

# *Shorelines*

*A Journal of Student Creativity*

 Metropolitan  
Community College  
Longview

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# Shorelines

A Journal of Student Creativity

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Cover Photo **“Old Glory Wings”** by Kathy Tracy  
**2nd Place** Visual Arts

### A Wall

By Asma Abdullah

#### 1st Place Poetry

A wall is my mirror  
 For tall it always stands  
 A beating it takes  
 From weather, beast and man.  
 Different in color  
 Discrimination it must bear  
 Cracked not under pressure  
 Of shades it's forced to wear  
 It's a canvas of art  
 Of voices etched in time  
 Echoed to present  
 Felt by the blind  
 A perfect contradiction  
 It's an exit and an entrance  
 Fallen for independence  
 Built up for prisons  
 A wall is my mirror  
 It reflects what is real  
 Standing up for all  
 But not free to its own will.



**“Free”** by Tyler Kraft





**“As Above So Below”** by Jay Wright

## How It Feels To Be Birder Me

By Joseph Mosley

### 1st Place Prose

I am a birder but I offer no stories about the birds divided by crayon pigments at a feeder. Also, I am the only American birder to go into the field like a Brit.

I remember the day I became a birder. Up until my thirteenth year, I had always been enthralled with birds, fixated on the winged whistling whims that encapsulated a world I could just glimpse. I sought to learn every name and song. These were creatures that had freedom, the ability to go where they wanted, and I could sort and name them. I was a boy who liked birds. To me, I was an ornithologist in training, just no title. I would spend my time in a bird book trying to learn the difference between warblers and sparrows and wondering if any of the woodpeckers in my northern Georgia yard could be an Ivory-billed Woodpecker. My one wish was to be a birder who would find some rare bird and have the fame for the skill and luck that comes with the competitive hobby.

Being able to report birds might seem like a daring thing, but for me it was a glory seat. I wanted to know what each little blob of mystery and feathers was, then be the person responsible for finding an amazing bird. Claiming to have seen a bird that is so rare is comparatively like catching a big fish but having no proof of it. A birder's credibility is to know every bird inside and out. Your knowledge of the flight call of Sprague's Pipit would make or break the authenticity of your

sighting. For a young person wanting to learn to bird on his own, it seemed that my bird sightings would never be trustworthy or notable enough to be submitted for reports. This changed with two programs I joined shortly after my thirteenth birthday. Using eBird and the Great Backyard Bird Count allowed an amateur to submit sightings and, in exchange, keep lists. Now the potential movement of unique and novel species into my little yard was on my mind. Any unusual wind patterns or cold-front might bring a cuckoo or Caribbean hummingbird never seen in the state before. Endlessly, I was sucked into the vicious cycle of new seasons, rarity chases, and lists of species seen and not seen. I was a birder to myself and my family, but not to anyone else.

Prior to this period I differed only from non-birders by the fact that I knew a lot about birds, and they did not. To my friends, I was becoming a bird-nerd. I could talk continually about earliest arrival dates for dozens of warblers, how to separate Clay-colored from Chipping Sparrows, or how there are different species of crows living in Bartow County, Georgia. I knew the locations of all the rarities seen in the neighboring counties as well as I knew the roster of the Georgia Bulldogs. To me this was natural; there are over ten thousand species of birds, why wouldn't someone want to know at least the couple hundred that could be found in the yard? Now they were questioning why I would want to get up before

dawn to travel several hours just to see a duck? Because I had never seen it before and its behavior was only known by me through books. The quest to see any new species was driven by this connection; I had seen a wild creature with blood in its veins. Any moment and it could be gone, thereby being separate from me and my world on the ground. I was a crazy nerd who only seemed to think about the next species I wanted to see.

Upon entering high school in the Midwest the next fall, I comprehended how I was thought of in society. Many would lump me with this new hipster birder movement, city kids picking up bird watching and photography to connect with the environment. While I might be this to some people, it is not the whole of me. The outdoors is an outlet for many of my pursuits. Birding is just my defining hobby. Don't assume that any type of stereotype fits me.

