

# Living

The News Reporter, Thursday, May 12, 2016, Section C

## Winners of the 2016 A.R. Ammons Poetry Contest

Published here are the original poems by the winners and honorable mentions of the 2016 A.R. Ammons Poetry Contest, The Reuben Brown House Preservation Society, BB&T and *The News Reporter*.

### Division I K-Second Grade

#### First Place

##### "My Fat Cat"

My cat is fat.  
His name is Pat.  
He loves to sleep on a big mat.  
Pat is brown and black and very funny  
My friend mistook him for a bunny.  
My pet Pat is very bold  
He never does what he is told  
Pat loves to stretch out in the sun  
And when dad comes close  
He jumps and runs.  
I love Pat with all my heart.  
I pray each day we'll never part.

**Diyana Mills**  
*Carolina Adventist Academy*

#### Second Place

##### "Almost"

One day I almost ate a berry.  
It was very, very hairy.  
I think it was a strawberry,  
But I'm not eating a hairy berry!  
One day I almost got eaten by a bear  
When I was walking in his lair  
I have that bear a mighty mean stare  
And then I just got out of there!

**Farrah Meares**  
*Whiteville Primary*

#### Third Place

##### "Friend"

I have a friend I may not be able to see with my sight,  
I know he will be there morning, noon and night.  
I may be small,  
But there's one who's tall that will help me through it all.  
He dries my tears,  
And takes my fears.  
He made the heavens,  
And the days all seven.  
He's easy to find,  
He doesn't hide.  
I call him Jesus.

**Kinsey Reaves**  
*Old Dock Elementary*

#### Honorable Mentions

##### "My Birthday Cake"

My birthday care is decorated pink,  
I always eat it with chips and drink.  
My favorite was the decorated sprinkles,  
The eight candles really did twinkle.  
My name was printed on my cake  
Oh, I can't wait until it's time for another one to bake!

**Kenzy Fowler**  
*Old Dock Elementary*

##### "My Dad"

My dad took a day off from his job.  
We went on a trip with his new fishing rod.  
We caught a big fish.  
We fried it up and ate it from a paper dish.  
We camped in a tent all night.  
It was dark cause we had no light.  
The moon shined really bright.

**Kayla Hayes**  
*Old Dock Elementary*

##### "School Day"

I wake up in the morning  
We must get on the bus.  
My brother doesn't like school  
So he begins to fuss.  
My dad says be nice  
You have to go to school'  
Go to school, obey the rules  
That is really cool.

**Makayla Keisler**  
*Williams Township*



Division I honorable mentions were, from left: **Kenzley Fowler, Kayla Hayes, Makayla Keisler, Brianna Price, Ladasia Riddy, Carlos Saucedo, Blake Stocks and Atheena Swindell.**



Division II winners were, from left: **Allison Gore, first; Gracie Toney, second; and Shane Dorsch, third.**



Division III honorable mentions were, from left: **Zoi Blackwell, Aazizah Lee Bryant, Danielle Mills, Nyasia Singleton, Leondra Smith and James Spurgeon. Not present were Caleb Dingle and Keyona Williams.**

##### "My School"

School is fun.  
You go there to learn.  
I like to read when it's my turn.  
We make lots of crafts in my AIG class  
I like to play Heads Up, Stand Up if we cannot go outside  
My school burned down  
But we are not sad.  
Soon we will have a new school  
And I am so glad.

**Brianna Price**  
*Old Dock Elementary*

##### "A Sweet Day"

I crashed my bike at a tree  
The tree I didn't see.  
I thought I saw a bee!  
I hurt my knee  
When I crashed my bike into the tree  
My dad came out to see  
And checked on me  
And he say my swollen knee.  
Dad helped me to safety  
And that was sweet and lovely.

**Ladasia Riddy**  
*Whiteville Primary*

##### "Computers"

Computers are my favorite thing to do at school,  
There really are a lot to do with all those tools.  
I work on math and reading every day.  
On Waterford, there are so many games to play!  
The music on the computer is really cool  
Oh, I can't wait to get back to school

**Carlos Saucedo**  
*Old Dock Elementary*

##### "Trucks"

Beep! Beep!  
Trucks are big!  
Some trucks can even dig.  
They can be different sizes.  
At truck shows they win prizes.  
Trucks are strong  
Like King Kong!

