Fall 2010

Writers and artists at work

Waynessence
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Fall is a bit unique in the world of education. While the rest of humanity views the season as a time when the world winds down—days shorten, leaves fall, and calendars dwindle—folks in our world see each fall as a new beginning! Fall blossoms at Wayne College this year like never before! With a new, eager, and incredibly talented Editor-in-Chief, Charlotte Lorson, and a bumper crop of creative contributions from across the college community, we think this edition of Waynessence marks one of our greatest beginnings yet!

We hope you agree that the new binding adds an even more professional look to this semester's Waynessence. Join us in thanking Wayne College and SOPAC for their continuing support of this ever-evolving publication! And a special shout-out goes to Carolyn Freelon for her technical support and vision!

It seems as if the skill and creativity of Wayne College students, faculty, and staff grow by leaps and bounds each term. This semester, writers and artists submitted more quality work than we could include within our pages! So, please enjoy the staff’s selections, and consider contributing your own work to Waynessence next semester!

Susanna K. Horn
John C. Lorson
Waynessence Co-Advisors
Honey Bee On Flower
by Thomas R. Smith

Staff

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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.
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Goat at the Wayne County Fair .......... Judith Bridger ......................... title page
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This past summer my son and I accompanied my wife on a work trip to San Diego. We had some free time, and enjoy baseball, but the San Diego Padres were out of town. However, there were tours of Petco Park. I signed us up. I will never forget the tour, but not because of all of the bells and whistles of beautiful Petco Park.

Our group of 12 or so assembled at the stadium main gate entrance. First stop was underneath the park at the area that services the on-field luxury boxes. This is the area where it costs about $26,000 a seat for a season ticket. It was explained to us that this includes fine wines, carved roast beef, etc. In the private lounge beneath the seats is a glass wall where you can watch batters taking extra hitting during the game.

At the end of the tour group, bringing up the rear, was a frail elderly lady, all alone. She was wearing sun glasses. Everyone was in awe at the amenities of Petco. The lady just lagged behind standing quietly in the back of the group.

Next, we proceeded by elevator to the press box. This is the area where members of the media watch the game in luxury. The group started loosening up a bit, and began sharing stories. One couple was from Seattle, and noted how they routinely sit in a corporate box. Another couple one upped them with a story about how they got to sit in the Yankees mega cost seats this year. To my horror, a younger man with his wife said they lived in Chicago and now and then watch Cub games in “that dump.” I covered my son’s ears. “Danny, don’t listen to such sacrilege.”

Another lady, from San Diego with her nephew, was obviously proud of Petco Park. They kept asking the important questions. How much does a luxury box sell for? Can you watch something other than baseball on the flat screen televisions?

The elderly lady just kept shuffling along, saying nothing.

Every stop on the way, my son was oblivious to the trappings, he just kept trying to check out the view of the field. He kept pulling on my arm and asking me when Don, the guide, was going to take us onto the field.

The tour guide turned to me as we stopped in front of the stadium sushi bar, and asked if I had ever been to any other parks. I smiled. “Just a few. We were going to watch the Tijuana team play today, but the game got canceled according to the on line schedule.” I was dead serious.

“Where are you from?” was the next question from one of the tour participants who heard my response. I replied, “Near Cleveland.” “That explains it,” he joked. Ouch.

The tour continued. Suddenly, the quiet old lady spoke to me. She told me that she and her husband love baseball. She said they have been lifelong Padres fans, and have a package season ticket plan with two seats in the outfield. I felt bad she was alone, and wondered where her husband was that day. I told her my wife and I enjoy baseball, and in fact, have been going to ball games in minor league, major league (and even the Mexican League) parks throughout our marriage. The elderly lady lit up with a huge smile.

The tour continued, and she kept close to my wife and son as we next stopped at the Padres Hall of Fame. She smiled when we got to Ray Kroc’s shrine. The tour guide explained that continued on page 2
the McDonald’s founder had saved the Padres with a 12 million dollar purchase of the club, when they were only hours from being sold and moved to Washington.

Everyone else on the tour had bolted to the balcony for an incredible view of the park. The guide explained that the ground crew was busy repairing a portion of left field damaged by a stage set up for a concert. We just shook our heads. There ought to be a law against concerts on fields.

