without you, what would we have to look to?

You are the sun
brilliant, beckoning, beloved
Your presence as radiant as sunlight

You are the world
vivid, venerable, valuable
And without you, where would we be?



Jordan Freeman | Drawing



HOCKENBERRY CEMETERY, TICHNOR
Raven Perschbacher | Scanography

HOLD ON TO HOPE

Cathryn Lyle | Poetry

Hold on to hope,
bad things will get better.
Hold on to hope that this too shall pass.
Hold on to hope that you will overcome this mountain.
Hold on to hope that your life is not over, it's just beginning.
Hold on to hope because tomorrow is always a better day than yesterday.
Hold on to hope because even if you feel
like you're drowning you're still
walking in that's what counts.
You are alive and
you have a purpose.
You matter.
You are important.
You are loved.
Don't give up.
Hold on to hope.

ASU-BEEBE POETRY CONTEST

In April 2022, a poetry contest was held in honor of National Poetry Writing Month. This contest was sponsored by the ASUB Publishing Studio and the Creative Writing Class.

TARA FORSTE (1ST PLACE)

INEVITABILITY

The old woman sits atop the hill, the days just pass her by,
No visitors come knocking, she hangs her head to cry.
She goes to town for groceries and hopes for conversation,
Yet she's met with blank stares and frowns, she's got a social deprivation.
Sometimes she feels her old age is a curse and far from a blessing,
As she remains over the years a witness to each loved one's passing.
Her faded eyes examine hands as rough as the depression,
A lonely exit she'll soon make with no one in procession.



SHARON HAWKINS (2ND PLACE)

OLD HOME PLACE

...Dusty road not as chalky as I remember
When I was home last November.
Moss so sublime
Covers like a rug the old roofline.
Fallen leaves piled knee high
I reminisce of siblings jumping in the pile!
No welcome on the small front porch
Except the torn screen-door, echoes we were mainly poor.
Musty smell of stale firewood in the den
Reminds me of warmth I still feel within.
A wooden angel where Daddy lay
Lends peace to the patriarch's way.
I smile as I open the hallway door

Poetry Contest

Memories of "hurry up or I'll go on the floor!"
Fond relics of pots and pans rattling before dawn
Proves Momma's love was daily shown.
Smells of cedar, icicles on living room floor
What I'd do to have just one more!
Gifts piled high, orange slices in the candy dish
Songs of Lambs - remind me we were rich!
As tears stream down my cheeks, I drive quietly away
Father, protect the old homeplace - I'll return next May.



CHRISTY PARSONS (3RD PLACE)

SMILE

As the sun glistens on the pond, I miss seeing you sitting next to me on the dock.
The water ripples across the surface as a gentle breeze blows, and I miss your touch.
A dragonfly lands softly upon my thumb, and it tickles.
Suddenly, I remember your funny laugh.
Many times, boisterous laughter would erupt between us during a shared joke.
Oh, how I miss your sense of humor.
Honeysuckle permeates the warm summer air around me.
I close my eyes and I realize how much I miss your scent.
I miss everything about you and will forever cherish your smile.





5



6



7



- 1. Kamryn Runyon
- 2. Noah Willis
- 3. Elijah Willis
- 4. Kamryn Runyon
- 5. Kamryn Runyon
- 6. Shyanne Chism
- 7. Seath Mahoney

A TALK WITH THE TEMPEST

Deann Roberts | Creative Nonfiction

Normally when we went to Daytona Beach, we went for the enjoyment of it. The beach was twenty-three miles long with stretches of packed white sand that motor vehicles drove on. My boys, ages two, five, and six years old began driving lessons there, assisted by sitting on my husband's lap, of course. Construction and demolition was their thing. They would create grand, gritty fortresses only to watch them wash away or collapse them in a frontal assault. My husband loved to stand in the surf and throw a line, reel it in, and throw it again, all in the hope that a fish would find the bait interesting enough to swallow it. As for myself, I loved soaking up the rays. Laying under the heat of the sun relaxes the whole body to the point of sleep.

Daytona Beach is always packed with people, hundreds of people — people running into the water, people putting on suntan lotion or sunscreen, and people having picnics on

carefully placed blankets. This evening there were no people. There would be no fishing or playing today. It was deserted, even spooky.

Seeing this made me anxious, to say the least. I knew we shouldn't be there. There were public service announcements that played over and over all day long on TV and radio, and they now ran on a loop inside my head. "Stay indoors." "The beaches are closed." "Don't risk your safety." Mother Nature had birthed an angry child that was throwing a fierce temper tantrum without concern for those in its path. Nine days ago, this raging blow, David, had exhibited 175 mile per hour winds and had destroyed property, killing 1,500 souls in his path. However, he wasn't expected to come up the Florida coast until the next day, so we thought we would just drive down the beach and see how big the waves were.

The sun dipped low in the sky. At sunset it couldn't be seen because it hid behind the



GYPSY
Ethan Nguyen | Photography



ROLE MODEL
Sydney Johnson | Photography

ghostly grey ceiling of stratus clouds. No beautiful sunset tonight.

I wanted to walk. I wanted to feel the wind and the spray. The van stopped. I jumped out and turned toward the East. There it was! The Atlantic Ocean lay immense before me. My heart leapt! It was breathtaking. There was angry deep blue, almost black billows cresting at twelve feet high, folding and falling into the rich turquoise surf. They pounded into the shore with a sound like thunder, creating white troughs of salty sea water at their edge.

The combination of the sound with the never-ending gale vibrated through my soul. The wind lifted the tentacles of my hair and very impolitely tied them into a thousand knots. Oh, how I dreaded the comb out! I ambled along the alabaster sand letting my body absorb the sensations. It was intoxicating. I could taste salt on my lips, the sea mist on my skin, and the

warm sand under my feet. I felt I was creating a relationship with the mother of Earth...or God. My soul spoke words of praise and received a tender touch, an assurance that I was loved. The urging to use the sense given me and go home surfaced. Being in the center of a dilating force such as this was convincing me of my vulnerability, more so than hearing about the dangers of a hurricane on TV or radio. What a small speck I am in a vast universe.

I turned back, returning to my husband. It was louder, darker, more intimidating. We would meet again, Lady Tempest and I, but for now it was time to go home to my kids. I had a new understanding. I was no longer that youngster who thought I was invincible. The love was mutual. I am a part of Lady Tempest, and she a part of me.

I had a conversation with the Tempest, and it changed me.



Tamara Towns | Photography

I WAS ONLY NINETEEN YEARS OLD THEN

Skylar Turney | Creative Nonfiction

My fingers pounded the glass...hard. This next one was going to be it. The post where everyone knew my story. This was going to be the post where everyone stopped, not only liked, but re-blogged the entire thing. I could feel it. That moment when you are exasperated to no end. The line between heaven, earth, and land were gone. The post had made its debut.

I eagerly checked my phone...often. Nothing. There was absolutely nothing. Why this one? I thought this had to be the one. I had even posted a picture of my new nose piercing alongside it. Nothing happened. And then the world found its own home. I had finally come around. My luck was finally aligned with the stars.

I stared at the glassy screen for minutes. Glaring at this person's username. Trying to gauge some kind of idea of their existence. Trying to understand who they were with minimal effort. The username was unique, dark, and different. It was the kind of username that slipped through the muddy palms of children and animals. It was like hearing the name "Susan," if only Susan was a jazzy word. It felt normal, and different, and scary in the best ways. So, I tapped that username. I waited for that next loading screen. And there it was.

There was a moment of silence for me personally. This new person had deemed me worthy of "re-blogging" and that was not something to be taken lightly. (Did I mention I was just 19 years old then?) My 19-year-old brain went into overdrive. I had been noticed by someone and someone of the male audience too. My next actions had to be quick and cautious. I was now the hunter. I was taking things into my own hands for once. So, I did what any teenage girl would have

done...I bravely hit "send a message." I typed so fast the screen clicked three times. "Hey," was all I said. And it was with that I awaited my destiny.

