

# Eclectic Soup

A Collection of Creativity <sup>no on</sup>

2010-2011





# SONA

A COLLECTION  
OF

2010-2011

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*A Collection of Creativity*

2010-2011



ELECTRIC

**SOUP**

A COLLECTION OF CREATIVITY

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*A collection of*

*creativity*

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# *Eclectic*

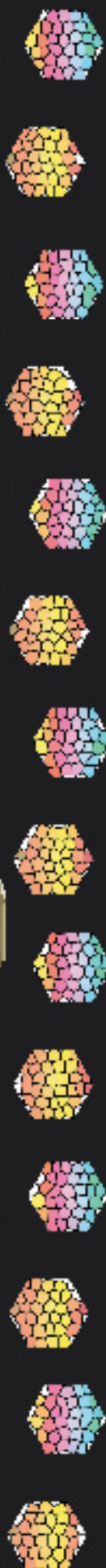


*A Collection of Creativity*

*2010-2011*



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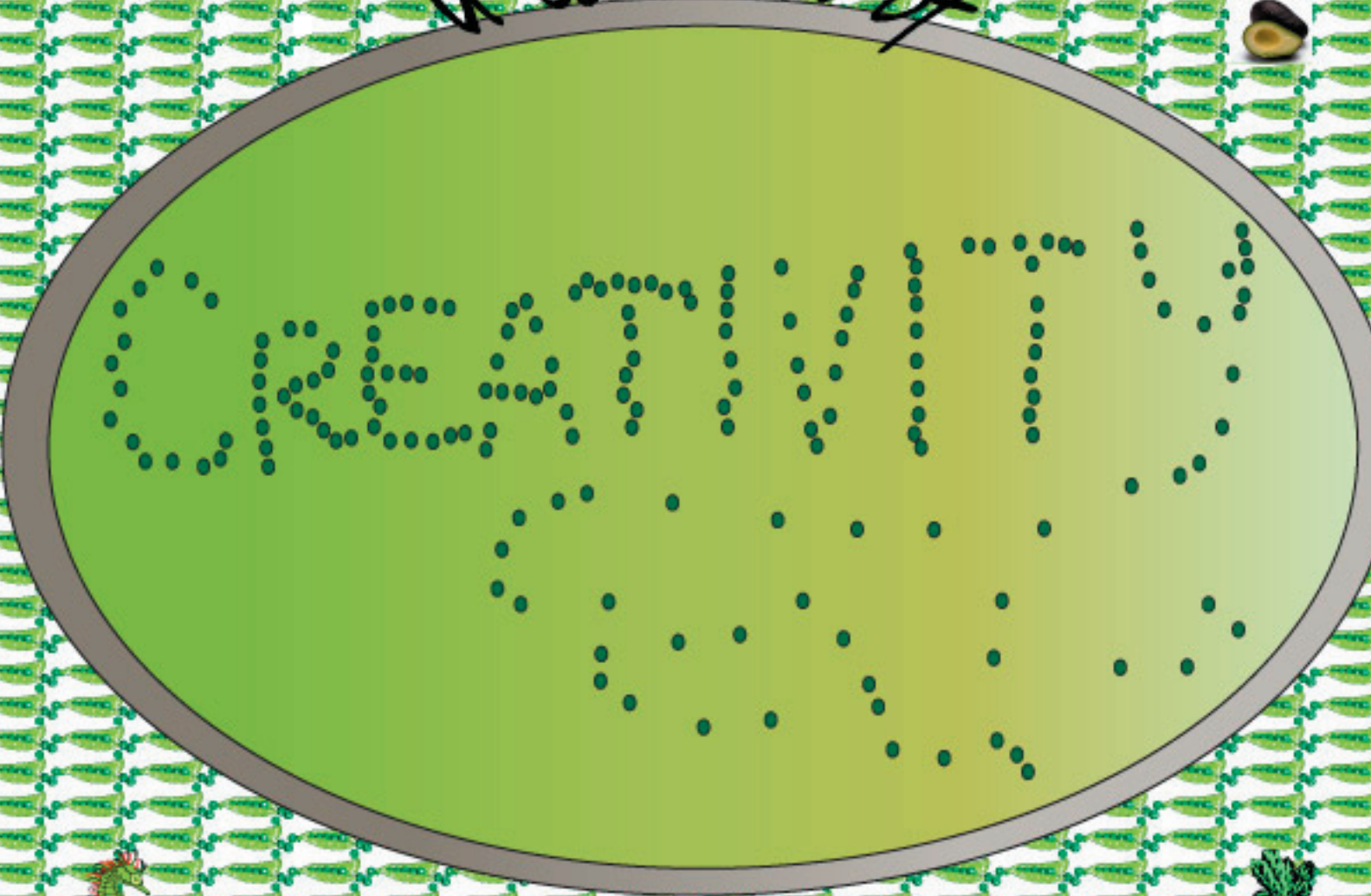




# ELECTRIC

# FOIP

*a collection of*



2010

-2011



# Have You Been Drinking?

By Lexie Kukuk

“Have you boys been drinking?” The words had stunned the four men in the car as their gazes met where the guard’s eyes were fixated: the empty beer cans in the back seat.

Michael Kane had just completed boot camp for the Marine Corp. He was in his final steps of schooling with some of his old friends from Elmhurst—the town they all grew up in causing normal boy chaos. Kane and his two friends had the weekend off (what they called ‘leave’) and decided to go to Oceanside—a city in San Diego—to do their laundry. Or so they thought.

With their duffle bags in hand as they strolled down the street, Kane heard a whistle. He turned to see another friend, Bob, driving up in a red convertible.

“As soon as we saw him, we knew we weren’t going to just do our laundry.” He laughs.

They spent the night in the town, observing the beach and enjoying themselves.

“This was a time where drinking and driving wasn’t as frowned upon. And that’s exactly what we did. But with Bob half lit, I was left to drive the car” he says with a smirk.

Kane had never been on the roads before (and his lack of judgment wasn’t helping him much either) as he was trying to get them back to Bob’s house on base. He accelerated the convertible up to ninety miles per hour as he was approaching a curve trying to make it back to Camp Pendleton. Why was he going so fast? He simply says, “Not only was I not thinking clearly, but I had to go fast. I was in a convertible.”

As soon as he turned the corner he saw what was waiting for him. There 20 feet away was the military post with three guards lined across it waiting to check ID’s.

“I slammed on the breaks so hard. I was practically standing up on them,” he says.

After the smoke cleared, or so how he puts it with a chuckle, the guards asked them to pull over when they saw the beer cans and cooler.

They were taken into the main office being constantly reminded about how much trouble they were in.

The guards called everyone: the superiors, bosses, and the master sergeant or the head of military police. They were told that they were in jeopardy of losing a stripe, being demoted, and being fined. Big time.

Kane asked if he could run to the restroom quick. Not knowing what would happen, they told him to go out back and around the corner.

“When I got outside, I booked it to the car. I launched every single can over the railroad tracks to my right as far as I could. When I got back inside, I gave my friends a wink.”

His friends, still wrapped up in the moment, didn’t understand why he winked at them. When the master sergeant arrived, they all went outside to take a look at the car. Kane couldn’t tell his friends about what he did. They all stared at each other breathless. *This is it* was the only thought in their heads.

Absolutely nothing. The car was completely empty. The guards and his friend’s jaws dropped. “Where the hell is it all?” Kane says the guards stuttered.

The master sergeant faced the guards. “Let them go, we have no evidence,” Kane says.

“We got a little reprimanding, but nothing too serious. I got away that time, but I never did it again. I knew I would *never* get that lucky in a million years,” he says as he shakes his head.

Lyndsey Cross



# Picture Day

By Dan Schmidt

**D**iane Schmidt. She's a 51 year-old special education teacher, a flower and travel lover, and a yoga fanatic. More importantly, she's my mother.

Throughout my life I've heard thousands of stories from my dad. Every hunting and fishing trip, every long drive, and every boring night at home, it is crazy stories from high school and college and stories about the dumb things him and his sister did. But no stories from Mom. She's told me how it was vacation after vacation growing up and a lot of gymnastics and *tantalizing* synchronized swimming. But never a full story. Never something crazy and unique.

Sitting down to interview her I was ecstatic. Ready to hear a story. Ready to hear something to top Dad. But what's the first thing I get?

"You know I don't have any good stories right? Everything I've got is kind of boring," she said.

Fantastic. There goes my plan.

I went on anyways. Question after question I got nothing. Boring memories and generic things everyone else says. I ask about all of her trips she took with her family, her gymnastics experiences, and the *excitement* of synchronized swimming. Still nothing. Finally, I got something. I got pictures.

She began telling stories of her horrible history with pictures. In third grade she took a school picture

with her eyes half closed and looked like a complete idiot. Her mom didn't know there was such a thing as "re-takes" and instead of getting a new one, the picture was put in the yearbook, mass copied, and handed out to friends and family.

"It was horrible. She just handed them out and told me, oh well, you'll have a better one next year."

When she was 13 she went on her first plane ride and apparently this was a big deal for her parents and they made her dress up. Unfortunately she had made the mistake of letting her older sister cut her hair, who by the way was still learning how to do so. The end result was too short of a haircut and horrible pictures.

Senior pictures brought misery as well.

"Oh God. Those were terrible," she said.

My mom wore huge glasses throughout high school. While taking the pictures she had to deal with keeping them up. She spent every second pushing them back up her nose, trying to keep them from falling. When the pictures were done, there were no good ones. In the only remotely decent one, she had forgotten to push her glasses back up and they were almost falling off her nose.

"My parents didn't want to pay for more proofs, or to take more pictures, so I was stuck with what I had. I ended up picking this one where I was doing this stupid over-the-shoulder look. It was horrible."

Then in college, my mom had what could've



been a breakthrough in her pictures. Her freshman year every student that lived in her dorm had their picture put up in the hall. She ended up getting voted as the Olivia Newton John look-a-like (who played Sandy in the movie *Grease*). But not even this was considered good for my mom.

“It was probably just a pick-up line for all the guys,” she said.

Even for the granddaddy of them all she couldn't get a good picture. Her wedding. My parents' photographer made them do a pose where they were pretending to be leaving the reception with an awkward, fake waving good-bye as the “just married” couple. It turned out horrible and the two of them looked and felt stupid.

“I loathe pictures.”

## *Into the Mind of a Scholar*

*By David Eggert*

Walking through the streets throughout Madison, Wisconsin, Mike Eggert is just the same as all the other business students striving to make a life out of what he has. Unlike the others, Michael spends more time in the library than out of it. Unlike others, Mike won a competition to go to Arizona and represent the University of Madison in a National competition.

Again, unlike others, Mike was 1 out of 2 chosen from a group of over 500 students to study abroad on a scholarship to Copenhagen, Denmark. What drives this young man to be better than others? When asked about it, Mike responded with an answer “What's the point of doing something if you aren't going to try?” One man with a dream and actual intentions of doing them. Michael Eggert.

This wouldn't be the first time Michael

traveled to Europe. When he was 14 he was surprised by his grandparents with a once in a lifetime chance to travel to his Father's hometown. He spent a month in Germany traveling up the Alps and on through the oldest castles. He described it as one word, “unbelievable”. Ever since the experience, Michael has been haunted of dreams made up of three things: sailing, football, and reliving the experience of a foreign land. Mike took advantage of these dreams and overcame all three of them. Not only is he involved in all of them but he is getting one for free. In the summer of 2009, Mike became involved in a sailing club and excelled to the point of getting his own license to sail.

As for football, Michael took a route only the truly courageous can go. Rugby. The most brutal sport known to man was now taking over the mind of my older brother. Within the first month of the new game, he was the talk of the team, being considered to being brought up to the varsity team of Madison. Unfortunately, Mike's journey of rugby ended in a hurry after he got a concussion after his fourth game at the higher level.

“The most important of all dreams was to travel to a foreign land” said Mike when asked about what he dreamt most of. Mike set fourth and applied to study abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark. Without even the thought of having a chance to study in Europe, Mike was called and asked to accompany 400 other applicants for an interview. Like all others Mike had to wait in line for his interview. I asked Mike if he was nervous while he saw other people coming out from the questioning. All he could say was “After watching the faces and responses coming out of that room, I didn't want to take a step closer to that door.” After the interview Mike was not worried at all he said “I just felt so natural with the interviewers, we joked around. I don't realize what everyone was stressing about.” Michael was called right away for a second interview of only 50 applicants.

This was a bigger challenge than before and as expected there were tougher questions. What he had never expected was to wrestle one of the interviewers. Yes, he took the interviewer down for the count within the first minute. The room erupted with laughter and everyone gave the man crap for challenging my brother. He told me “the man challenged me and I took a jump at it. I wasn't going to let him beat me.” Well his strategy worked. Out of hundreds of applicants there really was no one better.



# Imagine

By Simone Van As

Imagine, lying in bed, not being able to move anything but your head. Imagine, being the only person in the whole world not able to kill yourself even though you desperately wanted to.

