Crown Hill Cemetery
by Melissa King

Sitting in the cemetery I look over the beauty before me. The large shady trees, the flowers, plants, and flags that loved ones have placed carefully there. And then I look at the tombstones themselves with their intricate detail, swirly script, and thoughtful messages. I wonder how many of these were patients who flat lined on the exam table or how many were victims of gunshots, self-inflicted or otherwise. How many were old? How many were young? How many had known death was coming? How many were ready to go? How many knew the Lord? How many are missed? How many have I passed on the street? I come here on sunny days to seek solace; peace. This is it: the final resting place. It is constant; immobile; it will never change. This is my town, but will I be buried here? The names look familiar and unfamiliar. The place looks intimidating, but suffocating I am not. I can breathe to my lungs’ fullest capacity. I am free here; I am home.

Ever Beautiful
by Jennifer Jackson

Waynessence, the literary magazine of The University of Akron Wayne College, is published for the campus community to provide an audience for aspiring writers and artists. All materials are published with the consent of the contributors, who accept full credit for their work.

Artists, photographers, and writers have produced their own work independently. Their proximity in Waynessence does not reflect the intentions of authors or artists.
The Memory Remains
by Ashley Rohrer

The
Rows
Of
Something

In
Between
The
Lines
Of
Somewhere

In
Between
The
Circle
Of roads
That
Cross
The paths
Of
Mystery

Forsaken
By the
Battle
Between
HEARTS

As the
Roads
We go on
And the roads
We pass

No More
At
Last

Truth revealed in the end

Advisor’s Note
Semester after semester, year after year, we come together, separate, and perhaps meet again. Wayne College changes and grows. Waynessence is never the same either.

Enjoy this issue, filled with some of the best examples of Wayne student writing – and enhanced by a number of our visual artists.

Susanna K. Horn
Waynessence Advisor
The Smucker Learning Center
Innocence
by T J Salopek

I was walking with my friend one day
Just around the block to the park to play.
When suddenly there was a state of hell in the streets
And two gun shots knocked my friend off his feet.
At that moment he was staring death in the eye,
As everyone came to gather and cry.
Sirens cried out; for it looked as if help was on the way
But not even God could save this child today.
As the police looked at the innocent boy with two holes in his chest,
The one said to the other, another innocent has been put to death.
To this day that sidewalk is still red
From that innocent blood that had been shed.
Every year there is one white rose placed on that blood stained road,
With a message to all to never let another innocent fall.

A Dedication to My Father
by Alissa Chenevey

A Warm Breeze
Blows.
As The Sun
Rises.
It’s A Perfect
Morning.
They Were The Days You Loved.
Now You’re Part
Of This Sky.
Soar Like An Eagle,
For You’re In A Better Place.

Steve, The Latest
Edition To The Clouds.
Heaven’s Newest Carpenter.
Watch Over Us, And
We’ll Stay Strong.
Our Guardian Angel.

Note: The Waynessence staff reserves the right to choose and edit written submissions as well as art and photography based on length, technical accuracy, and audience considerations.
Writer and Artist Biographies

Beth Borham is an adult student at Wayne College majoring in social work. She lives and works in Orrville with her husband and son.

John Calvey from Chatham is Karen's husband and Josh and Matt's dad and master of Butterdog, Libby and Benny.

Alissa Cheney lives in Shreve. She will be transferring from Wayne to major in animal caretaking.

Amanda Conley is a student at Wayne and the editor of Waynesence.

Jacqueline Ferdarko is from West Salem.

Ayite A. Gaba is a tennis lover from Togo in West Africa, majoring in nursing.

Amanda Giovenco is a mother of three and a volunteer firefighter majoring in photojournalism.

Bethany Hogan is a nanny by trade who loves to write. She is currently majoring in English.

Barbara Ingram lives in Orrville and is a Social Service Tech. major.

Jennifer Jackson is a single mother of three and a Sociology/Criminal Justice major.

Janet Keith is using her own mind and finding her own voice for the first time. She is currently majoring in Social Services Technology.

Joanne Keller is a "nontraditional student," housewife and mother of four. She was born and raised in Sharon Center, Ohio and has never strayed too far from home.

Melissa King is a dietary employee at Brenn-Field Nursing Center in Orrville. She likes to read, write poems and short stories, and shout random French phrases.

William Lally is a former student at Wayne who has returned for more. He is interested in a wide variety of subjects as well as the arts.

Brandon Leatherman is a sophomore majoring in Liberal Arts.

Eric Morris is 20 years old, possibly majoring in journalism.

Brandon Noel is a full-time student who hopes one day to be a famous movie director or writer.

Peggy Parker of Norton is the Office Manager and Circulation Manager for the Barberton Herald, majoring in communications.

Ashley Rohrer uses her writing to express how she feels. In her spare time she likes to write, play basketball and listen to music.

George Rufener

Amanda Conley

In the dark, I hear her.

The whisper of a hip shifting,

A warm breath that flutters the

Hairs on my arm, then curls

To purr rhythmically against

The syncopation of my pulse.

The anticipation of leaving

Turns my body tense and cold.

Already suffering from withdrawal,

I yearn for my next bit of warmth.
high up into a tree with a chainsaw to cut down some branches. His parents are now afraid to leave him alone.

Both Tom and Charlotte begin to speak, one over the other. Neither pausing, they ask the question each in this group, over time, has asked. Although the words may be different, the question is always the same, and oftentimes pleading, as now: “What can we do? We can’t go on this way. How can we get our lives back to normal once again?”

Although it is apparent that Jennifer feels the same way, is her level of commitment as deep as Dan’s mother and father? Charlotte and Tom will always be his parents, but will Jennifer continue to be his wife? She is young with much life ahead of her. Will she choose to try and sustain a marriage with someone who is verbally and at times physically abusive? To live with a man who is self-centered and unable to hold a job?

Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to Tom and Charlotte’s question, as people cease to be, yet live. As marriages end, couples remain together. As fathers become childlike and children remain children, always. Somehow, somehow we must gradually learn to accept an unacceptable situation.

The answer is not one Tom and Charlotte want to hear.

Margarita Rosada
By: Jessica Waggy
SEPTEMBER 11TH IN ORRVILLE, OHIO
by Beth Borham

IT’S EARLY AND YOU HEAR THE ALARM; IT’S ANOTHER WORKDAY. THE SNOOZE BAR IS SO INVITING THAT YOU PUSH IT SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE YOU TURN IT OFF AND CRAWL OUT OF BED. YOU STAND BENEATH THE SHOWER AND HOPE THE “INVIGORATING” SHOWER GEL YOU BOUGHT WILL WAKE YOU UP. AFTER DRYING OFF, YOU STAGGER INTO THE KITCHEN TO GET YOUR FIRST CUP OF COFFEE. NOW YOU MUST AWAKE THE LITTLE ONES. THEY ARE LIKE MORNING SLUGS, MOVING AT AN INCREDIBLY SLOW PACE. YOUR MIND IS SHOUTING—“HURRY UP!” YOU ARE PATIENTLY TRYING TO TELL THEM TO “GET A MOVE ON,” AND “WE HAVE TO GO SOON.” YOU GET EVERYONE DRESSED AND OUT THE DOOR. IT SEEMS TO BE A DAY LIKE ANY OTHER. WITH HUGS, YOU DROP THE CHILDREN OFF AT DAY CARE AND GO TO WORK...

T

hat’s how I imagine the day started for the victims of the September 11th tragedy. They were ordinary people like you and me. They went to work to make a living until the unthinkable—the unbelievable—happened. Sometimes I wonder if they stopped to feel the autumn sun on their faces. The victims wouldn’t have known it was for the last time; but, somehow, I feel comfort in imagining that they took a deep breath of the crisp morning air and found some joy there.

As a parent, knowing the joy of raising and loving my child, I feel so sad to think of the parents who won’t get to watch their children grow. They will miss all of the milestones: the graduations, the weddings, and the lives of their children and grandchildren. As a daughter, I can remember how strange family holidays were after my father died. I remember waiting for him to enter the room and sit in his spot on the couch. My head knew he had passed away, but there was a place in my heart that didn’t grasp it. During this year that has passed I have found my thoughts straying to the victims families, especially during the various holidays.

The day of September 11th is so shocking it will stay with me forever. The question of, “Where were you when Kennedy was shot?” has been replaced by, “What were you doing on September 11th?” I was at work making calls when a lady called me an airplane had crashed into one of the World Trade Towers. At first, I thought that surely she was mistaken; then reality kicked in and I was glued to the news. Like many, I just wanted to be home with my husband and son. I just wanted to hold them close and know they were safe. I wanted the assurance that there was some sanity left in the world.