I don't remember how he worded it. That's not the point. I'll never forget the general idea of what he asked. Basically, in a simple message, he said, "Hey, how are you?" Something inside of me chipped away. I could feel each breath popping me beneath my ribcage. Each breath was short and choppy. And for whatever reason, I liked it, this newfound excitement of finally talking to someone. I couldn't possibly blow my cover. So, I sent back "Well, I'm just a small-town girl living in a lonely world... And if you read that correctly, you should be wearing a decently sized grin." My musical ancestors danced in the air around me. A Journey song quote was bravely laid on the table. I watched as the chat bubble bounced, faded, reappeared, etc. And finally, he said it. "And I'm just a city boy born and raised in South Detroit."



ELEGY OF THE BULLY

Tim Honea Jr. | Poetry

Woe, you bullish riders of all things shallow
 Whom follow after your gifts of misery
 And to the vermin that tear and swallow
 On the scraps of perceived jealousy
 For my vultures, in viscera, they danced
 Devouring the yet unconsumed

I bid pestilence for your petulance
 Given me amidst your brood
 I am in the glory of my compassion
 My love overfills my grave
 It seems the answer to what comes next
 Depends on what you gave

I've sorrow for your soul
 And sadness for thine skin
 Hateful bells from demons toll
 Waiting and Waiting for you within
 All the hate and rumor, spread and devised
 Vitriol, suffering and evil created internally
 Will be revived upon your demise
 This, being what is inside of yourself, is your own eternity.

LIVING AND LOVING

Willard Edward Crain | Poetry

Live to learn. Learn to live.
 Life without love is like love without life.
 Life is not worth living without love.
 Love must be nourished for it to live.
 Life is not worth living without the love of your life.
 Life begins when love is alive.
 Love begets life. Life begets love.
 Life's journey is better when the love of your life
 travels with you.

◀ **GIRL IN YELLOW**
Alaina Brewster | Painting



▲ **MAN'S BEST FRIEND ON FARM**
Kevin McPherson | Photography

▼ **MIMICKING A PHOTOGRAPHER SHOOT**
Mitzi Idrogo | Photography





TREADS

Ethan Nguyen | Photography

A YEAR OF DROUGHT

Sierra Hurley | Creative Nonfiction

Halfway across the country in the middle of May, I sit in a huge beige chair, shoulders stiff and head bowed, trying but failing to block out the sounds emanating from the closed door in front of me. The receptionist at the mahogany desk next to me darts her eyes in my direction, as if afraid of what I might do. I can barely meet her gaze, staring at grey, lifeless eyes reflecting the environment around her. My gaze falls to the floor quickly, squeezing my eyes shut to try and remove myself from this too big chair in this too small room. I clasp my hands together tightly, praying for us to be able to leave, praying for quiet, praying for it all to be over.

I am, in fact, in a funeral home. The smells of formaldehyde and stale cleaning supplies assault my senses. Prior to this, I would have been unable to describe death in a smell. Yet, that is what I smelled in this too cramped welcome center. Crosses hung on the wall and fake arrangements set on tables, their flowers

covered in dust and drooping, representing the blank looks and slumped shoulders on visitors.

My mom's brother has just passed away, and as his only willing relative, my mom must bear the burden and grief alone. I can hear her through that dark wooden door, wailing for the loss, the obligation, and the decision laid before her. That keening, a primal, breath-stopping sound, bored into my head and my heart, cracking and breaking it piece by piece, ensuring that it will never be forgotten or left behind. Indeed, that wail would burn its way into my memory forever. My mother cannot bear to make the call on his cremation, which was necessary to get him buried with the rest of his family in Arkansas. Although what remains in this world is flesh and bone, his soul burns bright in her chest and chokes off all intelligible thought. Her brother, that constant source of protection and mischief from her childhood, would be reduced to nothing but ash. A decision she really had no choice in, but that will weigh heavy on her shoulders the rest of her life.

After what felt like an eternity but must only have been fifty minutes, that massive wooden door slowly creaks open, bright light seeping out and shadowing the person standing in the doorway. My mother, her eyes normally the brightest shade of sea green, look faded, red rims circle them, and mascara has left a trail reflective of the marks imprinted on her heart. Although she is looking at me, I know she is still in that room, signing her name at the bottom of that white paper. I stand up and get closer, stare at the steady streams that continue to seep out despite her silence, and a boulder lodges itself in my throat. Words fail me, and all I can do is stand there, arms hanging down at my sides, head still pounding with the beat of her cries.

We walk out of that tiny welcome center, sun peeking through clouds as cars race by, blissfully unaware of the grief that has swallowed us whole. We get into the car and just sit there, the silence an all-consuming well. The sounds of her weeping echo repeatedly in my ears, a deafening

roar of misery and torture unlike any cry I have ever heard or will ever hear. True sadness washes over our heads and hangs like the clouds that slowly roll in. And yet, we sit, unmoving and unspeaking, not ready to talk but drowning in our own thoughts.

The sounds of rain wake me from my stupor, and I turn to look outside. It is raining, wet drops falling on the window and rolling slowly down it, mirroring the trails that have carved a path on my mom's face. The irony of rain in California during a year of drought can only stand to be explained by the clouds weeping alongside my mother, expressing their pain at her loss. Finally, the car starts, and we begin to make our way back to the hotel, my mother leaving behind a piece of herself as the loop plays on in my head. I startle and look to see an ambulance zoom past. This sound haunts me, and my mother's face looks like mine. I guess in this we both have gained our demons. And now, we must learn to overcome them together.



WATER ON LEAF
Shyanne Chism | Photography

TOMORROW NEVER KNOWS

Miranda Vealey | Creative Nonfiction

"I say in speeches that a plausible mission of artists is to make people appreciate being alive at least a little bit. I am then asked if I know of any artists who pulled that off. I reply, 'The Beatles did!'"
- Kurt Vonnegut

There was a path running from the coal pile to the back door of my father's two room shack. Upon closer inspection, though, it was really a deep groove cut into the ground made by the countless trips to and from hauling coal to warm up the bitter West Virginian winter night. West Virginians are good at cutting into the earth. The rich men pay the poor men to dig and move pieces of our planet aside, for coal, for power.

The mining community my father spent his adolescence in was typical for that region during the 1950s. It was a grid of white-washed shacks lined up and down wide dirt paths. Almost every household was headed by a veteran of World War II, all too eager to return from a foreign war and dive headlamp first into grueling, repetitive labor. I say this unsarcastically because, according to my father, the men in his "town" seemed to relish this manly duty in which death by enemy fire was not an ingredient.

My father, who likes to be called J.V., is the second oldest of six boys. He recalls that at ten years old he first used a flushing toilet. There were cracks in the floor of his home that he could see straight through to dirt. His parents were able to provide food to their brood by collecting government beans, rice, and cheese. J.V. still does not know why he was chosen to live with his paternal grandparents at age twelve. Whatever the cause, he was the only child of the six sent to live away from his parents and siblings. It is a mysterious

part of his life that leads to even more admiration on my part.

In contrast to his turbulent adolescence, my father was able to use the opportunities the military provided him and build a comfortable life. I was nestled and raised in a comfortable environment. When J.V. told stories about his life in West Virginia, I memorized them, but I did not understand them until I was an adult myself. He tended to relate more information about the objects in his life at that time, rather than the people.

From West Virginia, my father dug three tangibles from the Earth of his world and lit up mine: my mother, a college diploma, and the Beatles discography. As J.V. can recall the first indoor drinking fountain he used, I can recall the first time I heard and understood the Beatles. My love for the Beatles is organic, just as my love for my parents. It was not forced on me. When I decided to use a certain 90s pop song for a talent show dance routine, the only comment from my father was "how repetitive" all the sounds were. I suppose that was my first interaction with a music snob.

In my comfortable childhood, J.V. would drive me to school every morning. The inside of his little maroon Tacoma was a cocoon, a womb if you will. The music of the sixties and seventies was the nourishment to my embryonic musical inclinations. My dad was delighted to share his music with someone who appreciated it.

I memorized the members of the Beatles but occasionally mixed up names and referred to our favorite Beatle as “John Elton.”

I have not met a human who did not struggle during the teenage years. As I stumbled along the path to adulthood, I clung tighter to the Beatles. My dad gave me all the CD versions of their albums. He bought me books about them, and, of course, there was a boom box. I would listen to the albums in order while reading the biographies of each song as it was sung. This has left me with a treasured, yet mostly useless, expansive knowledge of the most mundane facts concerning each member and song. The band became a big part of my identity as a young person.