But I am not tragically a birder. I do not suffer any sorrow or regret, so the labels don't define me. I don't mind being put in box. The box is just options I could choose. It is not a game or coping mechanism, but I can be competitive and relaxed while birding. I don't bore every non-birder with the details of the birds I notice subconsciously.

Someone is always by me to say that bird watching sounds boring, thinking I go out to watch the red and blue birds and count which ones come to the feeder. It fails to hold me back. Inside, the thirst is growing and the sparks are flying; I am ready. Here is the task and let the ignorance fall. The twinkle in the eye appears. Something new is beheld. Curiosity is kindled

in the young and old, which is beautiful. The beholder could cheer or cry. Mystery is no longer shrouded in unfamiliarity.

Without curiosity, the non-birder has no intrigue, no awe. Their position seems shallow. This aerial realm is too distant to care or ponder. There is no urge to be miserably cold or wet on an early Saturday morning. The non-birder has no thrill of finding a bird that was sought with every bit of your being.

I do not always feel like a birder. Even now I can become the boy who likes birds and feels normal around a group of people playing games. Give me a sport or game that I can beat a competitor at and for a moment I forget about birds. I feel the least like a birder when I run a race. Running until the point of exhaustion and pushing beyond seemingly removes birding from me totally. Competition separates me from my world of birds. In a game or race, no one cares how many birds I can identify or my lists. I can forget them, too, but this is only temporary. When the race is done or game finished, my mind is filled with birds more than ever, like I am missing something. I feel the most like a birder when those around me seem to pay no attention to birds.

Sometimes it is the other way around. A non-birder is surrounded by birds and birders. Deep in the woods of Burr Oaks Conservation Area, I am in my world. Names of tanagers, thrushes, grosbeaks, and a hoard of others, are ringing in their ears. The air is filled with whistles, clicks, buzzes; color is popping out of the trees above, movement here and there, spring migration at its finest. To me, my mind is attuned to every sound, movement,



**“Rocks”** by Tyler Kraft

shape, behavior, narrowing the birds down to give each a name. I move like a spy behind a far leaf, then glimpse yellow, black and white, piercing at a pitch above any human voice. "Pleased, pleased, pleased to-meet-cha, Chestnut-sided Warbler." To me this is pure pleasure. To follow a bird through a tree is easy. Identifying is now second-nature though a challenge. Meanwhile the non-birder, standing towards the back acknowledging that everyone wants to see the birds, is still a little out of tune. When shown a bird, they may remark, "That is amazing! I never have seen a bird like that one."

The mystery is still obscure because they don't want to observe a tanager or Oriole. The thrill of putting a name to something is not alluring. Neither is learning about the bird. Then I feel the great chasm of difference between me and the non-birder.

But in the main, I feel like a House Sparrow, apparently dull, hopping around after one another. Hold one in hand, and a sharply patterned bird is revealed; shades of brown and gray intermingle. Two side-by-side look identical in pattern, but then the features are noticed. Clearly, each has little more color here or there. A few feathers missing or discolored, bolder brown or cleaner cheek patch, each has a distinct part. Go to the next city and they are little different again. All the same and all different, all follow each other from one essential place to another. Perhaps that is how the One who knows each sparrow meant it to be in the first place.



## To Know Thyself

By Megan Hall

I sat before the mirror

And we locked forrest eyes

And I promised you my love

For the rest of my life.

I promised I would be kind to you

Give you as long as you need

To grow and heal and flourish.

I saw you for the first time

Not covered with lies and shame

And I felt an ocean of compassion

Wash over me.



**"Reflections"** by Jay Wright

## The Reach of the Dust

By Madison Clark

Heave Ho!  
The soot will never leave my skin.

It clings to my face,  
The blackness engulfs,  
From the peak of my head  
To darkened toenails.  
It creeps behind my ears,  
A never ending ivy,  
An intruder in waiting.  
It resides under my nails,  
The smell suffocates,  
Stuffs my lungs without retreat.

I bump shoulders with my brothers of the dust,  
Clasp sooty hands with my neighbor.  
Our backs crackle from hacking,  
Heaving through stone for coal.  
We hoist the coal behind us,  
Our soiled boots scuffle on the rocks.  
The laces once pure, now tainted,  
The lanterns flicker overhead.

