

THE INK QUILL

LITERARY AND ART MAGAZINE

Bladen Community College

2016



Samantha Stitz—BCC Alumni

Faculty Editors: Cathy Kinlaw, Sara Neeley, Joyce Bahhouth

Graphic Design: Jeanne Butler

Layout: Jeanne Butler

Special Thanks:

All Contributors

Bladen Community College English Department

Joyce Bahhouth

Cathy Kinlaw

Jeanne Butler

Copyright © 2016 by The Ink Quill Society, Bladen Community College

All rights reserved by The Ink Quill Society of Bladen Community College. No individual shall copy content from *The Ink Quill Literary and Art Magazine* without written permission from The Ink Quill Society and the author or artist of the particular piece. Each author maintains his or her own individual copyright and may sell or copy his or her work.

If *The Ink Quill* is the original publication site for the work, contributors may submit their work elsewhere as previously published work and credit *The Ink Quill Literary and Art Magazine* as the original site of publication.

CONTRIBUTOR INDEX CONTINUED

| Name and Pages | Name and Pages |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Neal, Lisa 88, 89, 90 | Sheppard, Ray 37, 55, 74 |
| Novak, Robin 84, 86 | Shipman, Kimberly 72 |
| Pait, Levy 21, 54 | Smith, Alyssa 139 |
| Pearsall, Elisabeth 70 | Todd, Madison 133 |
| Pridgen, Collins 41 | Vitale, Diane White |
| Rains, Tommy 62 | 67, 93, 94, 95, |
| Rhone-Lewis, Xavier 43, 105, 126, 140 | Williamson, Betty 11, 64 |
| Shaw, Richard 56 | Willis, Joseph 101, 102 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROSE

| | | |
|--|-------------------|----|
| <i>The Train Incident</i> | Betty Williamson | 11 |
| <i>Would You Like That All the Way?</i> | Gabriel Barnes | 14 |
| <i>The Girl Who...</i> | Erica Butler | 17 |
| <i>Crackle Discoveries</i> | Erica Butler | 18 |
| <i>Language Is Alive</i> | Jacqueline Madden | 19 |
| <i>Operation Saving Santa</i> | Levy Pait | 21 |
| <i>Not All of Us Have Horns</i> | Gabriel Barnes | 26 |
| <i>Who's Scruffy Lookin?!</i> | Gabriel Barnes | 28 |
| <i>Spicing Things up</i> | Micah Brown | 30 |
| <i>Darkness</i> | Hannah Allison | 32 |
| <i>Comparing Language to the Living</i> | Gabriel Barnes | 34 |
| <i>Language As a Living Thing</i> | Micah Brown | 36 |
| <i>Tom and Huck > Dick and Jane</i> | Gabriel Barnes | 38 |
| <i>The Magic in Reading</i> | Collins Pridgen | 41 |
| <i>Monkeys and Music: A Literary Narrative</i> | Michael McDuffie | 44 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROSE CONTINUED

| | | |
|---|------------------|----|
| <i>From Harlem Pre-K to UNC-G Sociology</i> | Micah Brown | 47 |
| <i>I Am Going to Be an Engineer</i> | Mary Butler | 50 |
| <i>Unstoppable</i> | Levy Pait | 54 |
| <i>Proud to Be Who I Am Today</i> | Richard Shaw | 56 |
| <i>Bee Fearful</i> | Karen Brown | 60 |
| <i>Raccoon Rampage</i> | Tommy Rains | 62 |
| <i>The Veterinarian</i> | Betty Williamson | 64 |
| <i>Identity and Culture</i> | Joyce Bahhouth | 66 |

POETRY

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|----|
| <i>What I Need</i> | Hannah Allison | 69 |
| <i>A Sigh</i> | Elisabeth Pearsall | 70 |
| <i>The Passing</i> | Harriet Delores Grundei | 71 |
| <i>The Rude Shadow</i> | Kimberly Shipman | 72 |

CONTRIBUTOR INDEX

Name and Pages

Name and Pages

| | |
|---|---|
| Albright, Alex 119, 120, 122, 123 | Duffus, Kevin 113 |
| Allen, Willie 80, 81 | Elizalde, Bridgette Munoz 143 |
| Allison, Hannah 32, 69, 74 | Faircloth, Grace 131 |
| Bahhouth, Andrew 83 | Grundei, Harriet Delores 71 |
| Bahhouth, Joyce 66 | Hunt, Christopher 141 |
| Barber, Gabe 127 | Kiefer, Danielle 16, 33, 63, 82, 97, 98, 99, 100, 138 |
| Barnes, Gabriel 14, 26, 28, 34, 38 | King, Ginger 75, 76, 79 |
| Brown, Karen 60 | Kresmery, Karen 31, 59, 91, 92, |
| Brown, Micah 30, 36, 47 | Lennon, Takenya 73 |
| Butler, Erica 17, 18, 78 | Jacqueline, Madden 19 |
| Butler, Jeanne 65 | McDuffie, Michael 44 |
| Butler, Mary 50, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111 | Melvin, Tykia 72 |
| Cooley, Abby 129 | Miller, Jopesh 46, 53, 96 |
| Cowan, Jennifer 77 | Munn-Goins, Ashanti 135 |
| Cox, Aaron 103, 104 | Murphy, Mary Ann 25 |
| Deloach, Tykia 137 | |

are going to make it!

So now it is time for you to start dreaming and if you have a dream, start taking small steps and you will get there! Every step counts. Show others that you can chase your dreams until you accomplish them. Be an example to people. Show them that if you can achieve your dream, so can they. Be an inspiration! What will you do? How will you plan your **success? How will you remain confident in yourself? Don't** worry about the people around you or the problems that you will have ahead. Focus on your goal and be self-confident! Do **not be afraid, be brave. Don't let others ruin your goals!** Believe in yourself, and live your dreams!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

POETRY CONTINUED

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----|
| <i>A Snake</i> | Tykia Melvin | 72 |
| <i>Experiences</i> | Takenya Lennon | 73 |
| <i>Demons</i> | Hannah Allison | 74 |
| <i>Little Birds at Play</i> | Ginger King | 75 |
| <i>Tuesday Morning</i> | Ginger King | 75 |
| <i>Now I See</i> | Ginger King | 76 |
| <i>Who Am I?</i> | Jennifer Cowan | 77 |
| <i>Racing Thoughts...</i> | Erica Butler | 78 |
| <i>Nothing at All</i> | Ginger King | 79 |
| <i>The Path to the Field</i> | Willie Allen | 80 |
| <i>Through the Night</i> | Willie Allen | 81 |
| <i>Morning Poem</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 82 |
| <i>Destruction and Madness</i> | Andrew Bahhouth | 83 |
| <i>My Daughter</i> | Robin Novak | 84 |
| <i>The Time Has Come</i> | Robin Novak | 86 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY

| | | |
|--|--------------------|----|
| <i>My Bleeding Heart</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 16 |
| <i>Where It All Began</i> | Mary Ann Murphy | 25 |
| <i>Window of Opportunity</i> | Karen Kresmery | 31 |
| <i>Study in Shadows and Light</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 33 |
| <i>A February Morning on White Lake</i> | Ray Sheppard | 37 |
| <i>Tiger in the Sea</i> | Xavier Rhone-Lewis | 43 |
| <i>Not a Dog</i> | Joseph Miller | 46 |
| <i>Wisdom</i> | Joseph Miller | 53 |
| <i>Lighthouse at Hilton Head, SC</i> | Ray Sheppard | 55 |
| <i>Nature's Beauty</i> | Karen Kresmery | 59 |
| <i>Geometric Shadows</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 63 |
| <i>L.I.B....</i> | Jeanne Butler | 65 |
| <i>Farming in Bladen County</i> | Diane White Vitale | 67 |
| <i>Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, NC</i> | Ray Sheppard | 74 |
| <i>Praise New Orleans</i> | Lisa Neal | 88 |
| <i>Charge of the Saints</i> | Lisa Neal | 89 |
| <i>Blue Marine</i> | Lisa Neal | 90 |
| <i>Aglow</i> | Karen Kresmery | 91 |

DREAMS DO COME TRUE!

Bridgette Munoz Elizalde
Grade 8 Tar Heel Middle School

Dreams are what every single person in the world has. You may have very big dreams that sometime you doubt they may ever come true. Dreams are there for a reason. They make you stronger! Challenges will always face you, but you have to keep going because that is how you reach your dreams! That is how dreams come true! Look up and think of the ones who believe in you and those who inspire you! Those are the people who should motivate you to strive and keep going.

Do not allow anyone to discourage you or stop you from achieving your dream. Pursue your dreams and become an **inspiration to others! Maybe you will even change someone's** life; you never know! From the youngest mind to the oldest, everyone dreams to accomplish something. To achieve your dreams, you have to keep going and not worry about obstacles that you may face. Eventually, you will get there.

Set goals for yourself. Each step you take, no matter how **big or small it is, will bring you closer to your dream.** "All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them," a quote by Walt Disney, means that our dreams can come true if we dare to follow them. Be self-confident. In order to achieve your dream, you need to depend on yourself. This may require courage, time, devotion, and aspiration. Dreams do come true and the dream that you have in your mind is possible! Nothing comes easy. Be brave and face any hardships that may come your way. Do not succumb to failure, disappointment, and doubt. If you fail the first time, try harder. Do not give up. Be a risk taker and do not let anyone steal your dream! You have to believe and keep trying **despite the problems. Don't be afraid of failure because if you** keep trying, you will get better! No matter how hard it is, you

reasons for being placed in foster care, yet I always knew that I had a dream and that I could overcome any obstacles. In foster care stage I knew I needed to either grow a thicker skin or let myself go, so I decided to grow a thicker skin and another episode of my life dealing with illegal substances started.

After finishing my time in the foster care, I went back to living with my grandpa. My relationship with him was not the best. There were days I could not ask him for anything, which made me feel that I needed to start supporting myself. Do not get me wrong I was fed and had clothes to put on, but I wanted more things he could not provide. In order to provide for myself, I started selling drugs at my school. Fortunately, I did not do that for long because I was caught and sent to a group home where it felt like a small prison for kids. There was no color on the walls or floors. Those walls could tell silently the tale of some of the kids who went through the institution. Everybody looked deeply depressed because of the lack of freedom. I was told when to go or when not to go to get food. I was not even allowed to go outside or go play with the other kids in the neighborhood. There were rude staff members. I felt at moments that those staff members forgot that I was a child who deserved to be treated with respect and who needed a second chance. While in the institution, I still believed that if I kept a positive attitude and mindset, I was going to leave the group home and continue with my academics and goals.

It was right after Christmas break when I was finally granted the opportunity to return home and to my school and friends. While being back at my school, I learned of a great football player named Michael Oher who had a similar **story. Learning about Oher's troubles and successes gave me** the courage to keep believing in my dreams. Now I am a serious student with a very solid B average and seeking an A, while my teachers trust me and believe in my potential.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY CONTINUED

| | | |
|---|--------------------|-----|
| <i>Reflection</i> | Karen Kresmery | 92 |
| <i>A Man and His Horn</i> | Diane White Vitale | 93 |
| <i>Resting Place</i> | Diane White Vitale | 94 |
| <i>Singletary United Methodist Church, Dublin, NC</i> | Diane White Vitale | 95 |
| <i>Pollack</i> | Joseph Miller | 96 |
| <i>Dreaming of Spring</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 97 |
| <i>Study in Light</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 98 |
| <i>Broken Dreams</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 99 |
| <i>Beauty in Form</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 100 |
| <i>Anime Warrior Girl</i> | Joseph Willis | 101 |
| <i>Gypsy</i> | Joseph Willis | 102 |
| <i>Thorn Laden Beauty</i> | Aaron Cox | 103 |
| <i>Captured By Rose Vines</i> | Aaron Cox | 104 |
| <i>You Can Use Some Luck</i> | Xavier Rhone-Lewis | 105 |
| <i>Crazy Eyes: Orange Is the New Black</i> | Mary Butler | 106 |
| <i>Khal Drogo: Game of Thrones</i> | Mary Butler | 107 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY CONTINUED

| | | |
|--|--------------------|-----|
| <i>Bladen Community College: A Map to My Success</i> | Mary Butler | 108 |
| <i>Bellamy Mansion, Wilmington, NC</i> | Mary Butler | 109 |
| <i>Dr. Who and the Tardis</i> | Mary Butler | 110 |
| <i>My Cross</i> | Mary Butler | 111 |
| <i>Dream Chaser</i> | Xavier Rhone-Lewis | 126 |
| <i>Playful Days</i> | Danielle Kiefer | 138 |
| <i>My Guardian Angels</i> | Xavier Rhone-Lewis | 140 |

VISITING AUTHORS

| | | |
|---|---------------|-----|
| <i>War Zone - World War II off the North Carolina Coast</i> | Kevin Duffus | 113 |
| <i>Kevin Duffus: Biography</i> | | 118 |
| <i>This I Believe</i> | Alex Albright | 119 |
| <i>Charged with Simple Assault</i> | Alex Albright | 120 |
| <i>Marion Woman Killed Kneeling on Railroad Tracks</i> | Alex Albright | 122 |
| <i>Old Magnolia Tree in Mebane Cut for Store</i> | Alex Albright | 123 |
| <i>Alex Albright: Biography</i> | | 124 |

ARE YOU BRAVE ENOUGH TO PURSUE YOUR DREAMS?

Christopher Jeremiah Hunt
Grade 8 Tar Heel Middle School

I live with my grandpa Herman and his wife Tina because my mom has a substance abuse issue, and I have never met my dad. I have been living with my grandpa on and off since I was three months old. When I turned 13, I started being defiant and disrespectful. I was going through that stage when I thought I was grown. It took me going to foster care and a group home to change that mindset and attitude.

Later on, I got involved in drug dealing on school premises, which landed me in a Level III Group Home (housing designed for minors who can no longer function with their parents or foster parents). Even though on the surface I seemed to have no future other than to become part of the crime statistics in my community and end up in prison or dead, I always kept a positive mindset. I have always been fully cognizant of my academics and skills, which has given me inspiration and courage to keep pushing. I always knew deep down in my heart that I could have a better future. I always knew that I was brave enough to make my dream happen.

One day I told my grandpa I was going to a friend's house; however, I went to the house of another school friend that my grandpa did not approve of. When my grandpa Herman found out, he got so upset with me that he left marks on my skin. Social Services intervened and determined that I was **no longer safe under my grandfather's care. During that** period of my life, I felt I was being mistreated, and that made me very unhappy. I understood that there were many

want. Of course, you'll answer yes. Then, you will get help if you need it. A friend or a family member can cheer you on or boost you up. Last of all, have confidence in yourself. Never say you can't because you can. People try to pull you away, but the only reason for this is because they believe they have failed their dream. You can tell them differently. You can tell them not to give up because you can still become who you want to be. You can tell them to keep reaching for their dreams even if gravity pulls them down. Keep trying. Never give up.

How do you feel now? Do you feel powerful? Do you feel like no matter what, nothing will stop you from making that dream you have come true? That feeling is called courage. It was inside you the whole time. See, I told you so. This is what this essay was for, to strengthen your courage and make you keep reaching out. I hope you know that you can have anything you want in this world because it is what you want



MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

Xavier Rhone-Lewis—BCC Student

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MIDDLE SCHOOL ESSAY WINNERS

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----|
| <i>Dreams</i> | Gabe Barber | 127 |
| <i>Have the Courage to Pursue Your Dreams</i> | Abby Cooley | 129 |
| <i>Never Give up on Your Dreams Even If They Seem Unreachable</i> | Grace Faircloth | 131 |
| <i>Pursuing Your Dreams</i> | Madison Todd | 133 |
| <i>All Our Dreams Can Come True If ...</i> | Ashanti Munn-Goins | 135 |
| <i>Dream Bigger Than Ever Before</i> | Tykia Deloach | 137 |
| <i>Dreams ... Dreams ... Dreams</i> | Alyssa Smith | 139 |
| <i>Are You Brave Enough to Pursue Your Dreams?</i> | Christopher Jeremiah Hunt | 141 |
| <i>Dreams Do Come True</i> | Bridgette Munoz Elizalde | 143 |

Contributor Index

145-146

PROSE



DREAMS...DREAMS...DREAMS

Alyssa Smith
Grade 8 Bladenboro Middle School

“All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.” What’s the first thing to come to your mind when you hear this quote by Walt Disney? You should be thinking of how many things you can accomplish if you put your mind to it. No matter how big or small the dream is, there is nothing you cannot do. We all have dreams, but only some people have the courage to make them come true. Courage means the ability to do something that frightens you. Everyone needs courage because courage is strength. Courage can help you do things you probably thought you could never do. It keeps you reaching for your dream even when someone tries to pull you away. Courage in the heart makes you face your fears. All your dreams are possible if you have this amazing trait.