I remember sitting on the porch swing after I got home from work and listening to people going by in a panic. They were rushing to the grocery store or the gas station. I suppose that many felt the need to be in control of something. In the unknown moment, the need to do something compelled them to stock up the kitchen, to have a tank full of gas. From my porch swing I could see the line at the Shell station (now the Citgo Station). People were panicked, and a few arguments broke out over the gas pumps. Cars were lined up down the street. We watched the police cruisers circling the stations. Everyone had a level of alarm. I heard that gas prices would be between five and ten dollars by the next day, that they were already over five dollars in Columbus. I called my mother who lives near Columbus and she told me she had heard the same thing about gas prices in Cleveland. The rumor mill swelled with sensationalism.

On the news we watched the World Trade Towers get crashed into over and over, and yet kept watching, trying to make sense of the senselessness of it all. Like many children, my son was afraid we would all die.

Impossible Acceptance
by Peggy Parker

(Some names have been changed in the following essay to protect family privacy)

2003 – 2004 Writing Award Winner – 1st Place, Personal Essay

At the end of the long corridor we sit together on the chairs and benches lined along the wall. Although talking in low tones, our voices resonate against the high-ceiling walls as the three of us wait for the appointed hour. Our eyes follow in the direction at the sound of footsteps coming down the hallway. A middle-aged couple and a younger woman walk toward us and also sit down. We smile politely at one another, but our eyes reflect deep sadness. No questions are asked—there will be time for that later—we have not been introduced. A lonesome silence now fills the hallway.

It is seven o’clock Wednesday evening at Edwin Shaw Hospital. This is when the families of survivors of traumatic brain injury meet to receive and offer support to one another. Avery, a counselor, arrives and, opening the framed glass doors, we enter into the familiar conference room and sit down at the large table. Another counselor, DeAnna, joins us and begins our meeting by introducing us.

Tonight we meet a new family, Tom, Charlotte and Jennifer. Tom is tall with a body that has worked years of hard physical labor. His wife, Charlotte, has dark circles under her eyes; quiet weariness exudes from her. Their daughter-in-law, Jennifer, came with them, but appears as though she would rather be somewhere else by her fidgeting and lack of eye contact. They are here because their son and husband, Dan, has been injured. What do we say to them? “Sorry to meet you,” because no one wants to see someone else enter into our realm. It is a place where lives have been shattered and remaining pieces must somehow be put together. Of course we don’t say such a thing to these new people, but looks of understanding sorrow are exchanged with, for some reason, a slight embarrassment.

With a gentle voice, Avery next encourages each of us to explain how we came to be a part of this group. The first to begin is Sandy.

Sandy has an injured son. As she begins to speak, we see her once sparkling eyes and ready laugh become shrouded as she relives the life-altering event in her mind. Her son, Johnny, thought it would be fun to go “surfing” on top of his friend’s car while his friend was driving. The car swerved, but Johnny could not overcome the force that plunged him onto the street. Alcohol and drugs in his body provided the wisdom for such a stunt. Johnny was taken by helicopter to a hospital and was not expected to live through the night. Sandy struggles with her next words. She pauses; with a deep inhale of breath the words come quietly and with shaky voice, “It would have been better had he not lived.” We all absorb the impact of her statement. Sandy next reveals that her daughter just moved out of their home because Johnny’s violent threats were too much to bear.

To the right of Sandy is Dawnie. She somberly states that on a bright October afternoon, her son Ray left home to pick up a paycheck from work. At six o’clock that evening she received a heart-stopping phone call from the hospital informing her that Ray had been seriously injured in a car accident. He, also, had not been expected to survive, but with much time and therapy, is making progress. Ray hopes some day to no longer need his wheelchair.

It is now my turn. I briefly tell how my husband, Randy, while making a minor repair on the roof of our house, slipped and fell. The fall of twelve feet lasted but a moment; the result of his head striking the concrete patio will last a lifetime. I confess that he is now totally irresponsible and often abusive. I am learning how to handle the bizarre situations he creates, such as when he calls the police on our children over minor incidents and purchases new vehicles.

Although a little uneasy, Charlotte feels comfortable enough to speak of Dan’s struggle. She explains that after his injury, Charlotte gave up her high-powered career, became a homemaker and lack of eye contact. They are here because their son and husband, Dan, has been injured. What do we say to them? “Sorry to meet you,” because no one wants to see someone else enter into our realm. It is a place where lives have been shattered and remaining pieces must somehow be put together. Of course we don’t say such a thing to these new people, but looks of understanding sorrow are exchanged with, for some reason, a slight embarrassment.

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Although a little uneasy, Charlotte feels comfortable enough to speak of Dan’s struggle. She explains that after his motorcycle accident, he and Jennifer moved in with her and Tom. Too many bills and a need for recuperation made this seem like the ideal solution. Of course, it would only be temporary. But he isn’t exactly the Dan they once knew. Often angry and too impulsive, his reasoning is warped. He is now on medication and restricted from driving and using other machinery. Dan doesn’t like these restrictions and won’t follow them. Recently, while no one was at home, he climbed...
by giving ourselves gladly to bless them, as laughter and camaraderie became part of each task and each moment with the children.

We also spent one day of each trip shopping in a little Indian village. The authentic market was vivid with sights, sounds, and smells that we were unaccustomed to. Chunks of raw meat hung from metal hooks and attracted swarms of flies. Tables lined with homemade candies and other sweets buzzed with honey bees. Hand embroidered clothes displayed the natives’ love for vibrant colors. Because of the exchange rate between US dollars and Mexican pesos, we would be able to buy beautiful mementos for a fraction of their value.

Our group would go out to eat every evening because the orphanage did not serve supper. The children were given milk and cookies or sometimes jello and leftover beans for a bedtime snack. We needed more than that to keep us going after a hard day’s work.

In every way imaginable our trip to Mexico would be quite different from our vacation in California. But we wouldn’t exchange the experience for anything.

I had slipped easily into the posh life-style of the west coast, and I would slip joyfully into the underprivileged life-style of a Mexican orphanage. The culture and class of the one had adorned my life, but the love and gratitude of the other would enrich my spirit.

“Ladies and gentlemen, the captain and crew wish to thank you for flying with us tonight. We hope you enjoyed the ride. To our passengers who live in Cleveland, welcome home. To the rest of you, have a safe and happy journey.”

I grabbed as many backpacks as I could manage, hoisted a drowsy London onto one hip, and with a hand on Savannah’s shoulder, slowly maneuvered my way out of the plane. It was time to go home!

Fishing
by Amanda Giavenco

It’s mind boggling to think of children growing up in countries constantly at war and coping daily. For days there was no sound of planes overhead. The silence in stores was eerie. People spoke in hushed tones.

Orrville seemed even more courteous than usual. We were all a bit more polite: we were aware of our humanness, of how treasured each moment is, and how precious each of us is. A feeling that everything was surreal was upon us as we tried to go about our daily lives. In my experience, I don’t ever remember patriotism being so great. I waited in line to give blood, and like many wore a flag pin. Nothing we could do was enough.

My aunt, a native New Yorker, told me about going to the hospitals to volunteer. Unfortunately, most of the people they saw were frantically searching for family members who worked in the area. There weren’t many injured to assist.

Hearing of the thousands of victims, my mind couldn’t really comprehend it. Every individual who died had family and friends who loved them. The numbers could stagger you if you thought about it. Everyone has dreams, and I wondered about the dreams and accomplishments that the victims would now not achieve. I thought about goals and dreams that we all put off, or don’t try because we make barriers or roadblocks, and tell ourselves we can’t. Twenty years after graduating from high school, I applied to college. They were very helpful at Wayne College. I ignored the voice that tells me all the things I can’t do, and I went. It may take me six years to get a two-year degree, but I’m grateful to have the opportunity. In a way, I feel I’m going for all those who no longer have the option to try. Life goes by swiftly, and we can get so busy with the unimportant things that we forget to step back and regroup. How sad that it took a tragedy like September 11th to make me (and others) stop and think about what’s important. As the anniversary of that heartbreaking day approaches, I think of the families of the many victims; in my heart I wish them peace.
What happened to the past? When did it end and when did now begin? It doesn’t feel like time has taken me away. But I have woken in a new place. A place where yesterday drifts away and tomorrow never comes. Feelings of love are still there, but lots of the ones I love are not. Every day the gap in time gets bigger, but in return is refilled. This gap is filled with pain and sorrow. I look upon the photographs grasping on to what once was. Wishing I could keep some of what I once had, yet the reality that it is impossible, is enough to break my heart. What I would not give to fix those breaks and to repair the damage that has been done in the past. As my tears fall into the passing time, seconds go by; then it turns into days, then into years. Now the tears have made a river. A weaker person could die in this river of pain. But my broken heart keeps on fighting, struggling, holding back the overflowing river of pain. With hope that some day I will once again have the happiness that I so long for.