As stated in the article, “euthanasia” better known as the mercy killing, has become a big debate all around the world. Euthanasia is taking the life of the hopeless, ill and injured individuals in order to end his/her suffering. Euthanasia has become a huge debate about whether it should be legalized or if it’s wrong. Some say euthanasia is like murder you are going against someone’s mercy and taking away their life while others say that euthanasia is taking away the pain and suffering.

Euthanasia should be a legalized drug. If someone is dying a painful death and suffering, it is harder for them and their families, but if someone dies peacefully, it is better for them as well as their family to know that their loved one is in peace. Although euthanasia goes against many religions, it is also said that one should be taken by god peacefully and at ease.

Euthanasia should become legalized not to the public but to the government and to certified doctors. A certified doctor should be able to give someone this injection to let them end their lives if and only if it is agreed with by both the family and patient. This drug should be legal if someone is suffering or if someone is paralyzed and has nowhere to go with their lives.

An example would be a young 23 year old man, who was a dedicated rugby player, with a bright future living his dream. When in a split second all of his dreams were cruelly taken away when he broke his neck in a brutal challenge tackle. This young man became so depressed and couldn’t face life anymore; he then decided to take his life with the blessing of his parents and doctors through euthanasia.

A 23 year old man, lies paralyzed in bed since he was 3 years old not being able to do anything. A man who desperately wants to die, but is the only man in the world that can’t kill himself. With the blessing of his parents and doctors and this drug this man’s wish

could come true. Euthanasia is a very powerful drug, but every individual has the fundamental right to have control of their life.

## Is it a Myth?

By Nicole Theriault

People who have a donor sticker on their license receive less than full treatment by EMTs so their organs can be harvested. But is this a myth?

In the article “You Can’t Take Them With You” by Patty Stonesifer and Sandy Stonesifer, Sandy says the myth is true.

Sandy comments on the dilemma: “A surgeon was charged with a felony for allegedly hastening a potential donor’s death...the new guidelines allow for the donor’s surrogate to consent to withdrawal of life support...thus increasing the chance that the organs can be harvested in a short enough time to be successfully transplanted into a needy recipient.”

Janet Nowak is number one on the donor list for lungs; she has been on the list for about nine months. This has emotionally affected the family. The family is wondering if people are ignorant, selfish, or vain for not being a donor. Why can’t someone who is dead give up their organs for someone who is in need for them to stay alive? They can’t do anything with their organs after they are dead, so why not let someone else use them.

Putting the organ donor sticker on your license is up to you. When people put the donor sticker on their license, they don’t think *oh I shouldn’t be doing this, the EMTs aren’t going to try as hard to save my life*. They think, *if something bad were ever to happen to me, I will be able to save other peoples’ lives*.

If EMTs truly didn’t give their full treatment to people with donor stickers, people wouldn’t put the sticker on their license. Without people putting the sticker on their license, there would be fewer donors. Without any donors, other people’s lives wouldn’t be saved.

EMTs give the people in need their fullest attention. You have to believe EMTs will not even think about whether you have a donor sticker or not, not think about people on the donor list, and not respond with their fullest attention.



# Bad Ad: Victoria's Secret

By Kirstyn Wood

This advertisement was created by Victoria's Secret to promote their new fragrance, Dream Angels Wish. The picture in this advertisement portrays a beautiful Caucasian woman of her late twenties. In the picture, the woman is wearing nothing but a pair of lacy underwear. She is holding a dandelion in her right hand near her mouth, and with the same arm crossing her naked chest. The woman is sitting on a bed in a dark room. This is a two page advertisement. On the second page, an image of Victoria's Secret's new fragrance is shown.

The woman in this picture is beautiful. Although she is very skinny, she has a beautiful face and figure. Girls today look at these models and think this is how they need to look. Today, the average height and weight of a model is anywhere from 5'8" to 6'0", and their weight is between 100 and 125 pounds. This is significantly less than the average height and weight of a teenage girl. The average height of a teenage girl is 5'4", and the average weight is anywhere between 116 and 138 pounds. Advertisements, like this one, have led to many cases of eating disorders. According to America's Mental Health Channel, advertisers that use physical attractiveness to sell their product have put a tremendous amount of pressure on teens as to what their physical appearance should look like. Teen People magazine conducted a survey, and 27 percent of girls felt the media has pressured them to have the "perfect body." This is just another advertisement that falls into the category.

The woman on the bed with no clothes on symbolizes a soft sexuality. The intent is to advertise the new fragrance, but it looks as if they are trying to sell sex. This fragrance is for teenage girls and young women. How is this appropriately advertising towards their intended target market? Although this advertisement is not directed towards the correct market, somehow, it still manages to accomplish their goal. Although, women can still relate to it since this advertisement is soft and touching. However, most women will not want to look at an advertisement of a virtually naked woman sitting on a bed, in a dark room, wishing for sex.

There are a few hidden messages within this advertisement. The fact that the model is sitting on a

bed in a dark room represents dreaming. The model holding the dandelion (also called a "wish flower") to her mouth represents her making a wish. The advertisement portrays an innocent woman, which could represent an angel. The name of the new fragrance is Dream Angels Wish, which is perfectly demonstrated through the hidden messages within this advertisement. Although these hidden messages aren't exactly bad, it can still be offending to people by giving off the message that if you purchase this perfume, you will wish for sex too. Maybe your wish will come true.

The beauty of the woman in the advertisement is offending to other woman and teens that don't look as perfect as she does. Not all women look flawless and have "the perfect body." Having perfectly groomed hair, manicured nails, flawless skin, a beautiful figure, plenty of makeup on, with perfect eyes, and bright pink lipstick on her luscious lips, is very unrealistic. The pressure this advertisement creates is that all women should look like the woman in the picture, or it gives the message that if you want to look beautiful, you should look like her.

Accuracy is another problem. The fact that the size of the bottle of perfume is larger than the model's face makes this advertisement inaccurate. Exaggeration and intensifying the product is inaccurately informing the customer. Even though this advertisement shows where you can purchase the new fragrance (in stores and online) it doesn't give any information regarding the price. Leaving out information and incorrectly demonstrating the product alone makes this advertisement inaccurate and bad.

Advertisements and media are powerful. Portraying a bad advertisement to their audience not only makes Victoria's Secret look bad, but can send out a wrong message. Statistics, like the one previously mentioned, show that girls feel pressured by these advertisements, and that is only leading to girls becoming depressed and developing eating disorders. Being cautious with how products are demonstrated is crucial, otherwise people could potentially look down upon the company, and that could ultimately lead to less business and less sales.



# Eau de Terror

By Elizabeth Warsop

During a recent family trip to Disney World in Florida, my cousin Paul and I ran towards the Tower of Terror. We were there early and walked right on.

I started becoming a little uneasy as I sat down in my seat. I watched as a heavier man on an electric scooter drove himself into the back of the elevator. I nudged Paul and whispered, "How will the elevator be able to hold all of us?"

Paul giggled, "The Tower is in control" as I buckled my seatbelt and secured my hands to the handlebars. The bellhop helped a rather large, grungy lady into the seat next to mine. He looked at me apologetically and closed the elevator doors. I was trying to understand his gesture when a horrific stench bombarded my nostrils. It smelled like a cow pie that has been squirted on by a skunk and then thrown into grandma's old trashcan that has been sitting in the garage for a year.

She conked me with a park map, shouting "Can you scoot over so my backside can breathe?"

I stared at her and feigned motion. "Sorry, I don't have room." I really didn't want to give her any of my space.

She crinkled her nose and huffed, "Well that's fine dear, you'll have to deal with the consequences of a bottled up be-hind when the elevator levitates me and its contents get set free." I made a mental note that I was perfectly safe, as there was no way the elevator could ever possibly 'levitate' her voluptuous figure.

While I suppressed a gag, the ride swerved into a big black room. I wasn't even frightened due to the stench. The man in the scooter chair turned his phone towards me and screamed, "Smile!" as the elevator made its first drop and he snapped my photo. I held onto my nose with one hand, the other glued to the handlebar.

Suddenly the elevator started to shake and squeak, until it came to a complete stop. I thought this was part of the ride, until the man behind me started hyperventilating and

screamed, "We're all going to die!"

The grimy lady squirmed and declared; "I was really planning on making a pit stop after this ride! I thought I timed it perfectly." She conspiratorially announced "Don't worry if you hear a gassy noise presently. It's only me." An audible sigh could be heard as everyone glared at her.

"You got a napkin in that there purse of yours?" She asked me while digging into her fanny pack and pulling out half a turkey leg. As I wondered why a filthy person would ask for a napkin, I rummaged through my bag, grabbed my pink handkerchief, and delicately placed it in her hand. After wiping her revolting palms with my hanky, she blew her nose in it and offered it back.

"Umm, you can keep it!" I smiled at her. She shot me a look usually reserved for dead rodents in fancy French restaurants and tossed it into her fanny pack. Then the foreshadowed noise filled the elevator. The smell of turkey leg and her excretions enveloped all of us, and I almost certainly fainted.

Thirty minutes later the Disney staff fixed the elevator. The bellhop helped the larger lady out of her seat, and the man in the scooter wheeled out. Officials closed the elevator for maintenance. They must have brought an army of janitors to clear up the funk of B.O., turkey leg and the other indescribable fumes that were unwittingly unleashed on us.

When I finally stumbled out of the ride, everyone asked, "Are you okay?", "Did the elevator fall and crash?", or just simply, "How was your ride?"

I responded simply. "It stunk."

# Not Me

By Alexander P. Olson

There was someone else. He had my name. For the longest time, he was asked, "When will you learn?" He was lazy. A slacker. You know the kind. The kid who sits there, staring at the wall, while the rest take notes. Staring...dreaming. *When will they learn?* He was overweight with a cumulative GPA of 1.5. He was me. 75 pounds ago. Just another guy.

Distracted, he was lost in a voice. A voice he



cherished. But she's gone. Silenced by a dying will to live, it's just a memory. Left alone, he would get better. As she left, so did he...I would take his place.

My name is Alexander. Not a founding father or the Conquerer of the civilized world. But I'm not still staring at the wall, either. No longer listening for silent voices. Taking the top half of my class, I've grown. Always changing for the better. Although, that previous identity is lost...my name remains the same. Just another guy.

What is a name? A word? A guideline? Maybe the call-sign we wear every day, stamped on our foreheads like a serial number. Does the name define our parents? Or maybe we are given a name in hopes we'll be remembered as something our parents weren't. The question is not what the name means or who it came from...but who the name is given to and what they are going to become. When will they learn? **Not** just another guy.

# Trapped in an Elevator

By Marissa Cardella

"Come on Henry! We are going to miss the elevator!" shouted a teenage girl named Molly rushing with her crazy little brother to the elevator. They were heading up to their Dad's office.

"Here you go." Thankfully, a thick and wealthy businessman named Tom was there to stop it for them. The elevator closed and started to move.

There was a man in the elevator already. He appeared to be in his mid twenties and reminded Molly somewhat of her favorite Hollywood celebrity, Zack Efron.

"Thank you so much for stopping the door for us!" Greeted the peppy little girl as they rose through the building." Suddenly, everything was black. No one could see and all you could hear was the sound of Henry screaming for the sight of his sister's face.

"What happened?" declared the mysterious man.

Tom brought out his blackberry for light, "the

elevator must have broken down. This thing is ancient it was bound to happen. People will be here soon to help us."

Henry was still screaming and everyone was irritated. A half hour passed and nothing happened. To pass the time they made light conversation and discovered the Zack Efron impersonator's name was John. Not only that, but he had a very bad case of schizophrenia and was on his way to his therapist on the fourteenth floor.

Hours passed and nothing happened. It didn't even feel like light existed anymore. A mysterious vibration started to arise in the hot, stuffy elevator. "Molly, what is that moving for? Why hasn't anyone helped us yet? Where is Mommy?" Henry flooded Molly's ears with questions and molly had no answers.

"They are coming," John started to mumble himself, "THE ALIENS ARE COMING BACK FOR ME!"

Questioning the man's logic and slightly irritated that he was behind on hours of work, due to the lack of cell phone reception, Tom screamed at John to stop it with his crazy lies. Molly and Henry sat helplessly in the corner.

"Its probably just the repairmen fixing the thing," stated Molly thinking of the most logical explanation.

John went from being excited and scared to very serious. His voice got calm and he said in a low and mellow tone, "everything I say is right. Or else." No one argued with him again.

Everyone was getting hungry and the shaking continued on as it felt like more than twelve hours passed. Molly felt a weird gnashing sensation on her leg, but since she couldn't feel she didn't know what was going on. She smacked the thing that was chewing on her and found out it was John. She screamed, "What are you doing you freaking cannibal! Get away from me!"

SLAM! The elevator doors flew open. The repairmen had fixed it. John flew out of there so fast and no one ever saw him again. Tom demanded to talk to the building managers and threatened to sue them. While Molly and Henry rushed to their dad who had been waiting for them the whole time.