I know at home there is stew brewing,  
Onions sauteed in blissful satisfaction.  
My mouth waters for a meager bite,  
But there is no guarantee that I'll taste the warmth.  
No one promised me tomorrow's rising sun.  
No one promised me today's twilight.

A glance behind us at a clogged shaft,  
Once open and cleared.  
Yet our lips remain shut despite our memories' cry.  
Many cabins setting three plates, instead of four  
When the tired shaft could bear it no more.

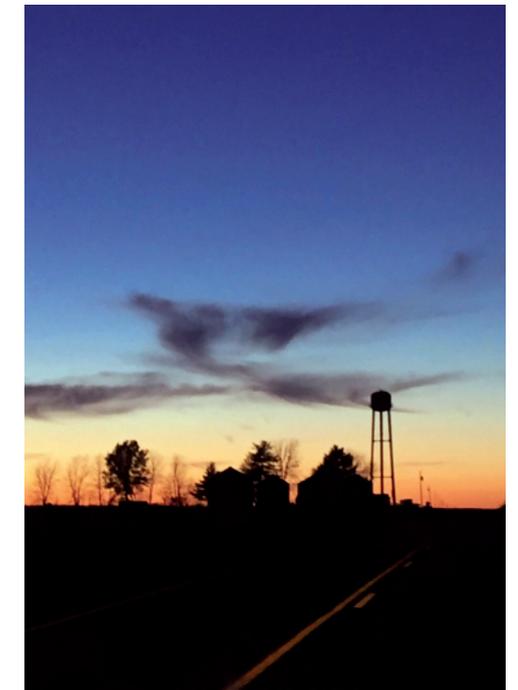
The pebbles trickle downward, thunk, thunk, thunk.  
We pause in silence, in trepidation.  
Hands still, except for the slight tremor of worry.  
We breathe out, We breathe in,  
Feeling no crushing weight,  
We press on.

I stumble as the rocks shift beneath me,  
Hitting my knees as ash meets calico.  
A river of red slides down my hand,  
Muddied with the dirt that will never taste rain.  
The bell sounds and we all stand upright,  
Surprised our spines can still straighten,  
Unlike Herman Moray's down the hill.  
I swipe at my face,  
Yet the black is still present.

The path home is worn,  
Well traveled by dirty soldiers coming home after war.  
My house is painted white,  
like dogwood leaves in the spring.  
A porch swing gently sways with the wind,  
A gentle breeze soothes my burning lungs.  
On the porch, I crush a bit of coal under foot.  
In the entry, I remove my ruined boots,  
Scrape my face of dust, grease, and weariness.

Outside the dust prevails,  
It remains the leader,  
The all prevailing force.  
Here the stew awaits on the iron stove,  
A spoon waits on the table,  
A fire gently coaxes the cabin's comfort,  
My wife and daughter bear happy smiles

Heave! Ho!  
The soot may never leave my skin,  
but it will never soil my home.



“Novelty, Missouri” by Adelyn Potter



“Free” by Max Bradshaw

## Blue Coconut Slush

By Rose Thomas

At the smell of springtime,  
I'd skip high school  
To gulp down icy  
Freedom.  
At the carhop,  
My tainted tongue  
Eagerly proclaimed  
Its craving for  
Color.

Youth – ripe and  
Blue.  
Exotic as Lolita's  
Silky skin and  
Cocky as Elvis'  
Shoes.  
Like my boyfriend's Ford  
Mustang - electric.  
I'd always wanted  
To steal it  
And escape to Vegas.

Crack! Pop, sizzle . . .  
The frigid elixir melted,  
Pooling under  
My warm tongue.  
Cooly, I tilted my head back  
And chilled as the puddle  
Pulled inward.  
Candy coated my throat,  
And my breath became frosty  
As I hummed  
Lana's "American."

Every spring since,  
When my goosebumps rise  
From the crispy, morning air,  
I roll my windows down  
To hear the  
Early-bird chirps,  
And, somehow,  
I taste it:

Vibrant, like downtown neon signs,  
And cold as the evening sky  
Who drowned the sun  
So its own stars could  
Shine.  
Hypnotized, fifty stars  
Spread their white legs  
For the promising  
Nylon flag.