I had my own car in high school, so the time spent alone with my father was whittled down to a splinter. To connect with me one

// From West Virginia, my father dug three tangibles from the Earth of his world and lit up mine: my mother, a college diploma, and the Beatles discography. //

weekend, he asked for help bringing down holiday decorations from the attic. I did my duty begrudgingly, standing at the bottom of the stairs, the last heavy box at my feet. He came down the steps and told me to open the box. We sat on the garage bench side by side, the opened box at our feet. At first, I was horrified that my dad had been keeping Beatles albums in an attic in Arkansas, certain the heat had destroyed the sounds. Hindsight tells me that he was the one to have packed those albums. Whether by intention or not, the Revolver album was at the top of the stack.

Instantly, the Beatles became more, my father and his music became more. I placed a holy value on my father’s Beatle albums because they had been with him through everything. At that moment in time, the albums, once disappeared in our attic, were between 30-35 years old. He

purchased them as a teenager, one per year, sometimes two. I was able to touch every album. He had the complete discography as well as a few rare ones. They were not in pristine condition. He had used each one as intended — played loud and often.

“Which one is your favorite?” I asked him.

“Either *Rubber Soul* or *Revolver*,” he replied.

“How come?”

“Because those were the first albums that started sounding different. The song writing was poetry,” he explained.

For once, I was not a know-it-all teenager. I listened to his words. We agreed that every album was intended to be listened to from beginning to end. No skipping around. He loved

how *Revolver* began with “Taxman” and ended with “Tomorrow Never Knows.” Dad thought that was a reference to the whole idea that death and taxes were the two inescapable truths for us. The song “Tomorrow Never Knows” was written by John Lennon after studying *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. These songs being on a revolving disc called *Revolver* lent even more meaning to J.V. as to the certainty of this endless cycle.

I kept the albums in my room for a while after that. I was a bit like Gollum and his “precious.” My teenage years continued to trouble my parents, and I moved out right after high school graduation. The albums stay with my father, but I carry the music in my soul.

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Tamara Towns | Photography

A RICH BUT POOR CHILD

Mildred Carthorne | Creative Nonfiction

When I was very young, we were what would be considered poor. I mean, below poverty level...way below poverty level, dirt floor kind of poor. I did not realize it then because I was brand new to the world, and the important things had not made themselves known to me yet. I was basically floating along, a blank canvas painting my life as it blossomed and unfolded around me. I grew up in a big family. I have two older brothers — one that was always making it known that he was the oldest, like I cared — and a brother that was only two years older than me. He was the cool one, the one that I got along with, like watermelon or popsicles on a hot summer day. That is, when I was not playing tricks on him.

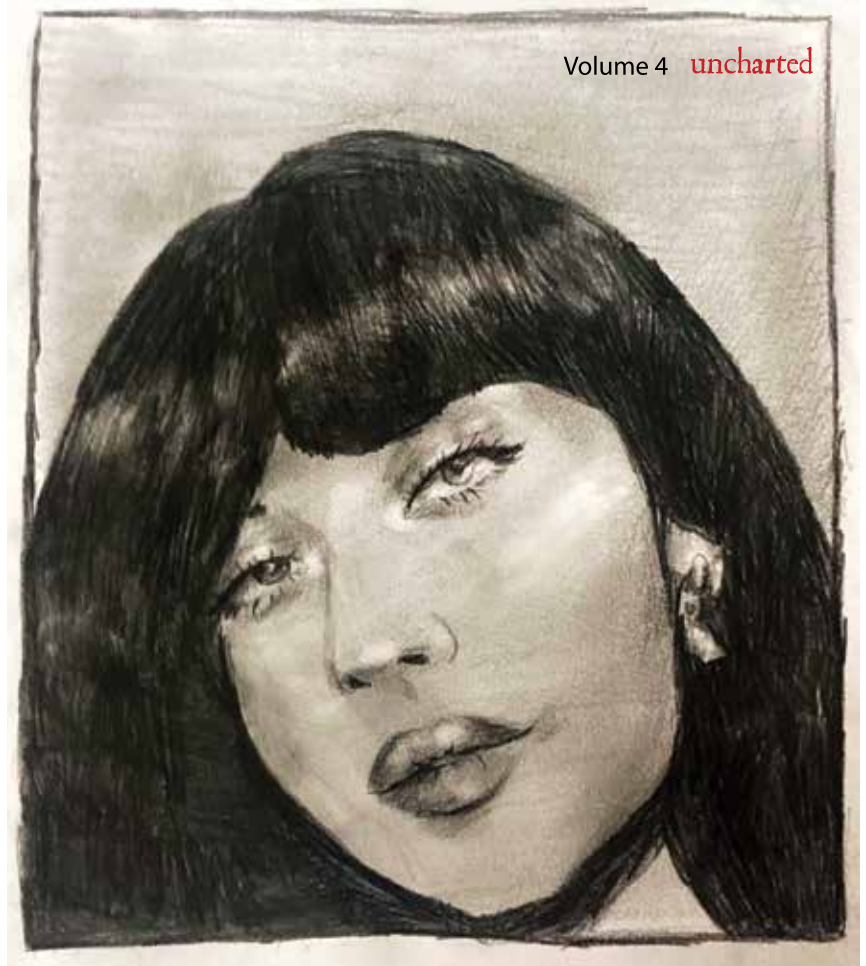
I was a prankster, a mischievous nine-year-old

midget modeled after the Norse God, Loki. If I was not making mischief, I felt like I was letting everything I was born to be slowly slip away. I just had to trick him. Once, I tricked him with a beef bouillon cube; I told him it was candy. I also had a sister four years my junior. I was not the friendliest older sister when I was a child. I guess I saw my little sis as a burden because I felt like she was so much younger than me.

My father was a mechanic, and my mother was a Certified Nursing Assistant. They both worked hard to give us what we needed and to try and give us what we wanted too. Even though my parents worked tirelessly to support four children when they were always in the midst of what seemed to be an economic downturn, I was a selfish and spoiled child. I didn't show my parents the love and respect they deserved.

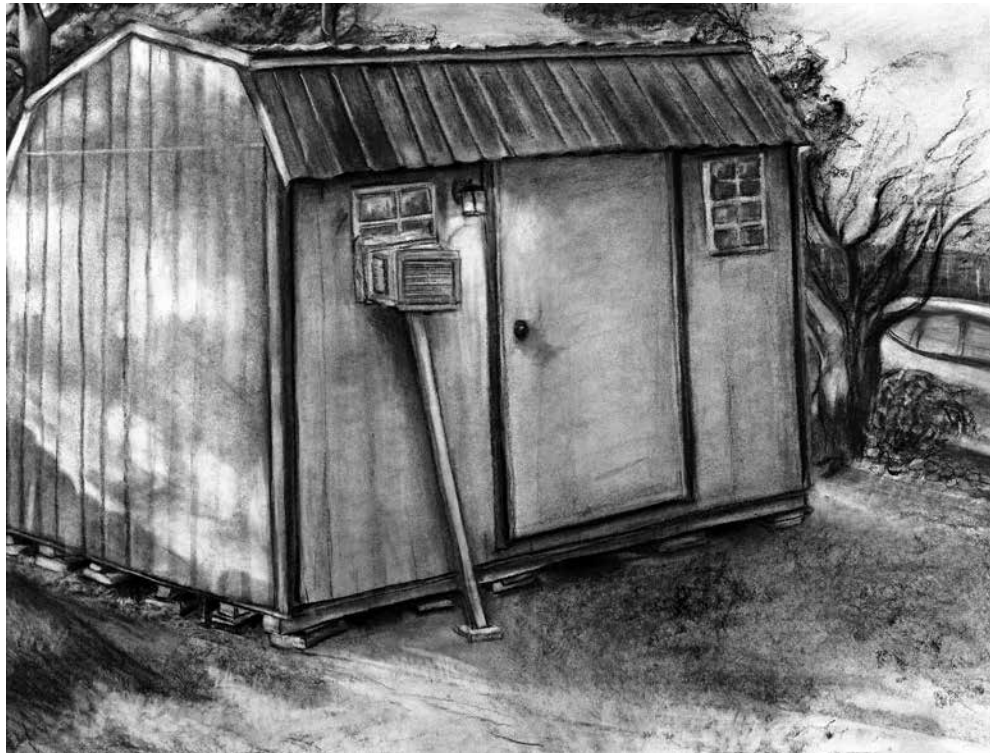
When I was embarrassed at school because everyone had a lunchbox but me, I blamed it on my mother. When I got the new Pocahontas clothes because the VHS had just come out but I still didn't get to sit with the cool kids, I blamed it on my mother. She always took my hate-filled words with love, with endurance, with passion, and with grace.