**Blake Stocks**  
*Old Dock Elementary*

##### "My Cat"

I have a fat cat her name is Lilly  
She loves to play and loves to act silly.  
Lilly likes to run and jump,  
Sometimes she hides behind the tree stump.  
When I got Lilly she was just a kitten  
I was afraid to hold her within my mitten.  
Now she is growing, she's such a big cat  
She eats lots of food and she's getting fat.

**Atheena Swindell**  
*Carolina Adventist Academy*

### Division II Thirds-Fifth grade

#### First Place

##### "My North Carolina Home"

North Carolina is the great-est place to live.  
It has much to offer and so many pleasures to give!  
We're not too far from the beautiful mountain or the sandy beach.  
This is the best state you

will ever want to reach!  
The four seasons here are really out of sight.  
It's never too hot or too cold, but always just right!  
Our state tree is the tall Southern Pine  
And our state flower is the Dogwood, which smells so fine!  
Our bright, red cardinal sits high up in the tree  
And looks down at all the wonderful sights to see.  
The Wright Brothers came here to fly their plane  
"First in Flight" – we will always remain.  
We are well-known for our delicious Bar-B-Cue  
And a tasty like drink called Pepsi Cola too!  
North Carolina is the place I will always call my home.  
I will never have any reason to ever want to roam!

**Allison Gore**  
*Williams Township*

#### Second Place

##### "Simply Unique"

I am a mouth that doesn't smile,  
Asleep but never dream.  
A crystal that shines in the night  
Yet rich I'll never be.  
I am a very caring person  
But you would not know for sure,  
Maybe if you met me  
You would know a little more.  
I am a daisy in a bed of clovers,  
I am thorns plucked off of roses.  
I know who I am I'm just



Division I winners were, from left: **Diyanna Mills, first; Farrah Meares, second; and Kinsey Reaves, third.**



Division II honorable mentions were, from left: **Ashlyn Buck, Ethan Dorsch, Hollee Garren, Demarriah Gibson, Makiyah Johnson, Jaelyn Kinlaw, Haley Anne McPherson, Anna-Grace Phillips, Carea Singletary and Lawson Ward. Not present were Riley Grice, Scarlett Hilbourn, John Penny and Yaquelin Pineda.**



Division III winners were, from left: **Sealey Scott, first; Grace Ann Wooten, second; and Shannon Flaherty, third.**



Division IV honorees were, from left: **Patrick Stewart, third; Reah Sellers, first; and Sidera Blackwell, honorable mention. Second-place winner Nyasia Baity was not present. Also not present were honorable mentions Charlotte Gore, Madison Hardee, Mary Grayson Koonce, Meghan Lee and Carson Ransom.**

like me  
And I'm living a life truly free.  
People look are me and think  
I'm just like everyone else,  
All I am like is me and myself  
... Simply Unique

**Gracie Toney**  
*Acme-Delco Elementary*

#### Third Place

##### "The Cycle"

There's the earthworm eating lunch.  
He does not know he is in a crunch.  
When he's dug up form the ground,  
And placed inside something round.  
The worm does not know his fate,  
That it's being used for bait.  
The fisherman places him on a hook,

And casts it in the brook.  
With that he catches a fish,  
The man prepares it and puts it on a dish.  
The fish is eaten and turns to waste.  
In the ground it is placed.  
There a earthworm begins to dine,  
And he thinks he is fine.  
So the cycle begins again.  
Round and round it will never end.

**Shane Dorsch**  
*Old Dock Elementary*

#### Honorable Mentions

##### "Opposites Make Great Friends"

Two girls – totally different  
Yet perfect for each other.  
One short – the other tall.  
One eats candy – the other greens.  
One has a nephew – the other does not.

*Continued on page 5-C*

# Ammons

*Continued from page 1-C*

One is outspoken – the other really quiet.

One likes puppies – the other kittens.

When they get together all difference disappear.

Both working together as a team

Giggling at everything, Spending days in the park while the sun is high in the sky.

Blond sweaty hair but they don't mind.

Running and playing without a care.