No matter who you are, you have a dream. Maybe your dream is to become famous. Maybe your dream is to have **over a thousand friends. No matter what it is, it’s your dream**, so have courage and make your dream come true. Make your dream a reality. Make your dream something you strive for your whole life because nothing is more important than your dream.

Can you feel it bubbling up inside you? Can you feel your **heart pounding with enthusiasm? That’s great because you should**. You should want to stop reading and start making **your dreams the biggest goal in your life. That’s what this essay is all about**. There are so many things that you can become. I want to help you become one of those things, so **don’t stop reading here because there’s more**.

Yes, believe it or not, you have courage. You just have to know how to use it. First, ask yourself if this is what you

Walt Disney achieved a lot of awards, but he also dreamed and worked hard. He did not let anybody stop him from **dreaming. He also said, “We keep moving forward opening new doors and doing new things because we’re curious, and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.” If you can do it, you can dream it. First, think. Second, believe. Third, dream. Finally, dare. Those who don’t believe in magic will never find it.**

If you have a dream, don’t wait for the green light. Do it before the green light comes. Don’t let go of your dreams because you failed the first go around. Laughter is timeless; imagination has no age; and dreams are forever. The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing. Always **remember to never stop dreaming. In the long run, it’s all worth it.** A dream is a wish that your heart makes. Always remember if you can dream it, you can do it. To make all your dreams come true, have faith in what matters most. If you can dream it, you can achieve it!!



PLAYFUL DAYS

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student

THE TRAIN INCIDENT

Betty Williamson—BCC Student

When I was about 10, my family lived in North Tampa, Florida. It was a nice residential area. The house we rented was one of two within a fenced yard. The other house was that of the owners.

The local school was about three miles away if you used the railroad tracks to get there or eight miles if you went around the swamp. Our street dead-ended in a screen of trees that hid the railroad tracks. The swamp was being drained on the other side of the tracks. There were some **hummocks surrounded by what we called “suck mud”**. If you stepped in it, it kept your shoe and maybe your sock. There were three or four narrow wooden footbridges leading from the rail bed to a hummock.

Most of the school kids walked the tracks to and from school. The school got the railroad timetable and announced the train times twice daily so we knew when to be off the tracks.

There was a small blockhouse store across the tracks from the school. The woman owner mostly sold snacks and drinks. I was usually paid in merchandise to sweep it out every day after school.

Seneca Street was the closest parallel street to 301N. As those of us from Seneca Street walked to school, we were

joined by kids from other streets that dead-ended at the tree screen like Seneca did. **You didn't want to be late, not because of the trouble you got into at school, but because late could mean you had to outrun a train.**

One afternoon, I was on my way home on the tracks. I heard some boys laughing way behind me. Then I heard a train whistle in the distance coming into town. I was only about halfway home. There was no train scheduled at that time. The whistle grew louder each time I heard it. I started running and looking for a footbridge. I was praying I would find one before the train caught me. The rail bed started to vibrate under my feet.

I glanced back and saw a chubby kid running as if to catch me. **I couldn't see his face, but I could see a train in the distance** behind him. I saw a footbridge ahead of me and redoubled my efforts. The rail bed was shaking now. The boy behind me was yelling. Suddenly, his yell was cut off.

I prayed and threw my books at the bridge. They landed, hanging a third off the other side of the bridge. I threw myself after my books, praying I would land on the bridge. I landed at an angle on the bridge; my feet and shoulders were hanging off opposite sides of the bridge. I tried to curl my feet under the bridge and threw one arm over my books. With the other arm, I grabbed the wood support under the bridge and hung on. I prayed I would not be shaken off.

The train flew by, vibrating the bridge extremely hard. It was a few minutes after the vibrations stopped before I could get up, much less stand. I was scared that badly. There was no sign of

DREAM BIGGER THAN EVER BEFORE

Tykia Deloach
Grade 8 Bladenboro Middle School

"All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them." That's a quote made by Walt Disney; a quote that can change somebody's life. Think about that quote. It says that if you have a dream to be a doctor, lawyer, nurse, teacher, or even the president of the United States, you can do it. Martin Luther King had a dream that blacks and whites will one day be treated equally; now whites and blacks are treated equally. I have a dream that I will be a brain surgeon. **It's going to take a lot of hard work and dedication.**

Some people think dreams don't come true, but to others, **dreams do come true. You can't just wish on a star** and hope that your dream comes true. You have to work hard to make your dream come true. For me to be a brain surgeon, I have to operate on the human brain. That takes a lot of practice and determination. I believe that Jesus Christ will make miracles in that room. Before every operation, I will pray that we will be in safe hands during surgery. **Whatever you do in life, don't forget to do it well.**

Sometimes I think it's kind of fun to do the impossible. Walt Disney also said **"The more you are in a state of gratitude, the more you will attract things to be grateful for."** When you believe in a thing, believe in it all the way, **implicitly and unquestionably. "Hakuna Matata" is a saying** that means there are no worries for the rest of your days. If anybody tries to get between you and your dreams and tells **you that you can't do it, prove them wrong. Whatever kind of work you do, no matter if it is building the best place in the world, don't forget reality.**

Walt Disney is another amazing person who dreamed.

is. Therefore, I strive to reach my own dream. We must have the courage to keep trying. If we fail, we must learn to start again and move on.

Nothing great is ever accomplished without persistence and patience. In order to be successful, our dreams must translate into work. The people who succeed are determined to work toward their goals and plans.

Not all dreams are made of absolutely perfect worlds. Dreaming is just one thing many people are unsure about. Courage, on the other hand, is being sure of reality and doing what is necessary to make our dreams come true. We cannot stop. We cannot give up.

“All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them” makes me think within myself. With hard work and dedication, I know I can reach my dreams. I have been told that they are impossible. I will prove through working smart that all things are possible. I have learned that dreams do come true...We just need to be courageous and believe in ourselves.



the boy who had been behind me. I was exhausted from the hold I had had on the bridge and the release of the fear. I was subdued as I walked down the tracks and onto Seneca Street.

There was a gathering of mothers there. There were some **kids, too. Everybody was upset because some of the kids weren't** home yet. The mothers with kids went home. Two ladies stayed at the end of the road until their husbands came home. Different neighbors tried to get them to come inside. The police were called and talked to the ladies. Two of the Seneca Street boys did not come home.

The names of those lost were announced at school the next day. The school tried to apologize to everyone. The principal offered counseling for anyone who needed it and a service was arranged in the auditorium for those who wanted to attend after school.

The railroad tried to apologize. The spokesman for the railroad said that they were very sorry about the deaths. The government had run a special train and forbade the railroad to give the school any information. The government said the train **was a matter of “national security” and that is all they would say.** This happened about the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The parents planned to sue the government, but the government said the parents could not sue them because it was a case of national security. The railroad pleaded that the government had insisted the train remain secret, and the school never got the information altogether. We moved away before it was settled and never knew who would get sued.

WOULD YOU LIKE THAT ALL-THE-WAY?

Gabriel Barnes—BCC Student

Condiments are those delicious elixirs of various tastes, textures, colors, and smells that we delight in adding to our foods. We use these compounds to season our food daily, whether we crack open the sandwich and squirt it, spoon it, or dunk it. When looking deeper into the qualities of these edible delicacies, one can find parallels to certain personality types.

The first condiment on the agenda is ketchup. Ketchup is that overachiever that does more than he should, and everything he does is done well. He is known and liked by nearly everyone around him, and for that reason, he has many imitators. Just in the United States, Heinz ketchup has grown to be a half-billion dollar industry. A single bottle is around \$2.43 and is used from dipping French fries all the way to topping meatloaf to dousing it on scrambled eggs. In shorter terms, ketchup is the **“Leonardo da Vinci” of condiments.**

Mayonnaise is that guy who is chilled out most of the time. **He’s there in the room, but everyone knows he’s not really “there.” He just wants everyone to get along with no** fighting or power struggles. Mayo has a mellow taste and works to hold the sandwich in place. If it did not have the creamy texture, it would most likely be lost in all of the other flavors present.

Mustard is a very straightforward person. There is no sugarcoating involved whatsoever, and his words pierce like a hot knife through butter. His obvious point will not be forgotten, good or bad. Mustard has a very strong taste, bright color, and distinct smell, so it is easily identifiable regardless of how many other flavors are present.

ALL OUR DREAMS CAN COME TRUE IF...

Ashanti Munn-Goins
Grade 8 East Arcadia School

Life is a message. It has responsibilities as well as possibilities. Possibilities give life to our hopes, dreams, and **wonders. Walt Disney states, “All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.” This quote describes** the importance of following our dreams and knowing how they affect our lives. We cannot let our dreams just be dreams; we must make them come true. Therefore, we must never give up on dreams. If we really want to pursue our dreams, we need to have the courage and be firm and persistent in every single step of the way. Sometimes, we are going to mess up, but with persistence, we can make it happen. Pursuit means to keep moving forward no matter what the cause.

The importance of following dreams will make us realize that failure is a part of success. Living is giving. When following our dreams, we have a story to tell. This story will give hope to others, and this is a great opportunity. Like the universe, our dreams have no limits. We are the creators of our dreams, big or small. When we understand this, we are able to design a way to favor our plan and accomplish our goal. Life is too short to waste with regrets. Thus, while **young, let’s pursue our dreams. It is in living dreams that we** get to know the true meaning of life.

What are our desires? What are our wants? We have to sort through all the things for which we hope. In order to fulfill our dreams, we must face reality. We are influenced by the ones who love and care about us. Yet, they may influence what our dreams should be, such as what we should want **and desire. If I decide to accomplish my mother's’ dreams, then I wouldn’t be happy. That’s not what my biggest desire**

don't happen overnight. For instance, let's say you want to become an astronaut; that takes years and years of training. Another thing to keep in mind is that procrastination is not an option. You should work hard towards your goals every chance you get and try to be the best you can be.

Your imagination can play a huge role in accomplishing your goals. Imagine the things you would get to do and the happiness you would feel when you finally pursue those life-long dreams. Use your imagination as motivation to push yourself to be the best. As long as your hopes and dreams do not break the law or hurt you or other people, then go for them. Nothing is standing in your way but doubt and fear. You should never doubt yourself. If you believe in yourself, **then you will succeed far more than you will fail. Don't ever** let anyone tell you that you cannot do something.

In conclusion, courage, motivation, and determination are the keys to succeeding and pursuing your dreams. Be sure to step outside your comfort zone and try something different. You should always remember that regardless of their size, all dreams are important. Most importantly, you should never let anyone tell you what you are capable of, for **only you can decide that. I believe that Disney's quote came** from the heart and has inspired a lot of people to achieve their goals.



As the heartiest of selections, chili is the most relatable to the gym rats. Chili always compares his muscles to those of the person next to him, even though nobody cares enough to even consider himself on the same playing ground as chili. Chili is usually piled on in massive quantities and is a composition of multiple foods, so it is a very different topping from others. This makes chili the best contender for the role of leader of the condiments, Bro.

Following my other examples, I now introduce the socially awkward kid in the back corner of the room—relish. Relish is honestly a bit of a weirdo who seldom interacts with others. He enjoys things that everyone else views as bizarre, and he thrives on his individuality, even if it is very isolating. Relish is a pickled cucumber jam, and not many people around these parts eat relish. Although it is a rarity, it is still a well-known condiment.

These condiments relate to stereotypes, but which one **would I be? I can't be something as run-**of-the-mill as these others because, as a person, I am much more unique than a go-to condiment.

I think of myself as the wonderful and possibly unheard of condiment of chipotles. I eat them on burgers that my dad cooks, and they are the best burgers I have ever eaten. I relate the heat of chipotles to my passion for my assignments, my hobbies, and my life in general. The very strong taste is my humor and friendliness, and the smoky aftertaste reminds me that I still have a serious, businessman side to me. I always like to spice things up, like changing up **on the reader at the end of my passages, but that's what** makes me the very unique condiment of my own.



MY BLEEDING HEART

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student

PURSUING YOUR DREAMS

Madison Todd
Grade 8 Clarkton School of Discovery

Walt Disney once said, “All of our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.” Everyone has dreams, and everyone wants those dreams to come true. However, **dreams don’t just come true; we have to work for them, too.** Do you think that Babe Ruth would have hit 714 home runs in his career, or that Dr. Seuss would have become so **successful in his writing if they hadn’t had the courage and determination to work hard for what they dreamed of?**

Courage simply means that you are able to do something that scares you, and determination is a quality that motivates you to continue trying to do or accomplish something that is **difficult. For example, let’s say that you have always** dreamed of learning to skydive, but unfortunately you are afraid of heights. With the help of a little courage and determination, you could spend less time wishing you could do it, and more time actually doing it. In fact, courage and determination make you a stronger person because the more you have, the less fear and worry there is. Dreams can come true if you just step outside your comfort zone and do **something you never thought you would do. Don’t be afraid; take a chance.**

Dreams can be small, large or any size. Everyone's dreams may be different sizes, but that is only because everyone has different dreams. Maybe your dream is to make an A on your next assignment, but your friend is dreaming of becoming a teacher. See, everyone has a different dream, but whatever that dream may be, it still matters. If your dream is a little bigger, then you should start by accomplishing smaller goals until you eventually reach your goal. When pursuing your dreams, you have to be patient because they

a professional surfer came true despite the almost deadly attack.

Martin Luther King Jr. is probably the most well-known man who struggled, but still chased his dream. Martin Luther King fought for his dream of equality. Despite being put in jail, he still continued to fight for his dream to come true.. On August 28, 1963 he delivered his “I have a dream...” speech. This speech is one of the most famous speeches in American history. Everyone is now equal in our nation, partly because of his dream and his courage to chase it.

All of these very different people with very different motivations to pursue their dreams and very different dreams altogether have one thing in common. They all had the courage to pursue their dreams and never give up despite many challenges and hardships. We can all learn something from these people and never give up on what we wish and dream. Malala Yousafzai was determined to get equal education rights for young women, despite the threat of death. Bethany Hamilton did not give up surfing when she had her arm bitten off. Martin Luther King Jr. did not give up his dream for equality for everyone even if that meant spending time in jail. We all have dreams for ourselves, and we can reach them—though they may seem unreachable—if we are brave and have courage.



THE GIRL WHO...

Erica Butler—BCC Student

She is the girl who wants to be *perfect*, who strives to be *perfect*.

She is the girl who wants everyone to like her. She is the girl who wants to always seem *smart*; she has a fear of being *dumb* or looking *dumb*.

She is the girl who wants to be *pretty*, who strives to be *pretty*.

She is the girl who wants to be *successful*, who strives to be *successful*.

She is the girl who lives *very far from perfection*. She lives *alone*. Her next door neighbors are Mr. and Mrs. *Mistakes*. Just across the street, she can see Mrs. *Regret* checking her mailbox every morning; she never forgets to wave.

Not everyone likes the girl and she doesn't always seem very *smart*. She is, however, *very smart*. She is the girl who *embarrasses* herself a lot. She is the girl who *worries* way too much about what people will say.

She isn't the girl who *breaks the* rules, but she certainly *cracks* them just a bit. She is the girl who gets so into movies that she *cries* as if the movie is her life.

She is *passionate*. She is *loving*. She doesn't like being *mean*. She doesn't like to argue, but boy, can she argue. She can be *mean* and she can be *boring*.

She can be extremely *patient* and she can be tremendously *impatient*. She will wait for you in the car for two whole

minutes before she starts rapidly blowing the horn in anger. **She will tell you that it's because she warned you that she was on the way.**

There is reason behind everything she does. She *hates* math. She *likes* to read. She *loves* to write. She *strives* to write. She strives to see every portion of herself on paper. She *understands* herself better this way.

She *smiles* a lot. She *conceals* her smile often just so **people don't dig too far into her happiness ... and she waits** for something big to happen, for she *does not settle*...or better, *will not settle*.

CRACKLE DISCOVERIES

Erica Butler—BCC Student

I think I discover a new part of myself every day. Often, I re-discover the same part of myself day after day, over and over again, until I finally accept my discovery as a portion of who I am.

Today, I discovered that I love the sound of melting ice. The winter storm that covered most of North Carolina yesterday heavily encapsulated the trees with thick layers of clear ice that absorbed the most beautiful color of grayish blue.

Today, the sun is releasing the trees from their burden of ice. Today, the trees are cracking away their beautiful heaviness. It sounds like the trees are waking up from deep pain. The crackling, breaking, falling, and melting vibrations of muffling ice sounds to be intimate, painful, yet...relaxing.

NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS, EVEN IF THEY SEEM UNREACHABLE!

Grace Faircloth
Grade 8 Clarkton School of Discovery

“All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them,” according to Walt Disney. “There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure,” said Paulo Coelho. “Dare to live the life you have dreamed for yourself. Go forward and make your dreams come true,” Ralph Waldo Emerson proclaimed. All of those quotes have something in common. They all say one basic thing. You can live your dream if you are not too scared to chase it.