# America's Navy: a Global Force for Good

By Hanna Prost

Kailey Schwarzenbacher, 17, a high school junior at a suburban upper-class Wisconsin town had dreams of serving her country and becoming a naval nurse. Thoughts of joining a group dedicated to courage, responsibility, and service enticed her.

The United States Navy is an institution founded 234 years ago that strives to develop disciplined young men and women into combat-ready forces capable of commanding the seas. And Kailey wants to be a part of it.

Being raised by a mother who is a nurse, Kailey knew from a young age she, too, wanted to become a nurse. To find a university that best suited her interests, she attended her high school's college fair, a collection of Midwestern public and private colleges. While at the fair with her dad, the Navy booth caught her eye.

"My dad thought it would be a good idea to join. The recruiters promised it would be beneficial to my chosen career path."

Kailey agreed with her dad's reasoning and found herself suddenly interested in becoming a member of America's Navy. She was persuaded by the obvious benefits.

"I loved the fact that I could retire within 20 years, they [the Navy] would pay for my schooling, I could still follow my dream of becoming a nurse, and it would be possible to settle down on base and have a family."

Her mother, however, was not so enthusiastic about her new idea.

"When I told her I was considering joining the Navy, she thought I was crazy."

Concerned for her daughter's safety, her mother tried to convince Kailey not to enlist. She told Kailey stories of her work partner's relative who returned from Iraq traumatized by the gruesome war.

"She told me that as a naval nurse, I would be aiding the Marines, who were stationed on the front lines. Because they were so involved in combat, I, as a nurse, would have to be treating some of the worst injuries of the war. I didn't want to do that; I didn't want to go to war. If I was sent overseas, I would be stuck there until my service was over, and I knew I would hate every minute of it."

After weighing the costs and benefits, Kailey decided against joining the Navy. She resolved to pursue her goal of becoming a nurse at home in America.

"It's is a great opportunity to serve your country, but the Navy is not for me."

## NEVER GIVE UP

By Nicole Theriault

I feel nervous before every race because I fear falling. It's not what most people get nervous about before a race. As a hurdler, it goes through my head. Before every race I think, *you can do it, have confidence*. The gun explodes.

I have a quick start out of my blocks and think, *keep my trail leg to the side*. Seven hurdles to go. About eighteen steps later I tell myself six hurdles left. After each hurdle I count down to help the race go by faster.

Five hurdles left.

Four hurdles left.

Three hurdles left.

100 meters remaining. Almost done. Crash. The first time I have ever fallen over a hurdle. And in a meet that determines if I advance or not. Regionals. Everyone watching is in shock. I think to myself, *am I going to be a quitter and stay sprawled on the track or will I finish?* I immediately get up.

Two hurdles left.

One hurdle left.

Finish line.

As much pain as I'm feeling, I hear people saying, "Way to finish," and "Great determination Nicole."

Next Year.

Confrence.

Regionals.

Sectionals.

State?

# YOUR LIFE IS ON THE LINE

By Joe Humpal

Bill Humpal is a 55 year old married man and has been in sales for over 30 years. After winning a sales incentive trip to the Bahamas, Bill stayed at a time share resort on the south side of one of the islands called New Providence Island, where he stayed in a luxurious three bedroom condo. With all the extra space around, Bill called his sister Nancy to come stay in this beautiful area near Nassau; without hesitating, she agreed. The next day, they decided to rent a car to do some touring of the island.

While he was getting the rental car, the lady at the rental car company was asking more than what was needed. "She was asking a lot of questions about where we were going, what kind of watch I was wearing, where are you staying, etc. I didn't think anything of it. I was very naïve, young, and stupid." He told her that they were going to Lyfke Beach that beautiful mid-afternoon.

As they drove to the beach and got out to admire the scenery, they noticed it was an empty beach and over in the distance were some beautiful homes, but they were surrounded by barbwire fences. A moment later a car started coming toward them down the road, but soon turned around and left. Then the nightmare began.

Bill and Nancy saw two guys running toward them. Bill said, "One had a black ski mask on, the other had a hooded sweatshirt on and had the hood

tied up so that only his eyes were seen. The man with the hood had a gun which I later found out was a 9mm semi-automatic pistol." The first thing the two guys did was put the gun to Bill's head and said, "Give me all your cash and jewelry or I'll blow you away."

Bill cried, "You can have everything we have, just don't kill us."

Then they threw Bill to the ground, the guy with the gun put his foot on Bill's neck, and said, "Don't you do anything or I'll blow you away mon." They followed by doing the same to Nancy. "This could be the end of my life. My whole life was flashing before me." Bill thought in his head. They took about \$60 cash, a Rolex, a gold ring, jewelry, Nancy's purse, and the car keys.

"We were scared shitless."

After telling Bill and Nancy to get in the water, fully clothed, they quickly ran off to their car. "That was the last we saw of them and our things." Bill says.

Then another car drove down, stopped behind the rental car, and a man that looked like Mr. T got out and said, "Something wrong?" At first Bill was still in shock and didn't know if they could trust him. But they decided to go with him to the police station. Unfortunately the police weren't helpful at all.

All Bill and Nancy wanted to do was leave the island, but they had no money left. They contacted the US embassy of Nassau to try to get any help if possible. The embassy gave them \$40 to leave the island, but asked if they could send them \$40 back when they got to the US. Bill's reply was, "yeah right."

When they finally made it back, Bill and Nancy decided they wanted to warn people of the horrific event and decided to publish their story in the local newspaper in hopes that it won't happen to anyone else. When asked if he would ever go back, he instantaneously said, "never."

Overall the cash and jewelry weren't significant, the fact that they lived was. Nothing is more precious in life than life itself. Even though Bill's work can take him to wonderful places around the world, if he needed to go back to the Bahamas, he would quit.



# A Series of Elevator Tales...

By Matt Hohl

“Look at the design I made with the buttons!” Buddy the elf said jumping up and down.

The Easter Bunny’s ears were steaming. “Ah Buddy you did it again.”

“What just happened?” The old man asked.

“This genius over here just broke the elevator for the fifth time this week,” the Easter Bunny said with a sigh.

“Hi! I’m Buddy the Elf! What’s your favorite color?” he said.

“I’m Uncle Sam and I WANT YOU to fix the elevator.”

“I don’t know how!” Buddy said getting inches from his face.

The Easter Bunny jumped in, “I have the repairman on call, but it’ll be a few minutes... man I am starving.”

“I have some candy canes and syrup here,” said Buddy.

“Is something wrong with him?” said Uncle Sam in a low tone.

“He found out this morning it is nine months till Christmas,” replied the Easter Bunny. “He’s going through a rough patch.”

“And who are you?”

“His therapist,” the Easter Bunny said as he rolled his eyes.

“I like to whisper too!” said Buddy as he jumped into the air. “Did I ever tell you guys how I got to New York?”

“Not interested,” said the Easter Bunny and Uncle Sam in unison.

At that moment the elevator started to move up. Not missing a beat, Buddy made a high yelping sound and started to sing.

“We’re moving, and I’m with my friends, and

we are moving, and having fun!”

“I HATE it when he sings,” said the Easter Bunny. “Gah! This isn’t moving fast enough. I have an appointment with the Thanksgiving turkey in two minutes!”

“I am still moving, and I’m having fun, and I am with my friends!”

“STOP SINGING!”

“Well it was nice meeting you,” said Uncle Sam with his back against the wall, “Have a nice day.”

Uncle Sam ran off, twenty stories short of his stop.

By Samantha Bonk

Hermione Granger stumbled into the elevator at the Du Bois Library on the twenty-third floor. Her stack of books blocked her view of who was in the elevator so she politely asked, “Would someone push the button for the sixth floor please?”

“My precious ... no need to help those nasty hobbitises is there precious...”

Hermione glanced down “Smegal? How did you get here?”

“Why bother... no one knows... maybe we should ask owl.” A depressed voice came from her right.

“Eeyore? Wow my childhood is coming back to haunt me to day. Who’s next Eris, goddess of strife?” Hermione thought aloud chuckling to herself. Giving up on either of the other two helping she set down her books and pressed the appropriate button.

Suddenly, in a poof of black smoke the elevator came to a stop with a sickening jolt. Through the thinning haze the three occupants saw a voluptuous woman in a black toga.

“Why of course who else would confuse you this much Hermione? Just wait things must get worse before someone interferes with my chaos.”

The goddess of strife articulated in a low husky voice.

"Of course things will get worse, I am in an elevator with a goddess who thinks strife and chaos is funny, a depressed donkey and ... well... I'm not sure what Smegal is any more."

"Yes, quite a bother isn't it," said Eeyore, "However," he said brightening up a little, "we haven't had an earthquake lately."

"And no fat hobbitses eating the food hmmm precious."

"Right at least none of that has happened. Then my day would be really weird."

Eris chimes in saying, "Double, double toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble. By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes."

"What do you mean?" Hermione choked out as all three of her elevator mates evaporated in to black smoke.

"Hermione. Hermione. Hermione!" Hermione woke to the screaming of Ronald Weasley and Harry Potter. She stared at them for a moment and then exclaimed.

"Where the heck am I?"

"We found you on the floor of the library elevator it had gotten stuck between the twenty second and twenty first floors." Harry explained. "Come on lets get you back the Hogwarts, the Muggles are freaking Ron out. What happened in there did you faint or some thing?" He asked as he helped her up of the floor.

"I had the weirdest dream." Hermione said dazedly. "I think I need to sleep more and study less for a couple of days."

## Alexandra Maddux

"OMG, get me out of here," said Justin Beiber, still speaking in a rather loud tone.

"Would you *please* talk more quietly, honey?" Grandma reached up to her ear to adjust her hearing aid. "We are in an enclosed elevator."

"Sorry, my ears are still ringing from my concert last night."

"*You* had a concert last night?" A voice peered from behind Justin's bodyguard.

"Umm, yes," Justin said. "Do you have a problem with that?"

A blonde girl wearing hair extensions and a hot pink Juicy sweatsuit struggled to wiggle in front of the bodyguard. "Ya, I do. How did *you* have a concert last night? What are you, like twelve?"

"Hey! I'm sixteen!"

"Honey, you're sixteen? You've grown so old," Grandma said. "It feels like your tenth birthday party was just a month ago."

"Hey lady, what are you talking about," Justin asked. "I don't even know you!"

"Hey hold up, are you that Justin Beiber kid," asked the blonde girl.

"Justin Beiber? No." Grandma looked closely through her glasses in confusion. "You're my little Johnny."

"I think you're a tad bit confused, Grams." Justin said, trying to convince Grandma of his mistaken identity.

"If you're not my little Johnny, I must have followed the wrong kid into the elevator again." Grandma crossed her arms in frustration. "Well, I can't say it doesn't happen often."

"Kay lady, you need new glasses or something," said the blonde girl. "You can't keep following the wrong kids around. It's creepy."

Justin agreed with the blonde girl. "Ya, quit creepin' around."

"Creepin' around? Is this a new hip phrase? I should use that around my grandchildren. If Justin Beiber says it, it must be pretty hip."

"Are you kidding? Justin Beiber isn't hip. His demographic is third graders who put his face in their cubbies at school." The blonde girl turned away from the conversation to hit more elevator buttons in an attempt to evacuate sooner.

"That is so not true! My face is on lunch boxes, too!"

The blonde girl flipped her hair while turning her head away from the elevator buttons and towards



## By Cynthia Baumann

After ten unending minutes of waiting, the elevator doors finally opened and Mandy strutted in like she owned the place. She didn't notice anyone interesting, so she pulled out her mirror and started reapplying her lip gloss. In the reflection of her mirror, she spotted a thug; their eyes met in the mirror.

"Ay Mami, sup?" Levonte said as he smiled showing off all the grills in his mouth.

"Excuse me, what did you say?" Mandy said looking him up and down thinking to herself how ghetto he was. She was not going to give this gangster the time of day; she needed to be on her game and find herself a preppy doctor or lawyer to marry.

"Girl, you fine! Mmm, lemme get a piece of that." Levonte said moving closer to Mandy, checking her out.

All of a sudden, before Mandy could respond, the elevator door opened and a gnomish boy with down syndrome walked in and stood directly in front of Mandy.

"Hi, my name is Peter." The boy stuttered.

"Hey sweetie." Mandy said in her sweetest voice. She was going to do anything to divert her attention from the perverted gangster. She couldn't help but glare at him with anger. She hated being treated like a piece of meat.

"Ay Mami, stop muggin' me. Can I get cho numba baby?" Levonte said, licking his lips.

"Excuse me, I don't speak ghetto." Mandy said in her brattiest voice.

"Dang mami, I got feelins' too. I may be a thug, but I know how to treat a girl."

At this point Peter was about to burst, he hated small places and he didn't like angry vibes Mandy was giving off and the creepy vibes Levonte was giving.

"Ahhhh! Shut up. Shut up. Shut up. Wahhhh! Stop it. Stop it. Get me out. Get me out." Peter started screaming.