Sleeping over – or talking overnight while the moon glows

Even the man in the moon smiles down on their friendship.

Two inseparable different opposite faithful friends.

**Ashley Buck**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “Duck Hunting”

Duck hunting is cool. It is way better than school.

The ducks fly by. I knock them out of the sky.

You duck hunt at dusk. They have feathers, but no tusk.

I blow my calls And the ducks start to fall.

I see the ducks look my way. I believe they found my decoys today.

Ducks take off for their morning flight

I try to keep them in my sight

**Ethan Dorsch**

*Old Dock Elementary*

## “God’s Brave Men”

God commanded Noah to build an ark

Strong enough to float untold days and nights.

Friends and foe laughed making fun of him

Working without wavering Noah finished just as the rains set in.

Families and animals walked aboard two by two.

Saved because of one of God’s great men.

Unafraid Moses stood up to Pharaoh

Sharing the message to let His people go.

Slaves no more – they were headed for the Promised Land.

Pharaoh made promises one more time –

Enough punishment, Pharaoh had enough

Moses led the Israelites towards the God’s Promised Land.

David was the youngest of eight

Yet God chose a young shepherd boy

To tame the giant Goliath

Without a doubt David believed God would be with him in flight

Here came the powerful giant of a man

Face to face with small David armed with only a sling shot and pebble.

Others laughed at his foolishness

David knew the power of God and shot Goliath between the eyes.

In the eyes of man three men won impossible duels.

Three brave men know their power came from God.

**Hollee Garren**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “Promise: I Got Your Back”

Anytime you need me friend

I got your back. You got mine!

I’ll help you out anytime. To see you hurt – to see you cry...

Just makes me join you and together we’ll weep a river of tears.

If our friendship should die I would mourn.

Can we agree to never fight? But just in case please remember it wouldn’t matter who’s wrong or right,

True friendship last for an eternity!

If you’re broken heart needs to mend

I’ll be right there to the very end.

Hand-in-hand love is sent and

We’ll talk until the sun shines for you again.

I got your back. You got mine!

We will always be the best of friends!

**Demarriah Gibson**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “Charlie”

Our dog Charlie is going to be mine

But that little dog is one of a kind

He is still little he’s like a child

But that pup has gone wild Charlie loves to play

But he gives me a fright Cause that pup likes to bite

All I have to say for the rest of the day

Is I love that put will all my heart

I hope we are never apart

**Riley Grice**

*Old Dock Elementary*

## “My Little Dog”

My little dog is such a good friend

She stays right by my side If she’s not in her pen

We can run around all day long

Or I can push her in a stroller

While I sing here a song I can hold her in my lap

Until she goes to sleep Or I can drive her all around

In my big toy jeep And if a cat comes around

She might give it a chase And that’s something really funny

To watch them two race So as you can tell

We have a good time And it doesn’t cost me not worries

Not even a dime!

**Scarlet Hilbourn**

*Old Dock Elementary*

## “What? A Golden Star”

Once, during a cold winter night,

A wee running girl fell on the frosty ground.

Rolling over she stared at a beautiful sight!

A bright starry twinkly sight blanked her with delight!

Unreachable – but still not far

One single golden star appeared

Outshining them all. Silvery twinkly trinkets all seemed to dull.

One golden star – all others forgotten.

Her hands stretched out to hold it close.

A bright neon moon White and cold and fair

Filled with magic was the air.

Even the man living there smiled

As he saw the wonderment. With magical fairies dancing in her head

Tired eyes...slowly drooping

Deep in sleep! Where did you go? I wish I knew!

**Makiyah Johnson**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “Perfect Gymnastics”

I have a huge desire – to stretch, run, tumble, land feet in place!

Flexibility, durability, likeability or is it lackability?

Practice, practice, practice again and again

Until it’s nothing less than perfect....

Perfect posture, perfect form, perfect timing

Just when I think it is perfect

A voice from behind says “Do it again!”

I really am really tired and want to rest,

Then a small voice reminds me we, in gymnastics never give in until it’s perfect!

East as pie – no indeed!

‘why do we do it?’ you ask. Because we believe nothing is impossible

Love it and want to be perfect!

