

Early Expressions
2007



Lamar State College-Port Arthur
A Member of The Texas State University System

Early Expressions

2007
Volume VIII

Early Expressions 2007 - Winners

POETRY

First Place

Mesmerized..... Cheryl Williams

Second Place

Peace Rozina Maredia

Third Place

Life..... Kurt Jones

Honorable Mention

First Love.....Lan Nguyen

Idle Town Aaron Williams

Questions Towards Life Kevin Thompson

My Love..... Connie Hoffman

SHORT STORY-FICTION

First Place

Wonder Boy Tony Cacioppo

Second Place

Sad but Still Going.....Alaa Baduan

Third Place

Eyes Shining Like Stars..... Demetri Cartwright

Honorable Mention

The Second Chance Yadira Trevino

Kevin and the Blue Horse.....Gabriela Estupinan

The Girl that No One Knew Andie Myers

MY NAME

First Place

One Who Lays Tiles Tyler Morgan

Second Place

Mothers Always Have a Reason..... Yadria Trevino

Third Place

The Person Behind the Name Bryan Casmire

Honorable Mention

Flowers.....Lan Nguyen

MY NAME

Honorable Mention

Warm Like the Sun Andie Myers
The Last Child Zachary Oliver

THE BIG FIRST

First Place

Little Miss Cowgirl.....Krystin Hall

Second Place

Different Job Tyler Morgan

Third Place

Taste of Snow..... Josh Schaver

Honorable Mention

One Night at Wally World William Streety

FAMILY TRADITIONS

First Place

A Heart in Half.....Armando Castro

Second Place

The Patient Gabriela Estupinan

Third Place

Family Reunion William Streety

Honorable Mention

Tradition..... Yadria Trevino

The Porch..... Demetri Goodman

Special Family Holiday La'Quetha Wilson

EVERYDAY LIFE

First Place

The Best Teacher Demetri Cartwright

Second Place

I Hate Go-Carts..... Tony Cacioppo

Third Place

The Monster in My Room Zachary Oliver

Honorable Mention

What Was I Thinking? Calvin Hicks

An Interesting Day of Work..... Kurt Jones

EVERYDAY LIFE

Honorable Mention

Making It..... La'Quetha Wilson

RISKY BUSINESS

First Place

No More Streety Circles William Streety

Second Place

A Lesson Learned Bryan Casmire

Third Place

The Night Tyler Morgan

Honorable Mention

My Life Sikandar Khan

Ants Crawling Down My Leg Gabriela Estupinan

La Cola de Caballo Yadria Trevino

VISIONS

First Place

The Church Ashley Heep

Second Place

The Sea and the Rhythm..... Tyler Morgan

Third Place

The Using Game William Donovan Jones

Honorable Mention

Only a Dream..... Isela Reyes

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Poetry

Poetry-First Place

Mesmerized

Cheryl Williams

When we are together, my mind is almost blank,
with nothing on it besides you.
When you whisper in my ears,
I can feel the blood rushing inside of me.
Every time I let go of your hand
I can tell that I have lost something
unique, something wonderful,
Something only you can give me.
You are always on my mind.
When my eyes are open, I think about you.
When my eyes are closed, I dream about you.
I will never forget about you,
not for an hour, not for a minute,
not even for a second.
When I look into your eyes
I know that my life has changed
And that my heart and mind are no longer mine.

Poetry-Second Place

PEACE

Rozina Maredia

Let the sun shine in the sky,
And please no one dying on the earth.

Let us have peace,
No one fighting and no people dying.

Let fly the green flag in the sky,
Send the message of peace over the earth.

A Dove is flying in the sky,
The Dove means peace, the Dove means love.

Let us try to stop the war,
No more crying on the earth.

Let us love each other,
Bring peace on the earth.

Peace without, come from within,
No wars, no violence and lots of silence.

Peace is blooms of the flower,
Peace must begin among us.

Poetry-Third Place

Life

Kurt Jones

Life is full of broken dreams
What's the irony in that?
To expect things to happen one way
Yet always ending in other ways

Life is full of broken dreams
What's the challenge in that?
How chasing love, man, gets you down
But always gets you where you need to be,

Life is full of broken dreams
What's the shame in that?
How some often give up
And never finish the game.

Poetry-Honorable Mention

FIRST LOVE

Lan Nguyen

It's wider than the ocean
It's deeper than the sea
Never felt in love before
He means a lot to me

He's the reason why I work so hard,
Why I go to school
He's the money in my pay
He's the beginning and the ending
Of my every single day

I love him with all my soul
He is my loving husband
He surely is my heart of hearts
I love this man and always will
Till death to us does part.

Poetry-Honorable Mention

Idle Town

Aaron Williams

Between the railroad tracks and the working chemical company, lies a flat and rustic unkept town, alive only in memory today. The tree house my buddies and I built ourselves was spent in time through debates of fucking the neighborhood kid up or any other fruitless activity inspired by false conceptions of our first hit of smoke and first sip of beer. The severity of these actions taking the leadership role of replacing any forward potential than this day with idle growth. The tracks below the tree house served as a challenge to stay upright on, with delusional, fledgling wings. For me and the words living in my head screamed and shook for a different challenge. The change in my pockets I always held on dearly to, talking with them at night under horrid longing for the long-term, until the trains came to flatten them, crushing all of my words tightly inside for the tossing into the lake of already made wishes.....

Poetry-Honorable Mention

Questions Toward Life

Kevin Thompson

If a person was to be traveling down a dark weary road of his own understanding then one day meets a man with a light a knowledge and tells him of how this road is a dead end and only ends in destruction. Should he stay to listen to all the knowledge he had of this road or just ignore him and continue his own way?

If the person decided to stay and listen to all the knowledge and get understanding of what the man was saying, and the man gives him light and tells him to turn from this path and leads him on other paths to warn as many people not to continue any further of this path. Would it be wise or unwise for this person to reject this offer because, he does not feel like doing it but continues to do things his own way?

What if the person accepts the offer and does what the man told him to do but just stops telling other people about a road that will end in destruction? Would it be considered selfish of him to have stopped? Because, not every person accepted what he was saying if this road that ends in destruction and they continued on the path of doing things their own and he got a little weary?

What do you think of this person? And do you think he decided to follow the man with knowledge and a light path of doing things? Or did he continue to do things his own way? What would you do if you were on this same dark weary road not knowing where to go and met this same man with light and knowledge and he told you about the path you were on? Which path would you choose his or yours?

Poetry-Honorable Mention

My Love

Connie Hoffman

My dearest darling, this I must say
I'm falling more in love with you every day
I'm waking up happy to know you are here
You show me everyday, how you care, and you will be there.
When I hold you close to me
Your love inside me will show for all to see
You've given me friendship, respect & love
Sometimes I believe you were sent from above
I wasn't searching for love when I found you
But I found love, when I found you.



Short Story-Fiction

Short Story-Fiction-First Place

Wonder Boy Tony Cacioppo

Once upon a time in a land far away called Nederland, there lived a super hero in the making. The boy's name was Ugean Underpants. Ugean was very small, puny, and a very funny looking boy; in fact, he was so weird looking and wimpy that a lot of the kids made fun of Ugean at school.

Everyday after school he would walk home three miles; he had to walk because his family was too poor to let him ride the bus. When he would get home, his mother would be waiting for him, so they could eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on Wonder bread. They would talk about how he had no friends and how everyone made fun of him. However, one afternoon after school, he heard his favorite commercial on the television playing in the living room. It was a commercial for a James Bond action figure. Ugean turned to his mother and said, "Why can't I be like James Bond? Everybody loves him, and everyone hates me." All that Ugean's mother said was "If you eat your Wonder bread three times a day, you will grow up and be big and strong." Poor little Ugean took those words to heart. He ate Wonder bread every chance he had. He brought a loaf to school with him everyday. Then one night something strange happened to Ugean. He had just finished eating his Wonder bread and drank the last glass of milk. Ugean kissed his mother goodnight and went to bed.

That night he had a strange dream. He was in another world, a world where everything was made out of Wonder bread. He started walking down the Wonder bread road past the Wonder bread field into the enchanted Wonder bread forest. Inside the forest it was like a bad Harry Potter movie. The forest was filled with unicorns, giraffes, kangaroos, and friendly alligators. Then Ugean saw a shiny object in the distance up ahead, and it was getting closer. When the object got closer, Ugean found out it was the magical Wonder Bread Genie. He said, "Ugean, I have been watching you very closely, and your Wonder bread intake is so great that I will grant you one wish. You can be anything you want to be." For Ugean that was an easy question to answer. Right then and there Ugean Underpants became Wonderboy. He had all the cool gadgets that any super hero had.

The very next day when he woke up, he felt bigger and stronger than ever before. That morning he didn't walk to school. He was strong enough to run three miles to school. When he got to school, he realized everyone liked him much better. No one called him by his old nick name, "Lets-Cream-Ugean." The girls called him "What-A-Dream-Ugean." All the girls

wanted him, and guys wanted to be him. For the first time in his life, he felt like James Bond.

After school Ugean ran home to eat his Wonder bread with his mother, but she was nowhere to be found. Then his wonder sense came in, and it told him to look in the basement. Young Nasty Boy, his arch nemeses, had his mother tied to a chair in the basement.

Ugean was stunned. He had no idea about how he was going to save his mother from Young Nasty Boy. Young Nasty Boy used to be the big man on campus before Ugean turned into Wonderboy. Young Nasty Boy refused to let Ugean's mother go until Ugean told him his secret to success. So Ugean and Young Nasty Boy sat down, had a tall glass of milk, and talked out their differences. Neither Ugean nor Young Nasty Boy liked to resort to violence.

Ugean and Young Nasty Boy are all grown up now and are best friends. They are both professors at South Texas School for Superheroes. They help kids to better manage their super powers in a non-violent way.

Short Story-Fiction-Second Place

Sad But Still Going

Alaa Baduan

A man by the name of John McCoy was a very good person. People loved him. He was young and charming. He lived by himself in a town called Yellville. He had no parents because they died whenever he was a toddler, killed by a bank robber, and it so happened his parents were at the scene. John was not there to see his parents die, so he was told that they went to heaven. He was raised by his uncle and aunt. As John grew older, he knew that his parents were dead but wanted to know why. His uncle and aunt did not want to tell him how the killer was never caught, and they didn't want his whole life to be focused on getting the people who killed his parents, that was why it was such a secret. John was at the local store one day and knew the manager there because he was a family friend. John ended up asking the manager how his parents really died. The manager did not want to tell him, but thought it was time for him to know, so he ended up telling him everything. John was very shocked that no one told him anything; so when he talked to his aunt and uncle, they told him they didn't want to hurt him. John ended up doing his own investigating. He went to the police, and the police told him that the case was closed, and they couldn't do anything about it because it was too cold. John was very disappointed because they never caught the guy. John never quit the search for the murderers. He did end up becoming a cop in his town and the search still goes on.