I did not realize it then. Then, I thought I was poor, but now that I have grown up and have a family of my own and have been smacked around and taught many hard lessons about life, I realize that I was rich. I had a mother who taught me how to bake the most delicious coconut cake. I remember laughing in the kitchen, flour on my face and floating in the air like little specks of sunshine. She taught me how to make meat and fruit pies, and she taught me how to sew. I had a father who taught me how to take an engine out of a car, how to tape off tires and windows with newspaper to prepare the car for painting. My father taught me how to hunt and fish, and my mother showed me what to do with my catch when we got home. I even got to prepare a turkey for thanksgiving dinner when I was little. I can remember what it was like plucking the feathers and pulling out all the nasty bits. I have realized — and I hate with a passion that it has taken me so long — that I was not poor at all. I was rich in warm and happy memories, rich in knowledge and learning, and most of all, rich in love.



▲ **JAMEELA** Alaina Brewster | Drawing

▼ **Alexa Martinez** | Drawing



SHOES

Peeraya Peters | Nonfiction

*"I am proud of where I came from, and I am proud of what I've been able to achieve through hard work and perseverance. And I guarantee you that anyone who tries to say otherwise hasn't walked a day in my shoes."
- Wendy Davis*

Do you think people like living barefoot? There are varieties of shoes that have an importance in life. In the place I grew up — out in the woods, living in a small cabin among trees and animals — I had no neighborhoods, no power, no supermarkets, no shopping malls, and, of course, I grew up with no shoes. For some of you, living barefoot is done for health benefits but not for me. I didn't even know what shoes looked like or where I could get them. No shoes was normal, and it was just part of my life until one day my grandfather gave me a pair. They were flip-flops, and I called them "shoes." At that moment I was extremely joyful. I immediately tried them on and ran around, jumped up and down like I was bouncing on a trampoline.

To be honest, I didn't like being barefoot. I remembered when I stepped onto the pieces of hard surface — hot dirt, rocks, animals, bugs,

// I had no neighborhoods, no power, no supermarkets, no shopping malls, and, of course, I grew up with no shoes. //

worms, whatever you can imagine found on the ground. If my feet could talk, they would have yelled several times, "Please protect me! It hurts!" Living in Thailand, it felt like there were only three seasons. It was hot, hotter, and hottest, like 100 degrees all year long. Shoes changed my life. Those shoes helped protect the bottoms of my feet from the heated surfaces of the ground, and it felt like walking on the clouds. I never left my place without them.

In the early morning my routine would begin. I heard my grandfather yell, "It's time to go!" I put on my flip-flops, my "shoes." I felt so powerful, like I was a wonder woman ready to go hunt in the woods. Of course, my shoes had become hunting shoes. As we started the hike, I could smell the fresh air and the scent of wildflowers. I was skipping, jumping, and running along on the walking trails. There were trips, and they fell off my feet many times because they were slippery and had no grip around my feet. Don't get me wrong though, I loved my shoes, and I told my grandfather "Thank you again" for my hunting shoes. The hunting that day was complete. The shoes were shown the adventure of what I had done that day, and I sure put a lot of miles on them.

One year later, when I was eight years old, my shoes were with me on a new experience, my first big heartache in kindergarten. As I grew up in the mountains, I had no friends, no toys,

and no comparison in life. I didn't know the difference between the rich and the poor until I was in school. I was the oldest in the kindergarten class at that time. I questioned myself, "What am I doing here?" I didn't feel welcome or like I fit in among those kindergarteners. Their uniforms looked nice and clean; their shoes covered their toes; and they had white socks on. This was different from the flip-flops, regular t-shirt, and shorts I had on. They started to question me

about my flip-flops and laughed at me just because I had no school uniform and shoes for school like the others. I was frozen, numb, terrified, and I wondered if my shoes could talk about what they felt if little tears would rain down on them like a spring shower. I looked around. There was only my shoes there to listen and support me at that moment. The shoes were a pair for life as the only friend I had at that time. When I came home, I asked my grandfather, "Are we poor, grandpa?" He didn't answer my questions but only told me that we didn't have enough money to buy a uniform and school shoes. My shoes could tell how I was feeling at any given moment without even speaking.

Shoes are for covering the foot. Some are made from leather, rubber, wood, and other available materials. My shoes were plain and only had two parts to the shoes — sole and thong. As the days went by, I found out that there were a lot of different kinds of shoes, like walking shoes, running shoes, swimming shoes, sneakers, loafers, boots, sandals, high heels, flip-flops, and tennis shoes. However, in Thailand, we only had one word, so my very first pair of flip-flops I called shoes. It was the only pair that was important to me, and they were used in every single moment in my life, like hiking, walking to school, jogging, jumping, and other purposes.

My shoes have played a very important role in my life. They have witnessed all the good and bad times, and they will be there to witness many more. Through every situation they have offered their support and listening ear without judgment or blame. I think my shoes would have a great story to tell if they could talk, but I might be in a little trouble if they shared everything!

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▲ **Ethan Nguyen | Photography**

SLOW YOUR STROLL

Willard E. Crain | Creative Nonfiction

As I continue getting older, I often think time is passing much faster. I have heard many of my older friends say that to me as well. I have learned that as we age, we become more aware of time speeding up because we are slowing down and are unable to accomplish as much in a day.

I am often reminded that I need to slow and not overdo the physical activities that I did when I was younger. In my mind, I still think as I did when I was younger, but it takes longer for my aging body to catch up.

I am learning how to find other activities that are safer and not as physically challenging. For example, I am writing more after finishing a creative writing course at ASU-Beebe. I also enrolled in an oil painting class during Spring 2020, which was the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic, and I finished the class at home after the campus closed. This was the first time I had painted in over 20 years. I hope to continue painting and writing the rest of my life.

I have developed a theory as to why we think time is speeding up as we get older. When we were small children, a year seemed like a very long time. A four-year-old thinks a year is forever. One year to a four-year-old is one fourth of their lifetime, and two years is half of their life. When we were little, we were very interested in how old our playmates were. If we were only a month or so older than them, we were very pleased to be the oldest kid. When a person is sixty years old, a year is one sixtieth of their life. With that in mind, I have come to the conclusion that as we age, each year becomes a smaller portion of our life spans, and this is why the years seem to go by much faster than when we were younger.

I was born May 19, 1947 at my Grandfather and Grandmother Pipkin's house in the little town of McRae, Arkansas. I turned seventy-five years on May 19, 2022.

When I am talking to young children and young adults, I like to ask them how old they think I am. I ask them if they know how many years a decade is, and if they don't, then I tell them it is ten years. I ask them if they know how many years a century is, and if they don't know, I tell them it is one hundred years. Finally, I ask them if they know how long a millennium is, and if they don't know, I tell them it is a thousand years. I tell them that I have lived during nine different decades, two different centuries, and two different millennia. So, how old does that make me?

Most of the time people think I am 90 years old, which is nine ten-year decades. When they think about the century that is one hundred years and the millennium that is one thousand years, they really get confused and can't believe I could be that old. I have to explain that I was born in the forties and lived during the fifties, sixties, seventies, eighties, nineties, and then the first, second, and third decades of the new twenty-first century, as well as the new millennium that started January 1, 2001. I then explain that anyone who is 22 years old or older has lived in three different decades, two different centuries, and two different millennia.

When we stop and think about this information, we realize that we are living during an amazing time that very few people have ever lived on this earth. This usually makes some of us "older folks" feel much older. Maybe we should slow our stroll, stay healthy, continue to learn, and share what we know with our younger friends and family.