"Dang boy, what is yo problem?" Levonte said

staring Peter down with a disgusted look.

"Aw, it's okay Peter," Mandy said, "we're going to stop the elevator now and get you out of here!"

Mandy hit emergency stop on the control panel. To her surprise, the elevator stopped right away. However, the doors didn't open.

"Oh my god! We're stuck. Oh my god!" Mandy wailed. She could not be stuck with the creepy gangster and this boy who was still wailing about getting out.

Levonte moved next to Mandy and slid his arm around her waist. "Mami, how about you come back to my place?"

All of a sudden the lights went out, and Mandy felt peter grab a hold onto her hand. "Great" Mandy exclaimed, "The gangster and the little boy. I wanted a doctor. What will mommy and daddy think about this?"

## By Katherine French

In a fancy hotel, on the first four floors an elevator picked up one person from each floor. The four residents of the hotel rode the elevator in silence.

One crazy young woman with a lovely pixie cut interjected the silence by saying, "hey guys I'm Ellen DeGeneres and I like to Dance!" Like always, she began to dance in her corner of the elevator. As she shook her booty to the elevator music, the cables above them could be heard shaking. In a split second the elevator came to a screeching halt.

A funny looking man with a long dimpled chin stepped forward, "Ellen look what you've done."

"Excuse me Jay Leno that was not me," Ellen replied with disgust, "I am sick of your snide remarks."

Angelina Jolie butted in, "Is there any way to get this contraption moving again? I have a Botox lip appointment to get to."

"Oh I thought that was natural," Leno replied. "And don't you have a zoo to go maintain?"

"No actually Botox is just a hidden secret and no I don't own a zoo. I have six children"

Leno snickers, "Isn't that the same?"

"Oh and the male in the corner who are you,"

Ellen interrupts, “we are all famous but what about you?”

“Hello, I’m Carl-Henric Svanberg. I too am famous. I’m the Chairman of Bp Oil,” a business-like man answered.

Jay Leno with another snide remark said “You’re famous alright. Everyone hates you for the oil leak.”

A booming voice came over the loud speaker, “Welcome to Celebrity Survivor...Elevator style! You will be stopping at four random floors and at each floor one chosen person will be forcefully removed from the elevator.”

The four residents approached the first stop. Leno began “alright who’s it going to be? I vote this Carl person. How dare he be in this elevator when there’s an oil leak killing our planet?”

Jolie states, “I second that motion, plus I don’t really care”

“I third that motion, but if it helps you can be on my show,” Ellen states.

At that moment, the panel beneath Carl-Henric’s feet was let loose and with it Carl fell to a tragic death.

The three remaining riders became nervous and clawed at the metal-paneled walls as they closed in upon them. Ellen dropped to the ground and had a seizure right before Leno’s and Jolie’s eyes.

Finally the doors opened, and Angelina Jolie and Jay Leno rushed out. Unfortunately Jay Leno tripped over his big chin and Angelina trampled him with her six inch pumps.

As Jolie ran away she shouted behind her, “That’s what you get for making fun of my lips and children!”

On that day, Angelina Jolie became the sole survivor of, Trapped in an Elevator...Survivor Style! She didn’t care though because she had her Botox appointment and various children to tend to.

By Erin Ferrall

“Like, can you please just stop that crying, it’s practically making my ears bleed,” Miley Cyrus said as she smacked her gum and absently twirled a stray piece of hair around her finger.

“Obviously she’s never heard any of her own songs,” Sandra Bullock said quietly to Vin Diesel as she jiggled her fussing baby on her hip. They silently exchanged snickers while Miley tapped away on her

phone sending never-ending text messages.

Suddenly, from the back of the elevator, someone cleared their throat. “Has anyone bothered to press the emergency button?” said Rob Pattinson in his sultry British accent.

“Well, yes of course, but it doesn’t seem to be working, just like everything else,” Sandra said with a long sigh. “Oh my gosh, Vin!”

The buff actor looked at her with confusion, “Who? Me?”

“Why didn’t I think of this earlier? Vin can use his muscles to pry open the doors and then we can climb out of here.”

Vin took a minute to think about this, “I am pretty strong.” He flexed his football sized muscles emphasizing his statement. “I guess I could give it a try,” he said with one final flex of his bicep. His hands latched between the two solid doors as his face began to turn red and a droplet of sweated sprouted from his forehead. Everyone waited in anticipation as he opened the doors barely an inch, but then he let out a burst of air and the doors slammed shut.

The baby began to screech even louder than before, when the snobby pop star’s mouth dropped to the ground. “Oh. My. God,” Miley said with her eyes as wide as saucers. “You are the vampire!”

Poor Rob looked around the claustrophobic elevator, “Seriously? You actually believe in those things?” He let out a nervous laugh as he rubbed his head and nonchalantly looked away. Just then, the tiny elevator became hushed as the crying and tapping came to a halt. Everyone’s eyes quickly shot to the handsome man in the back.

“Listen,” Rob said, “no one is supposed to know.” All that followed was silence, while everyone held their breath. He exhaled noisily, “Now have you all seen the movies?” All heads slowly moved up and down in agreement, even Mr. Diesel’s. “Then you know I’m a good guy. Now come on, let’s just try to get out of here,” the vampire said.

After a few minutes of complete stillness, the silence was broken by Miley’s squeaky voice, “Then can I, like, get your autograph or something? I don’t think I’ve ever met a vampire.”

Out of nowhere, the elevator doors shot open and Rob disappeared in thin air. Sandra took in a deep breath and unloaded herself and the baby as quickly as she could with Vin following right behind her.

Left all alone in the newly repaired elevator, Miley moved forward to leave with two final words,



“How rude.” Right then, the doors slammed shut just before she stepped through them, leaving her trapped in the elevator once again.

## By Karina Cardella

“I’m ready! I’m ready,” said an overenthusiastic yellow sea sponge. “I just love elevators! They’re almost as great as the Krusty Krab! Can I press the button for you, Mr. Cowboy man?”

“It’s Woody, and sure, what ever you want little fella.” He said, as he adjusted his cowboy hat.

“Yippee! Oh, Barnacles! It looks like somebody’s trying to get on!” Spongebob said as the bulky silver doors came to a close with a muffled bash. “We have to help him.”

“Don’t worry, Spongebob, you got a friend in me, and so does the guy trying to get on the elevator. We won’t leave them behind.” Woody said. He dashed over to the big red glowing button with big white letters inscribed on it: EMERGENCY STOP. Using his running start, he skillfully threw his hat at the button giving it enough force to open the elevator doors. A small, pinkish creature was standing in the entrance.

“Oh bother,” Said Piglet. “I almost missed the elevator again.”

Suddenly, Piglet’s eyes grew wide in horror. “Help! Help! It’s a Heffalump!” He said as backtracked out the door. But it was already too late. The doors had slammed shut once more.

“Who? Me?” Said Spongebob in awe. “I’m no heffamajigger, I’m just your every day, run of the mill, friendly underwater sea sponge.”

“Oh, well in that case, your not so scary.”

“Yup, there’s nothing scary about a sea sponge. It’s only those sea bears you have to worry about. But I know all about preventing a sea bear attack. Oh! What’s this?” Spongebob asked as he reached for a white hoop attached to Woody’s back.

“Oh no, you don’t want to pull—reach for the skyyy...” Woody began to say involuntarily.

Spongebob giggled. He pulled the string again.

“There’s a snake in my boots.” Woody said. “Okay, that is enough! Leave my string alone! I cannot wait to get off this elevator, you people are crazy.”

“I think the cowboy needs to learn some manners,” Piglet said matter-of-factly.

“Okay, okay, sorry guys. I just really need to get off this elevator,” Said Woody. “My friends are in trouble and I need to rescue them.”

“It’s alright,” Spongebob said. “I need to get off too. You see I really need to get home, but I can’t remember why. Maybe it was to feed my pet snail, Gary.”

A pink and mint green mollusk then fell from the ceiling of the elevator, making a very loud plop as he landed on the ground.

“Gary! Well I guess seeing as you’re with me, then I didn’t forget to feed you today, buddy. Oh well, I’ll see why I need to get home when I get there.” Spongebob said as the doors to the elevator opened up. “Barnacles! This is my stop. I guess I won’t get to spend any more time with my new friends. Well, good-bye cowboy man! Good bye pinkish thing!” Spongebob walked away, and as the metallic doors were coming to a close, Piglet said to himself, “Oh bother, that was my floor too.”

Woody rolled his eyes as he proceeded to make another heroic rescue. “I’m never getting off this elevator,” he said to himself as he gained momentum to run and hit the fluorescent button on the wall of the elevator.

## By Maria Walsch

“My wand is broken, does anyone have anything to fix it with,” said Ron Weasley.

Martha Stewart fumbled through her rather large purple purse. “I always have some tape or glue with me wherever I go. Now where is it,” she said perplexed.

“Oh yes, tape is what you Muggles call it,” said Ron Weasley scratching his head and wishing his friends Hermione Granger and Harry Potter were there to help him.

Captain Jack Sparrow was pacing back and forth and while taking off his peg leg said, “Everyone get comfortable! Unless you Ms. Stewart or that red-haired freak show with the magical powers can show me exactly how to fix the elevator, we are in for a long night.”

“Hey, I’m no freak show! I know the perfect

spell to get us out of here! If you don't want my help, fine! I will just go sit in the corner," said Ron reluctantly.

"I wish we could all just get along! On my cooking show last week I wasn't getting along with one of the guests, that sassy Miley Cyrus, but we settled our differences by doing arts and crafts. Not only do I carry different types of adhesives, I carry 'Do it yourself' card making kits!"

"Yay," said both Captain Jack and Ron sarcastically yet secretly happy that at least something would occupy their time.

"Well, before we start with *that* delightful activity, let me try a spell," said Ron clearing his throat. "Open Sesame!"

"Well I could have tried that! Stupid boy with the magic tricks, did he really think that would work," Jack said under his breath.

Ron and Captain Jack were glaring at each other for a moment, "Oh my gosh! The door is opening! You did it! Wait! Is that concrete? Darn we are still in the elevator shaft," said Martha with all hope taken from her eyes.

"Hey Martha, you have a big mouth! Yell down the shaft and get us some help," Jack said, while holding back a chuckle.

"I may have a big mouth, but at least I don't have bad breath," said Martha shuffling over to the door opening. "Help! Help," said Martha in a very small voice.

"You call that yelling for help? We will never be saved if you do the yelling! Jack, help me out," Ron said as he motioned for the large purple bag.

Jack and Ron grabbed Martha's purse and sifted through it. Jack said with a panicky and concerned look on his face, "What? No cell phone? Why do you have all of this nonsense in your purse and not a cell phone?"

"Well, I only keep the essentials in there," Martha said. Ron, Jack, and Martha scurried around the bottom to find something from deep within her purse.

Finally the elevator moved and the doors opened up at the first level of the building. All three stayed to help put things back into Martha's purse. Ron Weasley, Captain Jack Sparrow, and Martha Stewart wandered around the lobby of the hotel looking for answers

about the elevator. Jack asked the bellhop, "What happened to the elevator? We were just stuck in there for three hours!" The bellhop replied nonchalantly, "Oh, sorry about that, Donald Trump forgot to pay the electric bill."

## By Natalie Pierson

While the elevator doors opened on Level B for belief, Gandhi opened an eye to observe his surroundings. He was pleasantly surprised to see the lethargic elevator come so promptly, but he had not lost any faith on it. How could Gandhi help but accept it take five minutes tomorrow? It was so invigorating to be joyful of any circumstance.

"Why, hello Doc. How are you doing?" Gandhi asked as he entered the elevator. He gave a heart-filled hug to his companion. He was the one and only John Henry "Doc" Holliday who had been treating Gandhi's teeth for two years.

"Namaste! I'm well, thanks. Look, I've got no time for small talk," Doc said with a sigh. "Sorry, but I GOT to get home for my daughter's fifth birthday. She won't accept me being tardy with all her presents in my car!" He started tapping away at his right foot then just as some red and blue creature leaped in the doorway,

"Excuse me! I am the great Wonder Woman! Fear my name." She tousled her hair to the side to show off two feminine but toned arms.

The door at last came to a close, and they began to move. "Finally!" said Doc. He spoke to soon, because suddenly, there was a deafening screech from above in chorus with a girly scream of the same level. The fluorescent lights dimmed the slightest, and the elevator came to a stand-still.

"God help us if Wonder Woman is afraid too! Just what are we supposed to do now?!" said Doc fuming.

"Please someone help me," screamed Wonder Woman, "I'm stuck here!"

Gandhi calmly replied with much composure, "Find the strength from within. I am sure that we are in no danger." At that, he began to meditate on the floor.

"HELP me!" Wonder Woman placed her hands on Doc's shoulders and shook him silly.



“I’m not the superhero here! Do something and fast. I am claustrophobic,” he began to wheeze, “Does...anyone...have...a lunch bag?”

“Patience and faith will cure you of your anxiety,” Gandhi said, “Close your eyes and imagine a tranquil memory. I believe in you.”