**Jaelyn Kinlaw**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “True Friends”

Once we sat side-by-side in a kindergarten classroom

Learning colors, how to count, constantly chattering

Until our teachers kept whispering sh.....sh.....sh.....sh.

First grade – wee were best friends.

Learning to reading was a blast!

Big books, little books, computers,

Side by side..... Outside running and playing.

Second grade – together again.

Writing looping letters – Cursive writing – practice, practice, practice...

Will we ever get it rite? Numbers – ones, tens, hun-

dreds, thousands....

We only need the two of us! Third grade – here we are again!

Work hard for the EOG? EOG – or is it EGG?

No! Reading, Math End of Grade or end of life?

Together we made it! Fourth grade – school work got hard!

You were always by my side Willing to coach and talk.

Taking time – explaining, holding up cards

Until I learned. Fifth grade – everything changed!

You are not here! You left for another school.

Sadness – misty teared eyes.

Phone calls, email, snap chat, facebook

Letters delivered from your school to mine.

Now I know! Although the distance between

Us are miles away We have brought each other Smiles and memories

That will never go away!

**Haley Anne McPherson**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “I Am”

I am Tom Brady. I wonder about all the rules of football.

I hear the sounds of the crowd. I see the defense play.

I want to be the best in the league.

I am Tom Brady. I pretend to be the coach. I feel very special.

I touch and throw footballs every day.

I worry about losing the Super Bowl.

I am Tom Brady. I understand the game I say, “Let us win!”

I dream about our games. I try to be the best.

I hope to win a 5th Super Bowl.

I am Tom Brady.

**John Penny**

*Hallsboro-Artesia Elementary*

## “I Am a Competitive Dancer”

I am a competitive dancer. I wonder how my dance friends and I will do at competition

I hear our feet making the right sounds at practice

I see us on the stage in front of everyone giving it our all

I want to win our competitions

I am a competitive dancer I pretend like no one is watching when I dance

I feel free when I move I touch my toes to the ground

I worry that we will not win I cry when I can’t get the moves just right

I am a competitive dancer I understand that winning is not everything

I say that we are already winners because we are a team

I dream that we will always dance together

I try to do my best at every practice

I hope that I never give up and quit

I am a competitive dancer

**Anna-Grace Phillips**

*Williams Township*

## “Christmas”

The twelfth month of every year turns a bleak winter

Into magical experiences. Bright lights spring up – first

from one house then another Spreading sparkles of white,

red, green, blue and yellow Magically appear each night.

Trees both large and small take over rooms

In every house. No need for overhead lights.

Each tree is carefully decorated with beauty and light.

Dreary tired faces change from frowns

To smiling crowns spanning ear-to-ear.

Grumpy men turn into gentle teddy bears.

Mothers become firm threatening not to buy presents,

Loud children squeal in ever tiny store and mall.

Families planning both day and night

How to have a perfect December 25th

Families gather laughing all the while

Sharing memories of days gone by. But none can compare to this one special day!

**Yaquelin Pineda**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “Unseen Protectors”

Angelic Angels flutter their wings to the rhythm of heavenly music

Peering down from heavens to give strength to those in need.

Angels help us feel peacefulness, happiness and love.

In desperate times angels give us courage to open our eyes...

To face yet another day... handling both the good and bad.

Angels are present in the lonely darkness of night.

When in need – silently... without being seen,

Angels surround us with their snow white wings

Surrounding us tightly with their gentle arms

Rocking us peacefully until pain turns to softness

Leaving our minds flooding with serene happy dreams.

**Carea Singletary**

*Guideway Elementary*

## “Hot Dogs”

I love hot dogs so very much,

I would eat them every day for dinner, breakfast and lunch.

But not just any hot dog will do,

No one can make them up as good as guess who?

The best place to get a hot dog is at Wards Grill,

Nobody cooks them up like Mr. Junior McKeel.

They are the best ones you will ever eat.

And Ms. Kandle has them bagged before you can even blink.

First thing Saturday morning, if you want to find me,

You’ll find me and my dad at 706 South Madison Street.

**Lawson Ward**

*Old Dock Elementary*

# Division III Sixth-Eighth Grade

## First Place

### “Seasons”

White blankets the earth Animals are in deep sleep

All are bundled up. The tulip tree buds

Pollen tingles in my nose Bees buzz by my face.