Now, they are sewn.  
And can't help but to  
Wave in the hollow wind  
To the masses below.  
They call to me,  
But I am smarter now.  
Caramelized,  
Under hot, American  
Dreams.



## More Than a Plant

By Sara Gottschamer

### 3rd Place Poetry

A single drop,  
invigorative,  
permits life  
trickles  
down  
and around  
an emerald membrane  
to the centriole, of one's soul

Day after day  
delicacy unfolds  
blossoming  
into scarlet petals  
its' beauty exceeds all life  
attracting visitors from  
far and wide

It stands tall and proud  
all this wonder  
only to be plucked  
and fall lifeless  
upon the ground.



## A Weird Relationship

By Brittney Downey

I once knew a man from Kentucky  
Who slept with a turkey  
They stick together like glue

When he showered  
The turkey showered  
They stick together like glue

When he ate  
The turkey ate  
They stick together like glue

Whenever he went out  
The turkey went out  
They stick together like glue

It was a weird relationship  
One for the record book  
A relationship of a man and a turkey



“Tree” by Tyler Kraft



“Painting With Light” by Joshua Ladage

## Storm Struck

By Emaryn Larson

They always say lightning never strikes the same place twice, yet she can't stop herself from trying to disprove it. She found a place where it hadn't struck before – felt the power surge and leave through her. She told me how it filled her before taking everything away from her – leaving nothing but an empty shell. I couldn't see it though; she seemed so alive. I guess she knew how to hold up a mask. She told me that when the bolt hit her, she glowed, all that energy running through her body. She has witnessed the power of the storm – the power of the Earth – something a human was never meant to do. It was not for us. The power is too much for our brains to ever hope of understanding. That is why we used to sing and dance to call storms. She taught me this by taking me to feel it, too. The lightning reached down and found me, just like her. I know now why she was so empty because I was now empty, like she was. I never knew how empty really felt. No words could give it justice. So I will not try. You must feel it. Like I did. Storm-struck. Entranced.



## The Oldest Game

By Landon Williams

### 2nd Place Poetry

We arrive, fresh pair of eyes  
Old souls wrapped in timeless skies  
First touch of mother feels like wind  
Which is us and which is them?

Children learn to hear their name  
Through chorus of resounding praise  
Picking out a few good notes  
To help them keep the dream afloat

The game we play is a funny one  
We've so many lives to choose  
Some spend their first few thousand  
Stumbling over untied shoes

Laces made of fated thread  
Wise old hands are guiding them  
Through seasons amid a springing well  
Much to learn and more to tell

Reminded of the smoking gun  
Squinted eyes soak up the sun  
Gardens leap with help of rain  
Wisdom grows in name of shame

Rivers spring through canyons deep  
In the hearts of those who seek  
A place called home that has no walls  
Stronger than the redwoods tall



## Letting Go

By Ian Greene

### 2nd Place Prose

#### *In memory of my Grandfather*

The funeral didn't last that long in real life. For Laura, it must have lasted an eternity, only to end the moment they started shovelling dirt onto the casket. For a while it was just her, her mother, her father, her grandmothers on both her family's sides, her sister, and all her relatives. Her father wrapped his arm around his mid-teen daughter and held her tight. The spring sun may have been shining, but it might as well have been a cold winter for all Laura cared. She had just lost her grandpa to a stroke and already she began to miss him. As the people around her returned to their cars, she stayed put, looking down at her grandfather's grave. And just one day before his birthday as well.

"Laura, it's time to go!" her mother called out. Laura looked at the locket her grandpa gave her on her twelfth birthday; a picture of them on Halloween of that year when she dressed up as her favorite anime witch and he dressed up as the Scarecrow from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (the book version, not the movie). With a sigh, Laura took heavy steps back to her car, her head hanging low to the point her black hair covered her eyes. Charlotte, her sister, looked at her with sympathetic eyes and sighed, "I'm gonna miss

him too, sis. I'm gonna miss him too." Laura didn't reply; she just thought of the days ahead.