What Happened to the Past?
by Kelly Elaine (Hamrick Aasen) Sawtell

Waffles and Burritos
by Bethany Hogan

“Flight attendants, please prepare the cabin for landing.” The pilot’s voice over the intercom jarred me from my fitful slumber. I yawned and looked out the window. The lights of Cleveland gleamed through the darkness below. I was home! Or at least I would be after 10 minutes of prodding sleepy children through the airport and down to baggage claim, another 30 minutes of waiting for my boss to bring the truck around from the park ‘n’ fly, and a 45 minute drive to our house.

Landing gear bumped the runway, and I learned over to rouse the sleeping six-year-old beside me. “Put your shoes on, Sweetie,” I commanded gently.

The art of corralling four children in the right direction while wrestling backpacks, teddy bears, and jackets had become second nature to me in my year and a half of working as nanny for a wealthy chiropractic family. Vacations, business trips, and missionary endeavors were a regular part of our year.

On this particular occasion, we were just returning from a business trip to California. My bosses had been attending a chiropractic seminar at the Ritz Carlton Hotel. We combined business with pleasure and spent our Thanksgiving holiday at this luxurious hotel. For almost a week we indulged in delectable entrees prepared by professional chefs and slept in exquisite beds of downy softness. We made a daily trek to the beach where Baby London chased sea gulls and the rest of us built sand castles and played in the cold Pacific water. The Mrs. and I both received massages at the hotel spa while my boss played with the kids in the hotel swimming pool. On Thanksgiving Day, we dressed in our handsomest, stiffest clothes and attended a banquet prepared in one of the hotel restaurants.

I may have felt guilty about the extravagance of this luxurious vacation if it had been my choice of destination. But being only the hired help, I really had no say in the matter. So I participated with relish in a lifestyle I was not accustomed to. Our next trip might slightly balance out the scale.

In six weeks we would be leaving for Mexico. Our destination would be an orphanage in Morelia. We had been to this orphanage once before, so we knew what to expect. No opulent luxuries awaited us there. Hard concrete floors would ring with the sound of sturdy work shoes. Rice and beans and ground beef burritos would be our bill of fare. Thin bunk bed mattresses would support our weary bones at night.

Instead of enduring the indifferent stares of the pretentiously wealthy, we would be greeted by laughing brown eyes shining out of cute brown faces. Instead of lounging at the beach, we would be up at dawn and hard at work by eight, wielding paint brushes, toting buckets of cement, or pushing wheelbarrow loads of brick across the courtyard. Instead of signaling to smartly dressed waiters for another glass of wine, we would be drinking bottled water from multi-colored plastic cups.

In Mexico reality would stare us starkly in the face. Maybe through hard labor we could do penance for our extravagance. Everywhere we looked we would see partially built houses, begun with brick and finished off with cardboard when the money ran out, bumpy dirt roads lined with obnoxious advertisements for Corona and Pepsi, and dogs running wild in the streets.

Twice a year we made this journey in order to do physical labor for the orphanage. On our last trip to Mexico, we had painted the outside of the Home. The outer, stucco walls were freshened up with a sunshine-yellow paint while the windows were trimmed in bright blue. This time we would be building an addition onto the workshop. The Home’s resident handyman was especially grateful for our help as most of the other workers at the orphanage were girls who took care of the children.

But our trips to Mexico were not all hard work. We took time out of every day to play with the children. Their love and warmth and joy more than made up for any sacrifices we had to make. And we would become better people.
MY HOME
by Ayite A. Gaba

I know where I’m going
I know what I’m looking for
I know I’m not safe in the open air
And I want to go home.
I know my home is Love
Love that keeps away from solitude.
Love that keeps away from sadness
Love that brings happiness in Life.
I want to go home but I can’t.
I haven’t found the right key yet.
I was almost desperate when I found you.
You restore hope in me.
And when I think about you
I tell myself,
FIGHT FOR BEING OFF
THE HOOK OF SOLITUDE.

The Core of Sweetness
by Jennifer Jackson

Oh my love, with your eyes set a blaze
flood me with light through this spider web maze.
The moon shone magically over the sultry night
to feed the flames that grow into sight.
Your image is peacefully dulling the thorn
a spirit attended will no longer mourn.
With the voice of a nightingale you serenade my soul
pull it and fill it to float in the glow.
I dream of a dream under a small velvet crest
I bury my head in your sweet tender chest.
Your fingers entwine through each silken strand
holding on tight to keep as safe as you can.

Time’s Moments
by Eric Morris

Time is our great eraser
Sifting our precious minutes away
Nothing sails high forever
These moments are yours to take
Time offers no sympathy for regrets
By gones will forever be gone
Floating off to become memories
Sent to the fields of the lost
Climb life’s highest mountain
Travel life’s deepest sky
Stand tall in these moments
I beg you to live up this time
Memories will slip through your fingers
And leap into the vacant unknown
Each moment is monumental
And temporarily yours to own
For when the moments last stand
Exits to be withdrawn
You’ll speak to your silence
Where has my time gone?

Wheels of Life
by Jeannette Thompson

Untitled
by Melissa King

Be Still
by Jennifer Jackson
**Word Game**  
(Imagination)  
by Janet Keith

Love should be a celebration  
More than just a sex relation  
Not a game of domination  
Nor used as an abomination  
Love can exist outside your station  
Can lure you in through its temptation  
Love can be a revelation  
It can lead to life creation  
Love is pure without deviation  
Without the promise of ingratiating  
Don’t let it die with your stagnation  
Lift it up to the point of elation  
Love will fill you with realization  
Cannot survive emaciation  
Love can bind an entire nation  
And it will wilt in isolation  
Hearts feel love with palpitations  
Love is shared by reciprocation  
It doesn’t thrive on stipulation  
But can survive through tribulation  
Don’t spill your love through evisceration  
Love is friendship upon graduation  
It will always hold its fascination  
Love is life’s highest exaltation.

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**Let It Be**  
by Jennifer Jackson

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**A Christmas Decoration**  
by George Rufener

On the cold gray afternoon  
of a bitter Christmas eve  
from clouds of filthy ashen gray  
a shaft of golden light breaks through  
The dust of snow from morning  
set hills and trees asparker  
a gilded landscape all laid out  
in gold and shadow lush relief  
The setting sun now peeking out  
the light spreading across the land  
and in the air a fragile streak  
of color stretched across the clouds  
a rainbow bright against the sullen sky.
Tuesday: The day I found out Barry died
by Barbara Ingram

Death! Have you no discernment?
You take the very glimmer from the skies
leaving a half-hearted twilight.
And I am left;
this unforgiven, broken foot who has
no right to the heavens
nor any star to ride.

Hesitate not when rendering your next decision
to slight the skies once more.
Take instead this wretched heart.
Let me live in your savage ground
With worms as my choir – my conspirers.

Death, you play no fair game.

And I am left;
As the leaders or execution talk of the time coming
So does the time till the passing
And stops as another tear rolls
This is the world he knows
Pain coming, yet unknown
All is not lost of this place
For there is remembrance
Mourning the inevitable

The Whisper
by Brandon Noel

Life set to die
Pain coming, yet unknown
The caring now in black,
Mourning the inevitable

As the sands fall,
So does the time till the passing
So much emotion and pain
As the leaders or execution talk of the time coming

The next evening over steak and baked potatoes she confessed to him that she did not smoke, and was in fact allergic to cigarette smoke. Bill decided not to tell her that he was a smoker; instead, he nodded his head in agreement and emphatically declared the nastiness of the habit. Due to Joanna’s strong dislike for cigarettes, Bill decided that thirty years was long enough, and that it was time to trade one love for a possible one other.

A couple of weeks went by, and Bill had almost kicked the habit. He had gotten down to a mere five cigarettes a day, and he was feeling fine; withdrawal wasn’t making him want to change his mind yet. As a bonus, he could smell and taste foods better than he’d been able to do for thirty years, and his energy level was a lot higher. Overall, Bill was in higher spirits than normal, too. He began to wonder why he didn’t quit years ago.

He stayed at five cigarettes a day for the next two weeks. The Sunday at the end of those two weeks he decided to totally quit. He woke up, put on a pot of coffee, and took his half empty pack of cigarettes to the bathroom. He opened up the box and dropped them into the toilet one by one. After they were all in, he pushed the handle and watched them swirl around, and then they were gone. He threw the empty pack into the wastebasket. I’m finally done, he thought.

An entire week went by smoke-free. He craved the calming effect of the nicotine, and he’d gained three pounds, but he wouldn’t let himself indulge. Whenever he got that particular yearning, he’d chew on a stick of Wrigley’s Double Mint and tell himself that he felt better.