Short Story-Fiction-Third Place

Eyes Shining Like Stars

Demetri Cartwright

Long ago there was a man named Inb Adul Malik. He was dark skinned, muscular, and tall as any man I've ever seen. His teeth were white as pearls, and his eyes shined like the stars at night. He was as bald as Elijah.

When I first set eyes on him that day, I knew something was going to happen, not knowing the man would save my life. It was a hot summer day in June when I first saw Malik. It was Sunday evening, when all the church people came together for some evening fun. There was Uncle Joe on the drums, Cousin Mike playing the guitar and Grandpa Fisher on the keyboard. Daddy was grilling ribs, chicken, and links on the pit. Mother was in the kitchen cooking all the trimmings: baked beans, potatoes salad, dirty rice, corn on the cob, cole slaw, and her famous sweet potato pie.

My cousins from the neighborhood were there, Uncle Joe's twin boys James and John. James is bigger than John, especially his head. We always teased him about having a big head. We would tell him that his forehead was so big that when he saluted, he had to salute from the back of his head. My cousin Theresa's three daughters were there. We called them Bae Bae's Kids. These girls had no home training. They were what you call loose women.

After church they all came to the creek where my parents lived for Sunday entertainment. The creek was where most of us got baptized, so I guess we all had a connection there; but after that Sunday things would never be the same. Just as mother called us for supper, a man appeared from only God knows where. Daddy being the protector that he was asked, "Son, can I help you?" The Stranger replied, "Yes, Sir, I would like a bite to eat." I didn't see him at first, but when I heard that voice of thunder, I turned and looked right into his eyes. Those eyes shining like stars at night stopped my heart from beating for a moment. I never heard so much strength in a man's voice. Daddy said, "Son, have a seat." In family we always fed someone if they were hungry, no matter who they were.

After supper we would always go swimming in the creek, so after eating, down to the creek we went. Uncle Joe's twin boys were the first to jump in and tell everyone the temperature of the water. I've never gone for fear of water. This day I didn't feel fearful, so I got into the creek. The Stranger, Malik walked to the edge of the creek and said, "Miss, do you mind if I get in the water with you?" I answered, "Not at all." Just as those words left my lips, I fell off

my tube. Down I went under the water. I don't remember much after that. The eyes of Malik, the stranger, I swear were like a light for me to come back. Daddy, Mama, Uncle Joe, Mike, Theresa, and my cousins made sure I was okay. We looked for Malik, but he went just as he had come; only God knows where.

Short Story-Fiction-Honorable Mention

The Second Chance

Yadira Trevino

A few times life gives new opportunities, and it's important to know how to value them. In 1964 when I was twenty years old, the only person I counted on in the world passed away. That marvelous person was my Uncle Francisco. He was a really weak person and almost always sick. Also, his large humpback made things even more difficult. But even though he was like that, he still made the effort to go outside and play with me. My parents had died when I was only six months old, and Uncle Francisco raised me as if he was my own father. All my wishes and desires were accomplished. He knew this was not a good way to raise me, but his noble heart could not deny me anything.

When I got out of high school, I did not want to go on with my education. My uncle had a lot of money, and I thought my future was secure with him. He tried and tried to convince me to continue with my education, but I persisted in not going. So, he told me he would find me a job. All night I lay over my silk covers and thought about what kind of job he would find me.

The next day while we were having a dinner, I saw in the corner of my eye my uncle softly wiping his mouth and clearing his throat trying to get my attention. "I had found a job for you, Katy, and Monday you will start," said Uncle Francisco. I did not know whether to thank him or ask why it was necessary to get a job if he had so much money. After thinking a couple of minutes in silence, I thought exactly of which option to choose. I thanked him for taking the time to find me a job. If I did not choose the second option, it was because I knew the answer; but I did not want him to say it to me.

I had already had two years in my job, and I enjoyed it. They did not pay me much, but it was very easy, and Uncle Francisco was satisfied, so I was happy with it.

My uncle had been very sick at that time. Every night while we were having dinner, he tried to convince me to get an education. I agreed with him not to make him mad now that he was very weak. I told him that I would continue with my studies, but I had not decided what to be yet. The truth was that I was totally sure I did not want to go back to school. I always hated school. I barely graduated, and I did not want to be in the same situation; homework, memorize words, names or dates. In short, I did not want to have responsibilities.

The rainy morning of 1964, I found out from one of the servants that my Uncle Francisco died from a heart attack. From that moment all my mistakes started to be noticeable. For three

months I spent almost all the time in my bedroom. My first mistake was to start smoking. I had been fired from my job because I did not assist anymore. It did not really matter to me. I used to work just to see my Uncle Francisco satisfied; but he was dead, and my soul died with him. Even if the day was sunny and beautiful with a smell of roses, to me it was dark and with no end.

There I was sitting in my uncle's luxurious chair in his office waiting for the lawyer. My hair was simply held in a pony tail, my face without a drop of makeup and holding the cigarette in my right hand. Only a few minutes did it take the lawyer to read my uncle's last will. Then I realized that he left me a small amount of his money; and from all the properties he had, he just left me the smaller and oldest house where he and my mother grew up. After the lawyer finished with the reading he went away.

In my confusion, I started crying like an abandoned child. I did not understand why he did that. He was like my father, and I thought he wanted the best for me. It was awful to me to understand that I was his only family, and he did not leave me all his possessions.

After all that, it was not just the cigarettes. I also started to use drugs. For me every night was a party. In a few words I started to tear up my life as it was a paper full of mistakes. One day going down in the stairs of the building I used to live, I made a bad step and rolled down the stairs. The next day I woke up in a silent white room with my left arm broken and a terrible headache; then I realized I was in the hospital.

When I paid the hospital bill, I noticed that there was not much money left in my account. I did not have a job, I do not know how to do anything, and I asked myself, "What am I going to do when I finish my money?" Suddenly, an idea came to my mind as a sunrise in a dark room, to sell the old house that Uncle Francisco left me. I had never visited that house in my life. I decided to go visit it with someone who could tell me how much the house was worth.

When I get in the house the doubt came to me, and I started to think that to sell it was not the right thing. However, I had no more options because I had no money. As I opened the principal room door I was surprised when I saw a rope bundled in a hook hold in the ceiling above the antique bed of my grandparents. But it was stranger, when I saw a letter over the bed with my name on it. Without letting the person notice what was in the bedroom, I asked him to wait outside because I needed some minutes alone. I sat on the dusty bed, and I took the envelope shaking it to take the dust off. The letter was very long and signed with uncle's name. On the letter he said that he was sure that if I had visited that house it was because I had no more options, and I wanted to sell it. He reminded me that I should follow his advice and keep on going with my education. That money he left me was enough to pay for my studies and to live well. That way it would not be necessary to sell the house. He also said that the house had been in his family for generations, and he would not sell it for anything.

With tears falling down my cheeks I read the last paragraph of the letter, it said, "Don't sell the house and try to do the possible to keep going with you life without the necessity to sell the house. And when you think you can't anymore and feel your life is not more important then come back. Over the bed there is a little bench. Stand over it and put the rope around your neck, and that will be the end of your problems." With pain in my soul, I did not think twice and I did exactly the way he wrote it.

I closed my eyes hardly letting the tears fall. I tightened real hard my hands and moved the little bench away with my feet. All of a sudden I fell on the bed--me and the ceiling. Puzzled I opened my eyes and was amazed to see a piles of money with pieces of ceiling and another letter also with my name on it. It said, "How dumb you are. You have not matured. Death is not the solution, you have a second chance. Do not waste it!" And I did not.

Short Story-Fiction-Honorable Mention

Kevin and the Blue Horse

Gabriela Estupinan

Darkness, peace, and silence ruled around Kevin. Out of nowhere, a bright light stood in front of him. As Kevin walked towards the light, a tall golden gate opened. Horses, zebras, donkeys, and unicorns welcomed him, each with their own unique language. Fear and excitement filled Kevin's body. Kevin glanced back and all he saw are hills of sand. Kevin ran across the olden gates and leaped on top of a blue horse. For some reason he feels secure and protected in this enchanted garden.

The golden gates closed, and as the blue horse started walking, he said, "Welcome Kevin, to paradise garde. As you can see, nature dominates this place."

"Thank you, wow! Look at this river, it is full of fish. Its water is so clear. Could I jump in it?" Kevin said.

Blue horse said,"I can't deny anything to our special guest."

In the blink of an eye, Kevin was swimming in the river, playing with the fish and talking to them.

"So, what do you guys do around here?"

A little blue fish answered, "We swim, jump, and have fun."

"Don't you guys have to work?" Kevin asked.

"What is work?" Blue Fish asked.

Blue horse interrupted, "Come on, Kevin, and remember everything is natural in paradise garden. This means, everything is perfect. Enjoy it!" Kevin jumped out of the river, and on top of Blue horse.

Blue horse walked towards a mountain, full of different kinds of flowers. Kevin asked, "Where are we going?" "You will see when we get to the top," Blue horse answered. As Blue horse walked to the mountain, Kevin observed and studied everything around him. The cows by the pond were playing around with their calves. The unicorns flying above Kevin's head were headed for the north side of the mountain. When going up the mountain, Kevin kept reaching for every different flower, to make a bouquet, for his mom. Kevin started singing, and asked blue horse to join him. Kevin's mom had taught him this song when he was four years old. It was something like, "Get some fresh water in a vase, near your bed and in that vase, these flowers, to remind you of how much I love and care about you." When the song came to

an end, they had reached the north side of the mountain. Kevin couldn't believe his eyes as he looked down and all around.

On the north side of the mountain was a big circle of fruit trees. In the middle of the circle was a big rock table. On top of the table was every kind of fruit you could think of. Kevin jumped off Blue horse's back and ran, jumped, and rolled down the mountain. When he arrived at the table, he realized he wasn't the only child there. Boys and girls from different countries were there too. Kevin was glad to see the other kids. One of them named Bryan asked, "How did you get here?"

"Well, I don't know. I was in a dark, peaceful place, and then I saw a beautiful light. I walked towards it," Kevin said.

"And the golden gates opened. Yes, that's how I got here, too," Bryan said.

They held a long conversation, met other kids, and talked to them.

"Look I am taking these flowers to my mom," Kevin said.

"Oh, I forgot to pick anything for mine. Do you mind if I take some of yours?" Bryan said.