When I think of people chasing their dreams, I think of Malala Yousafzai. Malala Yousafzai was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman as she traveled home from school on a bus. She was shot because she believed that young women should be able to get an education. After the gunshot left her in critical condition, she survived and was still determined to make her dream come true. She was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2013 and was nominated again in 2014. In 2014, she became the youngest person to receive a Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 17. Are all of us as a society too scared to chase our dreams because of what other people will say or think? Our dreams could change the world, so why are we still too afraid to take on the challenge?

Bethany Hamilton also had the courage to follow her dream, even after having her arm bitten off by a shark when she was thirteen. In fact, she was back on her surfboard only one month after the attack. She did not let the attack stop her from her dream of surfing professionally. She won first place **in the Explorer Women's Division of the NSSA National Championships** only two years later. Her dream of becoming

medical issues and quick temper, Van Gogh ended up in an insane asylum after charging at his partner, Gauguin, with a razor blade and accidentally cutting his own earlobe off, followed by fits of insanity. He died two months later in that asylum. Although he only sold one painting while alive and **lived off of his brother's money, his legacy still lives on.**

Vincent Van Gogh had a troublesome life filled with failure. However, he overcame his mental, artistic, and financial disappointments so he could do what he longed and loved to do: be an artist.

Whether it is the ancient French and Vikings, Walt Disney, or Vincent Van Gogh, they all have one point in common. They all strived to achieve something unimaginably beautiful, and they succeeded. They all had various struggles that they overcame; the Vikings and French had to create certain words in order to communicate their ideas and feelings. Disney had to overcome many hurdles on his trip to **success after being called "crazy" and being turned down** many times. Vincent Van Gogh had to overcome his serious mental disabilities, which led him to enter the asylum. He also had to realize that even though you fail at first, you have to keep trying to achieve what you want to achieve. He did not let his mental, financial, or artistic state define who he knew he was inside and the incredible things he knew he could do. Like all of these people, we all have to strive to achieve our dreams no matter what the circumstances are, and we can do so if we truly believe in ourselves and realize our ability to do anything. Do you have the courage to pursue your dreams?



LANGUAGE IS ALIVE

Jacqueline Madden—BCC Student

Even though language lacks some of the characteristics of a living thing, it is still alive and changing each day. The use of language has allowed us to gain insight about things in history, further our intelligence, transport ideas around the world, and express ourselves. Language plays a key role in the lives of every human.

Some people may not think of language as a living thing because it does not eat or breathe, nor can we hold or touch it. Although these things are true, language is still undeniably alive and is intricately woven into the lives of all human beings. While a living thing is finite and has a beginning and an end, language goes on forever with no boundaries. Language has the ability to influence others and can be used to build them up or tear them down. While a living thing is tangible and language is not, it still has the ability to impact society, influence nations, and determine economic status.

Language has developed over hundreds of years and continues to thrive in the world today. When I think of language, I naturally think of a conversation of words between individuals, but this is not always the case. Language is also a **way of expressing one's self in the form of writing,** photography, art, music, and dance. All of these forms tell distinct stories and are prevalent in society.

The say "a picture is worth a thousand words" proves that language is used not only in words but in art as well. A picture grasps a memory, for example, and visually explains what is taking place in the moment it is captured. Paintings and drawings do the same and can also be used in place of words to share an idea or memory the artist has.

Music and dance uniquely coincide with each other to portray another form of language. The thoughts and feelings of a musician can be shared through his or her lyrics and instrumental backgrounds. These thoughts are relayed to an audience, creating a bond between the listener and the artist. A dancer then takes these lyrics or compositions and tells the **musician's story visually.**

Language has progressed with time, becoming more complex and widespread. New languages can be credited to the colonization and migration of people into foreign lands, integrating diverse languages and creating new ones. These new languages are based on each other even though they originally come from separate cultures. Today, we take classes to learn these languages so that we may be better connected and educated about the world around us.

In today's society, the majority of languages can be seen on social media, television, and magazines. These are also examples of why language has recently taken a step backwards. The words people use today have been shortened to simple abbreviations, text talk, and slang words. Some conversations have been replaced with emojis, similar to pictographic conversations between humans before a writing **system was developed. "Face Time" has replaced real face-to-face conversations.** Although we have more connections than ever due to the Internet, the connections in our relationships have suffered. Communication builds relationships and keeps them alive. Sharing feelings and thoughts is an extremely important aspect of any relationship.

In conclusion, even though language lacks some of the characteristics of a living, breathing entity, it is very much alive and is changing each day. Language has created and shaped nations and flourished for thousands of years, leading me to believe that it is, in fact, a living thing.

HAVE THE COURAGE TO PURSUE YOUR DREAMS

Abby Cooley
Grade 8 Clarkton School of Discovery

The word "dream" is closely related to the Old Norse word "draumr;" which means sequence of sensations passing through a sleeping person's mind. The word dates back to the **1200s. "Courage" comes from the Old French word "corage,"** which means heart, innermost feelings, and temper. In the late thirteenth century, the French created a new word, **"pursuer."** The word means to follow with hostile intent and has evolved into the word we know now, pursue. These words transformed into the powerful statement that Walt Disney once said, **"All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them."** If these inventors had never had the heart, innermost feeling, or temper to create these words or did not follow their ambition with hostile intent, Walt Disney would have never stated this very famous and influential quote.

Like the Vikings, Walt Disney never abandoned his wild and creative dreams. We can learn so much from these influential people who never stopped pursuing their dreams, just like the famous artist Vincent Van Gogh. Van Gogh was born on March 30, 1853 in Groot-Zundert, Holland. It took him decades to realize his true potential and calling to be a professional artist. After moving in with his brother, Theo, in Paris, Van Gogh met multiple famous artists. They included Gauguin, Monet, and Pissarro. Van Gogh attempted numerous times to perform at the same level as his fellow artists, but he failed. After falling short of their skill level, he created his own way to paint. Discovering his artistic abilities, he longed for a friend to help him start a school of art. It was only natural for his friend Gauguin to help him **with this task, and so he did. But as a result of Van Gogh's**

anywhere in life, and he would especially not be the best soccer player in the world. However, Messi pushed through all of the criticism and disapproval and has become the best soccer player in the world.

“Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” You may recognize this quote from Thomas Edison. The main reason dreams do not come true or are compromised is because people give up. If you give up, there is no possible way your dream is going to be a reality. Jim Carrey is a great example of not giving up and pushing through tough times. When Jim Carrey was 14 years old, his father lost his job and his family hit extremely tough times. Jim Carrey was living on a **relative’s lawn in a van in his teenage years. When Carrey** was 15 years old, he performed his first comedy act on stage in a suit his mother made for him. He completely failed his first standup routine. In spite of that, he did not give up. He **later moved to Los Angeles and picked up the role of “Lloyd” in the movie “Dumb and Dumber.”** From there he has become one of the most famous comedians today. You should never give up on your dream no matter what people say or think. Regardless of who you are, you can always make your dreams come true.

Don’t let your dreams be only dreams. Get up now, follow your dreams, and know that one day they can be reality. Never give up, and always know someone is behind you cheering for you. Remember that life is tough, but you can conquer most things if you are dedicated enough, and if you want your dream badly enough. Always remember Walt Disney’s words, **“All of our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.”**

OPERATION SAVING SANTA

Levy Pait—BCC Student

“Men, as I am sure you all are aware, the evil Desperado has escaped from the attic, again. He could be anywhere, but we all know what his plans are: he wants to destroy **Christmas,” Commander Boots stated. The little toy stuffed cat swung his oversized feet over the edge of the bed as he spoke. “We must act quickly if we want to save Christmas. Synchronize your watches.”** Everyone just looked at him and **blinked. “Well, those of us who do have watches...”** Boots looked up at the cuckoo-clock, **“The time is 2000, and the kid will be here any moment to go to bed. At 2300, we will begin our search for Desperado.”**

“All right, we have all done this before. Nothing new, let’s go save Christmas once again,” stated Sarge as he and the Little Green Army prepared for their mission. Later that night, the strike team stealthily set out on a search patrol in hopes of catching Desperado before he could enact his villainous schemes. If they had luck, they would be back before Christmas morning. It took no time at all to find Desperado and his henchmen. Desperado was standing atop **the stairs looking down on the living room below. “The gig’s up, Desperado! We have caught you again! Surrender and save us all a lot of trouble,”** demanded Sarge.

“So we meet again! You will not stop me this time!” growled Desperado, turning to his henchmen. **“Unleash the Marbleous Destruction!”** Suddenly, one of his henchmen, Minion, knocked over a large bucket full of marbles. The next few seconds were pure pandemonium as marbles crashed into the ranks of the Little Green Army. Soldiers dove for any **cover they could find. “It is time! Unleash my ‘Incredible, amazing, and invincible horde of assorted disgruntled, scary, grumpy, evil, and misplaced toys’ and at last we shall have**

revenge!”

“Sarge!” cried Private as he tried to limp for cover, wounded by a stray marble.

“Medic! We need you over here!” ordered Sarge as he ran to his aid.

“Yes, sir! On my way!” replied Medic as he ran out from cover to help Private.

“Airborne, Ranger, initiate Plan Victory from Above. Go, go, go!” directed Sargent motioning towards the edge of the stairs.

“Sir, yes, Sir!” chorused the two soldiers as they leapt off the top of the staircase.

Sargent then activated his radio, “We need the Medical Dump Truck sent here as soon as possible!”

“Deploying chutes!” barked Ranger and immediately two parachutes popped out of their packs.

“Approaching landing zone Victory, touch down in five!” stated Airborne, but as they prepared for landing, everything went wrong.

“Not so fast! I know all your plans!” laughed Desperado in his evil robotic voice, before shouting, “Commence counter-plan Windstorm!” Suddenly, the large fan on the far side of the room activated, blowing the two soldiers off course. The wind intensified, blowing them backward and upward away from the target zone.

“Mayday! Mayday! We have a problem. Do we have contingency orders?” radioed Ranger.

DREAMS

Gabe Barber
Grade 8 Clarkton School of Discovery

Do you have dreams? Do you think your dreams will come true? Do you dream about a place that you want to go or someone you want to be? Most everyone has dreams, and I **have dreams, too. “All of our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.” This famous quote from Walt Disney** has inspired many people to reach for their dreams and to achieve them. In fact, this Disney quotation may be the reason your dream is fulfilled.

In order for your dreams to come true, you must get out of your comfort zone and try new things that can lead you towards your dream. You must get up and strive for your dream now. If you want to make your dreams a reality, **procrastination cannot be an option. Michael Jordan’s dream** was to become a professional athlete and to get paid for what he loved to do. Jordan wanted to play professional baseball at first, but then he started trying new sports like basketball. Michael Jordan went on to fulfill his dream as a professional athlete, but in a different manner than he intended in the first place. Like Jordan, you should always explore and see where new things take you. Besides, your dreams may change, and if you try new things you may realize you have different dreams that you can pursue.

Never let anything get in the way of your dreams. Although there will be haters and other problems, if you pursue your dreams and are dedicated enough, you will achieve what you set out to do. For example, Lionel Messi is the best soccer player in the world, possibly of all time. Messi is also one of the smallest soccer players of all time. Lionel Messi was born with a disease that caused his growth to be severely stunted. He was told that he would never go



DREAM CHASER

Xavier Rhone-Lewis—BCC Student

“Watch out! Incoming!” cried Airborne. They then crashed into a rough, thorny green object, and their parachutes quickly became entangled.

“What did we run into?” questioned Ranger, realizing he was hanging upside-down.

Airborne, hanging upside-down next to him, laughed, “Who would have guessed? We are hanging on the mistletoe, how... awkward!” He then chuckled uncontrollably.

“Oh, be quiet, Airborne! Or my fist will kiss your nose!” growled Ranger, but that just made Airborne laugh more. “This is no laughing matter!” shouted Ranger as he swung his fist towards Airborne, but they were too far apart.

Meanwhile, back on the ground, things were not looking up. A sound echoed from the fireplace. Everyone quickly ran to the edge of the stairs. The soldiers gasped at the sight of the horde assembling in front of the Christmas tree. They could see soot falling down the chimney. Suddenly, the one man everyone was waiting for dropped into the room.

“NOOOO!!! We have to save Santa!” cried Gunner, “He can’t see the ‘Incredible, amazing, and invincible horde of assorted disgruntled, scary, grumpy, evil, and misplaced toys’ approaching behind him.”

“Is there nothing we can do?” inquired Private as he struggled to glance over the edge, down into the living room below.

“LOOK OUT, SANTA!!!!” shouted Sarge, but it was no

use. Santa could not hear him.

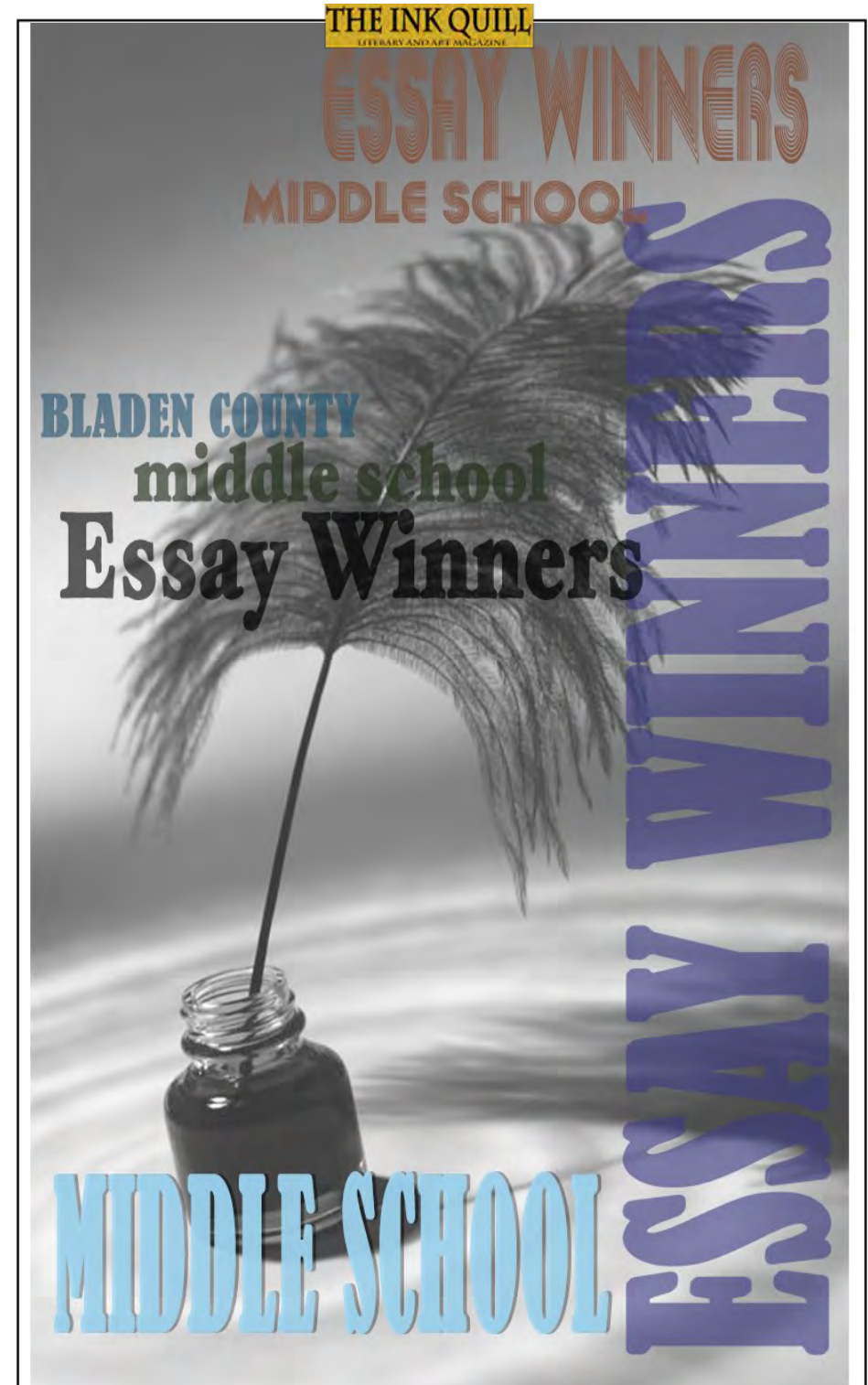
“Mwhahahahaha!!” laughed Desperado, “At last! Christmas is mine! All mine!” Using his powerful robotic legs, he jumped to the top of the railing. Raising both hands in the air, he shouted, “Nothing can stop me and my horde! Christmas is doomed! I shall put an end to it, now and FOREVER!!!” He cackled in his evil robotic voice, “HOHOHOHOHOHOHO!!!! HAHAHA!! MWAHAHAHA!!!!”