The Sunday at the end of the smokeless week, Bill got out of bed, slipped on his blue robe over his white tee shirt and striped boxers, and walked out into the kitchen to brew coffee. He stopped just inside the kitchen, and his mouth watered as he watched the coffeemaker swirl around, with the aroma of freshly brewed coffee filling the air. He turned the water and the garbage disposal off, poured some coffee into a mug, and sat down at the table.

“How in the world did you get on my table?” he muttered aloud, not realizing that he was talking to a pack of cigarettes. They, of course, refused to give up their secret.

Bill got up from the table and walked over to the sink. He flipped the switch above the counter that turned on the garbage disposal, and turned the water on in that sink. One by one he dropped the cigarettes into the whirling blades until he had an empty pack in his hands. He ripped the pack into little pieces, celophane and all, and tossed them down the garbage disposal as well. He turned the water and the garbage disposal off, poured some coffee into a mug, and sat down at the table.

After three cups of coffee he decided it was time to take a shower. He walked down the hall to his bedroom and over to his dresser. He reached for the drawer in which he kept his boxers, but his hand stopped short of the pull-knob.
Lying on top of the dresser was the pack of Camel Lights in a box, only they didn’t look at all like they’d just been through a garbage disposal and purged. He was sure there were no cigarettes on top of his dresser when he got up that morning, nor had there been any there for an entire week. Heart beating heavily, he picked up the pack and opened the lid.

Sixteen unused cigarettes stood at attention inside the box.

“They’re multiplying,” he exclaimed to the bedroom, “my cigarettes are breeding!”

This time he didn’t take a walk around the house. He knew that everything that was closed and locked three cups of coffee ago would still be closed and locked now. So he picked up the box of Camel Lights and went out the front door, down the sidewalk, and stopped when he reached Second Street, which ran in front of his house. He tossed the pack of cigarettes out into the road, and walked backward to his house, never taking his eyes off the pack of cigarettes.

They didn’t move.

He cautiously walked up the steps in reverse until his back touched against the door. He opened the door, stepped backwards into his house, and closed the door. His eyes never left the cigarettes, except for when the door swung through his line of sight. He stood at the window of the door staring at the cigarettes, too scared to blink, waiting for a car to run them over. Two drove past without touching them, but the third, a Grand Am, crushed them with the right front tire, and then again with the rear. The pack tumbled two feet down the road, and then just lay there.

Bill let out a sigh of nervous relief, then turned around and started toward the kitchen. He got as far as seven steps, and then let out a scream. On the carpet, just outside the doorway to the kitchen, lay a pack of Camel Lights.

He screamed again, ran back to the front door, and looked out the window. The pack of cigarettes that had been smashed on the road twelve seconds ago was now gone.

He screamed again, ran back to the cigarettes, and snatched them off the carpet. This time he noticed something he hadn’t seen when he saw them on the floor. The pack was sealed, its cellophane not broken anywhere. It was a full pack. Twenty cigarettes.

Mouth wide open, he gawked down at that unopened box of Camel Lights in his hands. Those twenty vices that, for the past thirty years, he could count on to make him feel better during rough times when he had nothing else to turn to. Now they were betraying him. Now, when he most wanted them to be gone, they refused; his anger at their stubbornness was just as sharp as his amazement at the absurdity of the situation. He’d tried drowning them, smashing them, and even to purée them in the garbage disposal. Old habits die hard, he thought to himself. The ironic part was that if this had been any other situation, he’d be smoking a cigarette, calming himself down and trying to think through the problem.

He chuckled at this thought. There was nothing humorous that he could find in the situation, but chuckling was the only thing he could think of to do, short of crying. Unless…

Of course, he thought, I’ll burn them! That’s what’s supposed to happen to them anyway! If I burn them, they’ll go away!

He went into the kitchen and got a box of wooden matches from a drawer beside the gas stove. He took the matches and cigarettes back into the living room, opened the pack of cigarettes, and pulled each one out, setting them on the stone floor in front of the open mouth of his fireplace. He withdrew a match and lit it from the side of the matchbox. His hands were shaking so badly that he was afraid the match would go out or that he would drop it, but neither happened. So, he picked up one of the cigarettes and touched its dry face to the flaming tip of the match. When the cigarette was burning enough to ensure that it wouldn’t go out, he put it in the fireplace. He repeated the process with the second, third, and fourth cigarettes; soon all twenty of them were smoldering in the fireplace, their white smoke lazily curling its way up the chimney. Then he lit another match and held it up to the empty cigarette box, catching it on fire as well. This he tossed on top of the cigarettes, and then closed the folding glass doors and watched them burn until there was nothing left but ashes.

Still feeling paranoid, he spent the next three hours going through every hole and cubby of his house, searching for any pack of cigarettes that might have magically appeared from thin air. He found nothing.

Filled with relief and a great sense of closure, he proceeded to take a shower. Thirty-five minutes later he got out of the shower, dried off, and got dressed. As he was dressing, the phone rang.
I was sitting at a restaurant having my usual lunch and a newspaper, when a large group of seven ladies with a child of eight years or so came into the restaurant. They were all well dressed and seemed very polite. They were looking around for the largest table they could find. There it was, right next to mine. The little boy’s mom had seated him first as the rest of the ladies began to be seated at the table.

Then I heard something that changed my whole outlook. The boy began to call the ladies by their first names. “Mom, I don’t want you to sit by me! I want Mary and Barb to sit by me,” he said in a loud, demanding voice. His mother and the other ladies obliged his wish, moving around again like a “Chinese re-arranging.”

“I don’t want you to sit by me! I want Mary and Barb to sit by me,” he said in a loud, demanding voice. His mother and the other ladies obliged his wish, moving around again like a “Chinese fire drill.” The boy was now content. Throughout their conversation, the boy called the ladies by their first names time after time.

“How disrespectful! I never, NO NOT EVER could have gotten away with that,” I thought. Calling adults by their first names as a child! My backside hurt just thinking about it. The boy’s mother never reprimanded him in any way. My mother surely would have made it hard for me to sit down. My father, well, I don’t think I would be alive today. That was always deemed as disrespect to my elders. “Doesn’t she care if this young man has any manners at all?” I was thinking to myself.

I suddenly realized, I’m in a different world today than I was back then. My mind began to question the world I live in. When did “not being so formal” turn into “its ok to be disrespectful”? “How could this woman not care enough to teach him right from wrong? How could she just stand there and allow this? Why didn’t one of the other women at the table say something? Don’t they know the importance of formally addressing our last names?”

My parents believed our last names were as important as being an American. We showed pride in who we were and respect for others, by using their last names formally. “Wow, what a change!” I began to think how important a last name really is. How we as a society don’t even use last names any more, and this is an everyday norm.

Now my thoughts had shifted to the pride of the last name. When a woman marries, she takes the man’s last name, and with pride in becoming his wife. How can women become wives without their husbands’ last names? Anyone can give a baby a first name, but it’s the last name that puts the infant in the family. Even our government won’t send all of our sons to war, for fear that the family name could not continue from generation to generation. Our history is in our last name, our “family tree.” Who we are and where we come from should still hold as much pride and demand as much respect as it did in my “old world.”

Dusting off the rulebook of manners in my mind, the lack of respect was too much for me to accept. I wanted to say something to the boy’s mother. If only I could bring myself to tell her how wrong she was, how wrong the whole world was. However, without making a scene, I quickly finished my meal. Tucking my paper under my arm, I got up to leave, biting my lip the whole way out the door.

He picked up the receiver on the third ring. It was Joanne, calling to make sure that he hadn’t forgotten about their dinner plans for the evening. He assured her that he hadn’t (due to the day’s events, though, he had), and that he’d meet her at The Terra Rica Restaurant at seven o’clock sharp. They said good-bye and hung up.

He met her at Terra Rica as planned, with the events of earlier in the day fading quickly like a strange dream after the dreamer wakes up. She commented on his good mood, and he just shrugged his shoulders and smiled.

Over a delicious dinner of lobster, steamed rice, and asparagus, they talked about their lives, their dreams, their likes, and their dislikes. She giggled like a young girl when he did impersonations of celebrities and politicians (he did a terrible mimicry of Sean Connery), and his heart caught in his throat when she took hold of his hand from across the table, looked into his eyes, and told him that he was the most enchanting man she’d ever met. He began to feel young and free again; she gave him a sense of comfort that he’d never known before.

After the dinner she asked him if he would split a piece of chocolate mocha soufflé with her. He agreed, and placed the order with the waiter. The waiter came back three minutes later with a silver tray covered with a silver lid, two clean plates, two clean dessert forks, and a clean knife for cutting the piece of cake. He set the things on the table, and then divided the plates and forks between the two of them. Last, he pulled the lid off the silver tray.