"Of course not, I picked enough to make two bouquets, here. Bryan? Bryan, where are you? Where am I?" Kevin asked.

"Kevin, are you okay?" asked a very familiar voice. For just a second Kevin was back in that dark, peaceful, silent place. Kevin opened his eyes and saw that very familiar picture on the ceiling of his room. Kevin sat up in his bed and saw his mom standing by him. "Mom, you won't believe where I've been!"

Short Story-Fiction-Honorable Mention

The Girl That No One Knew

Andie Myers

Once upon a time in a far away place there was a girl named Jewels. Nobody really knew her; she just kept to herself most of the time. She lived in the forest of squirrels with her family. In her family she had one younger brother and two older sisters. The two older sisters were loved by everyone; and there was not one person who did not like them. Jewels always dreamed about being like them, but no one even knows she existed because she was so quiet. She walked around the forest talking to the squirrels. She was the only one that could because she had one unique magical power to talk to all of the squirrels in the forest. There was one place in the forest where no one ever went, not even the squirrels or Jewels. It was called the Darkness of the Underworld. The reason they called it that was because it was very dark, and all the creatures that came from there were evil. They called them the Evil Warlocks. The evil warlocks ate the little squirrels for breakfast and dinner, but they only came out at night and early morning because they could not stand the sunlight. One night the evil warlocks had a master plan to eat all of the little squirrels in one night. Jewels found out this horrible news from one of the little squirrels. She told her whole village to try to hide them, but when she told the village what was going on, they just thought she was crazy. They said that would never happen and just laughed in her face. The next night she was the only one ready for the evil warlocks. She brought a torch so that the warlocks could not hurt her and some of her squirrel friends. The only way that she could defeat them was by catching their evil skin layer on fire, causing all of them to die. After she did that and returned to her village, all of the squirrels thanked her, and they celebrated. Her village felt bad for laughing at her, so they named her Queen Jewels of the Forest of Squirrels. Everyone loved and adored her; something she thought would never happen.



*"What's in a name? That which we call a
rose by any other word would smell as
sweet."*

--From Romeo and Juliet (II, ii, 1-2)

William Shakespeare

My Name... First Place

One Who Lays Tiles

Tyler Morgan

My name is the one thing that I will have forever. If I were to lose every thing that I have in this world, I would still have my name. My name represents my past, present, and future. My name is Tyler Keith Morgan. Tyler means, "One who lay's tiles." I find that funny because that is exactly what it sounds like. Keith means "in the woods," I am not really a hunter or anything, so I don't think that name has much significance. It is only my middle name, so that is okay. Morgan means "At the edge of the sea." That name is probably my favorite of all three. It also fits my personality. I would much rather be at the sea surfing or just relaxing at the beach. However, I was not named for what my three names mean. I was named after my dad's two brothers and a television show.

My dad was the oldest of three. My dad's oldest brother's name is Buddy Tyler Morgan. I got my first name from his middle name. My dad and his family often tell me that I am so much like him also, but I still have yet to see the resemblance. My grandmother loved the idea of me being named Tyler because her favorite television show was the Mary Tyler Moore Show. I cannot understand why that helped in my naming, but it is a story that they tell me all the time. My last name comes from a long line of Morgan's who are not from this area. All of my dad's side of the family lives in Oklahoma. I also have a lot of names that people call me. My dad has always called me TK or Ty. My mom for some reason calls me Keifus. I am not even sure if that is a name or how to spell it. My friends call me T-Morgan or just Morgan. My name is the only thing that I have, and I would never change it because I was named after two men who have had a huge impact on my life. However, if I had to change it, I would change it to Yann because in my French class Yann was my French name. It just makes me laugh.

I would never have a legal name change because I am proud of where I come from, and would never want to change that.

My Name... Second Place

Mothers Always Have A Reason

Yadira Trevino

I used to hate my name for some reason, but now I like it. I think every country in the world has their typical name. In Mexico one of the most common names is Maria. This is the name of the mother of Jesus Cristo. In Mexico religion influences a lot. I guess that is one of the reasons why the mothers choose that name for their daughters. Actually, some people have the belief that the name has much connection with the personality of the individual. For example, if the name of the father was Juan and he was a hard worker and good person, a son would be called the same name and would be expected to be a hard worker and as good a person as his father.

As I attended middle school, I used to hate my name. In the whole school there was no girl or teacher that had my same name in the house area either. I used to think my name was too weird, and that there was no mother who wanted it for her daughter.

Every time I head my name, I felt the whole world fall on to my shoulders. At that time, the whole world was just school and home. I preferred people called me “Yadi.” -- the abbreviation of “Yadira,” which sounds the sweetest.

When I started 7th grade, I collected some signs from parents and students. That way Mrs. Garcia could be our permanent teacher and not just a substitute. I went to the principal to see what she thought about the proposition. The first thing she told me was that I was exactly how she imagined me because of my name. She had a daughter named “Yadira,” too. She also told me that I was intelligent, mature, and as nice as her daughter. From that moment I started liking my name. Believe it or not, a positive commentary about my name helped me a lot. After that, every time I heard my name I remembered what the principal told me.

The other day my cousin brought a names dictionary. He was going to be a dad, and it was difficult to decide between some names. I was so curious that I looked for my name in the dictionary. The definition was “Friendly.” I started to ask my friends, “If you have to describe me in just in one word, what it would be?” Approximately 95 percent of my friends said “friendly.” “Wow! I thought, my name goes with me.” I had spent too much time disliking my name because nobody else had it. Then, I noticed that a lot of people liked it, it went with my personality, and not many people are called that because it is not a Mexican name. Yadira is Hebrew.

“Mom, why did you call me Yadira?” I asked very interested. “Because I think is a

beautiful name and I felt that it was the name indicated for you,' she answered.

She didn't even know what the meaning of Yadira was. However, she thought that was the best for me. Actually, I think so, too. People say mothers always have a reason. I agree, and I would not change my name for anything.

My Name... Third Place

The Person Behind the Name

Bryan Casmire

My name is Bryan Keith Casmire, and this essay focuses on the orientation of my personal name. The name Bryan originated from Scotland. The name "Bryan" means strong. Each person born is generally given a name to express ethical meaning or family origin as well as personality. I personally like my name because I have many cool nicknames, such as: "Lil-B," "B-Cash," "Bee," B.C. Powder, and B.K. Each nickname represents a different character.

I have always liked my name because I was never made fun of and have always been a person who is strong in character. For many years, family members called me "little Kurt" because I looked just like my father. Many stated we looked alike, talked, and walked alike. The name my mom and dad picked out I think was perfect for me because like I said, Bryan means "strong." The name represents the strong character or will, a strong determination to succeed with strong values and morals. The name demonstrates flexibility to express different ways of spelling; for example, Bryan or Brian. I think that is different and cool.

The name Casmire originated from French in Louisiana Bayou country. Over many years ago, the name has changed in spelling from Cashmire to Casmire, due to other people's errors and notations in spelling. The name Casmire means value or worth. Each individual has personal value based on integrity and word of honor. To acknowledge a personal name is to honor the person behind the name based on how he or she has chosen to live in today's society.

The name Bryan Keith Casmire represents the person of strong values, morals, and beliefs. He is one who has chosen to live a life with integrity and strong beliefs in God's creation.

My Name... Honorable Mention

Flowers

Lan Nguyen

On June 20, 1978, I was born. It was the year of the horse, and I'm also a Gemini. My mom had already decided what to name me before I was born. She named me "Lan." It means flowers.

My mom loved flowers. She planted all type of flowers in the backyard. I really don't know what all the flowers were called, but they were pretty and smelled real good. I helped my mom do her garden sometime. It was hard work, and it was amazing that she could take care of her gardens everyday.

I was named after my great aunt. I heard good and bad things about her. People would make fun of her name, because in the ancient language, Lan was a terrible name to call a daughter; they think it's a bad luck name. It's like a curse for that name. They thought it was an ugly name. My aunt didn't care what everyone said and moved on with her life. She was caring and loved to help people. She helped poor people. Those who needed the most, she would give them foods and clothes. She would volunteer for church activities. It would have been nice if I had met my aunt.

If I have a chance to change my name, I would not change it for the world. I like my name because it is easy to pronounce, simple, and the meaning is very simple. My aunt had a bad experience with her name, but now-a-days there are more of my name in Vietnamese. My name in Vietnamese is more popular today. There is a song about my name. The name of the song is "Lan and Diep." It is hard to believe someone wrote a song about it. I like that song. Everywhere I go now, they called me "Lan and Diep."

My Name... Honorable Mention

Warm Like The Sun

Andie Myers

When I was in the womb of my mother, she would tell people she wanted another bouncing baby boy. She did not want to know what she was having until I was born. If she did have a boy, she was going to name me Andrew, but since I came out a girl she name me Andie from the movie, Pretty in Pink. My two brother's names are Adam and Aaron and my little sister's name is Audrey. I guess my mom thought it was the cool thing to do when she started all of our names with an A. Andie comes from the French origin, meaning courageous. My middle name comes from the great grandma Daisy Marie. This is my grandma's mom. She died right before I was born. Marie comes from the French origin also. It means bitter sea. My great grandparents were immigrants from Germany. When I was a little girl they would always try to teach me how to speak in German, but I just thought they were crazy because they were not speaking English. Their last name was Myers, so that would make them my dad's grandparents. Myers comes form the German origin, meaning steward or bailiff. If I could ever change my name, it would have to be something pretty like a Hawaiian flower or something like the bright sun, because once you get to know me I'm as bright and vibrant as a flower and warm like the sun.

My Name... Honorable Mention

The Last Child

Zachary Oliver

Have you ever wondered why your name is what it is? Your parents probably named you for a particular reason, perhaps after your father, grandparents, or someone else that may have had an influence on choosing your name.

My name is Zachary Adam Oliver, and I did a little research trying to figure out why my parents named me what they did. I found many different things about my name. The name Zach is short for the Zachary, which was the first name of one of our presidents, Zachary Taylor. Zachary as an English name came from the Hebrew name Zechariah, which is one of the books contained in the Old Testament of the Bible. The name generally means ‘God is remembered’ and would be probably more applicable as the meaning of the name.

My middle name is Adam, and it was subsequently born by a 7th century Irish Abbot of Fermo in Italy. It has enjoyed something of resurgence in the English-speaking world since the 1960’s. In Hebrew it is a generic term for “man” and has never been considered a personal name.

My last name Oliver came from England back in the 1700’s. It was derived from the English and was also a very popular surname in England. It’s also from France, but about 80% of the people with the surname Oliver are from England,

My name makes me feel good and proud about myself because I know I was named after a president of the United States of America. Also, my first name Zachary was chosen because I was supposed to be the last child that my parents were going to have. As it happened, I was not. I kind of like my name because it has so much meaning to me. I would have to say that I have never thought about changing my name. I think it’s a great name and has an immense amount of meaning behind it.