THE DAY I BECAME A NURSE

Breanna Fletcher | Creative Nonfiction

It was a normal day just like any other, nothing exciting. All my equipment was obtained to start my day down the hallway. It was so early in the morning that I don't believe birds were awake yet. As I started down the hallway, half awake, I heard a piercing scream. An employee was screaming for a nurse. As I began to run toward the sound of the piercing scream, my pulse quickened; I was nervous. I hadn't been a nurse very long and here I was running toward screams for help.

As I entered the room of screams, I immediately jumped into action. Fear and excitement radiated throughout my body, sweat dripped off my face like a faucet. I shouldn't be excited about this; someone's life is hanging in the balance. Not a second went by and there were two other nurses in the room with me. There was no pulse that I could feel. I jumped and grabbed the backboard. After placing the backboard, I located his Xiphoid process and went two finger widths above that.

I'm doing this, I'm actually doing this! I felt the pangs of guilt deep within my soul for the excitement that pulsed throughout my body. After checking my frame and positioning, I started my set of thirty. This was a lot harder than I thought it would be. The dummies that I practiced on in class were nothing like this. I can't believe I'm doing this; I'm trying to save a human life, I thought.

After doing the first set of thirty compressions, I gave two breaths and started again. As I continued with compressions, I prayed that this man would start to breathe again. Sweat was

pouring off me as my insides pang for relief. I was breathlessly counting aloud as I did each compression. Nearly done with my second set, I heard three death defying cracks. I could feel each and every crack radiate through my hands and pierce my soul. There wasn't any training in the world that could have prepared me for this. I wanted to die right there, in that moment. I was supposed to be saving his life, not cracking his ribs! My nursing education nudged me back to reality, knowing this is normal. The guilt still lingered behind me like a shadow. Still counting aloud, I finished my set with two breaths. Nothing. Nothing happened; he was still not coming back to me.

The two other nurses then took turns doing compressions until the paramedics arrived. These paramedics really earned every dollar they made that day. These men took over compressions and started an IV immediately. They pushed fluids after fluids trying to revive this man. Still nothing. As the adrenaline was administered, I held my breath and closed my eyes, praying this man would shoot up off the floor. Well, all those movies lied; he didn't shoot up off the floor. He didn't budge at all. The paramedics continued to try and revive this man for over an hour. After the time of death was called, I couldn't help but think about this poor man's family. I would soon call them and feel the horrifying loss through their cracked voices.

This day was not what I thought it would be. It was a day that will forever be stained in my brain. Knowing that I tried everything I could, helps me hug my pillow at night. Moments like this are why I became a nurse, to give it all I have. The next piercing call for help will come soon and maybe, just maybe, this time they will open their eyes.

A MILLION LITTLE THINGS

Lee Ann Burrow | Creative Nonfiction

Emma, my teenage daughter, is a million little things all rolled into one, and together they make her amazing. I've said it often that I'm pretty sure she's going to change the world. However, it will have to occur after noon because mornings aren't her thing. When I take her to ride horses at the Wofford's barn, I watch and gain much insight about my daughter.

On one particular day, things just didn't go right at the barn. It happens. Just like in life, sometimes you ride well, the horse cooperates, and life is great. Sometimes though, the horse won't let you catch her, you ride like it's your first time, and absolutely nothing goes as planned. Today was definitely the latter. Some days it isn't just about the ride. It isn't about how many jumps, poles, barrels, or laps you make. It's about far more. A million important lessons happen during these rides.

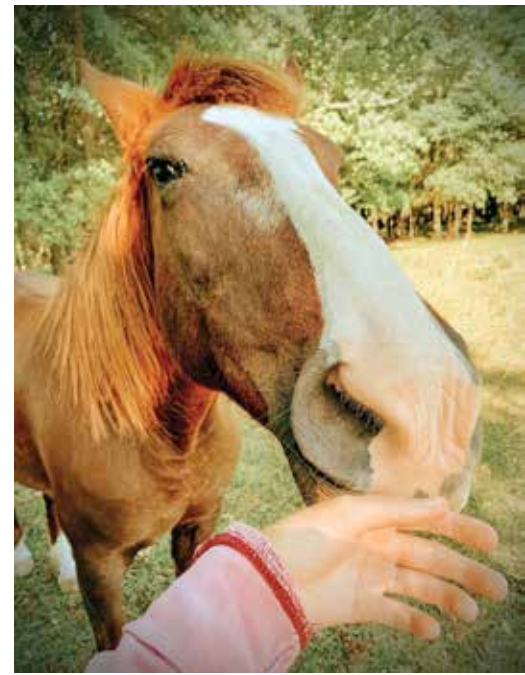
She learns perseverance. The horse was in a mood and wouldn't cross the creek. Emma tried tens of times, over and over. That dang horse refused. She had crossed that creek with Emma hundreds of times, but Diamond was determined she was not crossing that day. It was hard to watch my child struggle and coax. It was tough to see Emma frustrated. Finally, after trying several more times, Diamond crossed the creek to the open pasture. What seemed like a minor victory to most, was really a huge life lesson to Emma. She got in the car and told me about it; we talked. Tomorrow she will apply that newfound perseverance in life and not be so quick to give up on things and people who matter to her. She won't always settle for the easy path.

She shows love and patience. Though frustrated with Diamond, Emma worked with her and

finally convinced Diamond to cross the creek. She did it lovingly and patiently. I could feel her frustration from a mile away, as I'm sure Diamond could too, but she never acted in anger. One day she will apply that ability to love, even amid frustration, to her relationships. She will love authentically and patiently.

She becomes confident. Life can beat us all down. That's especially true for teenagers. When her self-esteem was low and she felt like she couldn't accomplish a thing, Emma finally got Diamond to cross the creek. As Emma and Diamond trotted in the far pasture, Emma sat a bit straighter in the saddle happy with her accomplishment and excited about the freedom she faced on the far side of the creek. She will apply that one day to all the hard things that need accomplishing in life. She will work for the intrinsic rewards and desire for freedom on her terms.

She finds a way to heal. Emma started horseback after the life-changing loss of her best friend to cancer. She'd cry and talk to the horse as she'd ride. It was heart-breaking to watch. Her instructor explained that horses are amazing therapy and the best listeners. Her instructor was right. Now Emma has her own horse and talks to Diamond about everything. She gets in the car and we talk some more because she's on a roll. (Who would want to stop that, right?) As she grows up, I suspect that Emma will be compassionate and kind to others because she understands loss. She will be open and honest about her feelings and respect other people's



feelings, too. She will be an excellent listener.

She grasps commitment. Some days Emma doesn't want to put the work in and wants to be lazy. She goes anyway. There are days she could just quit trying to cross the creek and walk on the side that is narrow and rocky rather than continue to try and cross that creek to broader pastures and better views. She could walk away and not take care of Diamond, but she doesn't. Later in life, she will apply it to homework, relationships, hard work, and friendships. She will be committed to the right things and people.

She loves nature and animals. Ask her where her favorite place in the world is, and she will tell you it's the barn. Why? Because she loves the pasture, the sun, and fresh air. She never minds the manure smell or the dust. She loves the horses (of course), the dogs, the goats, the chickens, and the cats. She sees each animal's contribution and her own place in the world. She will apply that one day when she has her own property with animals and grows into someone who cares about the planet and her impact on it.

She practices humility. Sometimes Emma just has to ask the experts to show her. Sometimes she has to get help to catch Diamond in the open pasture. One day she will use what she's learned to speak up for herself and what she needs. She will know when and who to ask for help and when to keep going on her own. She will willingly offer help to those who need it, too.

When you see my kid, give her a knowing nod. When she talks your ear off about Diamond or insists on showing you pictures, listen. What is represented in those stories, in her experiences, is so much more than most understand. She isn't just a girl with a horse on a bad day at the barn. She's a girl, turning into an amazing adult, who happens to be riding a horse that has taught her so much about life.