It took a moment for Doc to collect himself. After all, Wonder Woman still had not quieted her incessant squeals. “Thank you, Gandhi. My poor daughter, however, won’t have any presents on her birthday!”

“She shall learn a bit about the simple life then. Please excuse me.” And as soon as it all began, the elevator lights brightened. It arrived at the final floor. Gandhi strolled out the elevator leaving Doc gaping, and Wonder Woman leaning against the wall. ““A man is but the product of his thoughts what he thinks, he becomes”” (Chandler, 2010).

“Uhh, see you Tuesday for your appointment?” Doc walked out of the elevator a little dazed and unsure of what to do next.

# The Power of Opinion

By Sam Glass

They are the things that keep this country thriving. They are what charges every citizen’s mind, body, and spirit. And they are the things that shatter the lives of individuals. They are opinions.

An individual cannot stress enough how important opinions are. Be it one’s stance on abortion, or which president did the best job, or even who’s the best basketball team, they are what makes life worth living. And the best part: everyone can have their own opinion, because we have freedom of speech.

But things can get sticky when it comes to opinions. Where there’s an opinion, there is always going to be somebody who is opposed to said opinion. Sometimes, it’s as diminutive as disagreements on the favorite basketball team. Sometimes, it’s as callous as opinions on the military, and whether or not we should have taken the actions that we did when we entered Iraq. Sometimes...things can get nasty.

Freedom of speech is a fickle thing. It was created in a time when everyone had the same mindset. We’ve evolved. We’ve changed. We have grown. Different races, religions, and miscellaneous beliefs have come out of the woodwork. Now, with this melting pot we call America, freedom of speech isn’t as black and white as it used to be.

Racism. Homophobia. Religious intolerance. General hate speech plagues this great nation. And it is all protected by freedom of speech.

The video points out that other countries cannot speak out against their government. Racial intolerance often leads to riots; and that religious intolerance can often lead to death. The beauty of our country is that this...rarely happens here...because of our freedom. And yet, Americans still must live in fear in the US; they still must fear other people’s words.

I, an out homosexual, a liberal in a predominately conservative high school, and an atheist in a town overflowing with variations of Christianity, do not feel safe to speak freely because of my beliefs. I live in a town where racist and homophobic remarks are commonplace and considered funny. They wear on me like rust. With every new day, I am afraid to speak my opinion, and I am afraid of what I will encounter.

There are people in America, as well as any other country, who freely and openly talk of hate. Some take pride in their intolerance. In this country, they are protected. Protected. They get to speak of hate, because of freedom. How can something so sickening come out of something so tranquil?

I scorn this country for the fear people like me must live through. And, at the same time, I am enamored with this country because I can openly state my hate. We all have the capability to articulate what we feel without the true fear that we will die because of it. For the most part, we can speak our minds, and it will be accepted. That is what is great about America.

## *For Her*

By Brandon Holowitz

A nice ring, to show that I love her... an open bar, so we can have a good time. A honeymoon, so we can relax and be together. All of this for her. And my name...well, my name is broke.

I know what I want in life. I guess everyone does. But how do I get it? It's not like everything I want and need is just going to rain from the clouds—I sure as hell wish that could happen. But it can't. I'll find a way though...for her.

I'm not an idiot, so I know I have to go to

college for four years and earn a degree, then find a job that I can start out with, then take another three maybe four years to save for it all. SO MUCH TIME! Well...it's all for her.

I'm hard-working, determined, and I'm as lucky as a four leaf clover. I'm told that I'm lucky for finding her at such a young age. I mean, it's hard to find the ONE person you are willing to spend the rest of your life with. And that's why I'm lucky...right? Well, I see it differently. I found the most beautiful flower in a field of weeds, the ONE person in the entire world that I would spend the rest of my life with and hey! I'm ready to. She is ready to. But we can't. We are blocked by a wall—a wall called age, and that makes us unlucky. But I wait...for her.

We talk before going to bed about how it will be better after one more year. One more year of going to separate schools. One more year of not being able to see each other every day. One more miserable year. When she hangs up I can still hear her. My pillow whispers her voice into my ear as I try to get her out of my head, and it motivates me to give her the best, give her everything she has ever wanted and ever needed. I have to do it...for her.

A nice ring...to show I love her. An open bar so we can have a good time, a nice honeymoon so we can relax and be together. All for her. It's everything WE want. But she is all that I want. And all of this...everything I do is for her...all for her.



# The Prank Phone Call

By Margret Dubnicka

Riiiiiiiiing!

“Helloo? Is dis Mrs. Eckert?”

“Who is this? Ryan, is that you?”

“Uh... Is Mr. Eckert?”

“Cut it out Ryan, I’m cleaning today.”

“Is Mrs. Eckert’s childreen?”

“Shut up, Ryan, I’m busy. Goodbye.” I hang up.

It wasn’t Ryan. We’re not having our French exchange

# The High School Dream

By Alia Schroeder

There were no sharks circling me. I wasn’t clinging to a ledge hundreds of feet above ground. I wasn’t lost in a dark alley...but I was still scared.

It was the night before the first day of high school and my mind was full of worries: of new people. Of harder classes. Of the 2,400 students in my school.

“Are you excited for your first day?” my mom asked.

The pressure hung over me and I immediately burst into tears. The television shows I watched glorified high school, making it seem like the most important four years of my life. And going from a class of 40 to over 500 was a substantial transition.

I was anxious and not handling it well. But my mom hugged and comforted me, saying the next day would be great.

She was wrong. The first weeks of school were grim. I acted painfully

shy, even though I’m naturally gregarious and laidback. I sat silently in class, even though I knew the answers. I feared doing or saying things out of the ordinary in fear that I would be judged and labeled for the rest of high school. And that fear took hold of me until I had no voice, and no personality.

As the monotonous schooldays passed by, I realized I needed to make a change if I ever wanted to achieve my perfect high school experience. So I slowly forced myself out of my comfort zone. I talked to a new person in class. That wasn’t too bad. Then I made plans with them outside of school. What’s the worst that could happen?

Then, basketball season arrived. Practices took up most of my time and my team needed me. I was finally at ease.

After slowly forcing myself to step out of my comfort zone, I grew out of my uncertainty. Looking back, it surprises me how I let my fears control me. I regret the time I wasted growing to be comfortable in who I am, but I like the person I became.

I may not have the ideal high school dream I was hoping for, but I’m enjoying the present and looking forward to the future: to lifelong friends. To intriguing classes. And to fulfilling my purpose in life.

# Dan Erschen

By Kirstyn Wood

Sometimes thing happen to you that may seem horrible, painful, and unfair, which makes you ask yourself, why me? But, upon reflection, you realize that without overcoming those obstacles, you would have never realized your potential, inner strength, will power, or heart.

“I’m not amazing or special, I’m just doing the best I can with the cards I’ve been dealt. I still feel everything happens for a reason and is part of God’s

plan. It's up to me to make the best of it so the least I can do is to take care of myself and try to be strong for others." These words were spoken by one of the most inspiring individuals I have ever met, Dan Erschen.

April 4, 1990, will be a day Dan will never forget. He had lost all strength in a matter of three days. Not only was he unable to walk, but he didn't even have enough strength and coordination to even feed himself. He says it was like his entire body had fallen asleep. This led to three weeks in the hospital, high doses of steroids, and 6 plasmapheresis treatments.

"I call it 6 oil changes – they suck all the blood out of my body, spin it, give me back my red and white cells, and replace the plasma from a donor."

After three months of intense therapy, he was able to button his own shirt, but it took an entire year to completely recover this attack. However, he ended up in a very familiar situation ten years later. This attack ended up being worse. Much worse. Although he was hospitalized for only one week, Dan was unable to walk for one year and four months. This is when they finally diagnosed him with Multiple Sclerosis. Multiple Sclerosis is a neurological illness that has chronic symptoms and currently is untreatable.

One day, Dan had decided to give his wife, Bonnie, a membership to Westwood Health and Fitness. Being the motivational person he is, he decided it would be a good idea to try and encourage her by exercising right along with her. The first day was hard, but he never gave up. He started off only being able to do the elliptical machine for a total of five minutes. Four months later, he was able to work up to 45 minutes. He says exercise is what had given him his life back, and helped build his self confidence to a level that he knew he could do anything he set his mind to.

Eight years after Dan's second MS attack, he fell into peer pressure. His inspirational friends at Westwood encouraged him to sign up for the 2008 Ironman in Madison, Wisconsin. The Ironman is a triathlon that consists of a 2.4 mile swim, followed by a 112 mile bike ride, and lastly an entire 26.2 mile marathon. The event is to be completed within 17 hours, all in one day. He says he learned to appreciate the little things in life, so he decided to mark his calendar.

That day finally rolled around. Before the event started, Dan looked around and saw over a hundred bright yellow t-shirts, the ones he gave to his friends and family that came to support him. Spirits were high. At 7:00 on the morning of September 7, 2008,

the cannon went off. When he was nearing the finish of the swim, he could hear nothing but people yelling and cheering him on. He was swimming as fast as he possibly could. He just about reached the shore when it became quiet. As he climbed up on shore, he looked at his watch. One hour and 21 minutes. He was one minute too late. Only one minute. The cut off time was one hour and 20 minutes, and now his race was over.

Emotions were flying through the air. Knowing he did his best, he was just thankful for being able to get there. His journey inspired many people in his life, and he truly believes that everything happens for a reason. Dan appreciated every moment of that day and took from those moments everything he possibly could. He knew he wasn't a failure; he did the best he could. Dan had then decided he was going to participate in the 2010 Ironman, at the same location. His goal for this round was to beat his swim time by 30 minutes, which he knew he was capable of doing.

It was September 12, 2010, the day of the Ironman. He was in another familiar atmosphere. There were people everywhere, the music was blaring, and there were bright yellow shirts scattered throughout the crowd cheering him on. Fortunately, I was able to be one of the spectators in the crowd attending this inspirational event. I will never forget the motivational experience.

Once again, the cannon went off at 7:00 in the morning. Before he knew it, he was out of the water 29 minutes earlier than the previous Ironman. He made it. He spent 17 minutes in the transition between swimming and biking. Within this time he prayed to God as the tears poured out of him. Now he just had to get through the 112 miles biking and the marathon. Biking started off well, until the last 55 miles. MS started to kick in. However, he never gave up. His feet were burning and it turned into strictly pain, but he pushed through it and met his friend, Lowell, at the transition. They pushed each other, because they knew they were both capable of doing it. Dan and Lowell ended up running the entire marathon together. At approximately 9:40 at night, they crossed the finish line, together.

"The first thing I said when I crossed the finish line 140.6 miles later was thank you God!"

Today, Dan still has problems with MS. Not being able to walk 2-3 nights per week is a great challenge for him. He says he was blessed with having MS, since it has changed his life for the better.



“I’ve learned that relationships with family and friends are so much more important than any materialistic thing in the world. I’ve learned the true power of living while simply having fun. I’ve learned it is so much more rewarding to help others than to be self centered and caught up in your own self pity. I’ve learned how important it is to have faith in my life.”

Dan says he truly believes the saying “you help yourself by helping others,” which is how he determined his next goal to be to help someone accomplish the Ironman. He wants to help someone who thinks that they are unable to do it, or maybe even someone with MS that is in the same situation he was.

Dan Erschen is by far one of the most inspiring individuals I have ever met. He taught me to appreciate the little things in life. He taught me to make each and every day count, by living your life to the fullest with no regrets. Most importantly, he taught me to always have faith, never give up, and always be thankful for the friends and family you have, because they will always be there for you through everything. Hearing his story truly made me believe that anything is possible.

# My Adventure

By Annonymous

Beep, Beep, Beep. Ugh stupid alarm. I wake up and my room is black and silent. All I want to do is pull the covers over my head and go back to sleep. The breeze prevents me from getting out of bed. Then I think to myself, *I’m going fishing. Yes.* Sprinting around my room to find some warm clothes, I dress in layers for when the sun comes up. Out of my room, to the kitchen, I tip toe as my mother is still sound asleep. I grab the food I prepared the night before. I made sure to pack some Ginger Snaps in case someone gets sick. Once everything and everyone is packed up in the car the adventure begins.

No cars on the road, it seems as if you shouldn’t be out at 4:00 a.m. Pit stop. Everyone out. It’s my turn to treat to coffee.

After a lengthy car ride we arrive at Port Washington. Captain Bill has the boat all ready to go for us. As we board “The Office” the engines are starting. My heart is rumbling. As we are leaving the

dock I’m called up top to cover the most important job—I am now the captain. Steer right, Steer left. My duty is to not tangle the lines. When you have 12 lines trailing behind the boat that means you have to pay attention at all times, while doing so you can’t hit any boats in front of you. (Captain Bill says “you can only hit the other boats if they are white so it doesn’t leave a mark.”)

Now we wait.

FISH ON, FISH ON. My brother grabs the rod. I grab the book to record all of the information like the type of lure, and the water depth the fish was at.