Finally, the tour made its way back down the stadium, and we entered the playing field. The elderly lady started the same behavior as when the tour started. She got real quiet and lagged behind everyone.

With our backs to the field, the tour guide explained impressive statistics about Petco. My wife tugged my arm and motioned toward the area behind home plate. Crouched over at the edge of the grass was the elderly lady.

"Dad, I think she is taking some dirt. She has a small jar," whispered my son.

I immediately knew what was going on, and so did my wife and the others that noticed her leave the group.

Still crouched, the elderly lady opened the small jar and began spreading ashes. She next walked over to the third base side, and spread some more. Everyone looked the other way, including the tour guide.

She kissed her hand and held it in the sky. I looked at my wife, and saw a tear. I looked at the others in the group that witnessed what happened. There was not a dry eye to be found.

Now I knew where her husband was – he was on the tour in another sense.

She rejoined the group and we proceeded to the visitors’ clubhouse. The tour guide explained the amenities and how locker location is determined by the visiting manager.
A Love Unfathomed

by Amanda Delaney

I lay my head against your chest
And hear your heartbeat as you rest
It beats for me as mine beats for you
Such moments we share are eternally true

A love like this is one of tales
Where the truest feeling never fails
I’ll keep you safe through years to come
This burning passion shall not go numb

I kiss your head and hold you tight
Knowing everything’s gonna be all right
We’ll stay like this forever in time
Even after we’ve passed our prime

With wrinkled skin and weathered smiles
We’ll laugh together bout all the miles
Our bodies will age and our love will grow
For my future is yours, of this I know
Warped
by Misty Poehler
**One More Day Together**
*by Sabrina Brandenburg*

I hope that you stare at a blank page,  
Pen in hand, unable to catch  
The brilliant thought that glimmered in your mind  
But at the end of the day,  
All my vehement ill-will has gone away  
And I pray for you  
To find your way.

I slam the car door,  
Tires burning my fury,  
Churning rocks at you as they tear down the drive  
But at the end of the day,  
I return home to your arms crying.

I fight and strain  
As your hands form manacles around my wrists,  
Arms shaking and pulling  
But as I look into your concerned eyes  
My writhing releases  
And you pull me close.

I spit words of venom  
Straight to your ears  
But just a gentle touch of your hand  
Across my scarlet cheek  
And it disappears.

And even when you storm out  
Fury etched upon your docile brow  
I know that through your words  
You still love me.  

Because no matter what I say or do  
You know that it’s with love for you  
Through all the hurt and all the pain  
We know that our love is certain to remain

Our petty squabbles cast us different ways  
But in the end we return, sorry for the troubling days  
We laugh and hug and embrace  
And pray for another day’s saving grace

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**How the Cake Sees It**
*by Jake Marlow*

Things won’t always go as planned  
Life will trip us up along the way  
But in your loving arms I’ll always land  
Cause life’s trials could never take our love away.

And every night we’ll pray hand in hand  
For one more day together.  
For one less fight  
And our love to never end…
Three Point Flower
by Jacqueline Ranallo

Glorious Pink
by Jacqueline Ranallo

The Pollen Collector
by Charlotte Lorson
Friday Night Auction

by Sandra Kizzee

Running and jumping, the little boy darted in and out of the many people attending the auction that night. He wore no shoes, and his little feet were tarnished with mud. His bowl-style hair cut and the plain, homemade clothes he wore showcased the fact that he was an Amish child. Innocent and charming, he casually smiled at each person he passed as he made his way towards the table stacked with baskets and bushels of sun-ripened vegetables and fruits, homemade crafts, and mouth-watering bakery. The auctioneer was speaking in his dialect of fast talking numbers and words. “Now a dollar, a dollar, let me see a dollar” rang out across the crowd as the child snuck his way to the edge of the rough, wooden table. He quickly glanced around as his small, suntanned hand snaked its way among the bunches of grapes and cartons of red, ripe cherry tomatoes. He giggled as he popped them in his mouth. His cheeks puffed out like a chipmunk hoarding nuts as he scampered away to avoid being caught. His bare feet slapped on the cold stone floor. He darted in and out amid Amish and English alike. The auction continued, no one paying much attention to the imp as he scampered about, from table to table, snitching a tidbit here and there. His favorite seemed to be the grapes. They were easy to snag just a few in passing, and the baskets overflowed with the purple globes. A few missing would not be noticed.