What happened next was the unimaginable. As Santa slowly backed out of the chimney brushing off the soot, he dropped his enormous sack of gifts to the ground behind him. In an instant, the entire “Incredible, amazing and invincible horde of assorted disgruntled, scary, grumpy, evil, and misplaced toys” was crushed beneath the sack.

For a moment, a silence hung in the air. No one could believe what they had just witnessed, least of all Desperado. He stood on top of the railing with his arms still raised above his head, but his jaw hung wide open. He just kept blinking his eyes. Suddenly, with a screech of terror, Desperado jumped off the railing and fled back towards the attic, screaming hysterically the whole way.

The green soldiers glanced at each other, then towards Desperado as he disappeared around a corner with his arms still raised over his head, in sheer panic now instead of in victory. The soldiers then turned towards the living room where Santa was calmly placing presents under the tree, apparently oblivious to what had just transpired.

Private whispered, “Please tell me that I was not the only one who just saw that.” The others could only nod in confirmation. “Good, I knew I was injured, but I did not think it was so bad that I would start having hallucinations.”



ALEX ALBRIGHT BIOGRAPHY

Alex Albright has a BA from UNC-CH and an MFA from UNCG. He joined the English faculty at ECU in 1981.

He was the founding editor of the *North Carolina Literary Review*, has written and produced two musical productions: the UNC-TV documentary *Boogie in Black and White* (1987) and the one-woman show, *Coming into Freedom* (1990) and edited *The North Carolina Poems* (1994) by A.R. Ammons and also his *Mule Poems* (2010); *Leaves of Greens: The Collard Poems* (1984); and *Dreaming the Blues: Poems from Martin County Prison* (1984). He is the author of *The Forgotten First: B-1 and the Integration of the Modern Navy* (2013).

He has won the 1991 Jack Kerouac Prize, the 1998 R. Hunt Parker Award, the 2007 Roberts Award, and the 2012 Brown-Hudson Award.



When Santa turned to pick up his bag, he noticed the routing remnants of the horde. “Not so fast my little fellows,” he laughed as in one step he cut off their escape. That was that. The half of the army that did not faint dead, threw up their arms in surrender.

“Ha! Not so brave now, are you?” shouted Airborne, as he and Ranger spun dizzily upside down.

“Excuse me, Mr. Claus,” requested Ranger as he audibly cleared his throat. “Thank you for the help and all, but could you please let us down? This has not been our shining moment.”

Santa chuckled as he carefully removed Airborne and Ranger from the mistletoe and placed them on top of the staircase with their comrades. Santa did not say a word, but with a wink, he returned to his sack of gifts. He scooped up all of the defeated toys and slid them down into his gigantic pockets. He then stepped to the chimney, placed his finger alongside his nose, and with a salute, up the chimney he rose.



WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

Mary Anne Murphy

NOT ALL OF US HAVE HORNS

Gabriel Barnes—BCC Student

We do not hide in darkness anymore. We are not in your closet or under your bed, much less out in the woods. We **don't find it comfy there. My kind and I prefer a different accommodation to insure conflict.**

I forgot to introduce myself. I have no name and take no definite form. This fact conceals and confuses my victims. You might think we are from hell, but not all of us have horns.

To continue my point, we are vexatious entities. We feed off creating difficulty in the lives of whomever we choose. In formal sight, we may appear as something small, like your desire for that second delicious slice of chocolate cake. We usually appear as these seemingly minute troubles. We are **the "demons" you speak of.**

We are the addictions in your life: your lighting another cigarette or taking another shot makes us smile. You slowly but surely become completely hooked on some sort of parasitic substance or action. Knowing that we are the cause **of your life's going into a total tailspin warms our pitch-black hearts like nothing else.** We are pure evil; we show no grace or mercy.

We are the miseries and tragedies in your life. In your fits of dejection, we are always there to make matters worse. Your mind becomes a constant cycle that strengthens the lathing for yourself. You cannot stand yourself anymore. Mirrors become something to avoid because disgust is an unbearable feeling when you analyze yourself. We push you **to the brink of depression. After all, that's what friends are for, right?**

OLD MAGNOLIA TREE IN MEBANE CUT FOR STORE

Don McCloud, Staff Writer

Edited by Alex Albright—Visiting Author

One of Mebane's favorite trees

met the ax
as a drug company determined
the old Magnolia
must go
to build a parking lot.

Council member Bob Hupman said
the tree
would eventually die
no matter what, and it had
no historical value:
"No one was hanged from it."

Council member Tim
Bradley said
**"I used to climb it
when I was a kid."**

from the *Alamance News*, article with same title as poem. Some phrases have been deleted, but words, punctuation, and capitalization are as originally published on October 12, 1995: 5A.

MARION WOMAN KILLED KNEELING ON RAILROAD TRACKS

Alex Albright—Visiting Author

It isn't drink that makes her kneel

on railroad tracks as one
might well expect.

Nor is it terror
that brings her low
at the end of another vacant night.

On a rise in a field that once grew cotton,
she waits, ears curled in December's airy silence,
lips chapped and wishing she'd worn gloves.

Numb from love gone bad
or gone back to a wife,
she waits,
steel edges at her knees,
in the last moonlight she'll know:

I'll send you a sound forever,
a whistle long and true,
a pure call to God,
an answer,
almost a smile.

We are your loss of control when someone gets on your last nerve. We encourage every single curse and insult you. When your thoughts are clouded by derogations, we are in that work, too, stirring that brew of belittlement. We love when you finally snap. Our hard work pays off when you release your anger and allow us to spread, working just as a virus.

Resentment and hurt emboss the next person, and that creates more space that we can use for psychiatric destruction. **Honestly, it's what we want the most. You are weak, and we are strong.** By this point, we have total control over you, and we aim to keep it that way. Self-discipline is a thing of the past. We have pushed you beyond the point of ever turning back.

We don't bring everyone to these depths. We prey on everyone, but our efforts are not always successful. Personally, I hold a certain amount of respect for the person who restrains himself or herself. This person tries to be the **"better person" and is respectful to his or her neighbors even** if the feeling is far from mutual. My glass goes up to the person who stays loyal to his or her diet. The same goes to the ones who keep themselves happy even when they have every reason to be sad.



“WHO’S SCRUFFY LOOKIN?!”

Gabriel Barnes—BCC Student

I don’t have a certain quotation or character that I will focus on, so I decided to concentrate on one of my favorite actors and two of his most memorable characters.

As the quote I used for my title may not be recognizable to most eyes, some people who are stronger in “the force” may be able to identify the man behind it. Han Solo, our favorite smuggler and intergalactic vigilante-type, is the source of this quotation. He questioned after Princess Leia Organa called him a “stuck-up, half-witted, scruffy-looking nerf herder.” Han Solo is played by Harrison Ford, one of my favorite actors of all time. Ford is perfect for the role of the “rough-around-the-edges” Han Solo, who always has a wise-crack up his sleeve for any situation. He is a great source of comic relief during the many perils of the original trilogy of Star Wars and one of the best pilots around. He mans The Millennium Falcon alongside his Wookie “fuzzball” companion Chewbacca. “You’ve never heard of the Millennium Falcon?... It’s the ship that made the Kessel Run in less than twelve parsecs.”

In recognizing Harrison Ford as the actor of my focus, I must also acknowledge his second character in whom I take great pride. He holds a similar role, but instead of Han’s trusty blaster, he wields nothing but his whip and his signature fedora.

Indiana Jones is a unique character in almost every aspect. He still retains that snarky sarcasm of Solo but represents a more realistic character. (Sorry, fellow Star Wars fans, I am also fascinated by Chewy punching into hyperspace, but we all have to face that Indy is also pretty cool.) Doctor Jones is a renowned archaeology professor to his university, but even

He was committed
to John Umstead Hospital
where his medication
was adjusted.

She said he was pleasant
now

and not
violent.

The judge said
“this was a time
when the system
let him down,” and
found him not guilty.

• • •

All language, including use of quotation marks, is from the original news article by Jay Ashley, “Gateway to treatment not door to jail cell.” *Alamance News* 11 July 1996: C1.



CHARGED WITH SIMPLE ASSAULT

Alex Albright—Visiting Author

He came from Dogwood Forest
Rest Home, where
he had been swinging
a metal bar and acting
violent
towards staff.

The young black man was
agitated
and
acting
in a “threatening manner.”

He said he was a Vietnam vet
“trained to break a man’s neck.”
He spoke of “flash backs.”

Two days later,
he again became
violent,
swinging
a “board.”



he, of all people, has to sneak out and live a double life. His adventures range from being chased by native people all the way to drinking from the Holy Grail. Indy has a knack for being completely fearless in his endeavors until he is confronted by his ultimate phobia: snakes. This half-bold, half-reckless behavior is seen in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) right before he confronts his opponent and says, “You want to talk to God? Let’s go see him together. I have nothing better to do!”

Both of these characters played by Harrison Ford show many resemblances, as seen in the notable, quickly-drawn weapon, timely facetiousness, and unsurpassed quick thinking. These two characters both show that not all heroes are perfect, and even heroes break the law. These characters gave me, as a kid, hope that I can become famous through my comic mockery of the world around me. As Han Solo and Indiana Jones exhibit obvious flaws, they seem more achievable than Superman but hold the same level (I dare say more) of reverence among fans.

For now, in this time, I really want to be as successful as **Harrison Ford. I don’t need a blaster or a fedora; I just want to exemplify my ability and myself on the level of Mr. Ford.** In my classes, I aim to be as skillful as Solo and as intelligent as **Indiana. To whoever believes that I can’t write an essay as well as the next guy for my English 111 class and turn it in on time, I have a quote just for the occasion: “Never tell me the odds.” Han Solo, *The Empire Strikes Back*.**



SPICING THINGS UP

Micah Brown—BCC Student

After a bit of reflection and convenience surveying, I really can only see myself as chili for a hamburger or hot dog **topping. It's a dish that originated in Mexico with a rich history and many variations. The word "chili" comes from the Nahuatl word for chili pepper, "chilli," and the particular variation of chili I would be is the one I eat the most frequently: chili con carne ("chili with meat" in Spanish).**

I chose chili as my topping because it's the one that spices up a plain old hot dog or hamburger. In a way, it's the fun of a sloppy Joe and the familiarity of the barbecue favorites. A friend of mine chose chili for me because I'm "also warm and fulfilling." Chili is definitely that! Usually, if I am eating a hot dog or hamburger with the usual toppings (ketchup, mustard, cheese, etc.), it'll take a few to fill me up, and the toppings make it cold! With chili, it takes less for me to be satisfied, and the dog or burger stays hot.

I would choose chili for me because if chili were a person, it would be the one to bring light into a room, which I love to do. Chili would be the one to crack jokes and be the life of the party; it would be a warm spirit. I generally try to do all of those things because I love positive reactions. And usually, **if you bring out some chili dogs for dinner, there's some internal (possibly external) cheering. It doesn't get more positive than that!**

Another thing that makes me akin to the great chili topping **is its ability to vary upon the eater's preferences. There are all types of chili: vegetarian for the non-meat eaters, white chili for the ones watching their weight, chili without beans for the carnivores, spicy chili for the masochists, and many more.** Just like the variation of chili, I have so many interests that I

THIS, I BELIEVE

Alex Albright—Visiting Author

I believe in the second coming of Christ.

I believe in a life hereafter.

I believe there is a Devil and a Hell in afterlife.

I believe in law enforcement.

Horses that don't pull should be beaten or kicked.

Policemen are usually honest.

I believe I am being plotted against.

I believe I am being followed.

I believe women ought to have as much sexual freedom as men.

I believe that my home life is as pleasant as that of most people I know.

I believe my sins are unpardonable.

I believe that a person should never taste an alcoholic drink.

When a man is with a woman he is usually thinking about things related to sex.

I believe I am no more nervous than most others. Someone is trying to influence my mind.

Most people are honest chiefly through fear of being caught.

A large number of people are guilty of bad sexual conduct.

I believe I am a condemned person.

No one cares much what happens to you.

KEVIN DUFFUS BIOGRAPHY

Kevin Duffus is the author of *The Lost Light, A Civil War Mystery, Shipwrecks of the Outer Banks, The Last Days of Black Beard the Pirate, and War Zone*, as well as the producer of four award-winning documentary films on North Carolina maritime history.

His extensive research led him to the truth about how Black Beard the pirate captain was cornered and attacked at Ocracoke in 1718, why he tried to escape, and how his life might have been spared had he lived for three more weeks. He learned about a mysterious letter and the possibility of government conspiracies and cover-ups and the fact that many of the 25 pirates who remained with Black Beard were sons of North Carolina families.

His honors include a George Foster Peabody Award, the World Hunger Media Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award and the National Education Association Award.



can get along with a wide variety of people. You won't really find me hanging with specific types of people because I make friends everywhere! Can't go wrong with me (or chili).

All in all, chili is a versatile and tasty topping for hot dogs and hamburgers alike, and is a favorite among many. I can totally compare myself to chili because I, too, am versatile, tasty, and a favorite among many.



WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Karen Kresmery—BCC Alumnus

DARKNESS

Hannah Allison—BCC Student

I skinned myself for you, and, oh, did it hurt! I let you see **the deepest parts that I, myself, didn't even know were there. I showed you the reasons for my unrest and why I don't sleep at night. You learned the answer to why I never speak out of turn, why I never cross into dangerous territory like everyone else. You saw what I never wanted anyone to see. . . .but now I sit here bare and cold. You left me to rot, and I don't know why. Unanswered questions settle into place at the center of my brain as I settle into the night. The darkness comforts me when I know you never again will. It's all right, though; I will get used to life without skin soon enough. Don't you worry about me.**

The darkness will be there. The darkness will catch me when I finally fall. No one will comfort me like the darkness will. I love the darkness and the darkness loves me. I would rather get lost among the stars than get lost in your eyes anyway. My heart rests with the stars where the darkness lives. You know, people always say they are shooting for the **stars, but I don't think they realize all the darkness they must go through just to get to the tiny ball of fire. Do they know they will only be burned to a crisp upon arrival? Do they know that when or if they reach their destination, they will realize that they just fought for their lives to reach this place, only to meet their explosive demise? I don't think they do.** The stars are fine to look at but not to touch, like in a museum.

What if that's what stars actually are? Are the stars merely a museum of all the great ideas and brilliant minds that have passed away because of an old, worn-out meat suit? The people are burning with potential, but then, ... aren't we all like that, though? Just filled with things to say only to be shut

could adult passengers complain when their 10-year-old driver delayed their departure in order to visit with his mother?

Pat Stevens didn't mind the longer stops at Rodanthe because the store there featured a special treat eagerly **anticipated by young people. "They had this big cooler, and I remember being able to get my favorite soft drink there—Nehigh Grape," Stevens remembered fondly.**

Such were the halcyon days when an adolescent was permitted to drive a commercial bus—an age of innocence, days of freedom, and a time of peace and happiness on North Carolina coast. It could be said that the residents of the Outer Banks, and the coast in general, lived an elemental existence—leading simple, unassuming lives shaped by the wind and tides. By the summer of 1941, as America teetered on the brink of war, the Outer Banks seemed to have been bypassed by time, without strategic value and far from the conflict beyond the horizon. Then, one Sunday in early **December, when the "Seagoing Bus Line" pulled in at one of its regular stops, a man breathlessly ran out of the general store shouting, "You're not going to believe it. They just reported on the radio: The Japanese bombed our naval base at Pearl Harbor. Our country is at war!"**

The age of innocence had come to an end.

Kevin P. Duffus ©2012, All Rights Reserved.

Excerpted from Chapter Four—The Age of Innocence in *War Zone—World War II off the North Carolina Coast*

up to drive the bus because he couldn't sit in the seat and hit the accelerator. And when you'd hit a soft spot in the sand, everybody got out of the bus and shoveled for a while. Then they got going again."

"I remember there were these wooden bridges over the dunes, and riding in the bus was like a roller coaster ride," said Pat Williams Stevens of Ocracoke Island, who was a young girl when her family rode the bus. "Stocky was usually barefoot when he drove the bus. I had just never seen anyone drive barefoot before."

Despite the difficulties, island residents were frequent riders because not many owned their own cars. Almost everyone boarded the bus at its regular stops, but sometimes the boys would find riders waiting in the middle of nowhere. Stevens remembers one such time when a solitary figure waved down the bus in one of the desolate expanses between the villages. "One time they stopped, not in a village, but in a place where there was nothing around," Stevens said. "An elderly woman got on the bus. It was a terribly hot day, and she was wearing black cotton stockings. I watched her with amazement as she spent the next hour pulling sand spurs out of her stockings; they were full of sand spurs. No one knew where she came from."