“Oh no, I think I lost it,” says Alex.

He isn’t very gentle. But I love my brother.

Now we wait.

FISH ON, FISH ON. It’s my turn. I grab the rod and start cranking. Nice and easy keeping the rod tip up. It just keeps taking out line and I’m thinking, *who is going to win this fight? The fish or me?* It’s getting worn out. Closer, closer, closer. Finally it’s in the net. I hold the king salmon up to take a picture and then it’s time to weigh it. 15lbs. That is pretty big for a king salmon. It is getting late in the afternoon and my stomach is growling, so we pack up and head for land.

Now that we all have our land legs back it is time to clean the fish. My name may mean princess but I defiantly am not. I jump right in the action and clean my fish.

Captain Bill says, “Great job today Kailey.”





*Eclectic Soup*

*A Collection of Creativity*

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# Short Stories...in 55 Words

*By Dakota Hower*

Once there lived a man named Zazu Rusty. Zazu was born into the world a prophet of God. People had begun doing bad things, and Zazu was sent to end it. Zazu set fire to the Earth, and burned all sources of evil away. Today, Zazu still watches over us, eliminating all sources of evil.

*By Mark Mayer*

The sun beat down relentlessly. The sweat slowly slid down her neck, and a cool breeze swept over the boat and playfully danced with her hair. As she glanced around our eyes met, she smiled and I couldn't do anything but smile back. I stood up, at a loss for words, I said "Hello."

*By Samantha Bock*

## **The Dance**

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The costume itches, the shoes pinch, the lights blind, the hairspray clogs and the music blares. Her legs tremble, her hands shake and her mind goes blank. Utterly blank; no dance steps, no music cues, nothing. She panics. And then her body takes over and pulls her on to the stage and into the dance.

*By Gavin Snyder*

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## **War**

He joined because he thought it would be fun. It was his way of seeing the world. Now after all he saw, he was alone staring at the world. He was hearing the blood of brothers cry out to him. He had to tune it out. It's sad he did it the way he did.

*By Natalie Pierson*

## **The Sheltered Boy**

Ross had pleaded with his parents to visit his older brother in Boulder. After weeks of chores, he stepped off the Amtrak to spend a blissful weekend independently. That afternoon as Ross walks down Pearl Street, he sees a boy of about the same age playing a sitar in drags. He's never seen anyone happier.

*By Heather Mrotek*

## **California Dreamin'**

He booked a flight hoping to meet his soul mate. Lonely at Gate C his plane was delayed. Then AirTran was overbooked to San Francisco; he got bumped to the following flight. Mistakenly, he sat on the wrong plane, next to a beautiful California girl. He never traveled there, but he met his soul mate.

*By Kaitlin Stoner*

## **Join Me**

Karyn entered the church to attend her friend Julie's funeral. But, two coffins lay side by side. One contained Julie. She approached the other and looked at the victim's face. Mutely, she read the dedication. "Come," said Julie from behind her. Outstretching her hand to Karyn, Julie was haloed in light. "Join me in heaven."

*By Alexandra Maddux*

## **The Hallway Conversation**

In the hallway between classes, Carly and Molly see him. Molly has been secretly in love with him for years. He walks over in their direction. Molly freaks out in hopes of a real conversation. He approaches, glancing at Molly, then opens his mouth to start to talk. "Hey Carly, want to go out sometime?"

*By Karina Cardella*

## **Drunken Decisions**

He never should've gotten in the car that night. His car swerved, crashed into another.

He took the life of an innocent man, and crushed the heart of an innocent lover. We had a future, but now it's gone. I loved him, but maybe his fate was deserved.

Why must the young be so ignorant?

# JAWS

By Pip Atkinson

Five years ago, when I was told over a pork fillet that we'd be moving to America, I was excited to say the least. Not because of the opportunities or the experiences I'd be presented with, but rather, I was excited because this is the country that gave birth to "Jaws." In my 11-year-old opinion, this cinematic treasure was what made America great.

My perspective has, of course, changed a little since then, but I still think all this talk of America's greatness can be seen in places other than the six o'clock news. In fact, America's support of the underdog and its tendency to casually set world standards can all be observed in "Jaws."

Let us begin with my purchase of the "Jaws" 30th Anniversary Edition box set DVD. It was on the top of my 2005 Christmas list and came with a delightful little three-hour documentary on the making of "Jaws." Steven Spielberg was 26 when he directed this masterpiece, a decision fueled by "courage and stupidity," in his own words. Many a filmmaker, actor and studio turned down the opportunity to be a part of "Jaws," saying it was completely ridiculous and unachievable. Yet the courageous and stupid young Spielberg gave it a go.

On June 20th, 1975, "Jaws" rose from the depths of Hollywood to change the game forever. Had Universal studios not seen the potential in the aspiring young filmmaker, we would not associate that chilling two-note theme with sharks, Spielberg would not be a household name and youngsters, such as myself, would not be spending their free time on eBay looking for the McFarlane Movie Maniacs Four figurine.

A similar "just give them a go" attitude can be seen all across America and, in my opinion, is so much of what is great about America. If you are you are fortunate enough to live in this country, America will proudly stand behind you and support you as you attempt to reinvent the umbrella, or perhaps make a movie about a mechanical shark munching swimmers off the coast of Martha's Vineyard.

Failure in America is embraced as a learning experience; it is a reason to give it another go. It was not as if Universal had a solid reason to believe in the

vision of Steven Spielberg. In the years before "Jaws," he had given life to films about runaway demonic trucks and parents kidnapping their own children. Both solid efforts in their own right, but "Jaws" was obviously a bit of a jump. Mr. Spielberg undoubtedly rose to this highly taxing, daunting challenge...but what if he hadn't? As it is, "Jaws" was the greatest hit of all time.

America is known for setting international standards in everything from cinema to fashion to the military. Thirty-five years ago, in an experimental Hollywood, "Jaws" was this standard. No matter what "Star Wars" fans may insist, "Jaws" set the benchmark for the modern Hollywood Blockbuster. Costing an estimated \$12 million to make and grossing over \$250,000,000 worldwide, "Jaws" made a global impact. If you know where to look, pictures of young Asians in yellow "Jaws" overalls, Japanese video store displays and Australian movie posters can all still be found...like silent reminders of the global impact a stupid and courageous young American can make.

Americans fail to appreciate just how much of an impact they make on the rest of the world. This whole nation is a novelty to foreigners like me; everything from Dixie cups to Taco Bell is glorified in the eyes of an eager young Australian. Aussie kids break into American accents periodically, just because that's what they see on TV. Then, I sit back and realize perhaps this wouldn't be the case if America wasn't such a supportive, courageous, and stupid country. So, thank you America for filling my youth with sleepovers spent watching "Jaws," and eating Doritos. Perhaps even in a Snuggie.



# Hunting

By Annonymous

Cool, crisp air brushes across my face. I am awake. I jump into my warm clothes and get strapped into my safety harness. The alarming scent of Belgium waffles invites me to the front lobby of the hotel. My dad's getting ready in the room; I'm heading to breakfast. *It's hunting season*, I think to myself. We jump in the car and I get my socks and boots on.

My dad is planning out the day. "First we will go out for a couple of hours, if you want to come take a nap in the truck, that's fine. If we see a deer you get the first shot but remember that you can't shoot a buck," my dad says with excitement.

We are here.

Tip toeing through the woods, the leaves crunch under our feet. Climbing into my tree stand, strapping the safety harness to the tree, I get nervous. Side by side with my dad.

Waiting, waiting, waiting. *Burr its freezing.*

Crunch, crunch, crunch. My heart races faster and faster. *What could it be? Is it just another squirrel?*

"Dad, Dad," I whisper, pointing at the deer slowly trotting down the ravine.

My dad looks at me I look at him. I pull up my gun, put her in my sight, and pull the trigger. My dad gives me a high five. All the hard work paid off. Shooting at the range, taking a hunter safety course. Determined to make the kill.

We take our time to get out of the trees and walk down to the deer. My dad starts to think it is a buck. *Oh no, I hope I not. It's doe only season . . . what are we going to do?*

We get there and sure enough, the buck has to nubby antlers. My heart skips a beat. An experience of a life time has gone wrong. Horrified, I look to my best friend, my dad. He says, in his deep, scary voice, "We can gut it and run or turn it in to the DNR."

I said, "Let's go to the DNR. It's the right thing

to do."

We drive over to the station to meet a gentleman. He steps out of the car and I am standing there, frightened. I feel so small compared to him. Intimidated because I know I did something wrong. I feel awful and sinful. I want so badly to remember this experience in a positive way but right now I feel unlawful.

Because I did the right thing by turning the buck in, he let me keep it.

It pays to be honest, and respect the rules and laws. I learned this and another life lesson: look before you shoot. Think before you speak. And most importantly, be honest.

## My Criminal

By Simone Van As

I could feel my legs shaking, not sure if I would be able to stand any longer. I hear him say "I swear if you say a word you will be next". I didn't know what to do. My mind was racing, my ethical beliefs out the window. Trying to think of what to do, I just sat there in dead silence. Sitting in the wooden stool I was tied me to, I could feel my wrists start to throb. The ropes were too tight to get out of. Trying my hardest not to fall asleep, I could feel my eyes start to droop. I thought if I fell asleep I would never wake up again.

Thinking about what my mom had been telling me, about how my boyfriend of 4 years had been really clandestine about his life. I kept thinking about how different my life could be if I had listened to her worries and hadn't moved in with a culprit.

Thinking back to how this all started, reading a paper with the title *Four people were found dead in a garage last Tuesday, with no explanation why. In the Suburbs of South eastern Chicago, the crime rate has become rampant. Residents of Chicago have been told to lock their doors watch their every step.*

It seems crazy to be living your life in such fear. Growing up in the same city that was once quiet and peaceful and now all of a sudden people all around us are dying for no apparent reason. I concurred that my boyfriend would agree with me about how crazy this all has become until I found him in the garage covered in blood and a knife in his hand.

As I stood there frozen in shock. My first thought was to run, but that seemed inane at this point because if I did he would kill me. I tried to move, but as I tried to pick up my lead, heavy leg, I saw him take off. He caught me and started yelling, "It's not what u think..." He sat me down in the chair and used duress on me until I calmed down, and that's when it all happened. He was a criminal and he had done a flagrant thing, but that didn't stop me from thinking my life was soon to be over.

changed my view on how to respond to what is thrown at me.

## I Have the Choice...

By Nicole Theriault

I have the choice every morning to be blissful or prickly. This past summer I had a job handing out towels at an outdoor fountain. *How hard could it be to hand out towels?*

When children's mothers came up to me while I was working, they would get irate with me if things weren't going as they planned.

The child's mom said, "Why isn't the fountain on, there wasn't anything online saying that it would be off today."

I said, "I am sorry but there are technical difficulties with the fountain right now."

The mom said, "Well should I wait for it to turn on or am I going to waste my time?"

I said, "It is up to you because I am not for certain when the fountain will be turning on again."

Having mothers be rude to me because a fountain wasn't working made me realize I can't let the little things wreck my day. I am more aware of how inflection in speech can change how others respond.

With me staying optimistic even after mothers were irate with me, I was able to put a smile on other people's faces. I made sting bracelets while I was working and it made many little girls happy.

The girls would ask, "Who are you making the bracelets for?"

I said, "Anybody, would you like one?"

The girls said, "Yes, thank you so much."

And when a dad came up to me and said, "I would like you to know there are four girls with smiles on their faces, thanks again for the bracelets."

Hearing that I put a smile on those girls' faces showed me that when I am being optimistic it can spread onto others.

By the end of summer, handing out a towel



# Listener

By Simone Van As

I stand in the middle of the street listening. Listening to all the people walking by, laughing, talking, yelling. I listen to the cars whisp by, tires screeching, horns honking and engines roaring.

Leaving my life behind, those huge walls, in the dead silence of South Africa. Sitting in a small brown chair squished between my weeping mother and my smiling little brother in economy class, balling my eyes out, pondering why me? *Why do I have to be the one to leave?*

After a long 24 hour flight sleeping awkwardly shifting left and right trying to find a comfortable spot, which seemed near impossible, I fell asleep.

The next thing I know, I woke up to the soft droning voice of the flight attendant, informing us we would be landing. I sat up straight, buckled up, and waited impatiently while the plane landed. When I stood up, I could feel the blood rush through my body. It was like I was drinking a ice cold glass of water, on a hot desert day. I was so relieved I could stand up and stretch my legs, even though it felt like I was learning how to walk for the first time again.

After we got off the plane, it hit me, “here we go, this will be our new life in our new home” said my dad, who was picking us up. He had been living here for 3 months trying to find a house for us to live in. Numerous thoughts were running through my head I could hardly keep up with them. *I’m going to be the new girl again, Will people like me, Will I make new friends?, Will they think I’m weird?*

Starting school and trying to make new friends seemed impossible. But when I got to school, it didn’t take long for everyone to realize I was the new girl: the new girl with a funny accent. People were coming up to me every chance they had and asked me questions. I couldn’t help but laugh at some of the questions. Questions such as, “If you’re from Africa, why are you white?” and, “So did you ride an elephant to school?”