Towards the end of the night, as the air turned crisp and the moon peeked its way out among the clouds, the boy cast about, looking for his parents. His face was sticky with the spoils of his adventure. His eyes were drooping as the youngster’s energy faded. His mother corralled him and quickly whisked him towards the dark black silhouette that was their buggy. It had been just another Friday night auction, where the boy could scamper about unaware of the entertainment he provided.
My hero stands about 5’9” with brown hair and glasses. Not only is he the smartest man I have ever met, but I will forever aspire to be just like him. My father, Chris Vancil, has impacted my life in more positive ways than any other person I will ever meet in my life. He and my mom gave me the greatest childhood memories a little boy could ever imagine. I love both my parents, and both of them have supported me in everything I do. However, my dad has always followed and encouraged me through all my sports and activities. My biggest supporter often went out of his way to help me.

The start of September in my sixth grade year meant football season. My father and I shared the same passion for football. He played as a boy and tried to teach me everything he knew. As the season got underway, I played several different positions, including middle linebacker, running back, cornerback, and wide receiver. My coach believed I had talent at almost every position and played me most of the game. I struggled with only one position. For some reason, linebacker gave me difficulty. I had trouble tackling clean and often missed tackles. The day before a Saturday game, my dad got a bright idea. Though he had no extra football pads, he decided to be my target in the backyard. He told my mom to find something protective he could wear while I practiced tackling him. As my dad and I started stretching, my mom came out of the patio door with four ugly brown and black striped couch pillows and a couple small bungee cords. I remember my dad laughing as soon as he saw what was in my mom’s hands. “Well, I guess this will have to do,” said my dad. He strapped on the pillows while I geared up. It was time. “I want you to hit me as hard as you can,” he said with a small shake and hint of laughter in his voice. I agreed, and he started running towards me. I made contact, but it was not much of a tackle. With a smile on his face, he said, “Come on. Is that the best you’ve got? I may be an old man, but I can still take a beating.” We gave it a second try. I mustered up and hit him with everything I had. My shoulder plowed into the side of his leg as I took him down almost immediately. I stood up and looked at the man lying flat on his back staring directly back at me. He smiled and laughed before saying, “Now that’s what I’m talkin’ about.”

We ran the drill until my father could not take it any longer. He boosted my confidence and turned me into a hitting machine. I could not believe it. I felt confidence flowing through my entire body during the Saturday game. I had never felt that kind of confidence standing on the field, and it showed. I had a personal record of twenty-two tackles. After it was over, I ran over and gave my dad a huge hug. He looked down and said, “I’m so proud of you, Casey. I knew you could do it.” I felt on top of the world, but needless to say, we never did that hitting drill in the backyard again. When we got home, dad plopped down on the couch and propped both legs onto the couch pillows. When I looked at him, I noticed the purple and green hues all over his legs. As he lay back and turned on the television, I remember hearing, “Thank goodness for these couch pillows.”

As football season wound down, hockey season started. Though I had a passion for football, hockey was my true love. Both of my parents attended every game sporting their
team hats, sweatshirts, and blankets. I loved every minute of it. Halfway through the season, I started a small scoring drought. I kept missing the net or hitting the goalie square in the chest. As anyone who follows hockey knows, scoring goals is all about picking corners. My dad recognized my need for extra practice and did not hesitate for a second to help me out. When I got home from school one day, I saw a red plastic hockey goal sitting in the driveway. I jumped with excitement. My dad walked out of the garage and said, “What do you say we work on some shooting?” I smiled and ran inside to get changed. When I came out, I saw my father standing in front of the net. When I looked closer, I saw four brown, striped couch pillows wrapped around his legs with bungee cords. Our gaze met, and we broke into laughter. I took shot after shot picking corners, making dents in the garage door, and giving my goalie more and more bruises. Again, my dad took a good beating, but he did it with a smile. The next game I ended my drought and carried on a consistent scoring streak the rest of the year. I used my net as well as my goalie to practice as often as I could. Though bruises were everywhere, he never once regretted helping me in any way he could.