Hot sunlight beams down Sunflowers bloom in the fields

Summer burns my cheeks. Bright green turns to brown

Red leaves come flitting down and

The cycle repeats.

**Sealey Scott**

*Central Middle*

## Second Place

### “An Ode to Harriet Tubman”

Harriet Tubman so tired and true,

Not everyone could be like Moses or you.

Born into slavery at birth, Her destiny was to harvest the earth.

A child sadly struck with an iron weight,

Visions from God would determine her fate.

Herself and her unyielding bravery,

Freed from a terrible life of slavery.

On the Underground Railroad did she lead,

So that 300 others like her would be freed.

The Civil War did arise, Her titles were soldier, nurse and one of many spies.

A public speaker whose passion was equality,

Two husbands but no children had she.

A home so dear to her heart did she found,

For the sick and needy Blacks that did abound.

In 1913, at age 93 Pneumonia took her to be with God in eternity.

She stood for a life of civil rights,

And spent her time helping other win their fights.

**Grace Ann Wooten**

*Central Middle*

## Third Place

### “Before Dawn”

Slowly reaching, covering everything

In the shadowy depths, Moving across the landscape.

Above in a sky full of stars,

the moon

Is nestled as if it was calling

Out to every hidden shadow That moves slowly among

the Whispering trees.

This is the sonata of Chirping crickets, the sound of a

# Ammons

*Continued from page 5-C*

Beauty is what lies within your heart, not what's in your hands.

Beauty isn't about having perfection, its about having imperfection, Beauty is about knowing that you can.

Beauty is about being yourself.

**Keyona Williams**  
*Central Middle*

## Division IV Ninth-12th Grade

### First Place

#### “Motions”

Walking containers of blood and water  
Caught up in the day to day  
Hustling here, bustling there

Clattering into cellphones  
Frantically meeting dead-  
lines and processing papers  
Note-taking in meetings  
Days mapped out  
Repetitive schedules  
Running on familiarity  
Never seeing  
The people they meet  
The flowers they pass  
The signs on the street  
The cracks at their feet  
The setting sun  
Never hearing  
The voices that speak  
The rush of a river  
The chirping of birds  
The honking of horns  
The laughter that rings out  
Going through the motions  
Ensnared by the aspects of their life  
Oblivious to the beauty of the world.

**Reah Sellers**  
*Columbus Career & College Academy*

### Second Place

#### “Black Face, White Space”

Black people were never allowed in a shite space

Always told they were in the wrong place

They would say “no, not you, not your race.”

We told them they were racist

They said we were holding onto the past,

Black Face, White Space  
So we made our own space

To celebrate our culture and our race

They wanted to join but we said “no, not this place.”

They called us racist, said we were mean

But didn't we say the same thing?

Black Face, White Space  
Black face not allowed in a white space

Everyone says its okay  
But white face not allowed in a black space

Everyone says it's not okay  
Will black face ever by allowed in black space

Without white face wanting to invade and take our ways

I say yes  
And it starts today

Black Face, Black Space

**Nyasia Baity**  
*South Columbus High*

### Third Place

#### “79”

The smell of a freshly cut green.

A look of perfection like I have never seen.

The last time my game fell apart.

This time I will play it smart.  
I place my ball on the tee.

On this course I feel so free.  
My practice swing feels just right.

I am going to hit it with all my might.

I keep my eye on the ball.  
To hit it well I must give my all.

I hear the driver cut the air.  
I watch the ball travel with an intense stare.

Floating lightly through the sky,  
It's out of sight it went so high.

The ball lands quickly near the hole.

I am yelling loudly “Roll ball roll.”

I am a few feet short so I will putt this time.

If I don't make this it should be a crime.

A birdie is what I am aiming for.

My lack of confidence I can't ignore.

With my putter in hand I line up the hole.

Under par has become my greatest goal.

I made it in the hole this time.  
My next goal will be to shoot 79!