“May I get anything else for the fine couple this evening?” asked the waiter.

Bill looked down at the tray and the blood left his face. His breath hitched in his throat a couple of times, and when it caught he let out a scream. On the silver tray was a pile of unopened boxes of Camel Lights.

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After she had gotten over the initial shock of his actions, Joanne looked down at the silver tray. The chocolate mocha soufflé just sat there, unmoved by the drama.
**PRISONER #89637-132**
(for Leonard Peltier)
by Tracy Rupp

From 1492 to 1976, you remained an anonymous gleam of hope in the eyes of your ancestors, as they were raped robbed imprisoned killed.

Until the end of your life, and beyond, whether housed in concrete and razor wire, or set free, youth burned at the stake, a sacrificial lamb, the gleam will remain, now a trail of tears, prisms of light, an homage, a sundance. No chins will tremble, for strength has been your gift to a faithful posse of traditionalists, and mixed-breeds like me.

Mandela, my hero, Chief White Horse Eagle, my ancestor; I look to the Martyr’s Mirror for guidance, and reflected back I see your faces and the face of Leonard Peltier, jaw locked in painful remnants of childhood ills, yet still bearing the shadow of a smile: a man, a leader, a warrior, a face behind a number, praying in the Black Hills from a makeshift sweat lodge in Leavenworth, Kansas, remaining true to himself, to his people, in the Spirit of Crazy Horse.

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**ROYAL PAIN**
by Valerie Starkey

Drowsy smoke rings drift from Father’s mouth and disappear above his ratty recliner throne in our trailer-castle.

He has the divine right of kings . . .

But God never stopped him.

The pipe’s shiny body begs to be cradled in gentler fingers, like Mama, bowing beneath blows from his shotgun scepter.

His robe’s not purple velvet, but dirty yellow cotton, full of holes like my headboard.

He didn’t mean to hurt the sleeping prince . . . just scare him.

But his aim was bad from the booze.

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**First Place**
"I look to the Martyr’s Mirror for guidance, and reflected back I see your faces"

**Honorable Mention**
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AWARDS

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Sixteen unused cigarettes stood at attention inside the box.

“They’re multiplying,” he exclaimed to the bedroom, “my cigarettes are breeding!”

This time he didn’t take a walk around the house. He knew that everything that was closed and locked three cups of coffee ago would still be closed and locked now. So he picked up the box of Camel Lights and went out the front door, down the sidewalk, and stopped when he reached Second Street, which ran in front of his house. He tossed the pack of cigarettes out into the road, and walked backward to his house, never taking his eyes off the pack of cigarettes.

They didn’t move.

He cautiously walked up the steps in reverse until his back touched against the door. He opened the door, stepped backwards into his house, and closed the door. His eyes never left the cigarettes, except for when the door swung open at the window.

Bill let out a sigh of nervous relief, then turned around and started toward the kitchen. He got as far as seven steps, and then let out a scream. On the carpet, just outside the doorway to the kitchen, lay a pack of Camel Lights.

Bill twirled around, ran back to the front door, and looked out the window. The pack of cigarettes that had been smashed on the road twelve seconds ago was now gone.

He screamed again, ran back to the cigarettes, and snatched them off the carpet. This time he noticed something he’d never noticed before when he saw them on the floor. The pack was sealed, its cellophane not broken anywhere. It was a full pack. Twenty cigarettes.

Mouth wide open, he gawked down at that unopened box of Camel Lights in his hands. Those twenty vices that, for the past thirty years, he could count on to make him feel better during rough times when he had nothing else to turn to. Now they were betraying him. Now, when he most wanted them to be gone, they refused; his anger at their stubbornness was just as sharp as his amazement at the absurdity of the situation. He’d tried drowning them, smashing them, and even to purée them in the garbage disposal. Old habits die hard, he thought to himself. The ironic part was that if this had been any other situation, he’d be smoking a cigarette, calming himself down and trying to think through the problem.

He chuckled at this thought. There was nothing humorous that he could find in the situation, but chuckling was the only thing he could think of to do, short of crying. Unless…

Of course, he thought, I’ll burn them! That’s what’s supposed to happen to them anyway! If I burn them, they’ll go away!

He went into the kitchen and got a box of wooden matches from a drawer beside the gas stove. He took the matches and cigarettes back into the living room, opened the pack of cigarettes, and pulled each one out, setting them on the floor in front of the open mouth of his fireplace. He withdrew a match and lit it from the side of the matchbox. His hands were shaking so badly that he was afraid the match would go out or that he would drop it, but neither happened.

So, he picked up one of the cigarettes and touched its dry face to the flaming tip of the match. When the cigarette was burning enough to ensure that it wouldn’t go out, he put it in the fireplace. He repeated the process with the second, third, and fourth cigarettes; soon all twenty of them were smoldering in the fireplace, their white smoke lazily curling its way up the chimney. Then he lit another match and held it up to the empty cigarette box, catching it on fire as well. This he tossed on top of the cigarettes, and then closed the folding glass doors and watched them burn until there was nothing left but ashes.

Still feeling paranoid, he spent the next three hours going through every hole and cubby of his house, searching for any pack of cigarettes that might have magically appeared from thin air. He found nothing.

Filled with relief and a great sense of closure, he proceeded to take a shower. Thirty-five minutes later he got out of the shower, dried off, and got dressed. As he was dressing, the phone rang.

The weather was cold and damp. Rain pelted the small group of seven scouts and their Scoutmaster. This hike was difficult for 12-14 year old scouts. The steep and rolling trail – skimpy at best – was slickened by the cold pouring rain. Slippery roots grabbed the tired wet shoes and frequently sent a boy tumbling. “Damn it!” said Dick — a scout who would attain the Eagle rank — as he tripped and almost fell. Dave whispered a curse as he sprawled to the ground, his heavy pack making it almost impossible to get back on his feet.

“Let’s move it, guys!” yelled Bob Slocum, the troop’s one-legged Scoutmaster, waving one of his clamp-on wrist-crutches for emphasis. Slocum had lost a leg to war. Despite his handicap, he moved along the trail in firm sweeping strides. Compared to Korea, this hike must have seemed like a walk along the New Jersey shore. Pulling scouts to their feet when needed, he urged them on saying, “We’ll make dinner and vanilla pudding after we set up camp.”

After what seemed like a never-ending march, a location for the campsite was reached and the seemingly lead-filled packs were dropped against a tree. Steam rose from the heads and shoulders of the exhausted boys as they also quickly sat and leaned against the trees in an attempt to rest. “Set up the tents, the tent fly, and gather dry sticks from the tree trunks because they won’t be as water-logged as ones from the ground,” instructed Mr. Slocum.

The boys pulled themselves, begrudgingly, to their feet and did as they were told. Eventually a fire was built, Mr. Slocum showing Dick the “how to’s” of starting one in the rain. The hungry lads, like a pack of wolf cubs, gobbled down a dinner of macaroni and cheese, hot dogs and apples. Then Mr. Slocum heated some water to boiling and added boxed of powdered Jell-O pudding mix and powdered milk. “Dave, stir this until it’s thick, but don’t sample any,” he said. It was Dave’s favorite pudding and after the long arduous hike he was still very hungry. He had helped his mother make pudding many times, so this was an easy job for him. “Finally, something easy to do,” he thought.

The mixture started to boil and the sweet scent of vanilla filled the air. Dave looked longingly at the light beige liquid and craved the first taste. With a quick look at the Scoutmaster who was behind him and looking the other way, Dave turned and stuck his finger into the pot. The wonderful flavor barely registered on his taste buds when…WHAM!

Lights flashed behind his eyes before the pain registered on the top of his head. “I told you not to touch that!” a loud voice screamed. It took only a split second to realize it was Scoutmaster Slocum’s voice and a bit longer to realize what had happened. As Dave turned he saw the weapon, a large mixing spoon, in Mr. Slocum’s hand. A scowl twisted his lips and the glow of campfire heightened the anger in his eyes.

“Ow!!! That hurt,” exclaimed Dave.

“Maybe, next time you won’t sneek. We work together and THEN eat,” said the stern voice, beginning to soften. Dave noticed the wide-eyed look in the eyes of the other scouts. “Undoubtedly, they will never try this trick,” he thought.

The subject of the rap on the head was only heard later in an occasional snide remark, whispered so Slocum couldn’t hear. Dave heard comments like: “Want a lick of pudding? Huh, Heh, Heh” and “How about some pudding, Daveeet?!”

When the scout returned home, his mom had him immediately remove his campfire-stench clothes in the basement and go directly to the shower. After he showered she lovingly began to brush out the knots in his curly blond hair. “What happened to your head?” she asked, noticing the scab beginning to form.