The Big First

The Big First-First Place

Little Miss Cowgirl

Krystin Hall

It was the summer of 1995, and I was 7 years old, living in the small town of China, Texas. Every year a celebration was held called the Chinaberry Festival that had plenty of food, music, and games to choose from, and all the citizens of the town would come out to enjoy the festivities. Around this time about four of my classmates and I were entered into a contest called the Little Miss China Cowgirl. We had to dress up in cowgirl attire. I had on my cowgirl hat, candy curls, a red tied up shirt, a mini ruffled skirt, and the shiniest red cowgirl boots you ever saw. I was so excited to be entered in the contest where my grandparents, aunts, parents, and cousins as well as everyone in the community would see me show off my pretty outfit. I was so nervous because I had to compete against my classmates, and they had some pretty outfits, too. I was sort of intimidated, but I did a good performance for the audience when my name was called, followed by hand claps, and screams of my family and friends saying, “Go Krystin!!” At that moment I felt so alive. After everyone got up and did their performance, it was time to announce the winner. I stood on stage with my classmates, my heart thumping so hard it felt like it could come out of my chest, and then the announcer said, “Our Little Cowgirl for year 1995 is...Kayla Reaux.” At that moment I was crushed and disappointed at myself because I thought I did a bad performance, and I was so upset that I started crying as I left the stage. Even though my classmate won, I still wanted the title for myself. A few seconds later my mom came over to cheer me up by saying, “Don’t worry; you will win next year.” However, I still was mad that I didn’t win, and then my classmate Kayla came over to me and said, “You did good, Krystin, and I like your red boots.” The moment after she said that, I felt like a winner even though I didn’t win the title.

The Big First-Second Place

Different Job

Tyler Morgan

I have a very different job. I am a Juggler, and Illusionist. I travel around mostly our area, and throughout Texas, and do my show for churches, schools, Relay for Life, some birthday parties, and just about anything else that people call for. I remember the first big show I ever did.

It all started a few weeks before the show. A professional Illusionist came and saw my show and asked me if I would like to be the opening act for a show that he is going to be doing in Columbus, Texas. I said yes because it was my chance of a lifetime. It was the summer between my eighth and ninth grade year, so I was only fourteen years old. I was a very young performer at that time for this particular job. My dad, Brian Britt, my youth minister, and I packed the van with my equipment. Then we set out for Columbus, Texas. It was about a three-hour trip. We were going to a Christian Youth Camp. Along the way my dad and Brian were telling funny stories to make me stop worrying about the show. We finally get there and Brock Gill, the professional illusionist, and his wife greeted us. Then we proceeded to go eat lunch at a great Mexican food restaurant in Columbus. That was evidently my first mistake. All I am going to say is Mexican food before your first big show is the biggest mistake that you can make. When we arrived at the camp, Brock took us backstage so I could set up. The whole time I was setting up, I was sick to my stomach. I would make numerous trips to the restroom. It was evidently quite comical to everyone else. On the other hand, I got to meet and fellowship with a lot of cool and interesting people. It was a pretty laid back environment, other than when Brock started messing with people, and doing magic tricks. There was a cool band there that was going to be playing a concert when we finished our show. The whole time they were messing with me because I was so sick. I soon found out that about one hour before the show, backstage became a mad house. There were band members running around getting stuff ready for the concert. Brock had most of his stuff ready, but he was still messing with people. That is just the way he is, he likes to amaze you. The people that were the craziest backstage were the lights, sound, and camera men. They were hanging on rafters and pulling ropes, and switching lights. I thought the whole room was going to collapse on me. It was so loud backstage; there was stuff falling and clanking, and there was mechanical stuff grinding. I soon realized that I never knew what really went on backstage at a big job like this one. I was still a very young

performer, and I had not been in that situation before. Now we were at about thirty minutes until I went on. So I was backstage juggling my clubs, balls, knives, torches making all the people backstage nervous. The band was already on stage playing. When they were finished, I was supposed to go on. I was really feeling sick now, and I had no clue of how many people were sitting in the audience. I was standing at the stairs that go up to the stage, and Brock walked over to me and asked, "Are you nervous?" Then he went on to say, "Don't worry if you drop one. There are only a thousand people in the audience." My jaw dropped. I was definitely sick now. Before I could do anything else, I heard the M.C. introducing me so I ran on stage, and was blinded by the stage lights. I opened my mouth to say, "How are you doing out there," but nothing came out of my mouth. When something finally did, I was stuttering. Now that I look back, it is very comical. Finally, the crowd could tell I was nervous, so they all stood up and started cheering for me. This relieved my anxiety, and I proceeded to do my show and finished it, and everything went smoothly, other than the first part. After the show was over, people wanted to meet me, and I signed autographs; I felt like a celebrity.

I have been traveling and juggling for about four years now. It is definitely the best job I have ever had, but I will never forget the first show that I ever did.

The Big First-Third Place

Taste of Snow

Josh Schaver

In November 2004, I was able to experience my very first winter. I remember that day very vividly. It was in Fountain, Colorado. I woke up to the sound of wind crashing upon the apartment wall. It had done this many times before, and so I was used to it by now. I had to get used to it because of my strict routine every morning: be up by six-thirty and out by ten o'clock. This night, though, was not going to let me have my rest. Almost every time I was about to fall asleep, the wind would pick back up. So, finally I got out of bed, put on my glasses, and stumbled down the hall. As soon as I left the comfort of my blanket, my body started to freeze due to the cold air. My mind did not care about that though, but more of how the outside looked. As I finally made it down the hall and took the only left to the sliding door that led to the outside patio, I was stunned. Now the time was about 6:15, and the sun has just started to come out. My eyes were fixed not so much on the outside, but what was falling outside. I began to think to myself, "Is this snow or tiny bits of paper?" Now you are probably thinking why would I think that? For someone who has never seen snow before, I was perplexed. I was so captivated that I just stood there looking at each one as if it was the only one there. Finally, I told myself to go grab a handful of snow off the barbeque pit on the patio. Just to let you know, I had on just a thin layer of sleep attire and was also not worrying about the cold. I rushed to the door, thrust it open, plunged my hand into the snow, and froze. I was already cold and once my hand was deep into the snow mound, I felt as if my body froze up on me. The snow itself felt as soft as a cloud though, and the snow that was falling from the sky felt like tiny feathers landing on my face. Just as I pulled my hand out of the snow, a thought crossed my mind, "Why don't I taste the snow like they did on Charlie Brown." So I stuck out my tongue and to my disappointment, it just tasted like water. Soon after, I came back to my senses and rushed back inside. My body started to warm right back up with great delight. I was also able to smell the wonderful gas that leaked out into our apartment filling it with luxurious heat.

The First Big-Honorable Mention

One Night at Wally World

William Streety

It was the middle of September of 2005. It was my first day at Wal-mart in Houston off of Westheimer by the Galleria. I went in knowing that there was a voluntary evacuation ordered in Houston, but they still told me to stay and work. Those eight hours changed the way I look at a human life. I was there for computer training; that was all. As soon as I clocked in, they told me I was being put out on the floor. Only one other guy and I showed up in our section, hunting and fishing. Next thing I knew, panic broke out. A mandatory evacuation was ordered, but our bosses would not let us go. I was on the floor trying to keep people from killing themselves over a flashlight. I have never seen people so panicked. Some even tried to steal. I finally got behind the counter. A guy walked up and wanted to buy a gun. When I told him that he could not, he became furious and started cursing at me and threatening me. I had to call security and have him escorted out. By the time ten o'clock came around, the shelves were bare of flashlights, coolers, B.B. guns, and life vests. There were a few people left in the store but not many. We were all tired. My other coworker, Bill, walked up to me and said, "What a messed-up day to start." We made a rushed attempt to put up all the ammo that was left over. Finally, at midnight, our manager said we could leave. I have never been in that store again.



Family



Traditions

Family Traditions-First Place

A Heart in Half

Armando Castro

Divorce is defined as the legal dissolution of a marriage. To many it means a second chance and the start of a new life. To me, it meant the end of my family. Looking back now, I wish I could have stopped everything from happening. My mother said, "You can leave whenever you want," and my father did just that.

I believe it all started when I was the age of eleven. My father was what many would call the "entrepreneur," striving to make his imprint on mankind. My mother was the typical housewife, enjoying life with her children. At that age, I did not realize all of the late night arguing and disruption in the household. Being younger, I believe that even if I heard it, I would not believe it. "Hear no evil, see no evil," as I like to put it. As time progressed, I started to "open" my eyes and realize what was happening within my family.

One gloomy Friday night, my father returned home after a strenuous day at work. I was extremely happy because it was Friday, and that meant no school the next day. I recall him kicking off his shoes and jumping into his recliner which seemed to be his "happy place." Before I knew it, a flurry of cursing and hollering occurred, and those dreaded words came out of my mother's mouth, "You can leave whenever you want!" My heart sank to the bottom of my stomach. I felt woozy, and as the door slammed. My heart felt as if it had snapped in half.

Since the night of this tragedy, my parents have never even thought of trying to reunite, ignoring the feelings they once had for one another. Most of the time, they describe their disgust for one another. Maturing faster than many, I somewhat understand the dilemma that my parents faced. As they tell me their points of view, trying to justify the wrongs done, I still stand without a whole family. I do not show the feelings that I hold within, but as I continue to age, I can only hope that this pain will fade away.

Despite the fact that my parents are no longer together, I still love them both dearly. I can only hope the best for both of them. I take this as a learning experience and as time fades away, I will try to regain the part of me I lost.

Family Traditions-Second Place

The Patient

Gabriela Estupinan

Located on the door are “212- A and B” engraved with black letters on a golden 10 by 3 inch plaque. Hanging near the plaque is a 5 by 5 inch pillow; engraved in the middle in black letters is the phrase, “I Love you Nee-Nee.” Next to it a wooden door with golden handles stands strong and tall. This door is an invitation for everyone to come in.

There she is with her gray curled hair, 93 pound body, and moon-shaped face. The wrinkles on her face, the bruises on her arms and legs, let everyone know she is not young anymore. Now she feels helpless lying in that bed, which to the side has rails, so that if she rolls, she won't fall. To her left, her night table stands. Nearby are awful purple flowers with no aroma, a baby doll dressed as a nurse, and her brown glasses' case laying on top. Three drawers are stuffed with lipstick, deodorant, the rich pink strawberry aroma lotion, diapers, wipes, and a black and gray blow dryer. A battered old cigar box filled with old pictures, letters, and memories of her, holds a long lasting feeling of independence, and strength. The muddy brown recliner to the right of her bed, waits patiently for her to sit in like usual, for those 2 required hours per day. Behind the door hides the two door closet, which she shares with a roommate. The white sink waits and above it, deep in that mirrored square, is the reflection of the four white walls, where pictures hang, and the narrow curtain which divides the room in two. She lays there in the midst of all of this, waiting to be helped.