My father, my hero, my inspiration, has always en-couraged me and will continue to help me. At this point in time, he constantly gives me financial advice and helps me decide where to invest. After being a math professor for 32 years, he has taught me a thing or two about algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus. I have never had a problem that he could not solve. After everything my dad has gone through for me, I know that no matter what, I can go to him for help. He continues to be my “rock” which I rely upon for anything I need. He still comes to every single hockey game and is still sporting his team hat and sweatshirt. Jokingly, my dad and I still talk about all the unusual memories of my childhood. Every time I think about my hero and his effect on me, I cannot help but remember those ugly couch pillows.

Tequila
by Charlotte Lorson
Ohio University Marching 110

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Flight
by Nathan Hacker

Soup's On
by Nathan Hacker
Summer Thirst
by Kevin Engle

Soft-tail Front End
by Carly Gallagher
Roller Coaster Dragonfly
by Thomas R. Smith
**Summer Stars**

*by Jacob Barb*

When summer stars fall into the southern sky
When sunny days are replaced by cold winter nights
When it takes a little longer for the sun to rise
When green grass is covered by snow and ice

I wish I could fall into the sea
I wish pines were replaced by evergreen palm trees
I wish I had a little longer in the summer breeze
I wish I could go to that place I only see in my dreams

Next time I’ll follow my stars to the south
Next time I’ll be gone before summer runs out
Next time I’ll be where I’m going but I don’t know how
Next time is then so I guess for right now

For now I’m here so I’ll fall in your arms
For now you’re still my lucky charm
For now I need you to keep me warm
For now and forever you’re my summer star
To Prepare for the New Year

Take my hand,
And we will gallop through the quiet pastures,
Clearing every white fence along the way.

I will show you the metal dragon,
Green and gold
With rusted edges
That sit on wheels like giant boulders.

I will climb inside,
To start its engine rumbling,
And you will follow us into the Ohio Sea,
Drinking in the sight
Of the vastness ahead of you.

You will join me at the wheel,
Your hands clenched in your lap,
Head bowed reverently
As we reach the end.

And when we reach the end,
I will leave you there in your winter clothes,
Turn off the stars,
And bid you
Good Night.

by Kristen Brown
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by Jane Fink
Master of the Sky
by Janet Kodger

Haiku Kind of Morning
by Darlene Mullett

Coffee  The smell of coffee
Is his usual alarm
It churns my stomach.

Eggs   Some spring day it may
Have hatched into a cute chick
He wants it scrambled.

Juice  Fresh squeezed oranges
Giant sons of ripe lemons
Morning-mouth sour.

Toast  The toast’s ebon-brown
Oh, will anyone notice
My burnt offerings?

Clean-up Just dirty dishes
Remain to provoke morning
Mournings of my mind.
My Own
by Amanda Delaney

My life seems like a mistake,
Every step I make never seems to please you,
What must I do?
Must I just disappear,
Never to be seen or heard of again?
Must I bow to your every whim,
Am subject my life to servitude?
I do not think so.
I am my own, never to be ordered around.
I will not bow, I will not go away.
I have tried to please you, but that doesn’t work.
I will stay here and be my own.
Never to please you,
Never to bow to you,
I will just be me.

Graveyard
by Janet Kodger
Competitive natures, we all have it in some way, whether in the academic world, the world of sports, or everyday life. There are those that are competitive with looks, jobs, cooking, popularity, and in the world of art, whether it be music, painting or sculpting. Competitive nature is what makes us achieve, it sets us apart and drives us forward, we need it like we need to breathe. I admit that I like to win, it sends a smile deep within me and adds a bit of accomplishment to my ego. But, then, I let it go because it does not add to me, the me I want to be my legacy. I want to be remembered for more than the games I have won or the races I have run. I want the world to know that I mattered in how I helped another, how I loved, how I cried at loss and the way I rejoiced when I was happy. The tears of joy I shed when a new baby was brought into the world, and the tears I shed when a loved one passed into just memories. That is me, it is not just the winning or losing of competition, it is living that matters. In the end all that will ever matter is that we have lived with love and compassion.