“I learned a lesson,” he said. As the story began to unfold, he noticed a smile start to lift the corners of her mouth.

THE PUDDING LESSON

by John Shaffer

2003 – 2004 Writing Award Winner – 3rd Place, Personal Essay
Tuesday: The day I found out Barry died
by Barbara Ingram

Death! Have you no discernment?
You take the very glimmer from the skies
leaving a half-hearted twilight.
And I am left;
this unhonored, broken fool who has
no right to the heavens
nor any star to ride.

Hesitate not when rendering your next decision
to slay the skies once more.
Take instead this wretched heart.
leaving a half-hearted twilight.
Death, you play no fair game.
To slight the skies once more.
no right to the heavens
nor any star to ride.

And he falls to his knees to remain forever.
He can still hear the whisper of the lost
Of the now lost
Except for one
All is not lost of this place
All is lost
except for one
This one is now alone
And as he steps out
Tears flow down
This is the world he knows
This, one, turns
And stops as another tear rolls
He can still hear the whisper of the lost
And he falls to his knees to remain forever.

Old Habits Die Hard
by Brandon Leatherman

Bill Burns decided to quit smoking.
For thirty years, since he was fifteen years old, Bill had been a faithful contributor to the paychecks of the employees of the R. J. Reynolds Company, the makers of Camel cigarettes. Sometimes he smoked a pack a day; sometimes it was two packs. There was a stretch, after a bitter divorce from his wife twelve years earlier, that he peaked out at three packs a day for about a month. For the most part, though, a pack and a half did him well.

He didn’t need to quit; his doctor said that he was fit as a fiddle, more fit than most people ten years younger than him. However, the doctor told him (as doctors always do) that quitting would be in his best interest. He didn’t decide to quit to please his doctor, though.

Bill Burns decided to quit for a woman.
One day in the produce section of the local Giant Eagle, Bill met a lovely woman named Joanne. She had accidentally dropped a dozen or so apples from a display stand, and he stopped to help her pick them up. They stood around and talked for a while, found out they had a lot in common, and they made plans to have dinner.

The next evening over steak and baked potatoes she confessed to him that she did not smoke, and was in fact allergic to cigarette smoke. Bill decided not to tell her that he was a smoker; instead, he nodded his head in agreement and emphatically declared the nastiness of the habit. Due to Joanna’s strong dislike for cigarettes, Bill decided that thirty years was long enough, and that it was time to trade one love for a possible other.

A couple of weeks went by, and Bill had almost kicked the habit. He had gotten down to a mere five cigarettes a day, and he was feeling fine; withdrawal wasn’t making him want to change his mind yet. As a bonus, he could smell and taste foods better than he’d been able to do for thirty years, and his energy level was a lot higher. Overall, Bill was in higher spirits than normal, too. He began to wonder why he didn’t quit years ago.

He stayed at five cigarettes a day for the next two weeks. The Sunday at the end of those two weeks he decided to totally quit. He woke up, put on a pot of coffee, and took his half empty pack of cigarettes to the bathroom. He opened up the box and dropped them into the toilet one by one. After they were all in, he pushed the handle and watched them swirl around, and then they were gone. He threw the empty pack into the wastebasket. I’m finally done, he thought.

An entire week went by smoke-free. He craved the calming effect of the nicotine, and he’d gained three pounds, but he wouldn’t let himself indulge. Whenever he got that particular yearning, he’d chew on a stick of Wrigley’s Double Mint and tell himself that he felt better.

The Sunday at the end of the smokeless week, Bill got out of bed, slipped on his blue robe over his white tee shirt and striped boxers, and walked out into the kitchen to brew coffee. He stopped just inside the kitchen, and his mouth flopped open. There on the kitchen table was a pack of Camel Lights. He picked the pack up and opened the lid; twelve cigarettes lay in the pack.

He put the pack back on the table, went to the cutlery rack, and withdrew the butcher knife. He snuck around his house, checking doors and windows, looking in every closet and under every bed for an intruder that may have come into his house during the night and forgotten to take the cigarettes with them. However, there was nobody anywhere, and all of the doors and windows were still locked.

He returned to the kitchen, put the knife away, fixed coffee, and sat down at the table.

“How in the world did you get on my table?” he muttered aloud, not realizing that he was talking to a pack of cigarettes. They, of course, refused to give up their secret.

Bill got up from the table and walked over to the sink. He flipped the switch above the counter that turned on the garbage disposal, and turned the water on in that sink. One by one he dropped the cigarettes into the whirling blades until he had an empty pack in his hands. He ripped the pack into little pieces, cellophane and all, and tossed them down the garbage disposal as well. He turned the water and the garbage disposal off, poured some coffee into a mug, and sat down at the table.

After three cups of coffee he decided it was time to take a shower. He walked down the hall to his bedroom and over to his dresser. He reached for the drawer in which he kept his boxers, but his hand stopped short of the pull-knob.
A Moonlit Night
by John Calvey

The waxing autumnal moon rose, hesitantly, on my shoulder as we walked along the grassy leaf-strewn path. Libby rustled thru the corn that stood sentry beside the thorny clumps of blackberry and the wild brambles of multi-floral rose, long since grown up; given that the old man had passed away. The cows the young farmer had displaced would have inhibited their growth; instead, the endless rows of rustling corn stacks danced in their place. Ben, my large, muscular black Lab intermittently slackened and strained against his weathered leather lead as he sniffed along the darkened, wooded edge. Occasionally, Butterdog, our orange striped tom would rush by us, ghost like. Then crouch, waiting, straining, eyeing us as if we were some succulent prey passing, then pounce again.

My eyes, now accustomed to the dark, watched awestruck as the night’s sky unfurled its mysterious beauty before us, this rag-tag band of comrades. Was it on a night such as this that Troy was captured? Did Caesar’s blood lay cold upon the senate floor, or perhaps the mighty Egyptian Pharaohs’ glorious templar Pyramids were sanctified by sacrifice on evenings, moon drenched and starry such as these? Were the Ancients far nobler and important in their time than this little band of miscreants walking across the old farmer’s land? Yet, we are here and they are past, or do they travel still on their mighty steeds? While the mountains dance across the clouds of oceanic plains and up the building mountains or the cloudy rolling hills, tonight they look down upon my gang of four. Yes, a rather humorous group to see, Butterdog, Benny, Libby, and me.

Word Game
(Imagination)
by Janet Keith

Love should be a celebration
More than just a sex relation
Not a game of domination
Nor used as an abomination
Love can exist outside your station
Can lure you in through its temptation
Love can be a revelation
It can lead to life creation
Love is pure without deviation
Without the promise of ingratiating
Don’t let it die with your stagnation
Lift it up to the point of elation
Love will fill you with realization
Cannot survive emaciation
One can bind an entire nation
And it will wilt in isolation
Hearts feel love with palpitations
Love is shared by reciprocation
It doesn’t thrive on stipulation
But can survive through tribulation
Don’t spill your love through evisceration
Love is friendship upon graduation
It will always hold its fascination
Love is life’s highest exaltation.

Em
by Joanne Keller

Still deeply rooted in childhood
My tomboy is holding onto her rough and tumble ways
Her feminine features begin to make their presence known
The freckles on her nose and cheeks increase with the summer sunshine
Dark brown eyes, framed with thick lashes
Her boy-cut short hair is soft and silky (Washed frequently now, voluntarily!)
Her baby face is evolving into one of a young lady
Her impending beauty will be a thorn in her side
She will begin to feel differently
Boys will think of her in a new way
Confirming what she already suspects, yet deniers
The world will see the beautiful young woman she has become
But I will always treasure the tomboy that hides within.

Let It Be
by Jennifer Jackson

A Christmas Decoration
by George Rufener

On the cold gray afternoon
of a bitter Christmas eve
from clouds of filthy ashen gray
a shaft of golden light breaks through

The dust of snow from morning
set hills and trees aspikle
a gilded landscape all laid out
in gold and shadow lush relief

The setting sun now peeking out
the light spreading across the land
and in the air a fragile streak of color stretched across the clouds
a rainbow bright against the sullen sky
MY HOME
by Ayite A. Gaba

I know where I’m going
I know what I’m looking for
I know I’m not safe in the open air
And I want to go home.
I know my home is Love
Love that keeps away from solitude.
Love that keeps away from sadness
Love that brings happiness in Life.
I want to go home but I can’t.
I haven’t found the right key yet.
I was almost desperate when I found you.
You restore hope in me.
And when I think about you
I tell myself,
FIGHT FOR BEING OFF
THE HOOK OF SOLITUDE.