Unpleasant smells come out of that room every now and then, the smell of wasted liquids, her bladder let loose, the strong smell of the food she ate an hour ago. Her digestive system now lets out food waste as the most natural event in an individual life. Suddenly if you close your eyes, you can dream you are sitting on the soft white sand, looking out at the ocean, and the fresh soft wind slaps your body. She had asked for her ocean breeze air freshener to be sprayed.

The way she acts is like a child. Her deep voice penetrates the walls. She may makeup stories, or needs. “I'm in pain, I need to be cleaned”, or the most heartbreaking phrase, “I just need you to hold my hand and talk to me.....Do you know they call this my home? But really to me it's prison. I can't go out; if there is nobody to take me anywhere, I stay in this bed, in this room alone. Loneliness is my companion. Home, that safe, protective, assuring place is where I want to go.”

Four walls hold pictures full of memories. The bed embraces the owner of them. The owner is herself a long lasting living memory. She told me one day, "I see you, and I see myself; now you look at me and this is how you will look someday."

Family Traditions-Third Place

Family Reunion

William Streety

Every year it started out the same, the long drive on the second Saturday in October. We packed all seven of us in the car and took off to Kirbyville. Looking back on it now, the drive did not seem so long, but with that many people in one car any drive could seem like it took forever. There was always a big rush of excitement when we got to the road that led into our family's land. I could never tell if the excitement was because we got to see family we had not seen in a year or the relief of being able to climb out of the car. One thing was for sure; as soon as we got out of the car, we were hit in the face with the smell of fifty different home cooked meals. The wonderful sensation smelled of a combination of fried chicken mixed with sweet potato pie and brown sugar. The smells made my mouth water. Once we started to get over the initial smells, we were grabbed by what could be thought of as a giant. We soon realized that our giant was Uncle David, a six foot five inch tall three hundred and fifty pound beast of a man with a heart of gold. After we had been hit in the face with smells and nearly crushed to death, we would visit with the swarm of people that had gathered. It seemed as if they all knew me, but I had no clue who most of the people were or what their relationship was to me. I just faked it and moved from one person to the next. Once all of the "Hi! How are you?" greetings were over, we finally got to eat, or rather, feast. There were tables of food as far as I could see. I would start off on one end of a table and move on down the line filling my plate to the top. After my plate was about to break, I had to try and balance it all the way to the table. While balancing, the whole family would stop and pray. This is where things got tricky. The prayer would last anywhere from thirty seconds long to five minutes long depending on who was saying the prayer. The whole time I wanted to try and pick at the food on my plate. Finally came the Amen, and before I knew it, everyone was stuffing his face. I would eat more in that one day than I would usually eat in a week. Once all the eating was over, we all threw our plates away. People that had driven ten or eleven hours now had to start to leave. I would think to myself, "Wow! That was short." Next, it was our turn. Dad would reach into his pocket and pull out his keys. All at once, we would think, "Man! Now we have to get back into that car again."

Family Traditions-Honorable Mention

Tradition

Yadira Trevino

As every year, I am waiting for New Year, and it's not because I had a bad year and I want to forget everything bad I have been through. It's because every last day of the year all the family from Mom's side, which is very huge, go to my grandma's house. All the family lives in different parts of the U.S. and in Mexico. However, that day is so important that uncles and aunts come from everywhere, Washington, Illinois, Dallas, Houston, McAllen, and San Juan.

On the morning of December 31st, everybody gets ready. The elders go buy all the stuff, like the food and the piñata, which is not just for the kids, but also for the older people, too. The piñata is big with a lot of pretty colors. When you look at it, you can imagine a rainbow or a garden full of flowers with all those colors that it has. Inside, it is full of different kinds of candies, and the kids are anxious to get them. Some times it is full of different kinds of candies, and the kids are anxious to get them. Some times the piñata has money, too. So every piece of the piñata that falls to the floor is caught; for the kids are like a bunch of people who have not eaten in a long time. A piece of bread falls from heaven, and they try to get it desperately. Some like how it looks when the kids try to get the piece of piñata. Almost all the time some of them cry because they could not catch it. But I think that's part of the memory. While all the older folks buy that kind of stuff, we, the cousins, clean and prepare the house for the celebration. The kids play in the plazita (a little park that is like a block size) that sits in front of Grandma's house.

At night, all the family looks so pretty. I look around and I see groups that are formed by relatives. They are laughing and look so happy; they talk and talk. The kids are everywhere, running and playing, also, waiting for the piñata time. I look at my grandma's face, and I see her happiness reflected in her expression, watching the family together, like every year.

After the piñata my aunts give candy bags to everyone. It's funny because that day we act or feel like kids. I think it's because we feel loved and protected by the relatives. Minutes before midnight we get twelve grapes and when it is twelve o'clock, we start to eat them and asking a wish for each grape. Then, everybody gives hugs to each other wishing each a happy New Year. All the happiness for being safe, healthy, and alive is reflected in our faces with a big smile and tears running down our cheeks, wondering if the next year we will see the same faces.

Family Traditions-Honorable Mention

The Porch

Demetri Goodman

I was raised by my grandparents. They were wonderful creatures, but the one person I remember the most is Grandma Susie. She was the glue of the ranch.

When I think of Grandma, I can remember how she would get up every morning at 5 o'clock. After starting her day off by getting Grandpa off to work, she would prepare breakfast for the rest of us. When everyone had gotten something to eat, off to the barn we would go to do chores. Just before noon we would smell the aroma of soul food for that day. Everyday was like clockwork; after dinner it was naptime. After nap it was time to get clothes off the clothes line. We had to fold laundry and put it in its proper place.

The best day of the week was Sunday evenings on the front porch of the big house of Grandpa and Grandma. Their children and grandchildren would come together. The grown ups would sit around and jaw jack, while the kids played in the back yard. I have heard a lot of stories told on that porch.

The porch was like an altar. Everyone always testified about something there. It was where Grandma would take us to talk when we had done something wrong and received a spanking. We all had great memories of the porch, until Grandma fell and broke her leg. She never recovered. The fall was when it was discovered that Grandma had cancer. Shortly afterward she died.

After her funeral everyone gathered on the front porch as we would on a Sunday evening. We talked of the good old days. After that day we never gathered on the porch again. It seemed no one ever had the time after the funeral. I think Grandma was the glue that kept the family together.

Family Traditions-Honorable Mention

Special Family Holiday

La'Quetha Wilson

I remember it like it was yesterday. My family would gather together for a holiday. I would get up that morning so excited ready to open my presents that Santa had left me while I was sleeping the night before. I was soon ripping and tearing the wrapping paper in a hurry to see what I got. Everyone would then get prepared and ready to go to Grandma's house, where the older folks would exchange gifts to the person whose name they had pulled on Thanksgiving night. Dinner usually starts around noon whenever everything is complete. The meal would consist of all my favorites: Honey-roasted ham, oven-baked turkey, sweet buttery corn, fresh cooked green beans, Cajun dirty rice, spicy cornbread dressing, cheesy melting macaroni & cheese, mouth-watering rolls, seven up cake and other amazing desserts. The prayer, which was done by my uncle, would start and then the food was served. Silence would fill the room as everyone stuffed their faces. After eating, all the women would help clean the kitchen while the men continued with their conversation in the garage. Kids would walk around the neighborhood showing off all the new stuff we got that morning. My little brother and I would always dress similarly to each other. That would make it easy for my mother to take pictures of us which would be the greatest pictures ever. Everyone would slowly begin leaving as the day went by. I would be waiting ready to go, so that I could go home and play with the rest of my toys at home. Now that my grandparents are gone, things will not be the same.



Everyday Life

Everyday Life-First Place

The Best Teacher

Demetri Goodman

I remember the fifth grade as if it were yesterday. Shelly Brown was my math teacher. She was as beautiful as the sunset on a summer morning. Her hair was blonde and cut short. She had a scent of a bed of roses freshly cut. The moment I set eyes on her, I knew she was special. I say, "Special" because Ms. Brown taught me to believe in myself. I wasn't always so confident. I was a child that didn't feel loved. After a few months in fifth grade, Ms. Brown asked me to stay after class. I wondered why. The bell rang, and I sat there in my seat expecting the worst. To my surprise Ms. Brown asked me if I had ever heard of the Kelly Math Contest in Houston, Texas. Of course I hadn't. She began to explain that it was a contest for students who were advanced in math, and she felt that I should give it a try. I never had anyone to believe in me for anything. I was really excited. She told me to talk it over with my mother. Since my parent was divorced, my mother was the only person to make decisions in my life. I left school that afternoon feeling really smart.

I never expected my mother's reaction. I got no support from her. She said that I could not enter the contest. I could not believe what I was hearing. Had this woman lost her mind? Just the same she didn't change her mind. I went back to school the next day and told Ms. Brown my mother's decision. Ms. Brown asked if there was something she could do. She really was disappointed. She said maybe she could talk to my mother. I told her she could give it a try. She said that she would call my mother that evening after school. Ms. Brown called my mother that evening like she said she would. My mother still said, "No."

Ms. Brown told me not to be disappointed. She suggested that my mother was just trying to protect me, but just the same I was mad as hell is hot. The last day of school Ms. Brown had a math contest just so I could participate. I WON. She even had first, second, and third place prizes. No one since Ms. Brown has ever showed me love. If she had received some support from my mother, I might have been the first woman president. Ms. Brown is the first of a few people to show some interest in my life. I do believe if the school system had more Shelly Browns the world would be a better place. Isn't that what teaching is supposed to be about, helping one to believe that the sky is the limit and that a person has the potential of doing anything if he or she works hard at it?

Sometimes I often wonder about Ms. Brown. Is she still teaching? Is she still placing hope and dreams in her students? I know one thing. When I would get off track in life; many times it was her words, face, and love that would lead me back. She would say, “If you believe it, you can achieve it.”

Everyday Life-Second Place

I Hate Go-Carts

Tony Cacioppo

One thing that I truly hate is my poor excuse for a job. It's not a bad job for a high school student, but it's embarrassing to work there when you are in college. Starting go-carts for a living is not what I want to be doing for the rest of my life, but that is not the part of the job that makes me have pure hatred for my job. It is people who don't know how to discipline their children, people who don't know how to throw away their trash, and also people who show up right before closing time and stay for a while.