Laura sat in her bedroom, elbow propped up on her knee with her golden retriever, Goldilocks, resting her head on her lap. She was surrounded by posters for action movies and a few fantasy films her grandfather used to take her out to see growing up. Laura sighed in sadness before she heard someone knocking on the door. "Sweetie," her mother called out, "fresh clothes."

"Door's unlocked, Mom." She might as well have been a zombie. She sure felt like one.

The door creaked open as Sarah walked in, carrying a bundle of clothes in her arms. Goldie stood up, shook herself and padded out the door, leaving Laura with her mother. "So," Sarah started, breaking the pregnant pause, "How are you holding up?"

Laura looked at her mother from over her left shoulder, "How do you think?"

Sarah sighed as she took a seat next to her youngest daughter and wrapped her arm around her, "Laura, I know it's hard, but life keeps going on. Mourning is easy, it's getting over it that's the hard part." Sarah patted her daughter's shoulder.

"I promised him I'd get something for his birthday tomorrow," Laura told her mother, trying oh so very hard to hide her sobs behind a monotone. Sarah sighed and hugged her.

"Your father's ordering pizza for dinner by the way."

Laura grunted and went back to looking out her window. Once her mother left the room, she let the tears flow and sobbed, letting all her bottled-up emotions flow forth like the great falls of Niagara. It was cathartic, but it made her throat burn. Once she was done, she went into her bathroom to wash her hands and get ready for dinner.

Dinner was somewhat awkward for Laura as she only took nibbles of the Hawaiian pizza slice she would normally devour when she was in a brighter mood. Once she was done, she stood up out of her chair. "May I be excused, please?" Laura asked.

Laura's father, John, looked at her plate, "You're only eating one slice?"

Laura lowered her head as she walked to the stairs up to her room. "I'm not that hungry today." As she walked away, John and Sarah exchanged looks as they watched their daughter walk upstairs. Sarah was about to follow her until John placed a hand on his wife's shoulder.

"Just give her some time, sweetie," he told her. Sarah nodded softly at her husband, and sat back down.

Laura plopped down on her bed, her eyes still wet with freshly shed tears and a lump in her throat. She was dressed in her crescent moon and rising sun-colored pajamas her aunt had given her for Christmas two years ago. Surprisingly, they still fit even after all that time. On her neck was her pendant. She uttered one last sniffle before closing her eyes and letting sleep take hold of her.

"Laurie," Laura's eyes snapped open at the sound of her nickname. She was no longer in her room, as she found out from the wisps of fog and the soft grass underneath her. Instantly, she shot up and looked around, feeling the grass tickling in between her bare toes and the wind blowing against her hair. She looked into the sky and saw the moon and the sun both in the same place in a perpetual state of twilight.

*Am I dreaming?* Laura thought. She must have been, there was no other way to explain the sight before her. Yet the sights and the feel of the cool wind and dew-kissed grass made her think otherwise. "Laurie," the voice called out again. She looked around, her brown eyes scanning the bizarre landscape.

"Hello?" she called out. The voice sounded familiar but she couldn't put her finger on it. Just then, a shadow swooped over the girl. If this was a dream world, one could only imagine what the birds were like . . . if they were birds. Suddenly,



"Purple Flower" by Tyler Kraft

she could feel the ground rumble before her as though two anvils had dropped down behind her. There was also the sound of something breathing. Something big.

A chill began to run down Laura's spine as her skin burst into goosebumps. She could feel her palms slick over with sweat as her heart threatened to burst from her chest. Slowly, she turned around and what she saw caused her to suck in her breath in shock. It was a dragon, easily twice the size of a polar bear. Its batlike wings, tail, and serpentine neck encompassed the majority of its body. Midnight-blue scales the size of Laura's head hid its soft skin and reflected the sun and moonlight's rays like polished mirrors. Its tail ended in a sharp spike, reminiscent of a misshapen arrowhead. A surprisingly wolf-like head capped its long neck along with a crown of antler-like horns. Narrow, burning-red eyes bared down at the girl in front of it as it sat in a rather dog-like position on its four legs.