◀ **A RARE FRIEND**

Laura Bradley | Photography



▲ **SUN LIGHT PORTAITS WITH OLIVIA**

Mitzi Idrogo | Photography



UNCHARTED
GUEST WRITER:
DOT HATFIELD

Former ASU-Beebe student, Dot Hatfield, is the author of seven books. Her most recent novel, *Worth the Candle*, debuted in 2019. She is a freelance writer whose op-ed pieces have appeared in many regional newspapers. Her devotional material has been printed in *The Upper Room*, *Mature Living*, and *Evangel* just to name a few. After living in Texas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, Dot now makes her home in Beebe, Arkansas. Dot Hatfield is the 2020 inductee to the Arkansas Writers' Hall of Fame. You can find out more about Dot and her books at her website: dothatfield.com.

From ASU-Beebe students to professional writers, this issue includes contributions from Dot Hatfield, Lea Ervin, and Adam Houchins. Each of these published writers were at one time students at Arkansas State University-Beebe, and now they are sharing their journeys and secrets of success with *Uncharted* readers.

FINDING MY VOICE

I have written all my life — diaries, newsletters, press releases. Then, nearing retirement, at last I found my voice. It was from there I became a fiction writer. My first book soon followed.

I don't remember having any writing instruction in elementary school. Later, in junior high and high school, we wrote book reports and essays, usually on assigned subjects. My diary focused on boys, school, and teenage angst. As a young mom, I read Erma Bombeck every day. My journal's reflections on family life often mirrored her style.

Later, now a widow and an empty-nester, I signed up for a fiction writing class at the community college in Nashville, Tennessee. I learned the elements of a short story: a protagonist, an event that challenges, how the challenge changes the protag, all written with a beginning, middle, and end. I also learned the mantra, "Write what you know." For our final short story assignment, I wrote about how a destructive Music City tornado influenced the lives of two struggling musicians.

In 2000, I retired and moved to Beebe, Arkansas, where I found a wealth of opportunities for learning how to write. I enrolled in a creative writing class at ASU-Beebe and joined White County Creative Writers in Searcy. Writing short fiction soon became my favorite thing to do. I entered contests, submitted stories to magazines, and finally compiled a collection of my "award winning" short stories. I belonged to a critique group of four writers who met monthly to work on our on-going projects.

My version of "write what you know" was to develop a storyline from any past experience — real or imagined. I wrote about a college kid with an overdrawn bank account and the slippery slope that is; I told about a woman I knew who was a "bird whisperer;" I drew examples from my years as a crisis line counselor; and I told a story from the perspective of a character who is directionally challenged (which I am).

Small digression: “Write what you know” can also mean learn about what you’re writing, be it vampires, space travel, or historical events. Do your research, then you can write what you know.

My first novel, *The Last to Know*, tells about Sharon Jordan, who receives a call that her husband was killed in a car wreck in Lincoln, Nebraska when she thought he was in a meeting in Dallas. While realizing that some elements of this plot line aren’t new, my approach was to focus on the main character’s spiritual journey during her first year of widowhood.

To Find a Home was inspired by a tale I had heard many years ago about a missing child. I gave it my own twists and turns to make it a story about a young girl trying to find her birth parents. My third novel, *An Ordinary Day*, is based on an incident in my grandfather’s life. He was sheriff of Marietta, Oklahoma in 1928. An attempted bank robbery changed the lives of several people in that small town. *Worth the Candle* is the latest novel and it debuted in 2019. This story pursues “love at first sight” meets “God’s call on my life,” and what happens when those two issues butt heads.

I was pleased to have a one-act play, *R.I.P. Emma Lou Briggs*, presented at Center on the Square dinner theater in Searcy, and I have been published in several anthologies. I have maintained a blog for several years and published a collection of those essays. Alas, the blog went missing in action during the pandemic; there’s a rumor that it might be bouncing back before too long.

I am still an active member of White County Creative Writers; they keep me on my toes. I am also part of a monthly critique group that goes by the name of W4. Do I still write? Oh yes. Perhaps today I write more about the past than the future — but I am convinced, more than ever, that I still write about things that matter. And thankfully, I still have an audience.

In 2020, at the tender age of 86, I was inducted into the Arkansas Writers Hall of Fame by the Arkansas Chapter of National Penwomen. What an honor to be recognized by friends and colleagues for doing something I love. I will continue to write and edit as long as I’m able — as long as ideas keep coming my way. Oh, and by the way, this is the best kept secret about writing: ideas never stop coming your way.

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Ethan Nguyen | Photography





UNCHARTED
GUEST WRITER:
LEA ERVIN

Former ASU-Beebe student, Lea Ervin is a writer, poet, artist, and writing instructor from Alabama. She holds a B.A. in English from Harding University and a M.A. in Professional and Technical Writing from the University of Arkansas-Little Rock. Her work centers around living with chronic pain, anxiety, and OCD. She lives in Oneonta, Alabama with her husband, Brad White, and their Beagle-mix, Starla Belle.

MY WRITING JOURNEY

I believe it was the same day Dr. Stephen Knapp stopped teaching to remind me to cover my mouth when I yawned that we started discussing *Notes from the Underground* in his early-morning World Lit II class at ASU-Beebe. I already liked the course and him; however, on that day, I decided that studying literature was the ultimate goal. Burgeoning adulthood in the early-2000s in Central Arkansas provided little culture outside of the late-night bonfires with friends and circling the endless “loop” in small towns in used, lifted trucks with Flowmaster mufflers that did little muffling. My little, myopic world view began to expand as I was transported to 1864 St. Petersburg, Russia, despite my inability to correctly pronounce Dostoyevsky’s name. From that day on, I realized that studying literature would allow me to “see” the world without elaborate trips abroad that were just not possible for me at twenty. For the next 20 years, I would devote my career to the study of literature, writing, and the teaching of writing.

My first hard lesson in writing also came from Dr. Knapp. We had written our first literary analyses for the Fall Semester, and to my chagrin, I received a C. Half panic-stricken and half angry with myself, I made my way to his back-corner Owen Center office to figure out where I had gone wrong. I was about to receive my first, real lesson on the writing process. Out of all the pages I had written, he found one single paragraph and said, “Go with this.” We talked, marked, re-arranged pieces of the essay, developed paragraphs with quotes from the text, and revised my conclusion. I left feeling empowered and excited to reshape my first draft into a much better revision. Despite my lack-luster first attempt, I had the power to change a situation I wasn’t happy with, which is a lesson that applied to life experiences and not just academic papers.

I graduated with my Associate of Arts in 2003 and moved on to Harding University from which I graduated with my Bachelor of Arts in English. Five years later, I would go on to receive my Master of Arts degree in Professional and Technical Writing from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. I started teaching first-year composition courses and writing my own work as well, still using the process Dr. Knapp taught me. Over the past decade, I have had essays and poems published in various anthologies, websites, and blogs. In 2009, I was diagnosed with endometriosis and advocacy also became a very necessary passion of mine. I used my writing to advocate for others and have had articles and essays published in the Endometriosis Foundation of America’s *Blossom* blog, *The Mighty*, *Reckon South* by AL.com, and *Thought Catalog*. My most recent and most dear publication, “Nightflare,” can be found in *Memories*, a poetry anthology. To burgeoning writers, I implore you to stay the course. Revise. Reshape. Rejection will happen, but take it as a challenge to piece together something better and new.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

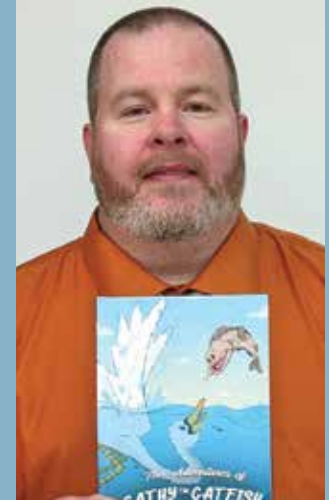
Although I have been fortunate enough to become a nationally published author, writing did not always come easy for me. I got started later in life with my education and have received three degrees within the Arkansas State University system, including an associate degree from ASU-Beebe and a bachelor's and master's degree from Jonesboro. It was during my time at ASU that I was responsible for writing hundreds of papers in various classes.

Because of the repetition of writing these papers, I noticed that their quality improved over time, and this was reflected in my grades. I thought to myself that it sure would be nice if I could write projects that would benefit me in other aspects besides what would be used to obtain my degrees. This led to four children's books, a screenplay, and a television series that I am developing that must remain nameless because they have yet to be published, and/or copyrighted.