Throughout the school year I made friends. I

listened to their problems and helped them.

My name is Simone, it’s French and means listener. Whether or not my parents planned on that, I sure do fit my name. I now am the one walking those streets I once listened to and driving that car someone else hears. But I still listen to the cries of my family and friends in the land I call home.

# Coming Home

By Gretchen Bruss

It was late. The clock just striking 12. Thunder, lightning, rain. He went out, he came home. But this time with a little pink surprise on his crisp white collar. There seemed to be emptiness in the air. A lonely heart, a drunk soul. Kate won’t put up with the lies anymore. She locks the front door, turns around slowly, and walks upstairs. Upstairs to where her first love lay. He lies cold and lifeless but she doesn’t cry. She hopes. She hopes tomorrow will bring happiness and joy, but little does she know that tomorrows surprises are nothing close to sweet. She is alone. She won’t remember the words. The loss. The end. But something will remind her when she is lying in bed with the dead.

# There Is Nothing Better

By Natalie Feder

And the race is off. One after another, they take their turn with the egg on the spoon, down to the cone and back, careful not to drop the egg. We have a comfortable lead with three kids left to go. We can win this. It is up to me to encourage my last three to victory. “Come on guys, take your time, we got this!” The final one crosses the finish line and the team jumps to their feet in excitement. “WE WON!” There is not a face shy of a satisfied smile.

The kids in underprivileged Mound Bayou, Mississippi showed me there is nothing greater than seeing a child succeed. I want to help children to accomplish every task set before them. With my education, I will be more equipped to teach, motivate, lead, and inspire children to fulfill the plan God has set for them.

By Christian Morrissey

I glanced over at the speedometer. One hundred miles per hour. Not bad, but we could do better. As we approached a higher speed, I kept my eyes on the radar, mounted on the middle of the windshield.

We maintained 115 miles per hour for five minutes. As I stared out the passenger side window, I expected to see another car falling quickly behind us. But without looking back, a BMW sped past. And being two teenage boys, we were not going to let him get away.

My friend's foot was on the floor. A 1997 Sebring was no match for a BMW. Surprisingly, we stayed twenty feet behind the car. As we raced around a slight turn in the highway, my body went numb, like thousands of dull needles softly poking me. The radar blared.

We were speechless. We looked in the mirrors, praying for the impossible. As we saw the undercover Chevy Impala police car rip through the median and onto our side of the highway, I could already hear both of our parents yelling. This time, a different set of lights glared at us. The blue and red was all we could see.

"Would you like me to give you a ticket for going 108 or for street racing?" the officer asked.

I had no answer for him. My hands trembled as the officer collected my friend's license, and mine five minutes later.

My friend had to pay off a 450 dollar ticket and find a chauffeur for fifteen days while his license was suspended.

Looking back on that day, no matter how much fun I thought it was, I know it was not worth it. And although I didn't receive a ticket, I learned to slow down and think—whether on the road or in life.

By Alexandra Olson

*The Land of Opportunity*...the common cliché phrase associated with the United States. This is because, time and again, the US has proved to be an outlet for people who need a new start. America is what it is because a life can be made here. A person can come from anywhere in the world and have a chance (or an opportunity) to be somebody great. Whether they want to escape poverty or just increase their annual income, they can make it happen in America.

In every nation, there is and there always will be poverty. But in a great nation like ours, there is also much wealth. One of the greatest things about our country is the opportunity to be what you want to be and make a living doing it. *The American Dream*. It has no definition. It changes from person to person. For some, the *American Dream* might be a white picket fence and a tire swing. For others, it could be backpacking across the states or serving in the military. Whether you want to settle in or stay out, you are free to live your *American Dream* the way you want.

My great uncle Ricky was born in Poland. A young man in his mid-twenties, looking to start over. When he came to the US, he didn't have much more than a pocket watch. Today, he is a multimillionaire living in California. As I've been told, he owned a belt-buckle factory in the late 80's and more recently became the co-founder of Netflix. He has made great use of the *Land of Opportunity* just as many others have.

The idea that someone can immigrate to America with a single idea and in less than a decade put it into affect is phenomenal. However, every great idea has its oppositions. Although in America it is possible to make an idea come to life, it is also possible for an idea to fail and bring someone to bankruptcy. But that is just another great freedom we have in America. We can put everything we have into building a business, hoping we will become altogether better because of it...and many become exactly that.



# Voices

By Alli Pichler

Everyone in my family has a different voice. My father's voice is like a terrible storm, thunderous and intense. And me, my voice is soft. It is calm, and gentle. My sister's voice is irritating and loud. It is the sound of finger nails scratching on a chalkboard. Grandma's voice is sharp-speaks out about her opinions more than necessary. And Danny, who is the youngest in my family, has a high-pitched voice like a train whistle.

But my aunts voice, my aunt's voice, like the breeze, like a choir of songbirds because her tune is never out of pitch, sweet to listen to when she is singing to you, singing to you and you feel at ease, is the taste of a batch of brownies after you bake them, is the aroma she gives off after spraying perfume on her skin, and you stand near her, the wind outside blowing, and Danny laughing. The wind, the laughing, and my aunt's voice that sounds like a choir of songbirds.

## 13 Months and Counting...

By Madie Berg

Everyone has a favorite childhood memory, whether it is a lemonade stand, playing pretend, or riding a bike. No matter what that memory is, in many cases that childhood memory shapes a person into who they are, who they were, and who they will become; that memory creates an escape from reality back to a time of simpler days and carefree actions.

For my friend Sara, 18, her childhood memory served as an escape from the hellish reality that she faced after the age of nine. Sara's mom was an alcoholic.

As a young child, Sara dealt with her mom's uncontrollable insanity. She put up with her random beatings, and suffered through her teen years without a mom who cared, or listened.

This heart-wrenching story began when Sara was at the early age of nine. She remembered her life being different than most, when she went to friends houses their moms would have a snack ready, and a hug to give them and when Sara had friends at her house, her mom, unsure of how to be a mom, hid in

her room until her friends were gone. Although Sara had thought about the differences in her friend's moms and hers, she did not think much of it; this life was a normal life for her.

As the middle school years went on Sara learned about abuse and alcoholism in health class, and discovered that the hellhole she had been living in was a mirror image of what she had been learning. With this newfound knowledge Sara tried to stop her mom from drinking, she would dump out bottles of liquor and pull the beer can out of her moms hand to get her to stop.

Negatively reacting, Sara's mom would beat her and verbally abuse her. With her dad, working third shift, and her brother oblivious Sara did not know whom to turn to. Breaking down one night Sara talked to her Dad about what had been happening and her dad told her that he would help her mom get some help.

Entering into her high school years Sara's mom went to rehab, which helped for one month, and then the drinking continued.

"My mom was either crabby or drunk," she said.

She remembered hearing somewhere that high school was suppose to be the best time of your life. Sara's was far from that, she learned that her mom's problems were not disappearing like her dad had promised but had progressively gotten worse.

Re-entering rehab for the second time was a struggle but Sara's mom managed to stay sober for six months after. Continuing in her foolish ways her mom was back to drinking. Sara with little hope remembered thinking to herself, "Alcoholism is a life style, and I have to learn to deal with it."

With little hope, Sara's dad put her mom back in rehab and it was a success. Sara's mom has now been sober for 13 months and counting.

Through it all Sara has become an independent and strong woman. She attends UW-Madison and plans to major in pre-law. Although her mom struggled and she essentially had to raise herself, she says this made her appreciate the value of life.





# *Eclectic Soup*

*2010-2011*

*A Collection of Creativity*



# At P&G Beauty Makeover Needs to Prove It Has Legs

By Katelyn Widenski

One man, one woman.

She felt weak in his strong presence,

While he struggled with her apparent beauty.

Together, they had a family, raised a baby,

Built a household in their early years.

Every day, she missed him

He sent her roses, filled with underlying concern

That she would recess, and pickup another man.

However, she was disloyal and her skin was cold,

But she still loved him.

Two customers of love separated overseas.

# Baby Sea Turtles

By Kelly Gross

The damp sand begins to rustle

Waves crashing, the sun rising

Out crawls a new beginning of life

They start their lengthy journey home

As they near the ocean; a struggle

Discovering where they belong

# California's Plan is Hope for Bond Holders

By Billy Gardner

Your skittish bonds have paid me rejection

Your haircut doesn't protect development

Losing to you spells out victory for me

I put the fault on you and there will be no settlement

You have no more matured then a few years ago

So now I say Good-Bye, Good-bye for nothing

# A Workout Ate My Marriage

By Jessica Peskie

He is romantic and supportive

Cheerful and happy

With an attractive physique how could he upset me?

We find ourselves eating dinner every night and staying up past nine

We find each other inspiring and interesting

Amazed at each other's every move

I cheer him on in races

And he helps me feel secure in my silly phases

I need to be a part of his life every day.

He is Mr. Lewis and he is my man.

# Different Paths

By Amanda Bauer

A nurse and a doctor, together for 6 long years

Committed to pursue a fulfilling career together

Together they evolved into quality professionals.

They hit a rough path and it was a long haul

With no money, no transportation, and severe shortages

It all made their underpinning needs a target to pursue

Until Doctors got promoted to specialized training with Physician Assistants

Before the nurse knew it, she was independent

Misinformed about the new venture

She sadly watched the Physician take over  
Unprepared for the future  
Is now ending with 2 different pursued paths

## Arizona

By Jordy Pendergast

Soaring over the desert, I begin to feel it is real  
Knowing I am back, to where I've been dreaming to be  
Mountains in the distance, sun beating on my face. I never  
want to leave

## AS Digital Wave Pounds TV, Hulu Plots a New Script

It remains unclear,  
With a dilemma facing the faint of heart,  
A strategy built upon the universe,  
Behaviors changing,  
Disruptive people staging the plot  
I unveil my true feelings, but not in a traditional way.  
You are extra terrestrial.  
My love for you Hulu, is unbearable.  
Yet, I am left worrying at the receiving end of the  
hung up phone.

## As Food Prices Soar, Eateries Scramble

By Aly Stoller

Bad weather has risen  
Over the past six months.  
We are scrambling,  
Not soaring,  
And I demand to be free.  
No more chains.  
You have driven me to  
Pursue another

As well as challenge my confidence.  
Fragile, sensitive  
Coping, but free.

Confidence will be restored.

## Generous Love

By Ashley Farina

Love is a work in progress  
The first step is a promise  
Love can be painful  
But it's never shameful  
Love can be misguided  
But it's never controlled  
Conserve your concerns  
and always focus on long-term

## Her Message

By Zach Klemp

Her message was lively,  
The way she focused,  
On the last stage,  
Of the relationship that,  
She just violated,  
With her anxiety,  
That she would tax my health.

## My Legs Hurt

By Kaylie Phillips

Lace up my shoes, charge the watch  
Grab my iPod, go out the door  
Start towards the road, begin  
Mile seven, got runner's high  
Mile twelve, I am panting  
Thirteen done, I'll hurt tomorrow



# Body Warrior

By Christian Morrissey, Steve Gerger, Jordy Pendergast, and Brady Vassar

A quick arm workout,  
Lower body warrior workout,  
75 minute squeeze routine,  
Via webcam,  
We streamed out video.  
Constantly adding new participants,  
We had to stop a few times,  
So Richard Davis could keep up.  
It was difficult,  
Not to be sore.  
Plopping back on the couch,  
We progress to sleep mode,  
With dreams of working out.

# Bond

By Anonymous

A developing bond  
An invested relationship  
An assurance of protection  
A set system  
A required friend  
A guaranteed battle  
A general settlement  
A lifelong agreement  
Future to look forward to  
Your best friend

# After the Losses—Play it Safe

By Brittany McNellis

After the losses—play it safe.  
After all the fighting,  
the broken commitments, the crisis,  
tough criticism, and taking advantage.  
After exposure, lack of appreciation,  
and investing time during the past two years.  
After the losses—play it safe.  
Re-examine disastrous decisions,  
stop the turmoil  
venture toward a new strategy.

A higher-quality of life.

Reduce the risk of a broken heart.

After the losses—play it safe.

# Wind

By Maggie Dubnicka

A sweet ephemeral breath  
A penetrating gust of chilling ire  
Eddies kick up in a sigh of death  
From which devils dare aspire  
  
This sense of freedom in its splendor  
Has no earthly limit  
No man-made creation can ever render  
Such power decrepit

This force in all its glory  
Has heard and has told  
Many a song and story  
To and from the young and old

What immortal creature is this?  
That-s borne the pure and sinned?  
Such an omnipotent sorrowful bliss  
Could only be the restless wind.