I recently walked down a long corridor with cream colored walls, the floors were a deep green and warm soft brown tiles edged in a melted butter color. Very pleasing to the eyes. So clean and polished that the floor glistened with the bright lights shining upon it. There were lovely paintings placed between doorways and a few sculptures depicting an artist’s view of the life of people here and there along the walls. I could hear soft relaxing music being piped through the sound system, and for a while the illusion of an art museum was present in my mind. But then I would pass a room and hear the rhythmic sound of a respirator hissing and the muted voices of people as they talked. Fearful that the loved one in the bed beside them would hear some dreadful words they spoke, so quietly that even the person next to them could not hear. The lovely veneer of the corridor melted away and the reality of where I was began to chill me. Suddenly, I am brought into the now, I become aware of why I am walking down this well decorated hallway and the loveliness of it diminishes.

I have come to this place to visit a friend. For more than 20 years we had a semi-competitive friendship, it was a friendship that is so very difficult to explain. She needed to be accepted by someone with no reservations, I suppose, for her the need for a friend and confidant was far greater than I ever believed.

I had always had that in more ways than most people. As a child growing up, my parents, siblings, and friends were great in that capacity. When I married, I found a friend that I could confide in and someone who respected my feelings beyond measure, a husband who understood me as a woman, wife and mother. I have been truly blessed with him as my partner in life.

I learned, during those twenty years of friendship with her, that she had not experienced those moments of acceptance. So for her, the search for that type of relationship became overwhelmingly paramount in her life. She was always searching, longing for something, and now, with this moment of clarity, I feel the pain of knowing she overlooked true friendship because she never knew what it was. A sadness settles upon me.

We were living the American dream, our husbands’ professions afforded us to be stay-at-home mothers, we lived in above average neighborhoods, with excellent

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schools for our children, and for her, these things never seemed to be enough. I thought we had the world in the palm of our hands and that all would be as we had planned. Happiness always. But for some reason everything seemed to change. There became a competitive theme between us. She wanted to compare her children to mine and always wanted to know what was going on in their lives, not as an interested observer but as a person who needed to be one-up on everything.

The friendship became strained, uncomfortable, and eventually distant for a while. Life took on a different hue as the children went off to college and began their separate lives. We once again would chat and visit. We shared pictures of grandchildren and talked of trips with our spouses.

Time passed. The retirement years were upon us and she talked of going South for the winter months, someday. I preferred to spend our retirement in the home we had built, so many years ago. No competition here, just preferences by two middle age couples looking into their futures. Maybe the mellowness of age will allow our friendship to repair itself and we can once again talk as friends, share memories and good times together, or so I thought.

Days pass. Time and life takes its toll upon each of us, in different ways. We begin to realize that we are not as in control as we had hoped we would be. Everyone at some given moment will have to accept that time is stopping for them, that their life as they have lived it is ending. For her that time came before her plans were complete. She had not finished the preparations for old age. Things were not in order, apologies have not been made, and forgiveness has not been given. The words, “you are my friend,” will not be heard and the words, “I love you,” will not be spoken. That is what death is about, endings are not always planned, life is not always finished for the dying. When the final moment comes there will be no answer for the living.

The competitiveness was there, of that I am certain, the friendship was long, of that I am certain, and the ending will leave an emptiness, of that I am also certain.

As I entered into the room and looked at my old friend, I listened to the respirator and saw the emptiness in her eyes. Maybe we should hope for an end without regrets, but then what would we have learned from life. I could not lean forward and whisper “I win,” for there is no victory. Instead I leaned forward and whispered “God speed old friend, embrace your new journey.”

**Teenage Wasteland**

*by Jim Lawrence*
Not Eye
by Sabrina Brandenburg

I am not I
nor ay
nor eye,
as thou dost see’t.

Nor thou, eye
nor I
as thou say’st

For say’st thou
not unto thy hand
“Thou art naught mine; Go hence!”
nor to thy head
nor thy foot
nor else that thine is, ist betwixt

Nor say’st thou
unto another
“Thine hand ist mine. Give recompense!”
nor to the head of the other
nor foot
nor else that lies betwixt

Nor should thou say’st
“I am not I
When thou art not by
For I am thine
And what ist thine, mine ist.”