The Core of Sweetness
by Jennifer Jackson

Oh my love, with your eyes set a blaze
flood me with light through this spider web maze.
The moon shone magically over the sultry night
to feed the flames that grow into sight.
Your image is peacefully dulling the thorn
a spirit attended will no longer mourn.
With the voice of a nightingale you serenade my soul
pull it and fill it to float in the glow.
I dream of a dream under a small velvet crest
I bury my head in your sweet tender chest.
Your fingers entwine through each silken strand
holding on tight to keep as safe as you can.

Time’s Moments
by Eric Morris

Time is our great eraser
Sifting our precious minutes away
Nothing sails high forever
These moments are yours to take
Time offers no sympathy for regrets
By gones will forever be gone
Floating off to become memories
Sent to the fields of the lost
Climb life’s highest mountain
Travel life’s deepest sky
Stand tall in these moments
I beg you to live up this time
Memories will slip through your fingers
And leap into the vacant unknown
Each moment is monumental
And temporarily yours to own
For when the moments last stand
Exits to be withdrawn
You’ll speak to your silence
Where has my time gone?

Wheels of Life
by Jeannette Thompson

Untitled
by Melissa King

Waiting here for it to begin,
Love lost, broken sin
Wanting, wishing to be free
Needing so much just for once to see
What life could be like someplace else
Maybe in another life
Or perhaps a dream
I could find my perfect world
Where I could just be me

The Graduate
by Joanne Keller
What happened to the past? When did it end and when did now begin? It doesn’t feel like time has taken me away. But I have awoken in a new place. A place where yesterday drifts away and tomorrow never comes. Feelings of love are still there, but lots of the ones I love are not. Every day the gap in time gets bigger, but in return is refilled. This gap is filled with pain and sorrow. I look upon the photographs grasping on to what once was. Wishing I could keep some of what I once had, yet the reality that it is impossible, is enough to break my heart. What I would not give to fix those breaks and to repair the damage that has been done in the past. As my tears fall into the passing time, seconds go by; then it turns into days, then into years. Now the tears have made a river. A weaker person could die in this river of pain. But my broken heart keeps on fighting, struggling, holding back the overflowing river of pain. With hope that some day I will once again have the happiness that I so long for.

What Happened to the Past?
by Kelly Elaine (Hamrick Aasen) Sawtell
by giving ourselves gladly to bless them, as laughter and camaraderie became part of each task and each moment with
the children.

We also spent one day of each trip shopping in a little Indian village. The authentic market was vivid with sights,
sounds, and smells that we were unaccustomed to. Chunks of raw meat hung from metal hooks and attracted swarms
of flies. Tables lined with homemade candies and other sweets buzzed with honey bees. Hand embroidered clothes
displayed the natives’ love for vibrant colors. Because of the exchange rate between US dollars and Mexican pesos, we
would be able to buy beautiful mementos for a fraction of their value.

Our group would go out to eat every evening because the orphanage did not serve supper. The children were given
milk and cookies or sometimes jello and leftover beans for a bedtime snack. We needed more than
that to keep us going after a hard day’s work.

In every way imaginable our trip to Mexico would be quite different from our vacation
in California. But we wouldn’t exchange the
experience for anything.

I had slipped easily into the posh life-style of
the west coast, and I would slip joyfully into the
underprivileged life-style of a Mexican orphanage.
The culture and class of the one had adorned my
life, but the love and gratitude of the other would
enrich my spirit.

“Ladies and gentlemen, the captain and crew
wish to thank you for flying with us tonight. We
hope you enjoyed the ride. To our passengers who
live in Cleveland, welcome home. To the rest of
you, have a safe and happy journey.”

I grabbed as many backpacks as I could
manage, hoisted a drowsy London onto one hip,
and with a hand on Savannah’s shoulder, slowly
maneuvered my way out of the plane. It was time
to go home!
SEPTEMBER 11th IN ORRIVILLE, OHIO
by Beth Borham

IT’S EARLY AND YOU HEAR THE ALARM; IT’S ANOTHER WORKDAY. THE SNOOZE BAR IS SO INVITING THAT YOU PUSH IT SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE YOU TURN IT OFF AND CRAWL OUT OF BED. YOU STAND BENEATH THE SHOWER AND HOPE THE “INVIGORATING” SHOWER GEL YOU BOUGHT WILL WAKE YOU UP. AFTER DRYING OFF, YOU STAGGER INTO THE KITCHEN TO GET YOUR FIRST CUP OF COFFEE. NOW YOU MUST AWAKEN THE LITTLE ONES. THEY ARE LIKE MORNING SLUGS, MOVING AT AN INCREDIBLY SLOW PACE. YOUR MIND IS SHOUTING—“HURRY UP!” YOU ARE PATIENTLY TRYING TO TELL THEM TO “GET A MOVE ON,” AND “WE HAVE TO GO SOON.” YOU GET EVERYONE DRESSED AND OUT THE DOOR. IT SEEMS TO BE A DAY LIKE ANY OTHER. WITH HUGS, YOU DROP THE CHILDREN OFF AT DAY CARE AND GO TO WORK...

That’s how I imagine the day started for the victims of the September 11th tragedy. They were ordinary people like you and me. They went to work to make a living until the unthinkable—the unbelievable—happened. Sometimes I wonder if they stopped to feel the autumn sun on their faces. The victims wouldn’t have known it was for the last time; but, somehow, I feel comfort in imagining that they took a deep breath of the crisp morning air and found some joy there.

As a parent, knowing the joy of raising and loving my child, I feel so sad to think of the parents who won’t get to watch their children grow. They will miss all of the milestones: the graduations, the weddings, and the lives of their children and grandchildren. As a daughter, I can remember how strange family holidays were after my father died. I remember waiting for him to enter the room and sit in his spot on the couch. My head knew he had passed away, but there was a place in my heart that didn’t grasp it. During this year that has passed I have found my thoughts straying to the victims families, especially during the various holidays.

The day of September 11th is so shocking it will stay with me forever. The question of, “Where were you when a plane hit the Tower?” has been replaced by, “Where were you doing on September 11th?” I was at work making calls when a lady I called told me an airplane had crashed into one of the World Trade Towers. At first, I thought that surely she was mistaken; then reality kicked in and I was glued to the news. Like many, I just wanted to be home with my husband and son. I just wanted to hold them close and know they were safe. I wanted the assurance that there was some sanity left in the world.

I remember sitting on the porch swing after I got home from work and listening to people going by in a panic. They were rushing to the grocery store or the gas station. I suppose that many felt the need to be in control of something. In the unknown moment, the need to do something compelled them to stock up the kitchen, to have a tank full of gas. From my porch swing I could see the line at the Shell station (now the Citgo Station). People were panicked, and a few arguments broke out over the gas pumps. Cars were lined up down the street. We watched the police cruisers circling the stations. Everyone had a level of alarm. I heard that gas prices would be between five and ten dollars by the next day, that they were already over five dollars in Columbus. I called my mother who lives near Columbus and she told me she had heard the same thing about gas prices in Cleveland. The rumor mill swelled with sensationalism.

On the news we watched the World Trade Towers get crashed into over and over, and yet kept watching. Trying to make sense of the senselessness of it all. Like many children, my son was afraid we would all die.

Impossible Acceptance
by Peggy Parker

At the end of the long corridor we sit together on the chairs and benches lined along the wall. Although talking in low tones, our voices resonate against the high-ceiling walls as the three of us wait for the appointed hour. Our eyes follow in the direction at the sound of footsteps coming down the hallway. A middle-aged couple and a younger woman walk toward us and also sit down. We smile politely at one another, but our eyes reflect deep sadness. No questions are asked—there will be time for that later—we have not been introduced. A lonesome silence now fills the hallway.

It is seven o’clock Wednesday evening at Edwin Shaw Hospital. This is when the families of survivors of traumatic brain injury meet to receive and offer support to one another. Avery, a counselor, arrives and, opening the framed glass doors, we enter into the familiar conference room and sit down at the large table. Another counselor, DeAnna, joins us and we begin our meeting by introducing us.

Tonight we meet a new family, Tom, Charlotte and Jennifer. Tom is tall with a body that has worked years of hard physical labor. His wife, Charlotte, has dark circles under her eyes; quiet weariness exudes from her. Their daughter-in-law, Jennifer, came with them, but appears as though she would rather be somewhere else by her fidgeting and lack of eye contact. They are here because their son and husband, Dan, has been injured. What do we say to them? “Sorry to meet you,” because no one wants to see someone else enter into our realm. It is a place where lives have been shattered and remaining pieces must somehow be put together. Of course we don’t say such a thing to these new people, but looks of understanding sorrow are exchanged with, for some reason, a slight embarrassment.

With a gentle voice, Avery next encourages each of us to explain how we came to be a part of this group. The first to begin is Sandy.