As for my recently published book, *The Adventures of Cathy the Catfish and Sammy the Swan*, the inspiration came from an unlikely source. I work security for an insurance company in West Little Rock that sits on a beautiful piece of property. By the building, there is a nice pond which serves as a habitat for many interesting animals. One day I saw a huge crane standing by the shore of the pond eating several fish. The idea of an unlikely friendship between the two animals (bird and fish) came to me, and the entire text was written before I left work for the night.

My advice to others would be to let your creative flag fly. In the past, I was extremely hesitant to let my work be seen by other people. It was not until I wrote *The Adventures of Cathy the Catfish and Sammy the Swan* that I developed the courage to send one of my projects to a publisher. Let other people see your work. If no one can see your work, then it can never really benefit you. The truth is that all they can do is say no, and if they do, try a different avenue or approach.

This writing transformation was extremely quick for me and has changed my life completely. During this process, I became upset with myself because I did not understand why I could not have done this years earlier. Then it became apparent to me that it was not meant to happen that way. It was all part of the journey. Had I not followed my educational goals and fine-tuned my writing skills, none of this would have happened. I have since embraced my journey and am grateful for it. It is never too late to follow your dreams, and if it happens later in life, so be it. Better late than never!



UNCHARTED
GUEST WRITER:
ADAM HOUCHINS

Former ASU-Beebe student, Adam Houchins, is a published author and a veteran of the U.S. Army. He has three degrees from the Arkansas State University system, including an associate degree in Liberal Arts from Beebe, a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology, and a Master's of Science in Sport Administration from Jonesboro. He has been to 24 countries, yet still calls the central Arkansas area home.

GLOBAL AWARENESS ESSAY CONTEST

In the Spring 2022 semester, the ASU-Beebe Global Awareness Committee sponsored an essay contest for the campus community concerning ways to invest in our planet. Peeraya Peters was declared the winner with her essay titled, "Invest in Our Planet: Act Locally, Think Globally."



INVEST IN OUR PLANET: ACT LOCALLY, THINK GLOBALLY

Peeraya Peters

I remember my time growing up in rural Thailand during the 80's without electricity and hospitals. We walked everywhere, filling our lungs full of fresh air from flowers and trees. It's easy to be in good health walking up and down the hills. We drank fresh water from the waterfall and collected rain. My family used elephants to carry big logs and buffalo to plow the rice farm. The technology of the day was a transistor radio with batteries; everyone enjoyed the news. We were living happily because we went to bed before the sun went down and woke up to roosters crowing at dawn. We hunted around for animals because there were no supermarkets to shop at

What can be done locally to improve our planet? My favorite way to help the environment is to plant gardens and trees. It is incredible how much food you can grow in a small area. Growing your own vegetables also reduces the need of transportation, packaging, and refrigeration typically associated with store bought items. Straight-out-of-the-garden freshness and taste will never be found in any grocery store. Trees in the right place are great. In the summer they can cool off your home with shade and in the winter, they drop their leaves so sunlight can warm it up. Also, being outside in the sun and fresh air is good for your health; a lot of people are vitamin D deficient, especially at higher latitudes.

Another way to help the environment is to pick up litter. Plastic bottles and bags are everywhere, and when it rains, they are washed into the gutter. Then it moves to creeks and

// We walked everywhere, filling our lungs full of fresh air from flowers and trees. It's easy to be in good health walking up and down the hills. We drank fresh water from the waterfall and collected rain. //

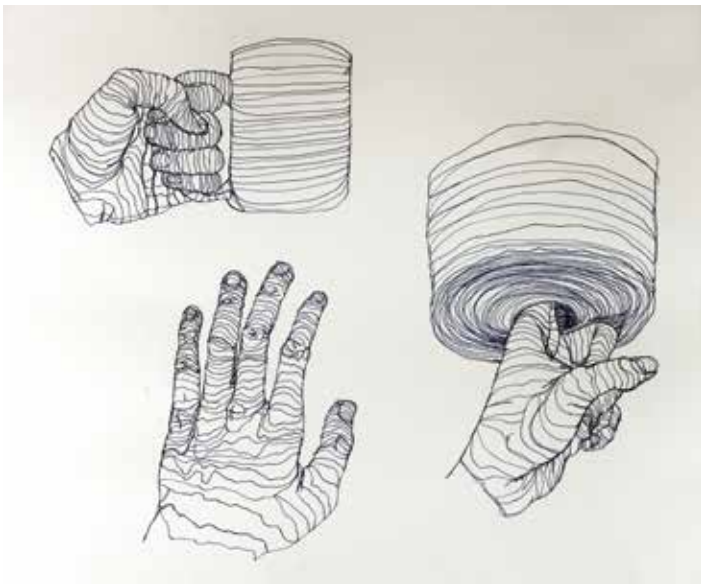
and cooked with charcoal in our outdoor kitchen. I saw people living long lives because they were connected to nature. My great grandmother was 112 years old when I was 8 years old. Today, we live in an era that has proliferated electronics, heavily processed foods, and sedentary lifestyles with increasing dangers, such as ionizing radiation and chemicals in the food and water.

causes problems for all sorts of animals on the way to the ocean. The Pacific Ocean has a large amount of plastic and Styrofoam floating as noted by documentaries. Micro plastics are even being found in some drinking water. The use of refillable water bottles and reusable shopping bags is something everyone could do to help reduce plastic usage.

Lastly, have fun educating friends and family on being a good steward of the environment. Make it a game or competition to see who uses less water, plants more trees, or picks up the most trash. Be creative. On a cautious note, beware from where you get your information. Environmental and climate issues have turned into a political hot potato. It is important to use critical thinking, due diligence, and sift information to get the truth. Some people say

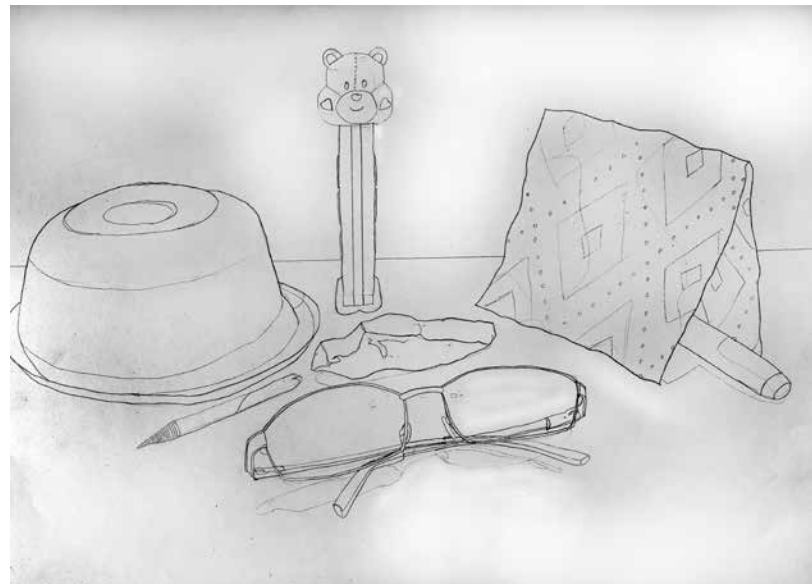
the earth is turning into a fireball and others say we are turning into a snowball.

I enjoy clean air, water, and food. As a child, I grew up without all the modern conveniences of today. I literally had to hand carry water every day from the river. Proper resource management is essential for a happy, healthy life and for keeping the environment clean.



▲ Jordan Freeman | Drawing

▼ MODERN ART Ethan Nguyen | Photography



▲ Jordan Freeman | Drawing

▼ Jordan Freeman | Drawing



REDUCING MASS INCARCERATION BY IMPLEMENTING ALTERNATIVES

Natascia Mansur | Nonfiction

The United States holds the record for number of incarcerations across the world. Reports show that even if the U.S. makes up only 5% of the global population, its incarceration numbers make up 25% of the global incarcerated population. Data shows that since the implementation of “tough on crime” policies in the 70s, the number of incarcerated individuals has risen from approximately 300,000 in 1980 to 2.2 million in more recent years (Cullen, 2016, para.1). In the ten years following 1985, every week one new prison was built to accommodate new inmates.