In a 1981 article about the Midgett boys and their bus service, writer Diane Ransom, who rode the bus as a young girl, made note of the fact that the bus stops at Rodanthe were always a little longer than at the other villages because the brothers never failed to visit with their mother, Ersie, who still resided in the family home and managed the family's general store at the north end of the island. How

down by the society in which we live. It's really sad, isn't it? People could be so much more than they actually are. If only we could defeat the darkness inside us, maybe we could reach those metaphorical stars that we dream of. Nothing will ever be enough for us. We will always be searching for more ways to destroy ourselves. Even if we find a way to do away with evil, bad things altogether, we will always find some way to be dissatisfied. We will be our own destruction.

The darkness may be my only comfort, but one day, people will do away with that as well. The stars will burn and burn until they, too, are nothing. Nothing will ever be enough.



STUDY IN SHADOWS AND LIGHT

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student

COMPARING LANGUAGE TO THE LIVING

Gabriel Barnes—BCC Student

Language is used and heard everywhere and every day. It is an unavoidable entity in our world as it has been for centuries upon centuries. Humans use many types of languages to communicate with others. For example, the most obvious form of communication is verbal. This communication involves the use of the vocal cords or written/electronic media, which in turn produces words, like conducting a speech or texting with a friend. Nonverbal communication is communication without the use of actual words. It is just as important but harder to read. It can be as simple as a facial expression or more sophisticated, like sign language or Morse code. Music and dance are also great examples of how language is conveyed in a more creative fashion, rather than as just upfront communication.

Language has many properties that would suggest that it is indeed alive. For example, it adapts to the obstacles that it is given, just like the biologically living things of Earth must do in order to survive.

In different countries, the same information can be relayed, but in the native tongue of the person speaking. If someone is deaf, adaptation is found through sign language or the written word. **Language can be created, or “birthed,” another characteristic of life. Slang terminology is being created daily, and some slang actually finds a spot in official dictionaries. Merriam-Webster has officially added the terms “hashtag” and “selfie” to their dictionary. To save time typing, texting has birthed a new type of language that involves the excessive use of butchering vowels out of words, such as writing “txting” rather than “texting,” and making phrases into acronyms, like “LOL” for “laughing out loud.” Also, language can be forgotten or unused over long amounts of time and “die,” just**

Each day, year-round, the bus departed Hatteras village at 8 a.m. for its run north and stops to collect riders, mail, and packages at Frisco, Buxton, Avon, Salvo, Waves, and Rodanthe before catching the ferry across Oregon Inlet. At Manteo, riders (salesmen mostly) could continue their journey by connecting with the Virginia Dare Bus Line that passed through Elizabeth City and on up to Norfolk. Depending on the weather, wind, and tides, the timetable was somewhat variable, so riders at designated bus stops had to be both patient and alert to quickly jump aboard when they heard the horn honk on the days when it was running a little late. When the tide was high or in storm conditions, the bus would have to navigate the inside route, on the sound-side of the dune line where a myriad of tire tracks seemed to lead in a myriad of directions. The freshest set of tracks were the ones inexperienced drivers were usually advised to follow, regardless of where the tracks seemed to lead. **If the ruts were deep enough, it almost didn’t matter where a driver wanted to go—his tires would follow the ruts despite the driver’s best efforts to steer out of them. “We called it ‘Route 101,’ which meant we had a hundred and one different ways to travel,” said Stocky, Jr., many years later. The sand along “Route 101” was soft and deep, and there were many stretches where the Midgett’s buses could only run about five miles per hour—sometimes not at all.**

Russell Twiford of Elizabeth City remembers making trips to Hatteras Island with his father in the '30s and meeting Stocky, Jr., for the first time. The two boys were the same age, and to Twiford, Stocky, Jr., seemed to be a typical kid until he got behind the steering wheel of the bus. **“The first time I remember Stocky, he was driving the bus, and he was too small to sit in the seat,” Twiford said. “He had to stand**

islands of the Outer Banks on the eve of the second world war. The story, which has been told often, begins with **Stocky's father.**

As a surfman for the U.S. Coast Guard, Theodore **Stockton Midgett, Sr., routinely scanned the ocean's horizon** for ships in distress, but he was also always on the lookout for better ways to provide income for his wife and four children. Midgett had keen vision. In the early-'30s, **he** wisely purchased a dump truck that was frequently hired by the state for various transportation-related projects on the upper half of Hatteras Island. In 1936, he opened a general store near his home in Rodanthe to provide provisions for the Civilian Conservation Corps camps installing erosion-control measures on the island. And in 1938, the forward-looking father happened upon a promising enterprise for his three sons; a franchise to operate a much-needed car-for-hire business to transport people and packages from each of the seven villages of Hatteras Island to Manteo and back. He purchased the franchise and a car and planned to gradually incorporate his three sons into the business as they matured. Harold, 18, was the eldest; Anderson was 13, and Stocky, Jr., was 10. But before their 44-year-old father was able to return home after securing the franchise and filing the proper paperwork, he collapsed and died of a heart attack in Manteo.

Unexpected loss and tragedy were sad but familiar parts of life on the Outer Banks. When confronted with the death of a loved one, few Outer Banks families could afford to spend much time mourning. To survive, it was necessary to move on quickly. Consequently, it was not unusual that the Midgett brothers, led by Harold, decided to keep their **father's dream alive, although they didn't have the luxury to** wait until Anderson and Stocky, Jr., matured. In the fall of **1938, after a few trial runs with the family's brand-new Ford** station wagon, the boys began the Manteo-Hatteras Bus Line.

like any mortal being. Latin is a great example of this phenomenon. Although Latin roots are still very much in use, this language is not spoken by any groups of people fluently as a first language.

Comparing language to the living reveals many parallels. From a purely scientific perspective, language obviously is not alive, but from a more modified viewpoint, it is viable. Nature divides things into two groups: abiotic and biotic. Biotic is living, and abiotic is nonliving. Language is adaptable, can be **"created," and can be "killed," but it cannot do these things** without the aid of actual living beings.

I, personally, label language as an abiotic factor of nature, such as water or air. Water can adapt to situations without being considered living, and air (focusing on the compounds that make our air) can be created and destroyed through the bonding and reacting. Language may often feel as alive as we do at times, but we must remember that language feels that way only through our creation, facilitation, and destruction.



LANGUAGE AS A LIVING THING

Micah Brown—BCC Student

To determine whether language itself is a living thing, one must determine *what* a living thing is. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, “living,” as an adjective, describes something that has life or is not dead. Yet, if we apply the word “living” as a verb, at least to human beings, it is the process of growing, developing, learning, and creating offspring before death. Thus, if language were a human being, it would be a paradoxical entity: old and young, thriving and dying, complex and simple, and having an exorbitant number of children.

Obviously, language took form some thousands of years ago from guttural grunts and sound patterns of early hominids, and broke off into smaller sects of languages spread out across the world. Our modern form of English is fairly young, taking its shape in the late 1400s, but there is no need to delve that far back into time to see its change. Take slang, as a simple example. In the 60s, the police were called “the fuzz,” whereas in the current year, aside from outright saying “the police,” I often hear “12.” So just at a basic level, as living things do, language is ever evolving. Every dialect, accent, word, syllable, tone, and pronunciation is constantly changing.

Noting that all aspects of language are constantly evolving, I can come to the conclusion that acceptable ways of using our modern version of English is as well. Yes, there may be a certain syntax that is required in academia, but there are many forms of accessible syntax that many people have come to understand with ease. Especially in the last decade, with the development of messaging services via phone and computer, there has been a shift in the way a younger generation communicates. Abbreviations, case shifting, and

WAR ZONE—WORLD WAR II OFF THE NORTH CAROLINA COAST

Kevin Duffus—Visiting Author

With his left hand seesawing the steering wheel and his right hand firmly working the long shift lever, Theodore Stockton (Stocky) Midgett, Jr., peered intently over the hood of the '38 Ford station wagon. The powerful flat-head eight-cylinder engine roared angrily as its tires spun, gaining and then losing traction in the sand. Ahead, clouds of seagulls and oystercatchers parted like a Broadway stage curtain to make way for the huge oncoming vehicle, gears grinding and barely inflated tires bouncing as it sped along the hard-packed beach at about 45 miles per hour.

The passengers in the back seat of the Ford were at once terrified, virtually helpless, and extremely anxious to reach the paved road at Whalebone Junction 50 miles up the beach. They had each purchased a \$2.50 trip on Hatteras Island's only means of public transportation for the six-hour journey from Hatteras village to the county seat at Manteo. So far, they were getting more than their money's worth.

With hands gripping door handles, window posts, or anything that offered a stable purchase, the riders dared to watch in disbelief as their 'bus' pitched and yawed over sand dunes, spun and slewed and splashed through small ponds, and raced along the ocean's edge as the surf greedily grasped at its speeding wheels.

The year was 1938, and behind the steering wheel was one of three professional drivers for the Midgett Brothers' Manteo-Hatteras Bus Line. Stocky was 10-years-old, which might explain the anxiety shared by the passengers in the back seat and why their bus driver was seated atop a large pillow.

Of all the possible tales to tell, the story of Stocky Midgett and his brothers, best personifies the innocence of the



acronyms have helped us convey emotion and consume **information in a faster and more efficient way.** However, it's all still our modern English.

Furthermore, language evolution is highly dependent on its consumers—on us, the people—and will be shaped to fit our needs as it has for the past few thousands of years. So, vicariously, language is a living and boundless thing, so long as living humans continue to exist.



A FEBRUARY MORNING ON WHITE LAKE

Ray Sheppard—BCC Faculty

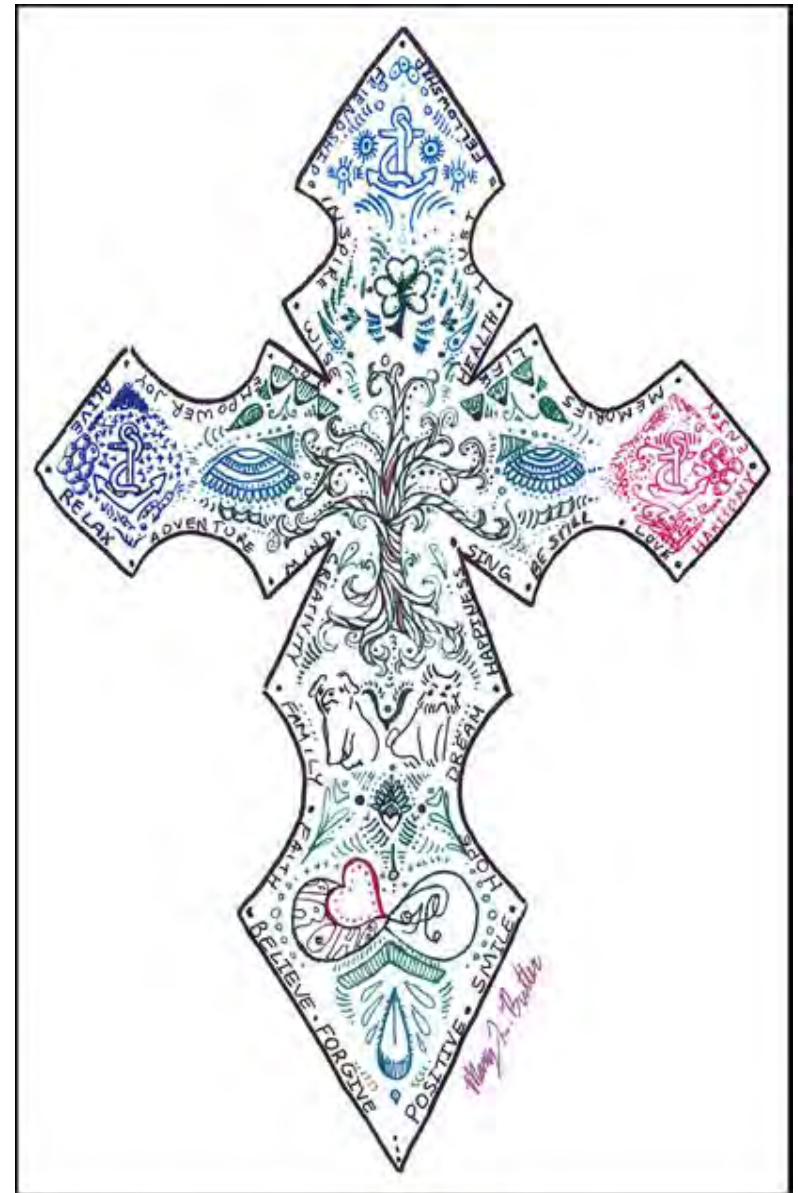
TOM AND HUCK > DICK AND JANE

Gabriel Barnes—BCC Student

It's pretty hard for anyone to remember the dawn of one's literacy, and I found this out as the topic arose in class and an assignment was given on the same basis. The first place you think is school, because yeah, everyone learns in school, so I thought back to my first day of kindergarten.

God, I cried like a baby when my dad dropped me off. I was never one to attract a whole lot of attention, but the following eyes of the other children told me this obnoxious entrance was something they all went through earlier in the week. Thinking this was punishment, I asked someone near me, "What are we doing here?" Mrs. Corbett saw my lips moving and wrote my name on the board. I didn't know what that meant, but I *did* know that was my name. My questioning her actions led to a heaping of checks beside it, and I was tethered by word to a tree for all of recess. That's not the point, even though it sucked. I read my name. *My* name. Not just a compilation of symbols. I had to go back further in memory to search for my answer.

Before my first year of kindergarten, I was going to Elizabethtown Baptist Church day school. I was deemed too young for kindergarten (as my brother was going through it that same year), and my father knew that even at four years old, I needed some sort of schooling to exceed in. The class never really taught much curriculum-wise, but I learned a couple of things by interacting with the other students. They all seemed a bit out of it. Not like they were really stupid or anything, but they just weren't as cognitive about the whole situation as I was. Observing the way my fellow school-goers acted and interacted, it all seemed so impulsive. I had higher deductive thinking skills, and that showed through my methodology and thought processes. I could read the notes



MY CROSS

Mary Butler— BCC Student
Submitted by Kathy McGurgan—BCC Staff



DR. WHO AND THE TARDIS

Mary Butler— BCC Student

my teacher, Mrs. Melvin, put on her desk, so each new art/craft wasn't really a surprise. Moreover, despite the students' intricately smeared finger paints, I felt like I was in a room of toddlers, and I just simply didn't belong.

Summertime, at my grandma's—*that has to be it*, I think to myself in my present-day college class. My wheels start turning, and I reach a conclusion on the very stepping stones that brought me where I am today.

It all started with *Fun with Dick and Jane*, the classic training wheels for phonics and reading comprehension. "Jane said, 'Run, run. Run, Dick, run,'" (Grossett & Dunlap, 8). The repetitions rang in my head until I just about memorized the whole book. It was a breeze for me when I was three-almost-four years old. I needed more of a challenge, and my grandma, as an ex-English teacher, definitely loved to supply.

The next summer, before I went into the daunting kindergarten, my grandma read to my brother and me as he was about to go into the first grade. (His favorite book was *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. I liked it too, but *Dick and Jane* were my original teachers.) We sat on each side of her, and she cracked open a book. Note—**this wasn't a normal** read-along. She brought out one of the biggest books I had seen in my four-almost-five years, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Now we're talking.

I imaginarily lived through every happening and peril of **Tom Sawyer's life**. From his deceptions of playing hooky and other buncos, all the way to attending his own funeral, I was there right beside him through it all. This book was WAY more captivating than Dick, Jane, and the rest of the over-simplified crew. Honestly, I was ready to prick my finger and write my name in blood as initiation. The books my grandma read to me, including *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*,

Treasure Island, and *To Kill a Mockingbird* gave me the crucial foundation I needed to become a prolific reader. That I did, even though I turned out not being as huge a reader as this paper hypes me up to be.