# Private Equity Makes Return to IPO Game

By Caitlin Pilgrim and Colton Sweitzer

The stakes are high  
Lucrative companies invest in one another  
Revenue grows, invest, taxes, depreciations, amortization  
Is up more than 50% since the purchase  
What was once a \$7.3 billion company  
Is now \$1.7 billion  
They try to raise new funds  
But with staggering hope  
Investors try to cut a quick and desperate deal  
Honchos are handed back only small amounts  
Of what was once lavish

# Camera

By Rachel Martell

You pick me up, press all my buttons.  
I never wanted to get so close to your face.  
I am tired of spending all day in a case hid away.  
You know I love to travel too!  
Click click, no I don't need to see that.  
I never agreed to witness this.

# Broken Peace

By Danielle Caliendo

The warm sun, the swaying grass,  
The birds singing, completely serene.  
My meditation, so deep,  
So tranquil..."DANI, DANI!"  
My little sister, my broken peace,  
"What?"..."Oh, I forgot."

# Wall Street Poem

By Danielle Caliendo

Her figure was attractive, her expression genteel.  
Her traditional heir peaked his attention at their first meal.  
  
When he was near her, his spirit was heartened.  
Every conviction was pardoned  
  
But she wrapped her powerful tentacles around him,  
Capturing his fragmented heart in her prison.  
  
He will never be the same again.

# Dead and Dying

By Brooke Renning

The lonely trees, they cry so soft  
Dying slow, begging for help  
Growing leaves, now fallen trash  
From Mother Earth, acid rain tears  
Her rivers run black, lifeless hell  
Mother be saved, mother be well

# Doggy

By Christian Morrissey

I call his name, he comes here  
I show him love, he gives it back  
I scratch behind his ears gently  
He licks my face all over  
We play Frisbee in the park  
I want a dog really bad

# Light Emitting

By Giana Enders

Demand Will for the next first time  
Leap over everything to work with, since the  
major relationship  
I'm laid out in need for shifting dynamics and  
strength  
Forth coming from dedication and being hurt by  
the weaker  
I suffered a slow start I question will I ever be  
light emitting again?

# Gymnastics

By Brittany McNellis

Gymnastics. Flexibility—don't get bent out of  
shape,  
mentally or physically. Moving forward, staying  
strong...  
for perfection is a difficult thing to acquire.

# Global Warming

By Steven Gerger

See the flow of the river. It can't be  
stopped, for water lasts.  
Rain and lakes—Cool mountain streams,  
are all sources of this current.  
Believe me. Rivers will dry up. When this  
world ends, air engulfs water.



# An Attraction

By Marissa Weber

An attraction nearly impossible to escape  
Far too powerful to underestimate  
An attraction shared between you and me  
The potential to grow is powerfully likely  
A smile so bright it attracts the majority  
The competition is far away, no competition at all  
really,  
An attraction shared between you and me  
An attraction nearly impossible to escape.

# Relationships

By Anonymous

You're dealing with something that's very different  
than a created interactive game.

We certainly don't ever want to cross the line of  
taking anything too lightly,

But in these communities things tend to blend  
together.

They strive for an approach, initial attempt to plug  
into what's happening.

Challenging, casual communication,

Delivering somewhat serious messages.

We want to make sure we're having that type of  
conversation,

Instead of being too serious, or too silly,

Trying not to cause zero involvement.

Staying cautious, having concerns.

One moment they're talking too seriously,

The next about the best pizza they ever had.

Questions on its page with answers,

Hidden beneath gold coins, scattered.

Now we're finding their voices, communicating,

growing mutual,  
describes in history.

While still maintaining this scavenger hunt

Sharing this intellectual capital

you're inviting people to help you succeed

As misleading or unsuitable outlines,

Commenting. Recommendations. Advice.

# A Fond Memory

By Danielle Caliendo

My grandpa held me tight in his arms,

He would tease,

"The mystical trap will not let you leave,

Say the magic word and you will be free."

I would try

Abracadabra, alakazam, open sesame!"

When he heard one he liked, he would let me be.

I would play and laugh...happy.

I loved that time, so strong in my memory,

Though he wouldn't remember it,

Seeing as he doesn't remember me.

# Generous Love

By Anonymous

Love is a work in progress

The first step is a promise

Love can be painful

But it's never shameful

Love can be misguided

But it's never controlled

Conserve your concerns

and always focus on long-term

# Spring

By Nicole Adamski

I heard the spring wind calling, painting the earth with color.  
I heard the spring rain—murmuring, promises of greener days.  
Born of many voices, summer is mine for the next six months.

## Visit

By Jessica Peskie

I live here now, not by choice  
I visit there, that is my choice  
Houses and land is all I see  
I wish to see lights, a city!  
Taxis buildings, nonstop energy  
Take me to this place, oh that is my dream

## Indoor Marathons Keep Runners Going in Circles

By Kaitlyn Tarala

Our potential keeps me going in circles.  
We could complete one another,  
We could experience the thrill.  
I crave a chance to be your world.  
I want to win the race.  
One shot. One shot to start a history.  
We can go the distance. I Promise.

## Korea

By Anonymous

Oh my, shoulder pads - how divine!  
Is that...chocolate?  
Smells like cats and cigarettes.  
Cuts here, seams there  
Must have been trying to get through the 90's.

# The Question

By Jake Sueflohn

After knowing you  
Being single is insufferable  
I have a question for you  
Say yes  
Your beauty weaves a spell on me  
The possibility of being rescued-none  
I have a question for you  
Say yes  
For this meandering drama called love  
I want my companion to be you  
I have a question for you  
Say yes

## Gas Exports Fuel Debate

By Kelly Gross

It comes in abundance  
And it comes in barren.  
It's developed and discovered  
And it never occurred to anyone.  
Its forward, crude, and competitive  
And it's justified by many.  
It moves at a rapid rate  
And exported before you know.  
It happens in a few weeks  
And it happens for a life time  
It's what the world calls love  
And it's knocking down our doors.



# Something New

By Lexie Zettel

From the article Novel Effort To Fight Cancer With Cancer Cells by Ron Winslow

As it developed,  
Like a fir far away,  
It strategically produced a tumor  
Of something completely new,  
Something significantly different,  
Challenging beliefs.  
A provocative twist.  
Translating to love.

# No Limits

By Liz Duchow

Fannie and Freddie

They leave footprints on each other's hearts  
Driven by love,  
They believe they can resist any fight.  
They unite with fiery promises of the future.  
Others argue during a crisis,  
Fannie and Freddie face the pressure with much risk.  
With courage and stability spurring them to believe,  
Their love knows no limits

# My Love

By Dani deWerff

My love for you is permanent.  
Your face continues to distract me.  
In February you confronted me among a dozen roses.  
Next you said, "Marry me?"  
My love for you is permanent.

# Saving People

By Anonymous

Rescuers: the few, the brave; to save a life  
their only goal  
Trustworthy, Daring and bold, Helping and  
brave, Reviving you  
Life flashes before your eyes, Failing is not an  
option

# Springtime

By Anonymous

The earth shifts, spring will soon be here. Flowers  
magically blooming.  
Birds, on the dot, chirping in the early morning,  
searching for worms.  
Rain sprinkling down, once the storm vanishes, kids  
jumping in puddles.

# Golf

By Nicholas Gmeinder

Wake up at nine, take a shower.  
Get on my clothes, go to the course.  
Beautiful day, course is empty.  
Play nine holes well, shot thirty one  
Not consistent, will not go pro.  
Going home, to play Tiger 12

# Red

By Giana Enders

Red is the color, I see! When I give up – on everything.  
Blood filled mouth, your painful fist. You must have heed, I  
had no motion.  
The silence, after that. Sounded something like – the  
ocean.

2010-2011

# Eclectic Soup

A Collection of Creativity



Photograph Poetry Prose  
Folk Short Stories Art



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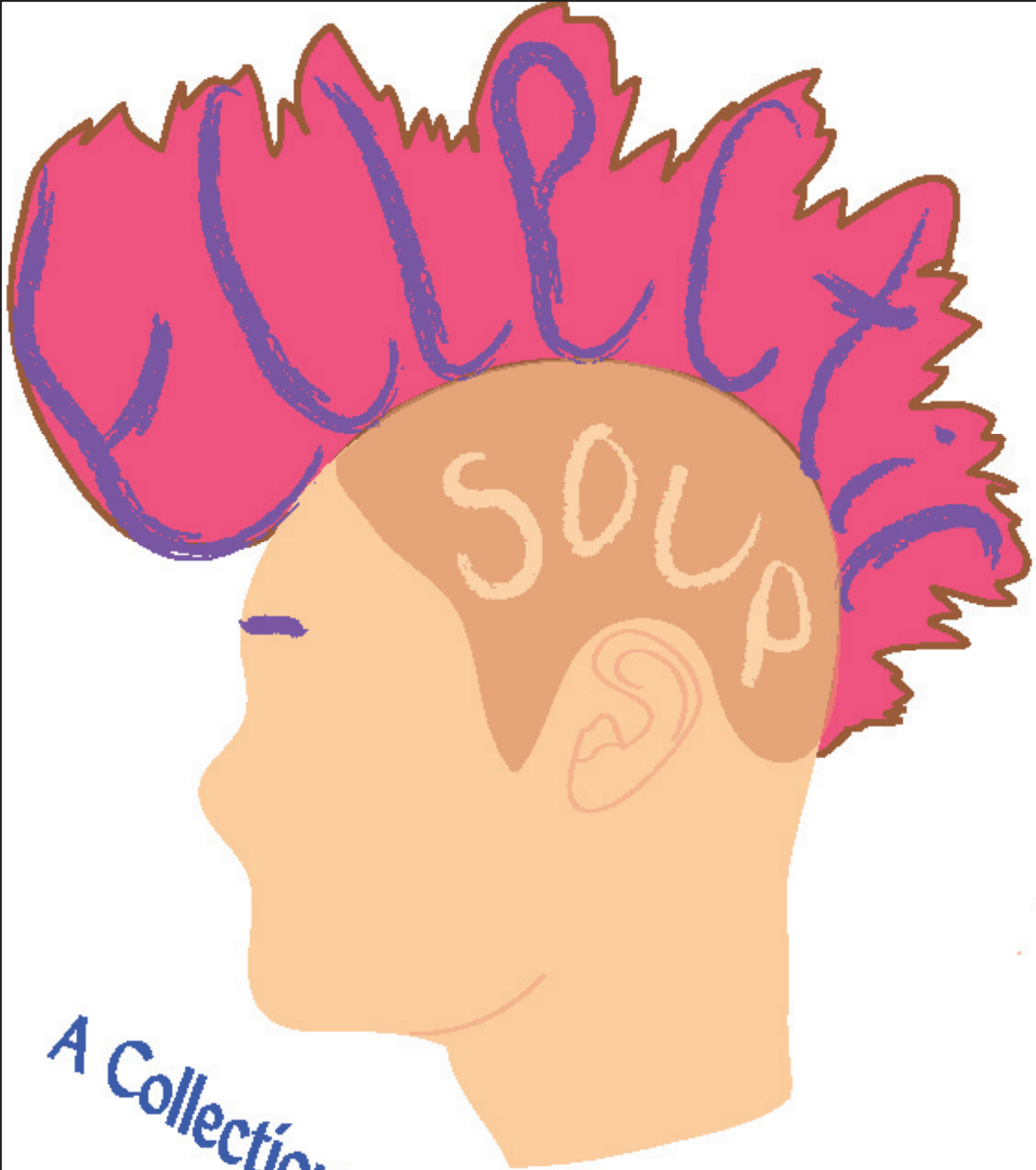
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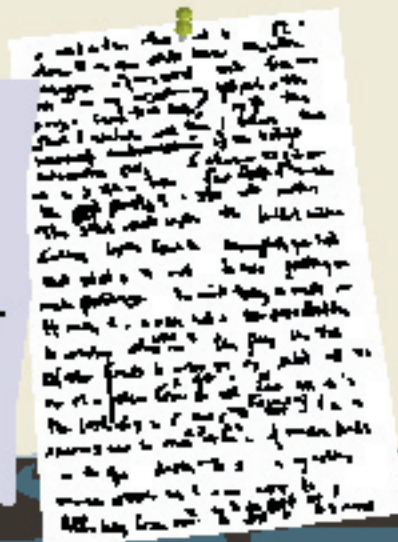
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2010 2011

## *Ec•lec•tic Soup*

[ih-klek-tik] [soop] - noun

a selection of ideas, styles, or tastes from a broad and diverse range of sources







# edlectic SOUP

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# ECLECTIC SOUP

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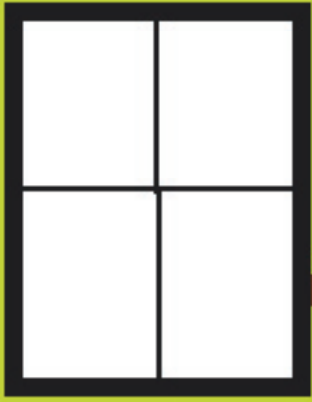






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# Eclectic Soup





Thanks to  
everyone who  
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Sarah

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Pitzo  
Fleury  
el Oury





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