THE BUCKEYE
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Cover Art:
Junior school Purchase Award
William Sullivan

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The Buckeye is a magazine of writing and art from seventh and eighth grade classes at Montgomery Bell Academy. The title was inspired by the buckeye tree that stood in the grove on the north end of campus. It was once a familiar gathering place for both faculty and students.
September 10, 1930:

My name is Jeremiah Smith. I’m 14 years old. I was born on September 23, 1917. My father died in 1918, during the final year of the Great War, a proud soldier of John Pershing’s army. I live in Flint, Michigan with my little sister, my older brother, and my mom. My mom is very strict about us being called “African Americans” as opposed to “black people” or “Negroes.” My sister goes to a preschool in Flint with the rest of our race. My brother helps out on our farm, which is a little bit outside of Flint. Me, I like the city. I love the feeling of running across rooftops, the wind rushing through my hair. Occasionally, I find a couple of dollars or a bit of food. One time, I tripped on top of a roof, and fell onto someone’s balcony. There was an unopened loaf of bread, which I took. I can’t help myself. I need to survive. Unfortunately, I don’t get to do that much. We’re very poor, so I have to work on the farm a lot. My mom desperately needs to find a job, but it’s the Great Depression! It’s hard for a white man to find work, so imagine what it’s like if you’re an African American woman! At home, I like to entertain myself with comics like Superman, Flash Gordon, and Dick Tracy. I used to hang out with my cousin, Jack Smith, but since we moved, I haven’t seen him.

September 13, 1930:

I just got a letter from Jack. It informed me that he had been planning on going to Washington, but didn’t have a home, so he was going to try to visit me as soon as possible. I was thrilled! I went downstairs to tell my mom the great news.

“Mom,” I called, “Jack is coming to visit!”

“That’s great, honey. But we need food. So here, take this money and get a loaf of bread and some milk.” She said.

I dashed out of the house, and flagged down a cab for African Americans. As I sat there, I looked down at the five dollar bill in my hands. It was an awful lot of money for me, so I would spend it wisely.

“We’re here!” shouted the cab driver.

“Thanks.” I hopped out of the cab and started to walk toward the store.

“Hey, come back!” said the cab driver.

He charged me the whole five bucks I had! I ran into a shop and pleaded for help. Suddenly, I heard a shout. “It’s the Ku Klux Klan!” Everyone ran for the door, except for one little African American kid, probably around 5-6 years old...
old.

“Kid, get out of here!” shouted the store owner, frantically waving his arms.

“Stop!” A booming voice shouted.

Everyone froze. The speaker walked into the shop.

“I am Nathan Bedford Forrest. A leader of the Confederate Army! And the Ku Klux Klan.”

I had heard enough. I quietly scooted around the man and sprinted out the door. I heard gunshots behind me, likely directed at me. I hoped everyone had escaped, but I didn’t have time to look back. I climbed a ladder onto the roof. I could hear the angry footsteps of the man thundering on the ground below me. I ran across the roof and leapt onto another one, landing in a roll to break the impact. I ran to an old sewer pipe (What the heck was that doing on a roof?) and hid inside it. My palms got very sweaty as the man thundered past me. I had to peek! I had to! No, I couldn’t! Yes, I could! Arrrghhhh! Finally, my curiosity getting the best of me, I peeked out the side of the hole, only to see a man in a white conical hat and white robes with a red symbol and the letters “KKK”. He had a flintlock pistol aimed at my face, while several other men, dressed the same as him, crowded in behind him. “AAAAAAAHAAAA!!” I screamed, jumping up. I bolted around the pipe, and leapt to the next roof. The men tried to follow me, and oh, what a disaster that was for them. The first man jumped off the other roof, banged his chin on the one I was on, and fell into a large metal container below. The next man jumped up, but his foot got caught on the roof, and he swung down into some old lady’s apartment. As long as he lived, he would never forget that mistake. Moments later, there was a sound like a gong as the old lady banged him in the head with a frying pan.

“You horrible brute!” She shouted. “You little juvenile should-” She never got to finish her sentence, because the man hit her. She recoiled back, holding her face. But then, to make matters worse for the man, a shoe came out of the house, and boy, did you ever see something hit someone so hard. Another old lady charged out of the house, and knocked him over the railing with an umbrella. A second later, another shoe came flying out of the house and hit the man, knocking him out. I ran towards home, chuckling, until I remembered the food I was supposed to get. For the rest of the way home, I hung my head in shame.

September 15, 1930:

Word finally reached me that Jack had been stopped by the Ku Klux Klan. I hoped he was okay, and decided to go to my brother, John, for help. I knocked on his door. Continued on page 5
“The Journal of Jeremiah Smith”

By Kyle Tavi

“What you want, squirt?” he growled.
“Let me in!” I shouted boldly.

That was a mistake. In one swift motion, he opened the door, grabbed me by the collar, pulled me in, and slammed it shut. He threw me to the ground and hovered over me. He had black hair, cut into a mohawk. He was wearing a shirt with his favorite heavy metal band logo on it. He had on black shorts with skulls on the sides. He was a pretty gruesome sight.