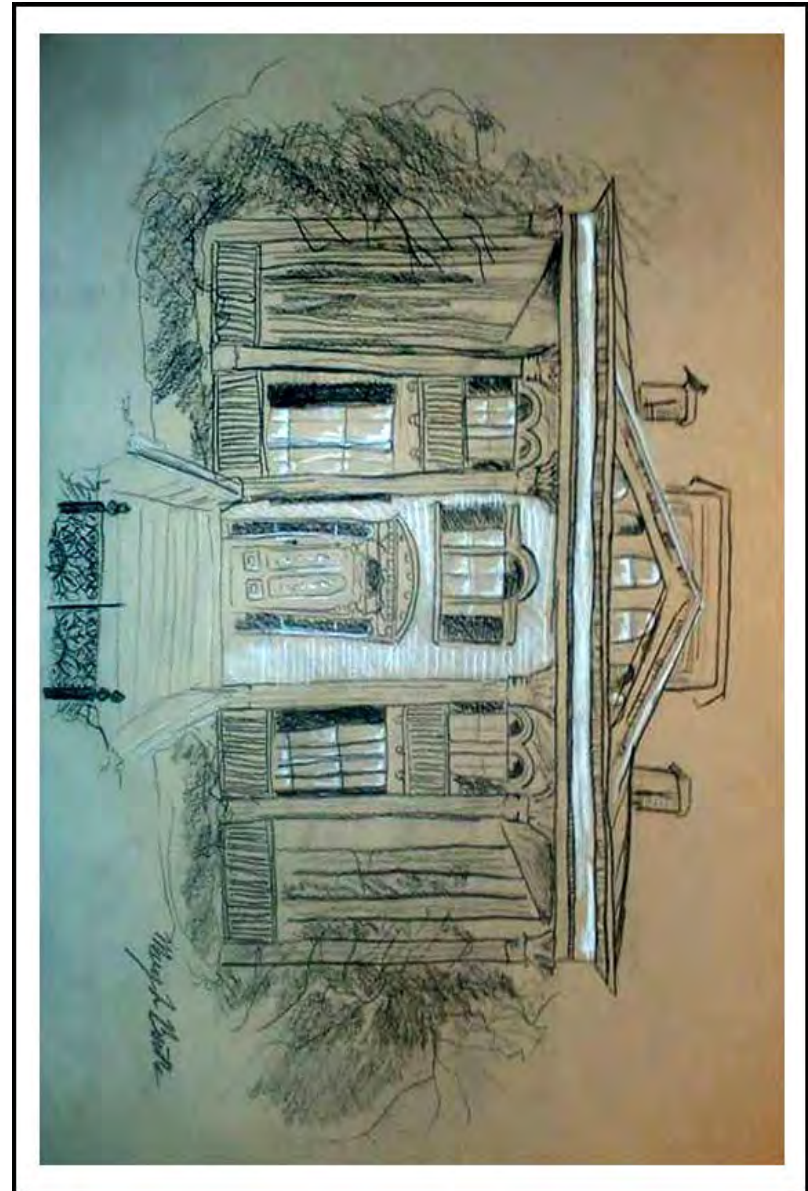
What it did do was help me become a better *speaker*, along with being a better reader. I found out after a major coming-out-of-my-shell type of deal, which was balling up **and signing up for the “Speech and Debate” team my freshman year, that I actually wasn’t so bad at public speaking.** The whole ordeal initially made me just about soil my pants in front of a judge, but the after-effects are something to be really thankful for.

The way my earliest stages of learning to read print were set up made an ideal environment for me to self-educate the rest of the way, all the way to writing this very work. I **wouldn’t have wanted my development any other way.** My reading experience has helped me with the speaking I now do fairly often in front of crowds, so I thank my grandmother for all she has done for me, along with anyone **else who aided me, but just as our reading says, “I was smart. I was arrogant. I was lucky.”** (Alexie 1998)

Works Cited

Alexie, Sherman. “Superman and Me.” *Los Angeles Times*. Los Angeles Times, 19 Apr. 1998. Web. 19 Jan. 2016. <<http://articles.latimes.com/1998/apr/19/books/bk-42979>>.

Fun with Dick and Jane. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 2003. 8. Print.



BELLAMY MANSION, WILMINGTON, NC

Mary Butler— BCC Student



BLADEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE A MAP TO MY SUCCESS

Mary Butler— BCC Student

THE MAGIC IN READING

Collins Pridgen—BCC Student

I don't know where I'd be today if I had never learned to read or write, but I'm pretty sure I wouldn't be a junior in high school, thinking about what career I might go into or **what college I'll be attending.** I sometimes wonder what influence reading and writing will have on my future. I imagine it will always have some sort of input, but I have no idea to what extent that will be. I use it every single day, and **I know for sure that it is something I wouldn't be able to live without.**

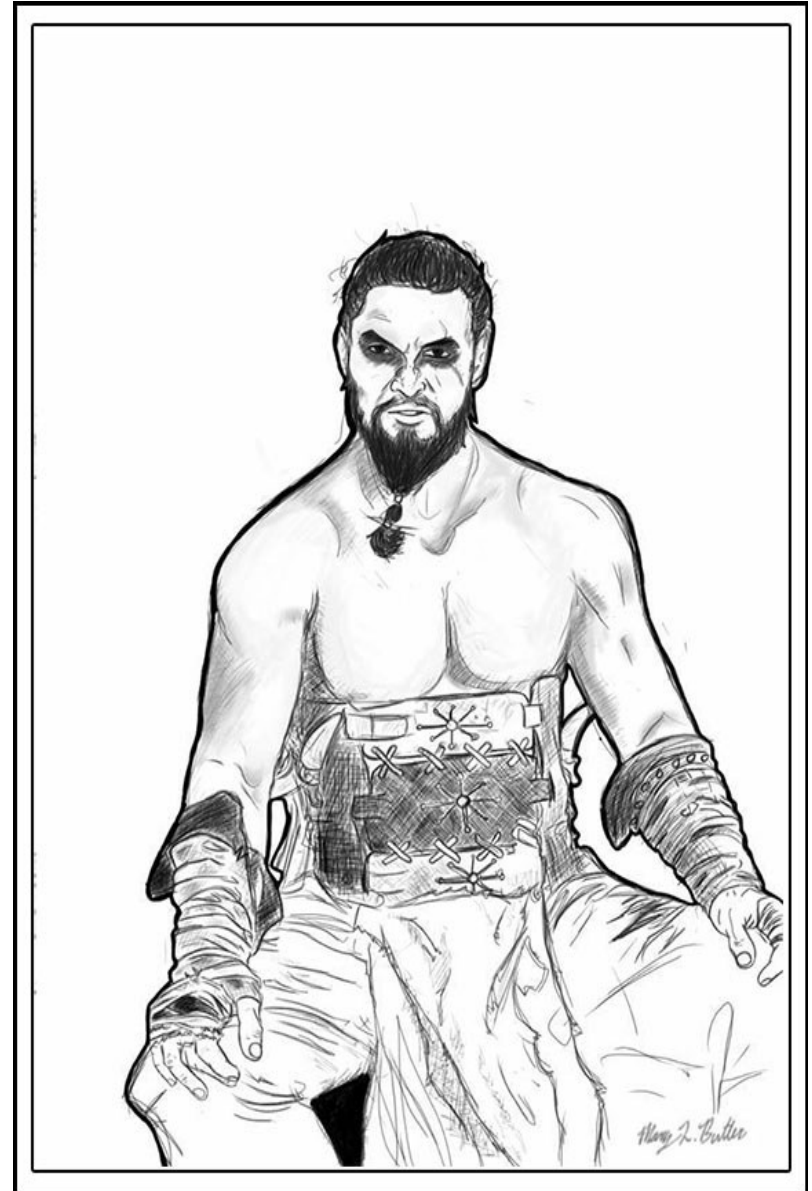
Since early on, the English language has been a large part of my life. **It's made me the person I am, and who I'm going to become.** For something to have such an impact on my life, **it's crazy to think that I can't even remember learning it.** All I know is that reading and writing has always just been a part of me. At some point between kindergarten and first grade, I assume I just became a reader because the details of it are all blurry. After asking my mother, she told me about how when I was little, she would take me to the Bladen County Public Library, and my sister and I would come home with a huge bag of books we would read together. The more I think about this, the more I remember checking out *Goosebumps* and reading books like the *Bernstein Bears*, **but these weren't the books that helped me find the magic in reading.**

When I was younger, I was the kid reading 800 page books in primary school and writing down any story idea that popped into my head. I very much considered myself a writer. I wanted to see my name on the spines of books while passing by every store window, and I wanted to be able to smell my ink when I flipped over a page. I just knew that when I grew up I was going to be an author. I even kept this

notebook where I would often draw out my characters or creatures I had created. I later found out this was something the famous author J.K. Rowling did also.

I've never pinpointed the exact moment that I discovered my thirst for books, but now that I think about it, there has always been this time in the back of my mind that stood out to me. Years ago, when the Scholastic book fair came to town, I was beyond excited to get my hands on this magazine you could order from. I flipped it open to the first page and I found the thing that changed my life. It was called *Harry Potter*, and it came in seven parts, all stored in this collector's box and costing around a hundred dollars. I'd seen the movies already and was obsessed with those, but there was something different, even better, about sitting down and reading everything as it happened. The day it came into the school's mail and I had to lug it all the way down the hall is one I'll never forget. I admired the pictures on the side of the heavy box, and while I didn't, at the time, know about anything going on in that vivid illustration, I knew I couldn't wait to find out. I remember now that this is where I initially discovered how much I enjoy reading and writing.

Taking notice of my newfound love for reading, my first grade teacher, Mrs. Fasnacht, entered me in a writing contest **for kids. This is when I wrote my first ever children's book** from cover to cover, all complete with some extremely ugly illustrations. I wrote my second at East Bladen High School in a class called Creative Writing. Just like when I was younger, I am still writing down every story idea I can think of and using them for this class. If I were still a first-grader, I think this is exactly where I would picture myself today. Now that I am in this class, I think a lot about when I was younger, reading *Harry Potter*, and how much I wanted to be an author. A lot of things have changed since then.



KHAL DROGO: GAME OF THRONES

Mary Butler— BCC Student



CRAZY EYES: ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK

Mary Butler— BCC Student

Today, the pages of these *Harry Potter* books are worn and the bindings of all seven are falling apart. They're resting neatly in the same box on a shelf beside my bed. I don't have the time to read much anymore, and I don't dream of being an author the way that I used to. Although I'm not sure where my future will take me, I know that reading and writing are things I'll always have. No matter what career I go into or how busy I'll be when I'm an adult, I'll always look back to when I found the magic in books and how far that magic has taken me.



TIGER IN THE SEA

Xavier Rhone-Lewis—BCC Student

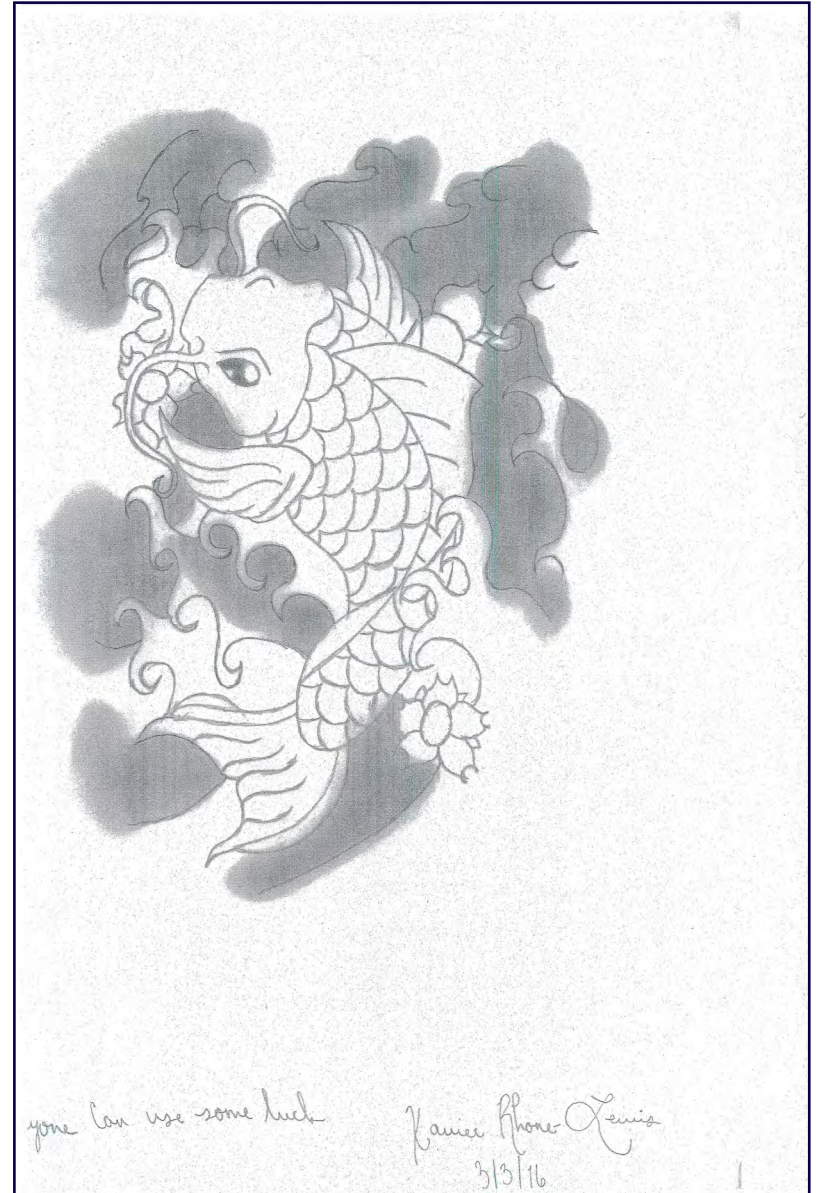
MONKEYS AND MUSIC: A LITERACY NARRATIVE

Michael McDuffie—BCC Student

Reading literacy is an important building block in the education of a child. For some, it can be a challenge. For other kids, including myself, luckily, it was something that came easily. The first book I read is a strangely vivid memory for me. Little did I know at the age of four that learning to read would help shape me into the person I am today.

In order to get to how my literacy in the English language has affected me, I need to start way back with how it began. My mother was very involved in my early years. She opted to stay at home to take care of me rather than work. I was very lucky to have my mom so involved in my younger years. One of the most exciting things to the young Michael was going to the public library in Elizabethtown to participate in the **children's reading program. The library offered various little** activities to pacify a group of young kids, such as coloring, playing with toys, and then a story. I remember one day I **picked up a copy of the children's book *Ten Little Monkeys*,** sat down, and picked out all the words I had learned from being read to during bedtime stories and at the library. I knew enough of them to figure out the story. I was so proud of myself. I called my mom over and recited what I knew **and guessed at the words I hadn't yet learned. She seemed** proud and encouraged me through the ten or twelve page book. It was a big day for me. Once I got to kindergarten and began to learn more, reading quickly became one of the things I do best and is one of the subjects I am interested in majoring in during college.

Fast forward quite a few years to middle school, and **you'll catch a slightly larger version of me discovering an**



YOU CAN USE SOME LUCK

Xavier Rhone-Lewis—BCC Student



CAPTURED BY ROSE VINES

Aaron Cox— BCC Student

interest in music. It is an interest I still enjoy and spend a lot of my time on. It is amazing the effect some vibrations from some instruments paired with words can have on someone. As someone who has had issues with self-confidence and anxiety, music is an escape for me. I can spend hours listening to albums and reading their lyrics, trying to break down and interpret what the artist means by them. It takes a good deal of English literacy to interpret literary devices like metaphors or alliteration that may be used. I have even had the privilege of meeting some of the artists I listen to and being able to discuss their lyrics with them.

Lyrics are an interesting thing to me. They can be written for all kinds of reasons. They can tell stories that can distract some from their problems for a while. They can also be used **somewhat as a vessel by the artist to reach out and say, “Hey, I know what you’re going through.”** Or for people like me who have trouble speaking up and saying things, they can cover it all for me. It is a powerful thing. Album art is **another thing that can be powerful in an album, but that’s an** entirely different can of worms.

Music is an entire language of its own. Some music can convey emotions without anyone speaking a word. Some of **the most powerful songs I’ve heard are instrumental.** Music has its own terms and ways of writing. Learning how to read music was almost as hard, if not harder, than actual reading. Even though I started out taking band classes, I am proud to say I am mostly self-taught. I tried learning in sixth grade on **the saxophone; I wasn’t very good. It took moving to drums** at home for me to learn, but it was worth it. It is still something I use today as I begin learning how to play bass. Music literacy along with English literacy will continue to play a part in my life as I move on to trying to write, play, and record my own music.

With all that being said, I am grateful for my education and

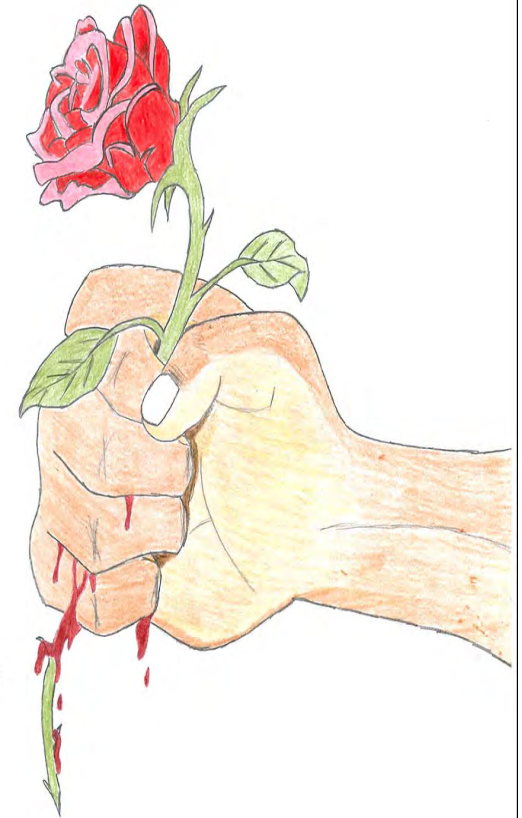
interest in English. It is a building block that has helped me learn and grow. If I didn't have the interest in English that I have, what would my hobbies be? They would probably be very different from what they are today. I probably wouldn't enjoy music as much as I do, at least the lyrical aspect. No matter how far I progress in my English ventures—for example, if I were to go on and write the most influential album of this generation or get a master's degree in English—they all lead back to my parents' endless support and that one little book that I decided to pick up. For that, I will be forever appreciative.