One of the problems with the world today is people not knowing how to discipline their children. When I was young and I did something that my parents didn't approve of, I got a beating (just enough to let me know not to do that again). These days parents are too scared to give their children a spanking. I guess they are afraid of hurting them or maybe the fear of beating them so much that the kids will be bullies or turn into killers when they grow up. All I can say is that I don't think that time outs or long talks, or taking something away is the way to go. I have kids back talk me every day, and in one case I had a kid punch me in the arm because I told him to stop fighting with his brother. When something like that happens, I watch as the parents do nothing about it. I guess they think it's cute, and I would love to straighten their children out. When I was younger, I was afraid of an elder. It didn't matter how much older they were, I still had respect, and I never disrespected them. The children these days have no respect for their elders, and I'm forced to sit back and watch America's youth fly down the drain in a go-cart.

When I get done with a candy bar or a drink, I always dispose of my trash properly for two reasons: one is to keep our earth clean, and the second is to help out the people who have to pick up after everyone. However, while I'm at work, I watch people every day just throw their trash on the ground even if they are two feet away from a trash can. It's not only with kids that I see this. Sometimes, it is elders who should know better. This shows disrespect to the earth that we all share and also to the hard working people who have to pick up after them. Their complete disrespect will slowly but surely cause me to explode one day. I just don't understand how people can be so lazy.

Out of all the things that make me mad this is the most understandable. To me it's just common courtesy that if someone shows up to an establishment minutes before they close, they should either leave or do what they have to do quickly. At my business when people show up minutes before closing time, they like to stay as long as possible. Now there is nothing wrong with that sometimes because Lord knows, I could use the extra cash, but sometimes I have plans after work or maybe its been a really long day of dealing with rotten children and picking up people's trash, and I just want to go home. They just don't understand that other people have lives. Maybe I just need to quit my job and go build a house out in the woods and live there and forget about all of these pet peeves.

Everyday Life-Third Place

The Monster in My Room

Zach Oliver

Once upon a time, a boy named Frank had a fear of the monsters that were in his room. Some nights he was so scared that he could barely get any sleep because of the strange loud deep roar that he always heard coming from the corner of his room. He would get so afraid at night that he would run into his parent's room, lock the door, and nestle in between them like a baby.

Their house was a small wood framed cabin out in the country on the hillside. They lived in a small Texas town that had a population of about 800 people. The house was located about half a mile off the only road in town. His house was way out in the woods by a mysterious, algae filled pond. It was very old, and everywhere you would walk the floor would crack, making a squeaky noise. The boy's room was really small and very colorful. His twin sized bed made the room appear bigger than it actually was. His comforter had red and black polka dots; which made the bed resemble a giant lady bug. The walls were painted blue and yellow and looked very peaceful to the eye.

One night during the summer, the boy woke up terrified, running to his parent's room, screaming "Help me, help me! There is a monster in my room." His parents snuggled him until he would calm down and be able to go back to his room for the rest of the night. This went on for about a week until his mother gave him a can of magic spray. She told him to spray it whenever he saw the monster, and it would disappear. So every time the boy would see the monster, he would squirt the magic spray, and it would make the monster go away for the night. The boy did that ten nights in a row until he emptied the can of what he thought was magic spray. Actually, all that was really in the can was air freshener from the family's bathroom. His mother had to buy more because if he did not have the special spray, he could not sleep at all. The boy had such a phobia of monsters that he could not sleep at night without the spray.

Everyday Life-Honorable Mention

What was I Thinking?

Calvin Hicks

It was a usual day at work, at Wal-Mart's deli. My co-workers and I always anticipated nine o'clock, which is the time we close and we could clean up without being bothered. Our shift ends at eleven so we're constantly racing the clock. This one day I probably won't forget. It was a couple of weeks before Mardi Gras, and we were very busy. Usually we would clean throughout the day, but the crowd had us moving nonstop. Finally toward closing time, the crowd died down, and we were behind on our cleaning. That day I decided I would clean the fryers and the meat slicer. Feeling worn out and fatigued from a long day, I was in a rush to get home. Wanting to get out of there as quickly as possible, I thought it would be faster to clean the slicer with a wet rag while the blade was spinning. While acting on my bright idea, the rag got caught somehow, and it jerked my hand causing me to cut a chunk out of my middle finger on my right hand. It was bleeding really badly, but I didn't realize how bad the cut was until I rinsed the blood off and could see my bare flesh. That's when I called my manager, and she had me rushed to the medical center where I waited about fifteen minutes just for a shot, a band-aid and for them to clear me to work the next day. We got back to Wal-Mart around 11:20, and my co-workers were almost done cleaning, so I asked them if they found my finger tip. They did but they said they threw it away because they figured I wasn't going to need it anyway.

Everyday Life-Honorable Mention

An Interesting Day of Work

Kurt Jones

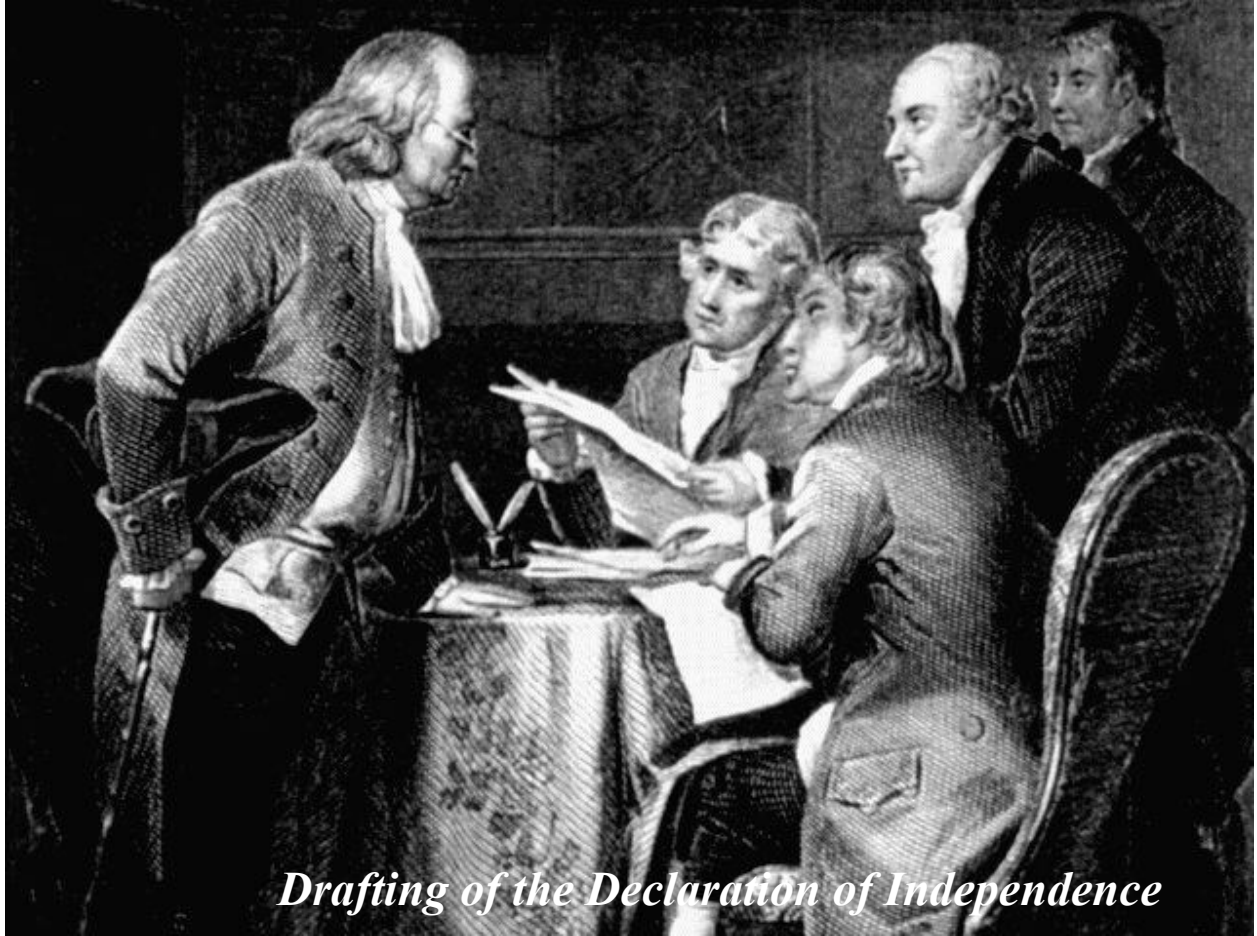
The rush to my truck had to be a great start to a late day. I showed up at work 30 minutes late; and to say the least, that was bad. My boss, already mad about other things, wrote me up and made me start scrubbing floors. To escape insanity, I convinced myself that this was a test of patience. After that, the day seemed to run rather smoothly until twelve o'clock. Twelve o'clock is rush hour for the cooks. As I was cooking burgers, Matt was going extra slow that day and making it really hard to work around. He was on hot dog station making all of our orders late. To say the least, this would not have bothered me if my boss did not tell us constantly that as cooks "we were a team." Everyone knows that as a team, you have to work together as a whole and help everyone out if needed. So to make matters worse, the kitchen leader told me to help Matt out. Then, Jason showed up late, which on rush hour is bad. To make things better, he looked stoned and was eating the food as he made the orders. Feeling a lack of patience now, I was right up the alley to go ahead and put in my two weeks notice. I started thinking, and I prayed for help and after that it was smooth sailing. After rush hour my boss pulled me aside and explained to me how I was doing well, and that I would get a raise. That to me was a day of what seemed as good as a thousand miracles or maybe just an everyday at Sonic.

Everyday Life-Honorable Mention

Making It!

La'Quetha Wilson

Growing up wasn't always easy, living in a two bedroom apartment in the slimiest parts of New York City called Brooklyn. We lived in the project where most of the poorer people stayed. It was in 1958. Times were hard; my mother worked three jobs and was stressed trying to keep food on the table and clothes on our back. Father worked at a point of time, but stopped because of a back injury on the job, then later was fired because of the money he collected for this. The money was so limited; mother would make us pass clothes down to each other that she made for us. As we got older, things began to change; we were now old enough to get our own jobs so that mother wouldn't have to work as hard. I began working at the cleaners called "Mrs. E's," located on the corner of our building. Money was given to mother and some was saved to the side; my goal was to save enough money, so that my family could have better things. The owner of the cleaners was Mrs. Elmore Edwards, an older lady in her late fifties who had moved there in her twenties and opened up the same cleaners. She was a sweet old lady; we would sit there at times and talk about all kinds of stuff. That was how I found out she was the only one still living in her family. Then later she called me the daughter she never had. Things got better at our house. That fall, Mrs. Edwards fell ill. Six months later, she was placed in the hospital. She stayed there three days and later died. Why did this happen? Her funeral was that weekend; it was so sad. It took me a while to understand how it felt to lose someone who meant so much to me. The following week there was a knock at the door; a strange looking woman asked to speak to me. We sat at the table and began to discuss Mrs. Edward's will. I found out that she had left me her cleaners and all her belongings. When I thought things would get worse, they got better; and to this day, I have opened up ten cleaners, so that my family could live better thanks to Mrs. Edwards.