Sandy has an injured son. As she begins to speak, we see her once sparkling eyes and ready laugh become shrouded by mystified vulnerability. It is now my turn. I briefly tell how my husband, Randy, while making a minor repair on the roof of our house, slipped and fell. The fall of twelve feet lasted but a moment; the result of his head striking the concrete patio will last a lifetime. I confess that I am now totally irresponsible and often abusive. I am learning how to handle the bizarre situations he creates, such as when he calls the police on our children over minor incidents and purchases new vehicles.

Although a little uneasy, Charlotte feels comfortable enough to speak of Dan’s struggle. She explains that after his motorcycle accident, he and Jennifer moved in with her and Tom. Too many bills and a need for recuperation made this seem like the ideal solution. Of course, it would only be temporary. But he isn’t exactly the Dan they once knew. Often angry and too impulsive, his reasoning is warped. He is now on medication and restricted from driving and using other machinery. Dan doesn’t like these restrictions and won’t follow them. Recently, while no one was at home, he climbed
high up into a tree with a chainsaw to cut down some branches. His parents are now afraid to leave him alone.

Both Tom and Charlotte begin to speak, one over the other. Neither pausing, they ask the question each in this group, over time, has asked. Although the words may be different, the question is always the same, and oftentimes pleading, as now: “What can we do? We can’t go on this way. How can we get our lives back to normal once again?”

Although it is apparent that Jennifer feels the same way, is her level of commitment as deep as Dan’s mother and father? Charlotte and Tom will always be his parents, but will Jennifer continue to be his wife? She is young with much life ahead of her. Will she choose to try and sustain a marriage with someone who is verbally and at times physically abusive? To live with a man who is self-centered and unable to hold a job?

Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to Tom and Charlotte’s question, as people cease to be, yet live. As marriages end, couples remain together. As fathers become childlike and children remain children, always. Somehow, somehow we must gradually learn to accept an unacceptable situation.

The answer is not one Tom and Charlotte want to hear.

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Margarita Rosada

By: Jessica Waggy
Beth Borham is an adult student at Wayne College majoring in social work. She lives and works in Orrville with her husband and son.

John Calvey from Chatham is Karen's husband and Josh and Matt's dad and master of Butterdog, Libby and Benny.

Alissa Chenovey lives in Shreve. She will be transferring from Wayne to major in animal caretaking.

Amanda Conley is a student at Wayne and the editor of Waynessence.

Jacqueline Ferdarko is from West Salem.

Ayite A. Gaba is a tennis lover from Togo in West Africa, majoring in nursing.

Amanda Giovenco is a mother of three and a volunteer firefighter majoring in photojournalism.

Bethany Hogan is a nanny by trade who loves to write. I am currently majoring in English.

Barbara Ingram lives in Orrville and is a Social Service Tech. major.

Jennifer Jackson of Rittman is a single mother of three and a Sociology/Criminal Justice major.

Janet Keith is using her own mind and finding her own voice for the first time. She is currently majoring in Social Services Technology.

Joanne Keller is a "nontraditional student," housewife and mother of four. She was born and raised in Sharon Center, Ohio and has never strayed too far from home.

Melissa King is a dietary employee at Brenn-Field Nursing Center in Orrville. She likes to read, write poems and short stories, and shout random French phrases.

William Lally is a former student at Wayne who has returned for more. He is interested in a wide variety of subjects as well as the arts.

Brandon Leatherman is a sophomore majoring in Liberal Arts.

Eric Morris is 20 years old, possibly majoring in journalism.

Brandon Noel is a full-time student who hopes one day to be a famous movie director or writer.

Peggy Parker of Norton is the Office Manager and Circulation Manager for the Barberton Herald, majoring in communications.

Ashley Rohrer uses her writing to express how she feels. In her spare time she likes to write, play basketball and listen to music.

George Rufener

Tracy Rupp is a mom, a social work major, and an archery enthusiast who mans the crisis line at The Counseling Center. Her written works have been featured in Nature Friend, The Daily Record and in Seeds of Truth, which was translated into Romanian.

Kelly Sawtell is the mother of one, majoring in Business Management.

John Shaffer is retired and reinventing himself as an artist/writer.

T J Salopek is a student ambassador for Wayne College.

Valerie Starkey of Creston is a Postsecondary student who loves writing, art, and theatre.

Jeannette Thompson

Jessica Waggy is a student assistant at Wayne College and will graduate from The University of Akron with a degree in Communication.

Addicted to Love
by William Lally

In the dark, I hear her.
The whisper of a hip shifting,
A warm breath that flutters the Hairs on my arm, then curls
To purr rhythmically against
The syncopation of my pulse.

The anticipation of leaving
Turns my body tense and cold.
Already suffering from withdrawal,
I yearn for my next bit of warmth.
Innocence
by T J Salopek

I was walking with my friend one day
Just around the block to the park to play.
When suddenly there was a state of hell in the streets
And two gun shots knocked my friend off his feet.
At that moment he was staring death in the eye,
As everyone came to gather and cry.
Sirens cried out; for it looked as if help was on the way
But not even God could save this child today.
As the police looked at the innocent boy with two holes in his chest,
The one said to the other, another innocent has been put to death.
To this day that sidewalk is still red
From that innocent blood that had been shed.
Every year there is one white rose placed on that blood stained road,
With a message to all to never let another innocent fall.

A Dedication to My Father
by Alissa Chenevey

A Warm Breeze
Blows.
As The Sun
Rises.
It’s A Perfect
Morning,
They Were The Days You Loved.

Now You’re Part
Of This Sky.
Soar Like An Eagle,
For You’re In A Better Place.

Steve, The Latest
Edition To The Clouds.
Heaven’s Newest Carpenter.
Watch Over Us, And
We’ll Stay Strong.

Our Guardian Angel.

Uh Oh!
by Amanda Conley

Note: The Waynessence staff reserves the right to choose and edit written submissions as well as art and photography based on length, technical accuracy, and audience considerations.
Editor's Note
This semester has proven to be both more challenging and more rewarding than I had anticipated. With the addition of the Editor's Choice Poetry Award, the number of written submissions exceeded my expectations. The quality of the submissions, both written and artistic, confirms my belief that Waynessence provides an outstanding opportunity for Wayne College students. I am extremely appreciative of the editorial staff's enthusiasm and unity in putting together this edition of Waynessence.

Advisor's Note
Semester after semester, year after year, we come together, separate, and perhaps meet again. Wayne College changes and grows. Waynessence is never the same either.

Enjoy this issue, filled with some of the best examples of Wayne student writing – and enhanced by a number of our visual artists.

Susanna K. Horn
Waynessence Advisor
The Smucker Learning Center

Advisor's Choice
Untitled
by Jeannette Thompson

Special Acknowledgments from the Staff
God, for guiding us
Susanna Horn
Carolyn Freelon
Dean Jack Kristofco
All the Writing Instructors
SOPAC
Everyone who submitted to Waynessence

The Memory Remains
by Ashley Rohrer
The Rows Of Something
In Between The Lines Of Somewhere
In Between The Circle Of roads That Cross The paths Of Mystery
Forsaken By the Battle Between HEARTS
As the Roads We go on And the roads We pass
No More At Last
Truth revealed in the end

As the Roads We go on And the roads We pass
The days go by On and on
The memory remains
As the Roads We go on And the roads We pass
The spell binding tale Through life Will win In the end
As The days go by More and More Secrets lie in The heart held Within your soul.

Moth Texture
by John Shaffer

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Susanna K. Horn
Waynessence Advisor
The Smucker Learning Center
Crown Hill Cemetery
by Melissa King

Sitting in the cemetery I look over the beauty before me. The large shady trees, the flowers, plants, and flags that loved ones have placed carefully there. And then I look at the tombstones themselves with their intricate detail, swirly script, and thoughtful messages. I wonder how many of these were patients who lined on the exam table or how many were victims of gunshots, self-inflicted or otherwise. How many were old? How many were young? How many had known death was coming? How many were ready to go? How many knew the Lord? How many are missed? How many have I passed on the street? I come here on sunny days to seek solace; peace. This is it: the final resting place. It is constant; immobile; it will never change. This is my town, but will I be buried here? The names look familiar and unfamiliar. The place looks intimidating, but suffocating I am not. I can breathe to my lungs’ fullest capacity. I am free here; I am home.

Ever Beautiful
by Jennifer Jackson

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Waynessence, the literary magazine of The University of Akron Wayne College, is published for the campus community to provide an audience for aspiring writers and artists. All materials are published with the consent of the contributors, who accept full credit for their work.

Artists, photographers, and writers have produced their own work independently. Their proximity in Waynessence does not reflect the intentions of authors or artists.