NOT A DOG

Joseph Miller—BCC Student

Even the
Most
Beautiful
Of Flowers
Can Be
Covered With
Thorns



THORN LADEN BEAUTY

Aaron Cox— BCC Student



GYPSY

Joseph Willis— BCC Student

FROM HARLEM PRE-K TO UNC-G SOCIOLOGY

Micah Brown—BCC Student

My mother informed me that I started reading books at the age of three. I vaguely remember being that age, but I remember being small enough to incite such wonderful praise and surprise from the much older, smarter adults. I never found the source of my love to impress people, but the more words I consumed as a child, the greater the satisfaction, so naturally, I kept doing it. I valued words, absorbing the small ones with ease and saving the larger ones for last. I set school records and often ran short of new **material in the Manhattan children's libraries. At age eight, I** surpassed reading comprehension at the college level to the annoyance and cruel envy of my other classmates. Back when I was shorter than a standard bathroom sink, I read all types of text with hungry eyes: infographics about volcanoes, pop-up tales about Disney characters, and the entire seven book series of *Harry Potter* between grades 2nd and 5th to name a few. My teachers loved it. They were proud. They were impressed. I would read stories to my mother until her strong snores filled the house. She was serene. She was proud. She was impressed. I still felt the stinging hand of adolescent envy, but my appeal lay within the crinkled **crow's feet of my mother and smiling Harlem teachers.**

As I grew up in the shiny hallways of the "Henry Highland Garnet School for Success," I began to use all my new words with ease and sought out more. I peered over the important paperwork of my principal and read the short stories on the backs of milk cartons, but all things do run their course. I was to move on to different hallways in lieu of awkward adolescence and discover more than multiplication tables. In the sixth grade, I attended a college preparatory

school on the edge of Manhattan, around five blocks from where the bridge connects to the rocks of the Bronx, and around 10 blocks from where my mother sat upon the hill in her office. I had a special bus pass for the commute back and forth from home because my mother wanted me to be self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency meant keeping busy on the weekdays with the tangential and passionate ramblings about Iraq and Egypt politics by an English teacher named David Enders, and immersed in the rattling Brazilian drums of Dana Monteiro. On weekends, I would be immersed in Mr. Antiosi's Lego robots or trek up the hill to help file the charge accounts on my mother's desk in the dusty 4th floor of the (now defunct) H.W. Wilson Publishing Company.

When Enders taught me how to value the issues of the world outside of my bubble, I placed books next to that sentiment along with his tattered pant legs and heavy Brooklyn accent. They squeezed next to Monteiro's deep chuckle and philosophy about the beauty of percussion and rhythm, and next to my mother's commitment to teach her child the value of organization. Antiosi fascinated me even more with lasers and motion sensors. I learned the language of each person with a hunger fueled by impression and curiosity since I had figured out that language was not merely words spoken aloud or through ink. I started to value the hidden gems of my knowledge and which doors they would open, whether good or bad. I was often second guessed on my intellect as a young black child or exiled by peers for my praise, but the praise was there, and it allowed me to experience more than I would have guessed. It hurt at times, but it would be a boring life if I were not literate in words, in music, in technology, in politics, and in issues near and dear to my heart. Enders married a woman in occupied Iraq. Montiero loved his culture. My mother loved typing as therapy, plus it provided for us. Antiosi just loved Lego robots. There's reason for knowledge and its passage: we need to be multi-faceted to make sense of the beauty of this world.



ANIME WARRIOR GIRL

Joseph Willis— BCC Student



BEAUTY IN FORM

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student

Having these vaguer thoughts at the age of 11 required a niche, at the very least. I landed myself in programs with other awkward adolescents with the same hunger, yet they were fleeting in July weathers. The adolescent sting had become a harsh burn of isolation, yet I always felt a necessary need to learn beyond what is expected. I assume that Mr. Enders had the greater effect on me with his aura of passion and anticipation. He always seemed on edge, and as years pass, I finally understand why.

That same edge trickled down my spine when the literacy in my older years grew to be the social sciences. I metaphorically dipped my toes into the pools of philosophy, sociology, anthropology and ethics and was pulled under exciting waters. I must have read over a million words about theories of cultural conflict and harmony, of inequity, and of relative morality in naïve awe, and as a result, each day **brings me a new example. I love it because it's a constant,** and I dislike it because it makes me find the negative in everyday activities. I always question the root of each issue, **each mannerism, and each colloquial. I'm physically in the wrong place most of the time to ask "Why?" because no one** will have an answer. There is no one for me to impress because I cannot find the ones with similar fire and hunger in their eyes. Does a flower bloom in a dark room? Does a man die because of what shows through his skin? Shifting **eyes won't tell you, nor praise you for asking, but there's a niche in this world for me to impress someone. There's a** niche where I can make this language my own and more.



I AM GOING TO BE AN ENGINEER

Mary Butler—BCC Student

I have not always known exactly what I wanted to be in life; even what I have in mind now is subject to change. First of all, I have not always been the most disciplined person. I grew up in an unstructured environment. As a result of my lack of rearing by my mother, I always struggled in things such as studying and time management. The world around me has always been such a difficult and perplexing place. Everything around me always seems not quite right. Because of that, I want to at least make things **right with myself, at least career wise. I don't want to be that person who took a job just for the money, but dreaded going into work every day because the job didn't fulfill me.** I have only recently come to the realization that I would very much like to be an engineer and welder after my brother in-law offered to teach me. Since then I have taken a few welding classes at my high school, and actually went to work with him one day. I was not disappointed.

I have always been a creator. As a child, I loved to learn things like drawing, macramé, and knitting. Throughout my childhood, I only wanted to learn how to make as much as I could. Around the time I started middle school, I started hand sewing stuffed animals and adding things to **my clothes. When I didn't have the tools to teach me how to make a particular project, I would study the object and recreate it on my own.** Because of my knack for making things, I have always made it my goal in life to learn as many crafting trades as I can.

One major sponsor in my life has been my stepmother. She has always encouraged me to be creative. When I visited my dad, she would always have some fun craft to do **with me. When we weren't busy crafting, my second**



BROKEN DREAMS

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student



STUDY IN LIGHT

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student

favorite thing to do was watch *Crafters Coast to Coast*, which featured artists and crafters. I would imagine myself doing all the amazing things I saw others do. She would always tell me she saw potential in me, while my own mother made a point to explain how I would not make any money in silly arts and crafts. Because of that, I have only been more determined to do something with my love of creating. Not only has she encouraged me to practice all I could, but she has also pushed me to take my art (whatever it may be) to **the next level. Ever since I've expressed interest in welding**, she has been urging and convincing me that I should pursue a career in engineering. Despite my concern and fear of the math that is required, she was certain that I was better at math than I thought. As she worked more and more with me, I began to see that she was right, making more certain that I should seek out a career in engineering.

As stated in “Sponsors of Literacy,” “Sponsors seemed a fitting term for the figures who turned up most typically in **people's memories of literacy learning.**” I could not think of a more memorable inspiration for my love of welding than my brother-in-law, Chris, who is a welder by trade. I tend to spend a good amount of time at his house to hang out with my niece. In my general interest in building things, I would follow Chris around to offer any help whenever he was working on something. Meanwhile, I would ask him all sorts of questions about his job. Eventually he offered to show me how his TIG (Tungsten Inert Gas) rig worked, and after a few demonstrations, set me up with a piece of pipe to practice on. Despite the initial frustration at my first few inexperienced attempts at striking the metal, I finally got a feel for it and decided that this was something I really wanted to learn.

The semester following that decision, I signed up for welding courses at my high school. I could not wait to start my first class. When I finally got to class, I found that I was one of three girls taking the class. This did not surprise me,

though I was pretty disappointed to see that the other two girls were hardly interested in welding. Their silliness and lack of interest in the class distracted me at first because I **didn't want the guys to stereotype me and think I wasn't serious about this class.** The girls were more oppressive to me than any boy could have been. I was more determined to **do my best to master the art of this trade because of the boys'** pointing out all the reasons women should not take welding.

I had a wonderful and very supportive instructor who always encouraged me to be the best I could be. He was always kind and helpful though I would question whether or not his kind words were because I am a girl or if I am genuinely a good welder who tends to pick things up quickly enough. He always seemed to take pride in my work, which always pushed me further and built my confidence.

The most recent and exciting accomplishment in my quest to weld took place the day after Christmas. This was the day I got to apprentice with my brother-in-law. Chris offered to let me tag along with him at work the next day. I learned so much that day. Not only did I get the opportunity to weld in a more official work setting, but I also got a real feel for the intensive environment that lies ahead for me. Chris taught me more about TIG, which is welding with gas and tungsten, **than I had already known. I also learned to "walk the cup,"** which is a term that refers to a method of swerving the torch for a clean and pretty weld. The other men working seemed impressed at my welds, some giving me advice on where and how I could improve. Chris called just about everyone over to see my welds. He seemed proud of me, which made my sense of pride swell a little.

Welding is a labor intensive and a male dominated career. Engineering is a very math intensive and male dominated career. I look forward to getting my hands in both and showing the world that I can give just as much as anyone else can. I have many sponsors; according to Deborah Brant in



DREAMING OF SPRING

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student



POLLACK

Joseph Miller—BCC Student

“Sponsors of Literacy,” “Sponsors deliver the ideological freight that must be borne for access to what they have.” I am very fortunate to have so many supportive people in my life to push me and remind me of what I am capable of.

Work Cited

Brandt, Deborah. “Sponsors of Literacy.” *College Composition and Communication* 49.2 (May, 1998): 165-168. Print. 8 Feb. 2016.



WISDOM

Joseph Miller — BCC Student

UNSTOPPABLE

Levy Pait—BCC Student

A mixture of sweat and blood runs down his face, but he does not stop.

He continues to stride forward. He trips and staggers but will not stop.

The eyes of history are upon him and this moment. He cannot stop.

Countless lives depend on his action. No pain and no loss can stop him.

He thinks of his family; for them, he must go on.
For his comrades lying around him, he must go on.
For the ones that are to come after him, he must go on.
Nothing can stop him.

The air around is torn. Time stands still as he presses onward. He must not fail.

Many in his position think of many things: of family, of friends, of country, of beliefs, of freedom, but his thought is just this: do not stop.

So he takes another step. His boots sink into the golden sand, making each step laborious. The wind and sun blind him, but none of this can hinder him.

No matter what may be on the other side of the ridge, he will face it. No matter what the obstacle is, he will overcome it. He takes another strained step onward.

With the weight of countless lives on his shoulders, his slow pace continues. His actions this moment will shape the



SINGLETARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, DUBLIN, NC

Diane White Vitale—BCC Staff



RESTING PLACE

Diane White Vitale—BCC Staff

future. Without him, all hope is lost for his cause.

Each of his limbs cries out in pain. His mind and body beg for relief.

Not his soul, it demands action to stop the enemy no matter the suffering. So he is determined to finish his course and to reach the end, whatever that might be.

Everything hangs in the balance of his effort: victory or defeat, freedom or oppression, life or death. His steps continue.

History itself hangs in the balance.



LIGHTHOUSE AT HILTON HEAD, S.C.

Ray Sheppard—BCC Faculty

PROUD TO BE WHO I AM TODAY

Richard Shaw—BCC Student

I met Tonya on September 3, 2006 and we got married on April 25th, 2008. Our relationship was put to the test in ways that most would never have even considered it making through, but it did, simply because my wife is the strongest woman I have ever known.

I spent nearly nine years in the Marine Corps beginning when I enlisted on January 28th, 2003 until I was medically separated on June 29th, 2011. During my time on active duty, I completed two combat tours to Iraq. I was a helicopter mechanic, aerial gunner, and instructor. I suffered silently with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for just over seven years and was about as close as one could be to ending my life before my amazing wife was somehow able to pull me out of the darkest of places.

After my final deployment in 2006, I started noticing that I was not the same outgoing, positive minded guy that I used to be. I met my wife about three months after returning from my last deployment, so she had a short **glimpse into the “real” me before things gradually began to spiral downwards.**

It started out with an onset of high blood pressure, nightmares, night sweats, hyper vigilance, insomnia, and panic attacks. After seeking medical attention, I was prescribed anxiety and blood pressure medication. As the insomnia, blood pressure, and panic attacks increased, I was put through countless tests and given more medicine. The medicine somewhat controlled my blood pressure, but I began to drink excessive amounts of alcohol, mixed with my prescribed medication, hoping to reduce my insomnia and panic attacks and seeking a couple hours of sleep at



A MAN AND HIS HORN

Diane White Vitale—BCC Staff



REFLECTION

Karen Kresmery—BCC Alumnus

night. However, even though I was beginning to sleep a little, the onset of sleepwalking and nightmares became a nightly occurrence. Shortly afterwards, I began to wake up with flashbacks and was completely convinced that our house was under attack. To top things off, I began waking up pacing my bedroom or house with my pistol in my hand, and my wife would follow me around to make sure I did not hurt myself or anyone else. I shut myself off from everyone and wanted to be by myself because nobody understood, and frankly, neither did I.

These events continued for years and started bringing out sides of me that I never imagined possible. My temper, concentration, emotions, memory, and self-control were polar opposites of what they were in years past. I was even forced to take two weeks off from work because of my erratic and odd behavior.

During all of this time, my wife would tell me that there was something wrong and I needed to seek professional help, but this only made me angrier, and I began to resent her more and more each day. To make matters worse, the people that I considered my best friends began to turn their back on me. I would take all of my frustrations out on her verbally and said some of the most hurtful things people could say to someone that loved them. What made her stick by my side, to this day, is beyond my understanding and reflects mainly her strength and commitment. In fact, my problems impacted us to the point of me leaving because I felt I was too much of a burden for anyone to have to deal with. Even while we were separated and about to get divorced, Tonya continually called me and came by to check up on me.

With all of that said, as a couple that was destined for divorce, I am extremely proud to say that today, we are happier and in a better place than ever. Because of her unconditional love and support, she was always there for me

to talk to. She showed me that it was okay to open up about things I may have been embarrassed or ashamed of because she never judged me. She taught me that it truly takes a strong person to admit the need for help. My wife has been right by my side in overcoming hurdles I would have never imagined possible.

With her encouragement, I was able to open up publicly about how PTSD has not only affected me, but my wife and everyone around me. Being a veteran, I was asked by my college if I would give a speech on Veteran's Day 2014. I figured it would be your normal "look at what I have done" type of speech, but I could not bring myself to brag about accomplishments when inside, I felt like a failure for so long. I wrote speech after speech for weeks and none of them seemed right, so on the day of the event, I threw everything I had away and spoke unscripted from my heart about the struggles PTSD has placed on me and everyone I know. **Though I'm not exactly sure of all I said, the feedback and support were incredible!** There were several people that approached my wife and me afterwards and thanked us for expressing in public what they felt or passed through, but never had the courage to share with others.

After that speech, we realized that we could not stop what we began. There were civilians more than veterans who suffered silently and had no place to go for support. In January 2015, we created a Facebook page named PTSD & TBI Break the Silence Breaking the Cycle which has become an outlet that many seek. The response, support, and the number of people reaching out for help has been inexpressible. It is truly difficult to fully understand what victims of PTSD go through and how one minute of a **severely traumatic experience can change someone's life** forever.

In closing, I want to say this, if not for my amazing wife, I



AGLOW

Karen Kresmery—BCC Alumnus



BLUE MARINE

Lisa Neal—BCC Staff

would have not been here to write this. We know that many do not have the support they feel comfortable with, and battle a stigma that they should not have to face. I have learned that it takes a lot of willpower to admit our weaknesses, but a little love and support can help us overcome all our internal conflicts.



NATURE'S BEAUTY

Karen Kresmery—BCC Alumnus

BEE FEARFUL

Karen Brown—BCC Student

My childhood was ordinary until one day it became extraordinary. First, let me start by saying I was very shy as a child. There was very little technology during the eighties, so imagination was the main source of entertainment. Instead of playing outside with the neighborhood kids, I would have my nose in a book. My enjoyment came from all types of books, so I occupied my free time by reading countless numbers of them. I would sit in front of our bookcase for hours skimming through books that lined the enormous wooden shelves. A favorite book of mine as a child was *Casper the Friendly Ghost Takes the Wild West*. However, things changed dramatically that year for me as a fifth grader. I blossomed from a timid little book worm into a radiant butterfly.