For thy hand remain thy hand
’twere it separate from body
and body remain body
’twere it separate from hand

For what mine is, shall remain mine
and what thine is, thine shall remain
and I, I; thou, thou,
even under celestial bell

For neither jewel nor vow
can steal thy mind from thee
nor mine from me.

Lost
by Jered Donda
Paper Faces
by Sabrina Brandenburg

I live in a world
Constructed of cardboard lives
And paper faces
Wooden puppets
With cotton-string-hair
Prancing around on superficial-wire-heels
Whose cotton tendrils are fitted just right

Their paper faces bleed gumdrop tears
Everyone around to please –
Please them because they believe
The superficial painted-on emotions
Match the feeling you supposedly exude,
Bleeding candy tears
For all to consume

Your shallow grazing wounds
Filled in with liquid paper
Blend into your paper skin
As if the wounds never existed
Because in reality they never did,
At least, you never really felt them.

Your flat, one-word expressions
Of emotions supposedly shared
Are brimming with the lies that play upon your tongues.

Your sketched-on expressions –
As fake as the words that fall from your leaden forked tongues –
Painted red with boiling anger
You never knew to feel
You just marched around like that
It’s the way things are, in fact

You let the majority rule your actions
Tied up on marionette strings
Dancing with your wooden bodies to the tunes they sing,
To the beats they create,
The moves they make

You open your mouths to sing their songs,
And out flow shrieking snarls of disgust
Because you know no feeling

Butterfly at Rest
by Gordon R. Beals

You go on with the world as it is
You see nothing wrong from your view
Under unseeing black-hole-eyes and parchment-paper lids

So like other before me,
Into the ocean I walk,
Drowning out the paper faces
And superficial fakeness they truly exude,
Desperate to end this empty-shell, painted-on world.

The water swirls in soothing vortexes -
Consuming with their ferocious nature,
Hiding no fake facade in their midst –

My hair blows in swirls around me,
No longer cotton tendrils
But rather gorgeous, flowing hair

My once shrieked and mangled song-voice
As beautiful and elegant as a songbird’s song
Drifting on the sweet summer breeze

My emotions come full-force
And I am drenched in them
I can feel the emotions and words of my brethren like breath
I am finally real
I am finally alive
...Rid of a world full of paper people
And I am truly alive!
You Lookin' at Me?
by Thomas R. Smith

Jurassic Swamp
by John C. Lorson
Go Away
The go-away bird,
startled by my presence,
flicks its feathered crest
to point me toward Bulawayo,
but I don’t want to go.
No cities sing to me.
Go away, bird,
I want to savor the sun
and revel in solitude
under this camel-thorn tree.

by Darlene Mullett

Camel Thorn Tree
by Darlene Mullett
Mystic Water
by Casey Vancil

During the day, it is nothing more than an unused hole of water. But at night, calmness and peace overtake the view of this clubhouse pool. It almost takes a different form. Everything turns mysterious yet romantic. The pool seems to ask questions with its dark, reflective surface.

Long, green beach chairs surround the dark hole. Stretching in a u-shape along the outside of the pool, the chairs stand on the grey, rough-looking concrete. Accompanying the chairs stand a few round white, marble-topped tables that sit in the four corners just inside the tall black fence. With no other lights around, the three clubhouse lights shine brightly. Shadows are cast across the concrete from every chair, revealing tiny slits in between the rubber bands that stretch across the metal frame. Attached to the stairs leading down into the water are the shiny, metal bars dipping into the pool reflecting the bright lights shining from the clubhouse wall. Wrapping around the inside of this rectangular pool is a streak of light blue. The dark, glass-like water rustles slightly with every bug that touches the surface. The reflection in the water looks nothing short of a real-life image flipped upside down. It looks as though the water is a portal into another world. One that is dark, unknown, and mysterious.

The sounds that surround this water only add to the mystery. At times of true peace, one can hear the chirping of grasshoppers from one hundred yards away. These songs carry on for what seems like an eternity occasionally interrupted by the rolling tires of a speeding vehicle. The hum of old, run down trucks is not uncommon at this time of night. Though several cars and trucks may interrupt, the sweet love song of the grasshopper carries on.

Morning only brings sadness as the mysterious water turns back into its normal, unused state. Though it asked questions throughout the night, none were answered. The next day will pass, and the chance to explore the mystery will arise once again.