Drafting of the Declaration of Independence

Risky Business

Risky Business-First Place

No More Streety Circles

William Streety

It was one of the best nights of my high school football career. For the first time, since my school's first season in football, we had a 500 season. I was the captain of the team. Actually, my best friend, Brain, and I were the captains. We were all ecstatic. The bus ride home was crazy. Ryan and Keith were singing our praises for being the first two people to play four years of Cathedral football. We got back to the school and got all cleaned up. We all were still pumped up from the win. Most of us sat in the gym talking. Finally, at midnight the coaches told us all to leave. We started to walk over to the cars, and I got an idea. So Brain and I climbed into my 1966 Mustang and drove into the big empty parking lot next to the school. I started revving the engine. The whole time my friend Brian was looking at me and saying, "Are you about to do what I think you are doing?" I looked at him and said nothing. I cut the wheel hard left and stomped on the gas. I was told later that all you could see was a huge cloud of tire smoke and a little red car in there somewhere. The whole time Brian was screaming, "Stop, stop, stop!" I didn't listen; I just kept on going. Finally, I stopped and heard the cheers coming from my fellow teammates. Then I noticed the mad look on my coach's face. At this time, I decided it was in my best interest to take off and go home. The next Monday, as I was pulling into the parking lot of the school, the principal greeted me. He simply said, "We need to talk!" So, we walked into his office. There, he proceeded to ream me out for about thirty minutes and gave me ten days of detention. The whole conversation ended on one note, "No more Streety Circles!"

To this day at Cathedral, anytime a student gets caught doing donuts in the parking lot, the donuts are called Streety Circles.

Risky Business-Second Place

A Lesson Learned

Bryan Casmire

The lesson that I learned the hard way was on one morning my mom went out of town for the week. I was fifteen years old. I was a freshman in high school, at the old Lincoln High school. I wanted to drive myself to school. I figured that if I was to drive myself to school, I would be the coolest freshman ever. I decided that while my mom was out of town, I would take her car and drive myself to school. I had it all planned out. She had gone out of town on that Sunday night, and every time she left town, she would always park her car in the garage and take her keys, but what she didn't know was that I knew where the other set of keys were. She always put them under the mattresses. Dad would always go to work about 7:30 in the morning, and my older cousin would come to pick me up, but not on this day. The day came for me to be the coolest freshman ever. Before my cousin came to pick me up, I called him and said I had a ride. I ran in my mom's bedroom, lifted up her mattresses, and grabbed the keys, jumped in my mom's car, and was off to school. I pulled up at the school with my music turned up loud and every one was looking. I said to myself, "Aaaaaaaaayeha!" The day went by, and every one was saying how cool it was for me to be a freshman and driving, and all the girls liked me. It was 3:00, and it was time for me to get home. I wanted to get home at 3:30 because my dad got off at 5:00, and arrived home about 5:30. As I pulled in the driveway, I saw my dad's truck. I was thinking about running, but I had nowhere to run. I pulled in the driveway, got in the house and he asked me if I had fun. I was thinking to myself-what is this? He talked for awhile while I listened.

Time went by, but I had to wait two years instead of one before I got my first car. That is the lesson I learned the hard way.

Risky Business-Third Place

The Night
Tyler Morgan

I wish that sometimes I had listened to my parents more because most of the time they were right. I sometimes listened to them, but most often learned things the hard way. The time that I can remember most vividly is when a couple of my good friends and I decided that we were going to wrap one of our teacher's house with toilet paper.

I was about fifteen years old, and so were my friends. Not one of us had our driver's licenses. We all decided that we were going to get rolls of toilet paper and landscape our teacher's house. We all loaded up in my friend's moms van, and went to Wal-Mart. We bought forty dollars worth of toilet paper. That was the first lesson I learned. Don't help pay for the toilet paper because it is just wasted money. When we got back to our friend's house, we devised a plan to wrap her house. We sat there for a few hours drinking Mountain Dew. Finally, we came up with the master plan. Not only were we going to wrap the house, we are going to fill up water balloons with mustard and launch them on the roof with a water balloon launcher. Than to top it all off, we were going to spell the teacher's name in the front yard with bleach so it would be there for a month or so. We get everything ready. We were going to drive by first and launch the balloons from the truck. It worked great. It was so funny. Then we all jumped out and started wrapping the house. It was the best job that we had ever done. There was so much toilet paper on their property that it looked like it had snowed. Than we got the bleach and spelled the teacher's name in the front yard. It killed the grass. It was great. We were all running back to the truck when we realized that Darrell was ringing the doorbell. He rang the bell about five times then came sprinting towards us and jumped in the back of the truck. We took off and stopped in a church parking lot. Somehow the teacher's husband found us, so we took off, and we were in our first high sped chase. None of us had our licenses. The chase went on for about forty-five minutes. My stomach was sick. I just knew he was going to get our license plate number, but one of my friends was smart. He had put a line of duck tape on the license plate. We finally thought that we lost him because we went over the bridge and then made a U-turn through the grass median and sped over the other bridge. We thought that the other guy would not do that because he was in a Mercedes Benz, but we were wrong. He wanted to catch us badly. Somehow we get into my friend's neighborhood, and we pulled into

a random person's driveway that wrapped around the back of the house. We sat there for about ten minutes until we thought we lost him. Then we pulled out and parked the truck down the street and removed the duck tape. We still had to go about half a mile to get to my friend's house. While we were running over, we heard police with their sirens and lights. When we got to my friend's house, we were all so scared; we saw cops patrolling all night in our neighborhood. Monday at school that was all our teacher could talk about. We were all in the class together. We never got caught by the teacher, or the cops which was a good thing, but we did not get off Scot free. Our parents somehow found out about the whole thing. We were all grounded for a month, and I could not get my driver's license until six weeks after my birthday.

Although it was funny to see that house, it was not the right thing to do. I learned that you should not drive until you are sixteen, and that you should not deface private property. I learned it all the hard way, and would defiantly go back and change the things that I did.

Risky Business-Honorable Mention

My Life
Sikandar Khan

Life is filled with a lot of harsh surprises and with consequences. Our lives can take a good turn or a bad turn. You never know about your future, what will come up for you next. That something happened to me, and it took a big turn in my life when I was a little boy. One day my buddies and I were playing cricket in our backyard. We were running around, when suddenly I tripped into the ditch and broke my ankle; I didn't realize until I got up and started walking that there was something wrong. I couldn't walk because of my broken ankle. My friends did not realize that I was sitting on the ground hurt and needed help. They just wanted to play and move on, so I tried to get up and go home. I tried one time to get up but couldn't walk. Then I fell down and tried to scream for help, but no one was listening to me. I thought about trying a second time. This time I stood up again but still couldn't walk. I tried to scream for help, but there was not a person that could help me because all of my friends were too busy playing cricket. The third time I saw a stick lying on the ground and got it for walking support.

I was nearly home when suddenly my mom came out and asked me what happened. Then my family took me around the house to see who could fix my ankle; but everyone was messing with it, and they made the case go from bad to worse. Finally my aunt told my mom to take me to the hospital, so a doctor could look at it and tell her what was wrong with my foot. My aunt gave her a long lecture, saying that if she did not seek professional attention, my foot would be in serious trouble. Then after a long time trying to convince her, Mother agreed to take me to the hospital. The doctors took ex-rays and told my family that I would be going through a big surgery. This surgery took me three years to recover. I missed four years of my school. This accident took my entire life in a big turn, and it took me a lot of hard work and dedication to get though and back to where I was supposed to be. When I returned to school, I was way behind my old friends. That's when my great uncle told me that "Life is like a battlefield. If you work hard and fight hard, then you will be recognized as the greatest warrior of all time." He was right about life; it takes a lot of struggle and dedication to make a successful person.

Risky Business-Honorable Mention

Ants Crawling Down My Leg

Gabriela Estupinan

Every Sunday used to be a family gathering day in Mexico. Sunday after Sunday all my cousins, aunts, uncles, and sister would meet at Grandma's house. Each and every one of my aunts including my mom had a duty, from cooking beef stew to making tortillas. This is one of many traditions I miss from my childhood.

While they were cooking, the children, including me, used to run around the patio. The most popular games we played were kickball, bingo, and stop. One special day, 5:00 pm came around, and we all gathered outside my grandma's house. All the neighborhood kids, my cousins, brothers, and I started playing kickball. Everything was going great; it was my team's turn to pitch. My brother, Hector, kicked the ball. Efrain caught it, threw at me, and I told Hector he was out of the game. Hector was mad about it. He grabbed the ball and hit my back, while screaming at me, "Here's the ball, eat it!" I turned around very upset; Hector was running away. I started chasing him. I slipped on a stream of water going down the street and fell on a pointed piece of beer glass. It felt like ants were crawling down my right leg.

I was rushed into the community clinic. My leg was open about 3 inches long and 1 inch wide. I had a severe hemorrhage. The nurse said, "We can't wait any longer, we have to sew her leg as soon as we can." No pain killer was given to me. I went through this procedure in excruciating pain. I remember the nurse kept asking me questions about school, trying to keep my mind off that terrible pain. I was on bed rest for the following four days. During those days I had to go back to the clinic twice a day for cleansing of my wound.

Now I have a scar on my leg. Every time I take a shower or wear shorts, I see the scar, and I get a funny feeling-a weird feeling, something like fear and happiness all together. When people see it, they ask, "What happened? Did you burn yourself?" I just laugh and tell my story. I don't wear shorts out in public because my scar makes me feel embarrassed and ugly.

As time passes, I ask myself "What if I had been mature enough to ignore his behavior and keep playing?" My grandma talked to me about it and comforted me with these words from the Bible, Matthew 5:39, "However I say to you: Do not resist him that is wicked: but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other also to him." Now I regret chasing Hector. If I had ignored him, I wouldn't have the scar that makes me feel embarrassed. I learned a valuable lesson with this experience. I learned that I should have more patience and control my anger.