"Um, hello." Laura greeted a creature which haunted her from fairy tales she read about as a kid. The dragon just growled and stood perfectly still like a statue, the only sign of movement being its nostrils which flared as it breathed. Laura gave the beast a sheepish grin and started to take a step back. However, the moment she even moved slightly, the dragon flared out its wings and encircled them around itself and the girl. The very movement caused Laura to yelp as she dashed

away from the beast, nearly slipping on her bare feet; she ran for the hills . . . or anywhere away from the beast. As she continued running, she heard the dragon give out what could only be described as a wolf and a humpback whale singing a duet before the *woosh* of rushing wind came after, followed by the sound of heavy, beating wings, a dead giveaway it was now airborne.

"Laurie, you're going the wrong way," the voice told her again. Laura ignored the voice as she tried to gain speed. However, she knew it wouldn't matter how fast she would get, the dragon would eventually catch up to her.

"Laurie, listen to me," the voice spoke again, "you have to go back to the dragon."

"And what," she asked, about to throw up from her adrenaline rush, "get barbecued!?"

"The dragon isn't trying to hurt you."

Irony begged to differ as a plume of aquamarine fire cut off her path. "You could have fooled me," Laura muttered. She began to run to the left of the flames only for the dragon to swoop by and cut her off again with another stream of technicolor fire.

"Laurie, all it wants is the locket," the voice told her. Laura gasped at the voice and looked down at her locket. She shook her head and wrapped her fist tight around the golden pendant.

"It can't have it. My grandfather gave it to me."



**"Sunrise over Lake Jacomo"** by Lindsay Cox



**“Stairs”** by Max Bradshaw  
3rd Place Visual Arts

Laura dropped down to her knees and started sniffing, “It’s all I’ve got left to remember him.”

“Are you sure?” the voice asked softly. “Open the locket.”

Laura opened her hand and stuck her finger nail between the door of her possession. She flipped it open and a wisp of blue light flowed out of it. She stood in rapture as the light twirled and coalesced into a human-like shape. Features started to take form upon the silhouette: eyes, arms, fingers, shoes, legs, and finally a familiar, wrinkled face with beady, yet loving brown eyes, and a beaming smile.

“G-Grandpa?” Laura whispered in awe and disbelief.

“Hey, Laurie,” her grandfather replied.

Laura rushed up, tears running down her cheeks in spite of a beaming smile, and gave him a hug, his ethereal form was as solid as her. They stayed like that for what seemed like forever, just grandfather and granddaughter. However, the moment was broken as the dragon trumpeted, causing Laura’s grandpa to break their embrace and sigh.

“Well,” he stated, “it’s time for me to go.”

Laura gasped. She was about to lose her grandfather just moments after she got him back. “Bu-but, Grandpa, you can’t leave!” Laura felt like she was going to cry. Her grandfather gave her a sad smile and brushed one of her bangs out of her face as to see both eyes.

“Laura,” he told her softly, “I’m not really here, you know that. It’s time for you to move on.”

“But I’ll miss you.” Laura sobbed.

“I know, but life goes on,” her grandfather told her. “It’s hard, I know, but I’ll always be there for you, right . . . here.”

He pointed to her heart. Just then, his body began to dissolve back into blue ether, the last shot of him being his smiling, loving face as he flowed back into the locket. Laura closed her eyes and snapped the locket shut. She opened her eyes and rose her face upward to the dragon standing right in front of her, its eyes looking much softer than earlier. She didn’t know if it had landed just now, or while she was speaking with her grandpa. Either way, she knew what had to be done. The dragon stretched out its right foreleg and spread out its talons like a homeless man begging for food. Laura pulled off her locket and walked forward very slowly. She took one last look at her keepsake for what seemed to be an eternity. She then placed it in the dragon’s hand. “Goodbye, Grandpa.” she whispered, as the beast’s talons closed on the locket. The dragon looked at her in sympathy and lowered its head as if wanting her to get on. She climbed onto its back. It then spread its wings and corkscrewed into the sky, its jaws loosening a twirling ribbon of fire. As she saw it fly off, she could see more dragons of all colors of the rainbow joining it in the horizon, each carrying a memento and a rider of all ages and gender.