Disguise
by Misty Poehler

The sounds that surround this water only add to the mystery. At times of true peace, one can hear the chirping of grasshoppers from one hundred yards away. These songs carry on for what seems like
Cancer-Free
by Kelley Casper

I can win.
Cancer claims many lives, but
It will not claim mine.
I am strong and courageous
Just like my mom
I will fight as hard as I can
So, that history won’t repeat itself.
Not letting the sickness from treatment bring me down
I have one dream;
I want to be cancer-free!
I want to be cancer-free!
I have one dream;
Not letting the sickness from treatment bring me down.
So, that history won’t repeat itself
I will fight as hard as I can
Just like my mom
I am strong and courageous.
It will not claim mine.
Cancer claims many lives, but
I can win!
Imagine diving into a crystal clear blue pool along with your best friend. Underneath, with your eyes wide open, you giggle and make funny faces at each other – the laughter almost allowing water to sneak up your nose and into your mouth. As you stare at your best friend, you see her lips move and you hear the hollow sound of words, but are unable to make out what exactly is being said. Pointing to the surface, you both glide straight up into the sunshine. Above water, her words are clear again and you easily understand what your friend was saying. Now imagine, for a moment, that every day of your life, words sound like you were planted underwater and every conversation is heard exactly like this. Communication would be extremely difficult, and frustration would be a constant companion. This is what life is like for my six-year-old daughter, Ava.

The day she was diagnosed will forever be engraved in my mind. As my family walked into a building where we were guaranteed answers, I reached down to hold my six-year-old daughter’s tiny hand. Her head held high as we walked together hand in hand, and I wished at this moment that I could have half of the confidence that she carried with her every day. Glancing down at Ava, she returned my smile with one that warmed me all the way to my bones. She is petite for her age and is easily the smallest child in her grade at school, but those that know her would agree that despite her height she undoubtedly has the heart of a giant.

The sun shone down on our faces, yet to me it felt like a dark, terrible cloud hung over my head. This imaginary bubble that I wanted to keep around my children had burst when Ava began struggling in school. The helplessness that I felt when her teacher called us into a conference is still vivid in my mind, and I remember the sickening feeling in my stomach as her teacher voiced her concern with how far behind Ava had fallen. As parents, we knew that her speech continued to need work, since she had a severe delay in speech and only tested at a three-year-old level, but we thought this was her only issue in first grade. According to her teacher, however, Ava was drifting constantly during the day, putting her head down on her desk and not completing her school work. Most importantly, her most recent testing done by the state showed that she is doing worse in school now as a first grader than in kindergarten. This news shocked us because during the past school year, Ava had received services from tutors, a title teacher, speech therapist, intervention teacher, and her teacher in class. With this much help, our first thought was how could this be so? Were all of these services failing our daughter?

As we left the conference, suddenly my mind was overflowing with similar signs that I had been noticing at home. For example, what would normally take fifteen minutes for homework took Ava anywhere from one to two hours and usually would consist of her simply getting up from her seat and walking away numerous times. Another

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thought came to mind when I remembered how many months we spent reviewing one hundred words for Ava to recognize. Every first grader was required to complete “The Big Foot Challenge,” which is reading one hundred words on a single piece of paper. All year, students and classmates had finished this assignment, leaving Ava in the dust as she continued working on it relentlessly. Even though we spent hours on these words, it was like looking at them for the first time every night. Nothing seemed to sink in.

After researching for hours on the Internet, I sat Ava down on my lap and asked her what school was like for her.

She replied, “Mom, there are so many voices going on around me. Can you make them stop? Can I move to a desk that has no one around and where it is quiet?”

My heart suddenly felt like it had stopped beating inside my chest as I listened to my daughter share with me how difficult it was for her to hear.