**Paxton Stewart**  
*South Columbus High*

### Honorable Mentions

#### “Wildfire”

Storm clouds rolling,  
Wind blowing,  
Trees swaying,  
Horses running.  
Lightning striking,  
Hooves hitting,  
Dust swallowing,  
Fire starting.  
Running through smoke,  
Breathing heavy,  
Sweating increasing,  
Vision clouding.  
Trees falling,  
Animals running'  
Wildfire spreading.  
Jumping over trees,  
Starting to breathe,  
See the end of life,  
Don't know if I will die.  
I made it out alive,  
With smoke in my mane,  
And dust in my eye.  
God always has shown the light.

**Sidera Blackwell**  
*Columbus Christian Academy*

#### “Spiders”

I see him crawling,  
Crawling towards me.  
When I turn on the light  
I now that he will flee.  
His legs are very hairy,  
Too hairy for my taste.  
But to me what's really scary,  
Is how fast he keeps his pace.  
My fear of him is grand  
And I know he feels the same.  
I tower over him  
But he still wins this game.

**Charlotte Gore**  
*South Columbus High*

#### “A Haiku on Life”

Life is meaningless  
At least that's what some would say  
Others find meaning  
But what does life mean?  
Means today and tomorrow  
Look forward to now  
Life for tomorrow  
Tomorrow isn't granted  
So live anyway

**Madison Hardee**  
*South Columbus High*

#### “I Live for the Beautiful Things in Life”

I live for  
The sparkle in someone's eye.  
I live for  
The warmth of a hug.  
I live for  
The moments of uncontrollable laughter.  
I live for  
The coziness of the indoors on a snowy day.  
I live for  
The smell of coffee when you wake in the morning.  
I live for  
The goose bumps that raise from your skin when you experience something beautiful.  
I live for  
The days when you learn new things about yourself.  
I live for  
The look in my other's eye when I make her proud.  
I live for  
The moment when you read a book that changes your perspective on life.  
I live for  
The changing colors of the sky.

I live for  
The unsaid notion of a piece of art.  
I live for  
The endless destinations and sights in the world.  
I live for  
The melodies that fill your soul to the rim.  
I live for  
The feeling of doing something good in the world.  
I live for  
The sense of belonging somewhere.  
I live for  
The feeling of a family.  
I live for  
The miracles that make you believe in something.  
I live for  
The compassion in a person's heart.  
I live for  
The raw late night conversations.  
I live for  
The crinkles in someone's eyes as they smile.  
I live for  
The honesty in someone's voice when they say “I love you.”

I live for'  
The moments you can't put into words.  
I live for  
The good in this world.

**Mary Grayson Coonce**  
*South Columbus High*

#### “Three”

The youngest of three girls  
Mama's eyeball, daddy's world  
Brown eyes, curly hair, dimples  
In their baby, it's that simple  
Two sisters above me, no one below me  
I get my way as you can see  
It's the bet of the best being the baby of three.

**Meghan Lee**  
*South Columbus High*

#### “The final shot”

Down by two with 10 seconds left in the game  
Imagine the things going on in my brain  
Our best player dribbles up the court  
For us this is not just a sport  
He drives around a defender or two  
Then passes the ball you know who  
I was a few feet behind the three point line  
With all the space but little time  
As the clock struck one  
I threw up a shot  
As the ball traveled, I let out a cry  
For if I missed I would surely die  
The ball smacked the backboard  
I was sure that I missed  
But it falls in we go up by one  
And I can't believe that we just won  
I beat the buzzer and won us the game  
Imagine the things going on in my brain

**Carson Ransom**  
*South Columbus High*

## Division V College Division

### First Place

#### “Poetry Manifesto”

“What does a poem do?” my college English professor asks although he already knows there is no answer to this question, which will satisfy anyone in the classroom, I could tell him that according to the dictionary, poetry uses aesthetic and rhythmic qualities to evoke meaning in place of (and now I quote) the prosaic ostensible meaning.  
And the reminder that it does no good to try and torture the poem—  
It will not tell me what it does not matter how many times I beat it with a hose.  
Maybe I should tell my English professor that poetry does nothing  
But even Doctor Why on YahooAnswers insists that poetry  
Is art and that art communicates.  
So I asked my grandma last night (and she's an English Lit major)  
What a poem does and she told me  
A story about her mother with golden hair turned grey riding bareback  
On her favorite mare through the Mennonite meadows in Iowa—  
How even after she lost her mind she could always find her way home.