“What you starin’ at?” he said.
“N-Nothing! Nothing at all!” I managed to stammer out.

He picked me up by the shirt and slammed me against the wall.
“I don’t believe you.” His fist was dangerously close to my face, so I decided to cut the act.

Okay, okay,” I whimpered. “I wanted to see if you’d drive me to find Jack.”

What happened next was kind of painful, so I won’t write about it. I ran downstairs, clutching my shoulder. It had taken most of the impact of getting slammed around so much. I went to complain to my mom, but she was busy weeping into her hands. I didn’t want to know why. These were bad times, and I don’t know if they’ll ever get better.

September 18, 1930:

I was walking down the road to the city when I saw an old lady crossing the street. She was African American, like me. “Hey, do you need any help?” I asked her. “Oh, thank you, sonny. It’s been hard to find a decent gentleman since 1885, when that wretched Ku Klux Klan business started. “You’re welcome!” I replied kindly. I escorted her across the street. When I was done, I started to walk away. “Oh, no you don’t!” she exclaimed, rushing toward me. “I won’t let you leave until I give you this.” She reached into her purse and pulled out a ten dollar bill. “Wow!” I said accepting the money. “Thank you!” She merely nodded, and walked away muttering something about a new frying pan and a bad husband. I ran across the street, to the comic store. The clerk was about to serve me when a white man walked in. The clerk stopped mid-sentence and went to serve him. “Wha-What-Why?” I sputtered, my face turning red. I calmed myself and waited until the clerk served me. I walked home that day with two Flash Gordons, three Dick Tracys, and a Bride-To-Be Romances book for my sister Marigold. When I got home, Marigold nearly tackled me with a hug.

“Yay, you got da bwide to be womances book!”” she yelled with excitement.
“Yeah, sis, I got it.” I chuckled.

I loved Marigold. I loved her more than anything in

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my life. This world would be a cruel one without her, and I was glad. Glad for my sister. Glad for my mom. Even glad for my brother. As I sat there, I remembered my dad. His fun personality, his hilarious jokes. His golden smile, and the way he always made me laugh. How he would dress up as Santa and climb onto the rooftop. How he was never afraid to be himself. When I grow up, I want to be just the man he was.
The red, ratty, and rusty school chair
Grimy as can be
Sits in the back of the room
Staring up at me
Its rusty posts like an old fishing boat
Hold it there for me
The crusty snot from many-a-kid
Sticks to the bottom unseen
The metal backing caked with dirt
Keeps the metal without a sheen
Old and worn down like a farmer’s work bench
The chair looked up at me
I spoke to the chair very quietly
Knowing everyone could hear

I pulled the chair to the front of the room
For everyone to see
I climbed onto the busted chair
Where on top I felt like a tree
I leapt off the back knowing I could fly
Flapped in the air like nobody could see
But hit my head on another desk
And then proceeded to cry
I leapt to my feet anger in my eyes
I turned to face the chair
At this moment I knew
The Boys had told me lies

Owen Smith
Grayson Hill

Clay Crews

Sims Lance
“Sonnet 1”
By Colin Smith

Thine eyes are like the aquamarine sea,
Yet see the details in the flakes of snow;
And though the dove compares itself to thee,

It finds it always ends up far below.

Thy hair is golden like the autumn leaves,
Though Cupid took his shot from far above;
The one thing that my heart truly believes

Is nothing can divert the force of love.

Though time may change us like the summer sun
And age may take its toll, hold up your chin;
I’ll still love you until my days are done,

For I know that true beauty lies within.

For thy beauty is only a small part,
Of what makes thou beautiful, that’s thy heart.

Jairo Santos
Will Brownie

David Koziak

Sam Bartholomew
Third Place Poetry

“Lacrosse Stick”

By Charlie Mason

As I walk into the locker room and see that old blue bag
Worn with experience
But I think not about the blue bag but what’s in it.
Silver and Red
It shines like a star
It gets cold when the temperature drops.
It gets wet when the sky cries.
Its body is as long as a sword
And on the field is almost as deadly.
To a certain player
It is a basket with a long shaft
A red string borders it
My alma mater’s colors
And the softest mesh in the world
Which is chained to it
The mesh is as white as a dove
The shaft has dents and bumps
But it is still perfect to me
And when you hold it
You determine the native’s game.
When you hold it you determine the lives of your fellow classmates

When I run with this stick I can almost copy
The great Athenian runner announcing to the city of Athens “Nike”
I feel invincible with it
Its is not a burden
Or a pain
Unless it is thrust at your ribs
It was a man down play
I caught the ball on the island
My defender thinks he is too cool.
I did a time and room shot
The rubber circle sprinted towards the goal
I would like to say in the 70 mph range
Right past the post and the master goalie’s foot.
Score.