Risky Business-Honorable Mention

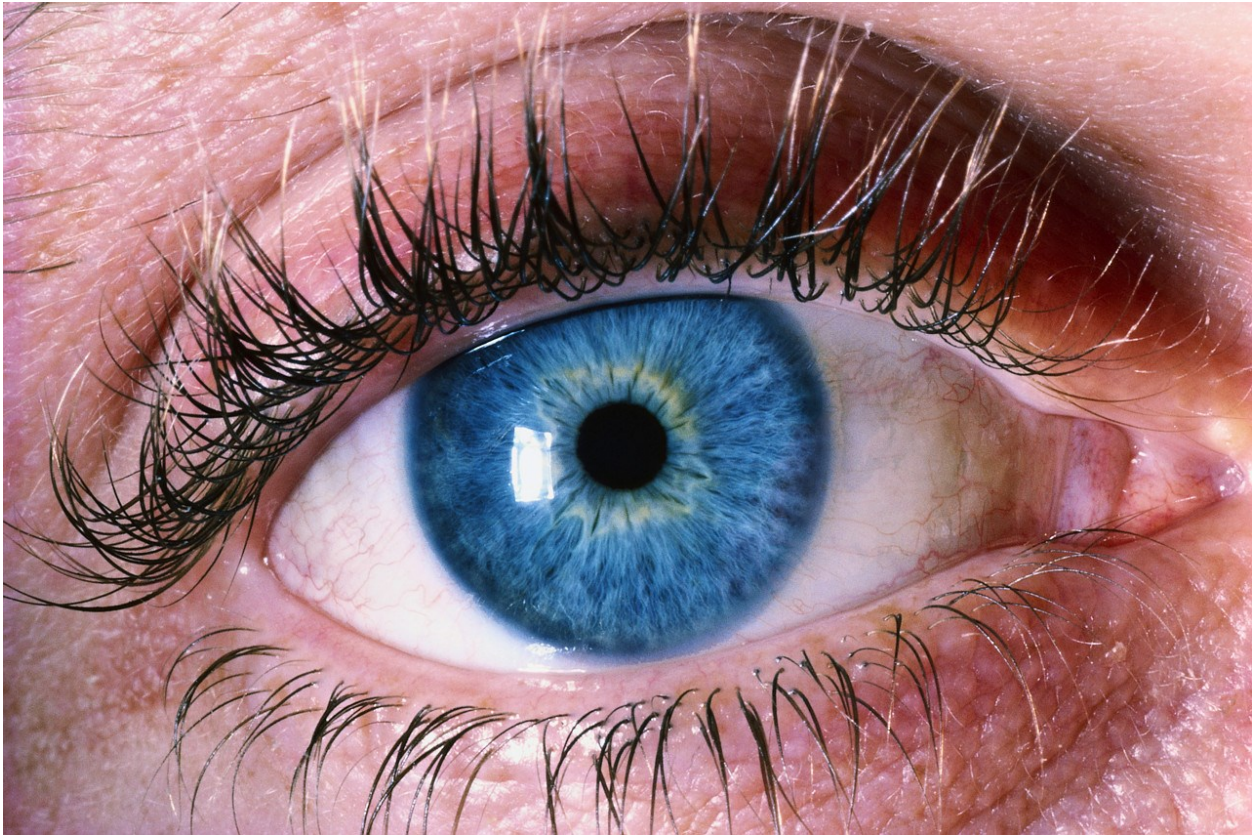
La Cola De Caballo

Yadira Trevino

After a great party at home and sleeping about three hours, I awoke alarmed with a pillow slapped in my head; it was my big brother who had just arrived to Mexico. "Come on, wake up, we're going to La Cola de Caballo!" he said. I was very tired but I think the slap in my head, some tickles and that excited voice of Jorge turned on my batteries. I got out of the bed and found strength like wanting to touch the ceiling and turned on the radio to get ready. Running down the stairs with the toothbrush in my mouth, I got a shock when I tried to go into the restroom and saw a young man who I had never seen before brushing his teeth. He just smiled and told me that he was almost done. The thing was that he spoke to me in English, and we were in Mexico. I closed the door and went to the other restroom. Then, Jorge introduced me to his friend. His name was Jeremy, and he was American. My brother had invited him. Jeremy had never been in Mexico, and he wanted to see new places. The drive to La Cola de Caballo was dangerous; it had a lot of curves, and it was narrow. However, it is wonderful to go through the mountains watching the beautiful nature. Soon, we got into the parking lot and not just me but everyone in the truck got out quickly and went to the big and attractive hotel's restroom. I was the first in getting out of the restroom, and the first thing I saw was a bunch of pictures on the wall of the bungee jumping. Since I was fifteen I was waiting for the opportunity to jump, and that bungee jumping is the highest in Latin America; it was just perfect. I told the others, and there was no objection to it. We went up there, and the first one jumping was my brother. "Who is next?" the guy asked. Without thinking twice, I said "me!" He handed me a paper to fill out and sign. My handwriting was horrible caused by the nervousness and adrenaline that was running into my body. I took off my shoes and all the things that could fall down. The guy put the security belts through my legs and tied it very well. While he was doing this, he was explaining to me how I was going to do it, and I could not stop smiling at him-- not just because I was nervous but also because the guy was very handsome. Then, holding up with my right hand the belts that were tied to my feet and with my left hand the one that was attached at my waist to a special cable, I walked slowly like a prisoner all the way through the support. When I got at the end of the base in the middle of mountains I looked down, and all I could see was trees. I closed my eyes and inhaled, feeling how the air caressed me and how my heart was palpitating full of adrenaline. I opened my arms

like a bird preparing its wings to fly, and everybody cried, “One, two, three, bungee!” and for a couple of seconds, I really thought I was flying, but speedily the band pulled me up, down and side by side. My body felt similar to a piece of cloth being shaken. When my body was almost stopped, he sent me an orange ball to connect to my waist belt and pull me up.

Then the others jumped too. Finally, after experiencing such feeling as the adrenaline in our bodies, we went down and walked up to watch the beautiful waterfall that looked like a horse tail, the reason why that place was called La Cola de Caballo.



Visions

Visions-First Place

The Church

Ashley Heep

What is with the church today!
Something must have been lost along the way.
Truth and honesty does not exist
because saying it might make someone pissed.

What is with the church today!
Children are taught just to agree
even though the truth will set them free.

What is with the church today!
What about loving our enemy
They are still a part of this big family.

What is with the church today!
So full of hatred
then we wonder why people have strayed.
Do people really read the Bible anyways?
Instead they try to keep these rules that are made up
No wonder why most people just give up.

What is with the church today!
We are too caught up in ourselves to even pray
Has the Holy Spirit passed away?

What is with the church today?

Visions-Second Place

The Sea and the Rhythm

Tyler Morgan

As I stand at the edge of the sea, the rhythm of my heart is a steady throb of excitement, joy, anxiety, and fear. But those four feelings are the feelings that make you want to learn more about what is in front of you. As my toes sink into the retreating sand that is being weathered by the water, my face is seasoned by the sea. My face is toughened by the salty wind; the smell of the salty wind alone is a mystery. What is this day going to bring me? I clench my board to my body; it is my only salvation against the wrath of my saving grace. I paddle out to the unknown; I am on a journey, not just to catch the best wave and ride it in. I am on a mission to figure out what nature is trying to tell me. As I pass the broken-down pier that has been aged for years by storms, sunny days, and the salty sea, the waves begin to grow. I see a nice set of waves on the horizon, so delightful that they will bring much enlightenment and wisdom. The waves bring the wisdom of life. I proceed towards the wisdom of nature, and the current pulls down on me like hands that are trying to claim me as their own. I clench tighter to my board, my salvation. Now I turn and wait for my wisdom to come. As I sit in the salty sea moving with the rhythm of the majestic waves, I realize that there is more to this world than just me. There is more to this world than just the land and the sea. There is more to life than the evolution from a single atom. There is someone watching over us who has the power to calm the sea. I paddle fiercely towards the land. The wave picks me up. I stand up and flow with the wind and the sea. I ride the wave all the way into the sand. I have been enlightened by one who is a million times wiser than I. As I step on the sand, I realize that my journey now is to seek him.

Visions-Third Place

The Using Game

Don Jones

When you thought I wouldn't, I caught on quick
I'm one step back before the fuse you lit
explodes with the plan you had for us all
You know I know, but you still have yet to admit
I'm the next project up your sleeve of tricks
I know you like the back of my hand
You think I'm down, but I'm standing still
Just tell me your next move, and I'll let you do what you do
The unknown is killing me. What is the truth
if this deed is not fulfilled. I'm up for the fight.
I'm ahead two to one in the bottom of the ninth
So if you think I'm staying still while you take my pride
You thought wrong. You better think twice.

I'm sorry for all the scheming and rhymes
It's just time to say what is in my heart.
Your life is monopoly, and you're too good at the game you play
You don't even know you're doing it anymore, but I guess that's why I am here
To say I hate the way you use me and all your own friends
I guess it is survival of the fittest, but you're only thinking about yourself
I know you're something better-only because I have seen it before
So we all quit, we give you all the credit and you win
But no one wants to succeed in the game you're playing.

Visions-Honorable Mention

Only a Dream

Isela Reyes

You are the man of my life.

You are wonderful

I would love to be asked to be your wife

However, you are too far away.

I see you as a perfect man.

In my dreams, you exist.

I would love to be with you,

But I do not think I can.

One reason is that you are too far away.

If only I could hold you in my arms.

I would be the happiest woman in the world.

We would play and run on the grass.

That is impossible because you only exist

In my dreams while I am asleep.

Thank You

Students

Early Expressions 2007

Faculty Advisor-Editor

Peggy Gene Knight

Judged By:

Sally Byrd

English Instructor

Lamar State College-Port Arthur

Publisher

Janet G. Polk

Print Shop

Lamar State College-Port Arthur

Typesetting Assistance

Karole Borel

Learning Center

Lamar State College-Port Arthur

Statement of Editorial Policy

The editorial staff of EARLY EXPRESSIONS 2007 would like to thank all of the students who submitted work for consideration to EARLY EXPRESSIONS 2007 this semester. Unfortunately, not every entry can be published. In order to insure fair and impartial judging and publication selection, the copy without the author's name is submitted to the judge. The judge at no time sees the copy which identifies the individual author.

The purpose of EARLY EXPRESSIONS 2007 is to publish the best entries for consideration. We are proud of the entries published in this issue and appreciate the support of all students who contributed to and enjoy the magazine.

As the editor, I will make changes to reflect correct grammar and usage to enhance each entry and the magazine as well.

Peggy Gene Knight, Editor

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