*We are the keepers of memories*, Laura heard her dragon tell her in her mind, revealing its gender to be female. *We give the grieving a push to let go of the pain of loss. However, it is up to those who are mourning to move on themselves. Just like you, Laura.*

Laura could see the moon and sun coming closer together, forming a blinding light. It was so intense she had to close her eyes. When she opened them back up, she realized she was back in her room with Goldilocks laying on her bed. She realized what she needed to do.

She could hear her mom cooking breakfast, her sister watching TV and her father setting up the morning cup of joe. "Hey, Mom?" she called down.

"Yes, sweetie?"

"Can we go visit Grandpa's grave today?"

There was a pregnant pause that hung heavily in the house. "Are you sure you want to do that?"

"Yeah, it's just something I need to do."

Sarah paused but shrugged. Closure was closure after all. If she was to start, might as well start now.

Later that day, Sarah drove the car up to the cemetery gates, and Laura and Charlotte got out. The sisters headed over to their grandfather's gravemaker and sat down in front of it. "Hey, Grandpa," Laura started, "I got you a little

something because, y'know, considering the date and all." She then slipped off her locket, opened it up so the picture inside was visible for all to see, and placed it on the cross. She teared up a bit but wiped them away with a sad smile. She felt Charlotte place her hand on her shoulder before she turned to see her bearing the same saddened smile as her. She just non-verbally told her sister, "We're gonna get through this together."

Once she pulled herself together, Laura stood up with Charlotte and began to sing.

*"Happy birthday to you;*

*Happy birthday to you;*

*Happy birthday, dear Grandpa;*

*Happy birthday to you..."*



**"Loose Park"** by Kathy Tracy

## Waiting for Western Civ

By Megan Hall

Every other day, out of the corner of my eye,  
I see the place where we first kissed.  
It was very awkward, in hindsight.

Every other day, I sit for ten minutes, waiting for my next class,  
under the stairs where we would talk and admire the watercolor gloom of Missouri.  
I try to think of Hawaii.

Every other day, I walk into the same classroom where  
I tried to figure out what I was two years ago -  
the first time someone called out the teacher in me.

Every other day, I pass by the place where you met her.  
I'm glad she fits you better than I did.

It's too long ago to justify caring,  
so I crack and scratch the ice from my car  
and it slides down the glass  
and disappears  
so I can finally leave.



**“Eventful”**  
by Brenda Phillips



**“Stargazer Lily”** by Lindsay Cox  
**1st Place** Visual Arts

## The Little Boy Who Made Me a Princess

By Madison Clark

### 3rd Place Prose

When I passed fifth grade and headed into sixth, my mother decided that she would homeschool me, as she was already doing with my sister. Homeschooling gave me the chance to make some great friends and grow deeper in my relationship with God. We came to the knowledge, however, that homeschooling did not offer as many opportunities for dances and such, so my mom planned special nights for my friends and me.

On one of these nights, when I was about fourteen, my two closest friends, Kristen and Megan, accompanied me. Megan wore a shorter purple dress with a black sweater, Kristen wore a longer gown with a shiny wrap, and I wore a ruffled dress that hit the floor, accented with rhinestones. I felt beautiful in that dress.

We went to the Cheesecake Factory, and then on an open carriage ride with red, velvet-lined seats. My friends and I tried practicing the royal wave, and our driver, clad in a cowboy hat and

plaid shirt, told us, "It's all in the wrist." I am sure he was quite amused by our giddiness. The entire night was magical, but what I will never forget is the little boy watching us drive by. As my friends and I rode by in our carriage, feeling beautiful, a little boy exclaimed to his mother, "Look, mom, princesses!" I never felt more like a princess than in that moment. I will forever cherish that memory. Thank you, little boy, who I will probably never meet again, for making that day more special than I could have imagined.

I will never forget this night with my friends, who have since moved on in their lives, and who I don't see very often. What I realize as I think about this memory is this; I didn't need a boyfriend or a date to prom to feel special. I just needed a God who loved me, a couple close friends, and a little boy on a sidewalk.



## The *Shorelines* faculty adviser and editors would like to thank the following for their expertise in judging the award-winning entries:

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