As our society has become increasingly more aware of civil rights over the past several decades, it has also become evident that one of the biggest civil rights injustices has been closely related to mass incarceration. In fact, people of lower socioeconomic status, African Americans, and Hispanics are disproportionately incarcerated every year. For example, 40% of the incarcerated male population are African Americans even though they make up only 13% of the total population (Sawyer & Wagner, 2020, p. 22). It becomes therefore imperative to examine how to reduce mass incarceration by implementing alternatives that expand sentencing options, save taxpayers money, strengthen communities, and reduce recidivism.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

Undoubtedly, the criminal justice system has been more focused on incarceration than rehabilitation of offenders or implementation of alternatives to prison. A high percentage of

prisoners (close to 40%) are incarcerated for non-violent crimes and sometimes for no crime at all. Many are in fact deprived of their freedom because of technicalities. It is not unusual, for example, for individuals to be incarcerated because they failed to appear in court. These people may not be intentionally trying to avoid the law. They may lack transportation or were not clear on what they needed to do (Sawyer & Wagner, 2020, p. 19). Similarly, youth are jailed for offenses that are not crimes, like technical violations of their probation. Many are held for “status offenses.” “Status offenses are behaviors that are not law violations for adults, such as running away, truancy, and incorrigibility” (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention [OJJDP], 2014, p. 3). Alternatives to detention that have proven effective have ranged from probation to halfway houses to community service (Families Against Mandatory Minimums [FAMM], 2011). In addition, day treatment, shelter care, specialized foster care, and group homes have reduced recidivism in youth and have also had an impact on positive life outcomes (OJJDP, 2014, p. 6).

Another important factor to consider is that a significant number of non-violent offenses are related to substance abuse or mental illness. One model that has proven to be effective in substance abuse-related cases has been the establishment of drug courts. These courts have more flexibility regarding sentencing and allow non-violent offenders to choose a treatment program instead of prison when entering a plea. This has proven to be extremely effective. For example, according to Bailey Smith’s (2003) article regarding alternatives to incarceration, “70 percent of California’s drug court participants

were employed upon completion of the program, a striking change from the fewer than 40 percent employed at program entry” (p. 54). Furthermore, a ten-year study by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) shows that use of drug courts significantly reduces recidivism rates. “NIJ researchers found that drug courts may lower recidivism rates (re-arrests) and significantly lower costs. They used data from a primarily pre-plea adult drug court in Portland, Oregon, to track 6,500 offenders who participated in the Multnomah County Drug Court between 1991 and 2001. Re-arrests were lower five years or more later compared to re-arrests for similar drug offenders within the same county” (National Institute of Justice, 2008, para. 2).

An additional factor in considering alternatives to incarceration is that they are significantly more cost effective than detention. It has been calculated that an adult incarcerated in a federal prison costs over \$28,000 per year. For juveniles that number increases to approximately \$88,000 per year. A treatment program, on the other hand, costs on average between \$1,500 and \$11,000 per participant per year (FAMM,

2011). Treatment programs are also significantly more effective than imprisonment at reducing recidivism rates.

STUDY REVIEW OF REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Another decade long study conducted between 2002 and 2012 by a group of researchers, analysts, and advocates examined the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI), an implementation strategy initiated by the Council of State Government. The premise of the initiative was to reduce corrections populations, thus saving money that would then be reinvested in “high incarceration communities to make them safer, stronger, more prosperous and equitable” (Sentencing Project, 2015). Twenty-seven states participated in the initiative with varied results. A few states experienced some degree of success. For example, Rhode Island “has shown a significant prison population reduction from a high of about 4,000 in 2006 to 3,200 in 2011. This reduction is largely due to legislation passed in 2008 as part of the JRI which increased the amount of good-time credits all individuals could



MOTORIZED

Ethan Nguyen | Photography

receive by participating in meaningful programs” (Sentencing Project, 2015, p. 12). Examining further the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, it appears evident that it did not fully achieve the expected results. As stated in the study, “The lack of targeted reinvestment in high incarceration communities is probably the most glaring weakness of JRI” (Sentencing Project, 2015, p.10). In addition to not reinvesting saved money in programs to help strengthen communities, hence reducing crime, other negatively contributing factors have included legislation not being implemented, severe lack of involvement of state government policy makers, and lack of follow up and accountability (Sentencing Project, 2015, p.4). However, the report further stated that “a revived, reoriented Justice Reinvestment effort could significantly reduce U.S. corrections populations and costs; and through smart, targeted and locally determined reinvestments, could aid substantially in repairing the destructive impact of high levels of concentrated incarceration on poor communities of color” (Sentence Project, 2015, p. 10).

AN OPPOSING VIEW

Some may say that “tough on crime” solutions are preferable. Some think that keeping offenders off the streets for a long time will make communities safer. On the contrary, data seem to indicate that those who spend longer periods of time incarcerated have a higher probability of re-offense. As previously mentioned, alternatives to incarceration like Drug Courts, have proven to be highly effective in reducing recidivism (Justice Policy, 2004).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, reduction of the incarcerated population is vitally important. To achieve it, the best approach is to implement alternatives to incarceration. Those alternatives include providing options and support to non-violent offenders, especially if struggling with substance abuse or mental illness, to facilitate their re-entry. That will reduce recidivism and therefore make communities safer. Also, considering that minority communities are disproportionately incarcerated, it will create a more equitable society. And, finally, implementing these alternatives reduces the cost to the taxpayers, freeing money to be invested in strengthening communities and other needed policies.

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LAST DAY OF CHEMO

Raven Perschbacher | Photography

PURPOSE IN THE WAITING

Christy Parsons | Nonfiction

In the poem, “What Work Is,” Philip Levine describes how a person needs to feel as though life has a purpose. The idea of purpose through work conveyed in the poem begins by the reader being able to envision themselves as the person standing in line in the rain waiting for work. In summary, the narrator is standing with several others getting wet, hoping that Ford Highland Park Automotive is hiring that day. The poem is about so much more than just work; it is about waiting. Waiting serves a meaning and a purpose in life.

Within this poem, the author focuses on the individual that is reading. The tone is quite negative in the beginning but takes on a lighter note in line 22 as he begins to think about his brother. As he is standing in line, he is overcome by love for his brother and can hardly remain upright. He also begins to realize the sacrifice his brother makes each day by going to a job he does not necessarily enjoy. Waiting involves sacrifice.

Standing in line, the commentator ruminates on thoughts of how long it has been since he last hugged his brother. Showing affection to our loved ones can sometimes be a true undertaking. Then he tries to remember the last time he told his brother he loves him. As he remains in the dreary weather, he also contemplates hardships his brother endures each day all for the sake of working to be able to sing opera. Sometimes the activities we enjoy most require labor. Therefore, waiting produces endurance.

This individual has many thoughts going through his mind as he waits. He knows if he does not continue to do so, he may not get a

chance to work. He realizes he must work to feed his family. In withstanding this long delay, he still has hope that work awaits him. Without hope we have nothing. The brother has hope because he realizes without work, he will not be able to do what he loves most, which is singing. Lessons in life are learned through waiting for something we hope for.

After reading this sonnet many times, the message that reverberates within is the purpose in waiting. Many moments in our lives consist of waiting. Waiting produces stamina and endurance. The person in this poem has not worked a meaningful day ever, and he feels as if he has no cause. We must feel as if our lives have meaning and purpose or we will feel worthless. Reflecting upon the many issues of past experiences in this life, some of the worst moments that have happened have produced the most valuable lessons.

In conclusion, waiting is a lesson from which everyone learns something. Some may wait patiently, and others fidget incessantly through it. A few lessons may be difficult, and others will be easy. Waiting may be short lived, or it may be many years. It could involve the loss of a loved one or maybe a birth. Reflecting upon the last year, it has been very difficult on our family. Hard lessons have been learned through loss. Sometimes our hardest life experiences produce the most dramatic results. How a person deals with harsh circumstances reveals true character. Whatever the case may be, waiting serves a meaning and a purpose in life. Even when moments are the hardest, we must cling to hope in the waiting.

Works Cited

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COLOPHON

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