She is describing what is known as Auditory Processing Disorder or APD. Auditory Processing Disorder, also known as Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD), is a complex problem affecting children. These kids, like Ava, have difficulty processing the information they hear, because their ears and brain do not fully coordinate. Kids with APD often do not recognize subtle differences between sounds in words, even when the sounds are loud and clear enough to be heard. For example, if someone said to Ava, “Tell me how a couch and a chair are alike.” Ava and kids with APD hear, “Te me how cow an hair alik.” As you can see, words are distorted and mixed up for my daughter. School and conversations with friends are extremely difficult for Ava. As the teacher speaks in front of the classroom to all the students, Ava grasps only a third of what is said because she hears everything else around her at a one hundred percent volume also. For example, the lights humming, someone walking in the hallway, and whispering around her – her brain has no way of filtering sounds. Most often the words are drowned out by all of the other sounds simultaneously.

Looking back, APD existed very early on. However, my husband and I had no idea that APD even existed. Ava first showed speech continued on page 28
issues when she was one because she wouldn’t make a sound. Many doctors were seen and first thoughts were always pointing to autism and deafness. Finally, we were referred to speech therapists that eventually taught her how to speak. Even then, Ava struggled and took until two days before her third birthday to say her first word, while most of her peers were forming sentences.

Unfortunately, Auditory Processing Disorder is only recently becoming known – leaving thousands of children undiagnosed and often untreated for years. APD is often misunderstood because many of the behaviors noted above can also appear in other conditions like learning disabilities or ADD. While there is no cure for APD, treatment is highly individualized; in fact, no one treatment is appropriate for all children with APD. My entire life will be spent finding what treatment works for my daughter.

Having received the answers that we anxiously sought for, we walked out of the building, back into the bright sunny day. As once again, glancing down at my little girl, I saw she was still smiling – her head held high as she confidently walked to our vehicle. My heart was in a thousand pieces because I wanted to take this away from her, and yet, as I looked at my daughter I didn’t see frustration or anger - all I saw was complete and sincere happiness. Ava will struggle with APD every second of her life, but I have yet to hear her complain. Today, my daughter taught me how to accept all circumstances, good and bad. My six-year-old showed me, her own mother, how to truly live, and since that day, my life has been forever changed.
**Victory**  
*by Steph Martinez*

His dark, brown eyes are wide with anticipation and focused solely on what is straight ahead. His lips are set in concentration, teeth gritted together making his nose flare. Tiny beads of sweat penetrate his chocolate brows as they trail down his face, falling silently to the charcoal cement below him. His shoulders high and his biceps tight as arms of steel spread out before him with masculine hands -- only his fingertips dare to touch the firm cement. His chest is held high displaying rippled waves down his stomach and his back wet with perspiration. Thighs are tense -- hard as a rock -- portraying long and intense workouts. He is bending, his knee caps bent so as to almost touch his chest. His feet are leaning diagonally against two metal shields, making his calves solid blocks -- and yet still, he stares straight ahead.

The crowd stands on their feet with excitement as a roar rips through the stadium. He tunes out the deafening crowd as concentration clenches his jaw tight. An announcer stands stiffly on the sideline and shouts his command loudly, “On your mark!” His voice echoes throughout the arena.

There is a brief second of extreme intensity and then the gun explodes.

The runner pushes off his hands and feet, his body suddenly in unison with the wind. Faster and faster he soars along the track as every muscle works together simultaneously as his arms pump in harmony with his legs.

Finally, he reaches the white strip, the force from his chest breaking the cloth and sending it to the ground. His hands pump the air and he looks up into the sky as his body slows down until he stops and kneels on the hard track. He looks up with a smile -- acknowledging the crowd for the first time -- and sheer happiness is clear on his face as he takes in the sounds all around him.

The intense training suddenly a thing in the past, he soaks in the victory.

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**Up Through the Rocks**  
*by Judith Bridger*

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WAYNESSENCE 29
Walking to the End
by Angelina Thompson

Boots Do the Talking
by Angelina Thompson
I’m lost in a world,
Where time stands still,
And reality slips away.
A place where the ones you love,
Sink into the abyss,
Not knowing if they will return.
A world of nothingness,
Where things exist,
But can never be found.
Hidden shadows conceal everything known.
Light fades into darkness,
Darkness fades into silence.
Blurred forms of life shrouded in mist,
Lost to reality forever.

Being Single Is Beautiful
by Gordon R. Beals

by Amanda Delaney
writers and artists at work

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FRONT COVER
Leaving Tonight
by John Lorson

BACK COVER
Shamus – So This Is Snow!
by Jane Fink