**Katherine Gomulkiewicz**  
*Davidson College*

### Second Place

#### “The Upside Down Hour Glass”

How do you begin to write about the ending of a life?  
Do you break the lines to match your heart?  
Or do you find serenity in writing lines iambically?  
Maybe you quote a line of Keats  
or Donne. Or is that overdone?  
Tell me, ancient bard, how would you start to explain the woes of a complicated heart?  
Dickinson wouldn't hold back—she'd start right—out—and say what she was thinking about—because she could not stop for, well, you know. So it doesn't really matter to her.  
He is dead. Nothing more.  
Frost believes that “would suffice.” But he'd throw in a birch tree, covered in snow, to mimic the

way your organs iced over when someone sat down and told you your father is dead.

He will not come back. Poe might suggest a haunting or reincarnation through another dead body, but all are futile. There is no raven rapping at my door: Just a pigeon.  
The man left us years ago. (four to be exact) Ran from responsibility and family. From all he had left so was this his goodbye? Or is it now?

“So do our minutes hasten to their end.” Yes, Shakespeare, but what do you do when your werewolf of a father transforms from a neglectful narcissist to dust? To nothing? What do you do when you learn you had no chance to say goodbye, and you realize that you can't say for certain if (given the opportunity) you would have take it?

Cigars and 60's music. Picking up pine cones in the brittle snap of winter. Admiration for Jesus and George Washington, the only two men worthy of your time. These are the things you gave me. What will I do with them now?  
I've read all these books and they are supposed to help you with stuff like this but they don't have all the answers and now I don't know where to look because that's where

I went when the world on the outside didn't make any sense and now the inside doesn't either. And I'm lost, Odysseus, help me get home.  
Get me off of Circe's island! I know you struggled with your daddy, too, Sylvia and mine also “died before I had time,” but I don't think I'm through, Like you.

You made me question whether any of this is worth it anymore. All pain, too much of it. Where can I find my old paradise, John? Where did you hide it? My more pleasant thoughts.

I know I will be fine but sometimes it's hard when Donne tells you not to ask for whom the bell tolls because it tolls for you, and usually you disregard him but this time it rings for someone you actually know, and you have to listen.  
How long does it take for indifference to become acceptable? I didn't receive that floating phone call, the one where you learn you have less than 24 hours 'til time escapes you and him and everything stops and you can't move your legs because they don't belong to you anymore.  
if I could rest my elbow on his guard rail and lean over to count the wrinkles on his face—one doesn't recognize mine—am I a bad person if for several unexplainable reasons, I wouldn't feel anything?

**Katie D. Bennett**  
*Davidson College*

### Third Place

#### “When They Came”

they brought the fire  
panting heat that coughed, sputtered  
drank up bricks  
licked up by street and chewed it  
like it was bubble gum  
that ball players spit on the sidewalk  
they brought the rain—water where it should not be  
cups from cupboards floating down the barren street  
castaways on the side and grandma holding our baby blankets over her head

they brought the storm with their big sticks that smacked the earth  
the cracks of guns like

thunder  
that shattering windows that glinted  
with their flames—like lightning  
had abandoned its home and fled  
like a refugee to my door they brought the calm—wet doormats, burnt grass in patches around my scarred feet  
plastic wrap hanging over smashed windows  
Grandma's blankets on the ground  
her with them, kneeling and crying over someone I do not know  
they brought the sunshine and told us they would fix up this town  
real nice with new paint and curtains  
and no rust or broken faucets  
new shoes for our feet—our feet that started bleeding

when the fire came they brought the night stamping out their well-being with guns  
onto the ground where our gardens used to grow  
spitting into the baked grass  
walking through my street that they broke into pieces with one fist smashed into the sky—  
and then that sky is falling around them  
like confetti at their homecoming celebration  
while under the tarp tent, I sit with grandma and the one blanket she saved from the storm they brought the red morning  
when grandma tells me to cover my eyes  
and not look at my town, which is splintered like a broken stick that someone tossed into the river  
and forgot  
but I look through my fingers  
and watch the wind ripple through  
a white flag, made from a pillowcase—  
the only thing standing on my empty street—my street that is silent and broken  
because they brought the war  
and left it here, dropping it like a ball  
in our hands

**Brooke Belcher**  
*East Carolina University*

### Honorable Mention

#### “Lawson”

Still, Grandpa rocks in that brown recliner  
as kerosene heat crawls through  
the brick house, outdated, but to him, it works just the same.  
Outside his window, the old, uneven sidewalk creeps around the porch, leading to the junky pickup truck  
that he refuses to let us sell to the yard.  
Rocking back and forth, he sits content amongst the bricks  
that he laid by hand the summer of '60,  
Grandma keeping him cool with sweet tea  
and the promise of a Jr.