As part of the class curriculum each week, we had a spelling bee. It was an opportunity to show how brilliant the class was and a chance to earn a free homework pass. It was a terrifying experience for me even though I knew most of the kids since kindergarten. I dreaded when the time came to stand in front of the class. I would often miss-spell a word on purpose just so I could sit down. Ms. Prince caught on to this trick almost immediately. She pulled me to the side one day and asked why I had such trouble with spelling the word in front of the class, yet would have a good grade on my spelling test. I reluctantly explained the issue. After a short pause, understanding my fear, Ms. Prince suggested that I look at **the back of the class while spelling the word.** “**This should help; you just have to try it. I have faith in you,**” she said.

The next week came very quickly for me. It was time for our weekly spelling bee, and I was mortified yet again. Before we started, Ms. Prince said she had a brief announcement for



CHARGE OF THE SAINTS

Lisa Neal—BCC Staff



PRAISE NEW ORLEANS

Lisa Neal—BCC Staff

the class. She thought she should enhance the stakes a little. The winner of the spelling bee would receive a coupon for a free personal pan pizza and a chance to be student of the week. This meant our picture would be posted in the doorway for everyone to see. The student would also be the **teacher's helper that week. The students could hardly contain** their excitement. We were all determined to win at this point, but one by one, we sat down in defeat. When my turn came, I froze. Ms. Prince sensed my hesitation. She secretly touched the corner of her glasses and pointed toward the wall. As if on cue, I spelled the word **constitution** and got it correct. I remember turning crimson red as the class cheered me on. After what seemed like an eternity, the spelling bee was over, and I was the only one standing. I had won.

After years of anxiety and pretending to be stupid, I actually overcame my fears. Not only did Ms. Prince ignite my thirst for spelling, she also gave me the confidence to flourish. I was no longer afraid to stand in front of the class. I won many spelling bees to follow. That one little jester taught me that words were the key to success. Life has handed me many different fears to overcome throughout the years. In **those terrifying moments, I can still hear my teacher's words** of wisdom as she stood there looking over the top of her glasses as only she could do. She was a very short and stout woman, yet her words were very powerful and unforgettable. **I've never lost my thirst for words. I still love to read. To this** day at any free moment, someone can find me in a corner with my nose in a book. Oh, I almost forgot the best part. I ate a lot of free pizza that year!!



RACCOON RAMPAGE

Tommy Rains – BCC Staff

The caller sounded upset. She and her children had been scared and her house violated. Her husband was deployed to Afghanistan, and she and her three children, ages 6 to 16, were at the kitchen table when a large male raccoon crashed through the pet door that led from the kitchen to the garage.

She and the kids ran screaming to the sanctuary of the bedrooms, while this raccoon made a mess of the kitchen. He upset the dishes on the table, not finding anything to his liking. As he was roaming around, he marked *his new territory* - urinating all over her kitchen floor.

He then opened a floor level pantry door and tossed its contents around before finding a box containing about a dozen individually wrapped packages of brownies that the lady had just brought home from Walmart. The thief dragged the brownies back through the pet door, opened the box in the driveway, ate one, and dropped one before leaving with the remainder of his booty to devour later.

The next night, she locked the pet door and shut the garage door, but the raccoon came back wanting more. He pushed the garage door up far enough to enter and clawed at the pet door, growling and snarling, before leaving the garage. He wasn't done yet. He climbed the front of the house until he got outside the lady's bedroom window and scratched on the glass and wood. His final act of desecration this second night was to *leave his calling card* at the entrance to the garage.

It was at this point that Wildlife Control was called. The



THE TIME HAS COME

Robin Novak—BCC Staff

Wow son, your senior year is done,
Watching you grow has been so much fun!

I can hardly believe it is two thousand eleven,
It seems like only yesterday you were just seven!

I've watched you soar from year to year,
All the fond memories I will hold dear!

The time has come, so it seems
To spread your wings, to follow you dreams!

Remember to always keep God first,
He will guide you and love you at your best or at your worst!

Now that you've become a wonderful young man,
Never forget I will always be your number one fan!

"Thanks for the joy that you've given me,"¹
Your future is bright; that's easy to see.

"I want you to know I believe in your song,"²
I will love you forever, for your whole life long!

Love, Hugs & Kisses Baby Boy, Love Mom

¹ Gray, Dobie, "Drift Away." 1973.

² ibid.

animal rescuers used an industrial strength odor eliminator to take the odor out of the kitchen. They set up a couple of cage traps and used some marshmallows, maple syrup, and the pack of brownies that the raccoon had left behind to bait the traps. The perpetrator's girlfriend was captured the first night, and the huge male raccoon was captured three nights later. The woman and her children were thankful and went back to leading a normal life.



GEOMETRIC SHADOWS

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student

THE VETERINARIAN

Betty Williamson—BCC Student

My father had a job working for a veterinarian. The house we lived in came with the job so Father could be on call 24/7. The house was on the corner of Highway 301 and a two lane road. The veterinarian had a hospital with a kennel out back. He treated cats, dogs and horses mainly. I often helped at **the vet's office by exercising and helping to feed the animals.** The veterinarian took on a partner fresh out of school. The older vet wanted to keep regular office hours and let the young guy handle the after-hours emergencies. Soon after the young vet came, he was given a greyhound as payment for services rendered. That caused a problem. The young vet **was living in a small room at the vet's office until he could** find a place to live. The dog, which was bred for racing, was unhappy because vets in Florida cannot race greyhounds.

I found myself with a black mutt that I named Edward. The dogs in the kennels were upset because he ran free on the grounds outside the fenced-in kennels. He followed me **everywhere. I had to train him not to follow me into the vet's** office or to the school bus.

Edward got hit by a car while I was at school. The young veterinarian found him in the road, still warm. The vet was so upset about not being able to save my dog that he gave my father some money to buy another dog. We searched for a month or so but I was not able to find another dog that suited me, so I ended up with a kitten that followed me **everywhere. I had to train him not to follow me into the vet's** office.

I got the kitten during Easter vacation so we bonded well. When school started back, he followed me to the bus stop next to the house and got on the bus. I got back off the bus

She wants me to know, she thinks of me
From early morning through the night,
But what my heart longs for most
Is to have her in my sight.

I do have other children
And they add up to three,
But this particular daughter
Thinks the very world of me!!

Though we can't be together
This year on Mother's Day,
She's sending me hugs and kisses
And loves me in every way!

She wants me to say thank you
A better mom could not send,
To guide your second daughter
Through life by being her friend.

Happy Mother's Day Mom
I love and miss you very much



MY DAUGHTER

Robin Novak—BCC Staff

I have a second daughter
But we live miles and miles apart,
She misses me so much
But I'm always in her heart.

I often wish she would call
But she's usually busy; you see,
It's because she gave me a grandson
That only stops when he's asleep.

She named her child Nicholas
I think he's oh so sweet
The best part of being his grandma,
He thinks I'm really "cool and neat!"

I'm not too fond of diamonds
I really don't want a pearl,
The jewel I love most of all
Is my little baby girl.

Oh those days I find myself
Feeling sad and blue,
I need to stop and tell myself
She really misses me too.

and tried again. The bus driver was so surprised that a kitten was following me that she could not close the door before the kitten boarded the bus! We were almost late to school the first day. The kids had a ball when the kitten got loose under the seats in the bus. The kitten got his tail caught in the door on one attempt. He had a permanent crook in his tail after that. After four attempts to get on the bus without the kitten, I had to walk him home and slip out of the house, making sure he stayed inside until I got on the bus after that.



L.I.B....

Jeanne Butler—BCC Staff

IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Joyce Bahhouth—BCC Faculty

Our environment, family, religion, education, upbringing, and personal experience shape our identity and make us who we are. Culture also plays a major role. The culture we are born in shapes our behavior and thought to the extent that we often tend to believe that our culture is the norm, and we **judge others' behavior and culture based on its similarity to the culture in which we were born.**

Many people who move from one country to another experience culture shock after having lived in that new country for a few months, not right away. This is the time when they start internalizing the culture of the host country and they start battling with themselves over whether they can or cannot accept that culture.

When we first immigrated to the United States, we packed in our suitcases some of our belongings and carried in our **hearts lots of memories ... and more traditions and culture** than we were ever aware we possessed. We learned that in order for us to be successful, we needed to adapt to different cultural norms. We started living by double standards and different identities. Different identities? You may wonder! We tried our best to observe others very closely and learn how they thought and what they accepted or rejected. We felt **like we were toddlers or even babies observing our parents'** facial expressions to learn whether we behaved as we were expected to or not. It was only at home that we dropped our masks, spoke our native language, ate our traditional food, and celebrated our traditional feasts.

However, when we now go back to Lebanon, we realize that there are many customs and traditions that we no longer accept and have difficulty imitating. We can still

DESTRUCTION AND MADNESS

Andrew Bahhouth (age 13) - Faculty Family
Son of Joyce Bahhouth

I stand, shaken
By the destruction that lies before me.
I feel forsaken
In this land of which all flee.
I am empowered
To do what I wish with this land that is devoured.
There is a sadness in it all,
A sadness of scars.
People like us made this place fall.
This wonderful place is ruined by the factories and the cars.
This pollution and tarnish
Are a wound with salt garnish.
What could I do with it now?
It can't be returned to perfection.
To better this place, I wonder how,
This place, ruined by greed's misdirection.
All it needs is a good deed.
Just one in this fiery chamber of the bad.
This disaster, like a warning, we must heed
To bring back this wonderful place, ruined by those who are
mad!



MORNING POEM

Danielle Kiefer—BCC Student

Woke early one morning,
The earth lay cool and still,
When suddenly a tiny bird,
Perched on my window sill.
He sang a song so lovely,
So carefree and so gay,
That slowly all my troubles,
Began to slip away.
He sang of far off places,
Of laughter and of fun,
It seemed his very song,
Brought out the morning sun.
I pulled back the covers,
Crept slowly out of bed,
And gently shut the window,
And crushed his freaking head.
I am not a morning person!



adapt, and we understand how people think. We know the history and traditions behind certain behaviors and attitudes, but we see them as strangers, not as adults who had these traditions engraved into their identity. We have changed, and our identities have evolved! We are who we have become, and it is hard to go back to who we were!



FARMING IN BLADEN COUNTY

Diane White Vitale—BCC Staff

POETRY



THROUGH THE NIGHT

Willie Allen—Friend of BCC

The sunshine has left us; we lie down for rest.
At this time each day, we ponder, perhaps confess.
Has the time been spent wisely? Have we given our all?
This day was ours, but have we let it slip, slide, and stall?

Minds slip into the house where it dwells alone,
Not one visitor is allowed in this very special home
Of rooms packed with clutter that only one may share.
Rooms have no windows to outside, so no one can stare.

Residents chase each other from room to room,
As though guided by lights that soon fade into gloom.
Dreams of daylight bid for their own time in the midnight,
But surrender they must to the power of subconscious
delight.



THE PATH TO THE FIELD

Willie Allen—Friend of BCC

It happened each day, right after school,
Walking, running, biking, or riding a mule
Quickly change into old clothes and head to the row
That needed picking, shucking, pulling, and perhaps a hoe.

Work until sundown, then back home.
Eat supper, study, no television and no phone.
Play checkers, or perhaps hearts, if time permitted.
Then a good night sleep, to be on the next day sharp witted.

Early next morning, eat, dress in a rush,
Then walk a mile quickly; catch the school bus.
Study, pay close attention in class—your only choice
If a future hope you have for others to hear your voice!



WHAT I NEED

Hannah Allison—BCC Student

I come to a fork in the road.

There isn't much around.

I don't know which to take

As I examine the ground.

One seems to be dark

With fear surrounding.

The other is like a field of daisies
With the sounds of animals bounding.

Not to say I'm not fond

Of little woodland creatures,

But I'd much rather like to see

What the frightful path features.

Though scary at first, it will pay off more.

Who's to say I won't turn out stronger

When I come back from the tour.

Humans can be fragile, yes indeed,

But I wouldn't want to hold myself back

From what I might need.



A SIGH

Elisabeth Pearsall—BCC Student

Stress and progress go hand in hand
Oh my, the irony to be had
Coming after work or play
Relief or despair
The sigh is not so rare

Wondering, pondering, contemplating life
Oh my, the break is almost here
But will I feel
Relief or despair
A breath of fresh air

Craving, needing, wanting the break
Oh my, we all yearn for an end
But it will begin again
Relief or despair
The sigh is always there



NOTHING AT ALL

Ginger King—BCC Staff

If your heart meant
Goodbye instead of
Goodnight

Why didn't you

Simply say it
Or say nothing
Nothing at all
Would have been
Nice



RACING THOUGHTS...

Erica Butler—BCC Student

Friday night wishes
Friday night kisses
Bush hair
Drowsy eyes
Peacock clothes
Tethered ties
Dark eyes
Pale face
Eagles soaring
far from their feet
Talon cries
Silent
With no tears
His mother cries, too
Books never opened
Words never read
Spanish never learned
Karate never taught
White pencils
Red flowers
Yellow cups
Yawns and Shouts
Blue clouds
Blue, very blue, clouds

THE PASSING

Harriet Delores Grundei—Mother of
Mitch Mitchell

The passing of a soul so grand,
Tho' not far-just another land.
Away in regions divine,
To other souls happily mated with treasure of mind.
Happier than human knows,
Eternally gladdened where there are no snows.
They're respectfully enjoying peace of glory,
Why should we grieve? They're not sorry,
Not sorry away from earthly fears,
But enjoying God's music for ethereal ears.
When we're happy thus, we'd regret that someone, tho' kind
Cried, and seemingly begrudged our happiness so divine.
So grieve not for the passing,
The heavenly treasures they're now grasping.
They are far happier so,
Away from earthly sin, fear, and woe.

October 7, 1938



THE RUDE SHADOW

Kimberly Shipman—BCC Student

Why are shadows so rude?
They are always mimicking you,
Copying every little thing you do.
Never to be heard, but always to be seen,
They steal the shape of everything.
Why are shadows so rude?
They are always following you,
Sticking to you like glue.
What could be ruder, I will never know,
Than the likes of you,
Rude shadow!

A SNAKE

Tykia Melvin—BCC Student

A slithery snake is seen irate and nasty
Feared by most as something not to fancy
But loved by some who see it as something
That becomes reborn,
Sheds its old skin so its new can adorn.



WHO AM I?

Jennifer Cowan—BCC Student

I cause great pain and suffering to all I come into contact
with.
Who am I?
I will change the lives of everyone I touch forever.
Some for the good and others for the worst.
Who am I?
I don't discriminate.
Old, young, disabled, black, white, green or any other color;
it is all the same to me.
Who am I?
I am always lurking, and you never know when I may knock
on your door.
Have you guessed who I am?
I am a thief, a cheater and a destroyer.
Life isn't fair and until I can be destroyed, I will continue to
reap havoc in the lives of many.
Who am I?
I am C A N C E R!
That's who I am.
Pray for all who come into contact with me.
The sooner you find a cure, the sooner you will be rid of me.
C A N C E R is who I am.....



NOW I SEE

Ginger King—BCC Staff

In tattered outlines
And simple gestures sprung
A tangible pattern formed

You brushed against my hand
And held a door or two
Then we moved to
Saying “how nice it is to see you”

In looking back my dear
Now how clearly I can see
The falling happened slowly
Turning everything
Into what it ought to be



EXPERIENCES

Takenya Lennon—BCC Student

I have been talked about,
used and abused,
cheated on and ashamed,
played the fool in this life you think is a game,
hurt and taken advantage of
by those who really wanted to show me love.

I have been belittled and decreased.

I have even starved to make sure someone else could eat.

I have sacrificed my body just so I wouldn't have to be alone.

I have been called names to my face and on the telephone.

I have been touched, but not by an angel,
but by someone who was a victim, too.

But if I can make it from there to here, so can you.

All you need is a relationship with God, and He can heal you.

**Don't let what you have been through
destroy what's on the inside of you,
for they all are just... experiences.**



DEMONS

Hannah Allison—BCC Student

As I gaze into the night, I see
The demons staring back at me
With beautiful eyes and a perfect smile,
Letting me know they're staying a while.
They sing songs in my head,
Put bugs in my bed,
And tell me not to tell.
Oh why did I set them free
If I knew they would only feast upon me?
Hell is here, can't you see?
The only demons are inside of me.



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WILMINGTON, NC

Ray Sheppard—BCC Faculty

LITTLE BIRDS AT PLAY

Ginger King—BCC Staff

The little birds at play
Outside my window
They don't know
What I know
They don't see
Inside of me
The amount of despair
If measured in pounds
Would take as many birds
As would cover the ground

TUESDAY MORNING

Ginger King—BCC Staff

On Tuesday morning
If rain is falling
I hope we stay in
Read a line
Or two
From a favorite verse
Or just the paper
Will do
And you can absentmindedly
Twirl my hair
As you sip