**Heaven Clark**  
*UNC Chapel Hill*

#### “This is Paris”

the city that saw the bloody head of Marie Antionette severed by the rusty knife of idealism. Days after her flight from Versailles—silk nightgown hiked up revealing her delicate pink legs.  
I almost pity her—a bride at 14 in pink taffeta trembling  
frosted cake crumbs falling from painted lips, I imagine.  
And now rolling her slender neck  
in some basement made of rotting oak beams  
with maggot bread crumbs to gnaw on.  
No, that is too dramatic. Marie Antionette, what were your last thoughts as you rested your pearl stranded neck against the cold block?  
I wander the now wide city streets  
and can still smell the

stench of the Seine cutting through the smell of the croissants and cakes baked fresh at the local café.

**Katherine Gomulkiewicz**  
*Davidson College*

#### “Grandpa's Leg”

1.  
A pale, crooked, cross-shaped scar marked the rounded stump where his left calf, dark with varicose veins, blue bruises and liver spots, once swung from the knee. Diabetes, was it? Infection? Arteries clogged with hog fat, too much steak, lard, whiskey?  
2.  
The recip saw buzzed through the bone like PVC, serrated blade chewing its marrow while he slept, anesthetized, as if he'd just finished a Maker's Mark and cola, home after piloting a red-eye from Denver to Montgomery.  
At peace. A piece of himself lobbed off, tabled, and wheeled to chippers or crematoria, cartilage and ligaments fried or pulverized, ash or pulp. Pickled in a jar, put on ice, shipped to Johns Hopkins, interns with lancets prodding it for a grade. Or bagged and dumped with other limbs of different lengths, colors, creeds, and maladies, each hunk tallied inside a thick file of medical history.  
3.  
Detached from Grandpa, the prosthetic is nothing but a rod, a titanium peg leg flexing at a creaking artificial joint.  
Linked to him, its hard metal juts from his sagging thigh, Yet it's his leg, fleshless, bloodless, as much him as his ruddy arms pricking with silver hair; as much him as I am who, as a child, would search the house for the lost leg, hunkering under tables, checking broom closets, until I found it underneath the bed, and then returned it to him, resting on the couch, unaware it had disappeared.

**Jackson Hall**  
*UNC Chapel Hill*

#### “Postcards and snapshots”

My sister was always an unassuming hipster;  
The selfie queen  
Before it was cool.  
She had to have the most glamorous shots,  
The Eiffel Tower despite the piss,  
the favela despite the danger,  
Pagodas swarmed by poor Thai children  
littering the streets; Times Square despite the clamor of the shuttering and shoving of others  
Trying to get the same shot.  
While she took snapshots to brag on times of fun  
I took postcards of what the tour would never show:  
There's always a man. There's always a lighthouse. There's always a city.  
And the underlying element of reality in back alleys behind all those pretty advertisement spots.  
That was clear when my eyes caught that dead shriveled carcass of a man torn apart by dogs reminding me or the statue-like gold lions in the Iraqi palace my father saw  
people blown to wine-maroon bits  
to be feasted upon by cameras and the baking desert sun.  
I refused to be a featurette in such cruelty so my photos were always bare, devoid of life, people, rendered callously. Just ordinary in kind,  
Sea cliffs of stillness, Street signs that never Moved.  
We captured how banally exotic the world is  
No matter if it's Bangkok or Baltimore, Paris or Portsmouth, Tokyo or Tampa, Sydney or Shreveport.  
So we both missed the point of photography:  
Even though cameras are supposed to capture Everything they portray they miss points  
Of what's really going on.

**dCaitlin Peterson**  
*UNC Chapel Hill*