With this stick I can be like the pioneers of old
Blazing a trail of broken ankles.
Victory lap
Photographer snap
I am like a bird and the stick my wing.
And at the end all is well for the war we fought
Is over and we are the champs.
Sam Bartholomew

Stanford Thombs

Maxwell Battle
William Clark

James Kinard

Matthew Milam
Honorable Mention Poetry

“Smoke”

By Thomas McRae

It was just a little whips of smoke
That gradually grew, I could’ve never knew
It would make me choke

No higher ground, caught in this explosion
But one false step, I could’ve never prep
Being caught buried under the burning emotion

Every fickle feeling is enhanced
Portraying my persona, in fear of mortality
That I am alone, in a space where light is now smoke

Walker Byrd - Self Portrait
“Wait!” I exclaimed, putting my head back in its sockets. Crowds are not my thing, especially when hundreds of classmates are releasing their inner barbarian. I saw hurdling, clawing; all that’s “vital” for escaping our so-called prison for the next three months. Of course I got pushed to the back with Andy again.

“I’m right here Alfred, I’m headed exactly where you’re headed.” My name is Albert Ford, which somehow turned into Alfred.

Andy is always reassuring in a way. We’ve been best friends since we could breathe, probably since we’re twins. Sure we’d had our fair share of fights, but we would have to shape up if we were planning on seeing our granddad this summer.

Often referred to as “Father Ford,” our granddad had been the foundation of our family for many years until our grandmother died several years ago. Partially for that reason, we haven’t seen him since the June of ’09. It’s also because my granddad had acquired cancer after I saw him last. He’d been suffering from the disease for nearly half a year, and he had seen no sign of hope since. My mother is sending my brother and me up to New York to see him. It feels like the first time in forever, and possibly the last time for forever. The first day of summer was the soonest available in our busy seventh grade schedules.

“Got the tickets?” Something tells me I shouldn’t have trusted Andy with those tickets.

“You got it, dude.” said Andy, reassuringly.

Mom had packed our suitcases, booked our flights, and written personalized notes on our sack lunches, all before we knew about the trip. If we were asked if we wanted to go, Andy probably would have said yes I guess I know him pretty well and I would have been reluctant. Back in the good ol’ days, Andy would talk to my Granddad, and I would hang with my Grandma. I could read her mind better than Andy’s. When we visited, we would solve all the world’s problems before noon, and then play some cards or board games while Andy and Granddad were out fishing.

Having no trouble finding our Power Ranger suitcases thanks Mom, we left the airport to explore the Big Apple (from the taxicab window) before sundown. We called a cab that only took half an hour to arrive.

“Shotgun!” said Andy, so excited he could barely walk. I don’t think he really understood what Granddad was going through though. Andy’s envisioning a Man’s Weekend like they used to have in Carolina, but Granddad’s been in-and-out of the hospital for the past six months, so I’m not expecting more than eating, sleeping, and a whole lot of Summer reading couldn’t be happier.

Beautiful NYC. I haven’t been here since Grandma and Granddad moved for health reasons. While I watch the Empire State building scrape the-OH MY CRASH!! Our cab got t-boned.

“ANDY!! ANDY!! Can you hear me?!” I screamed. I got out of the cab as soon as I could. The driver looked dead, and Andy was unconscious. I had to call Mom. I couldn’t finish a sentence before Mom and Dad were on a plane to New York.

Once they arrived, Mom dealt with Andy in the ER while I sat with my dad in the waiting room. Imagine being worried about confessing you failed your IPS exam, falling off the bed in the middle of the night, and getting simultaneously punched on both sides of your face at full speed. Put it in a pot and add some brussel sprouts to feel half as bad as I do now. Mom just had come out.

“Is Andy okay?”

“Yes. He’s gonna be fine. We’re going to have to fly him back to

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“My Grandfather’s Clock”  
By Mauro Mastrapasqua

Raleigh with us because he needs the help that Granddad just can’t provide. I hope you understand, and it’d help us out a great deal if you stayed with Granddad. I know he’d love to see you, and that’s really our only option right now.”

I couldn’t say no for obvious reasons. I eventually arrived at Granddad’s apartment around midnight. Summer had gone great so far.

I woke up the next afternoon to my Granddad’s cat “loving” on my cheek. I hadn’t slept this much since I had scheduled nap times. I walked out to the kitchen/living room to find my Granddad in an “I Heart NY” t-shirt reading the Times.

“Good Afternoon Albert.”
“Yes Ma’am,” I replied, half asleep and rubbing my eye.
“Maybe you should go on back to bed Albert. You’ve had a rough weekend.”
“I’ll be fine.” I fell backward. Thank the Lord the chair caught me. It’d be my home till the next morning.

I woke up again, starving as ever. I ran to the kitchen and scavenged the refrigerator. “Growing boy,” said Granddad.

Not really knowing how to respond, I replied, “Yes sir.”
“I remember when I was your age, back in the ‘50s. I’d eat everything I could get my hands on. It eventually stopped once I went to West Point. I lost a lot of weight that year. I lost so much weight, I…” My Granddad went on and on. All I wanted was food, but I guess he didn’t normally have anybody to talk to. I sat down in the chair across from his with my excessively large bowl of Bran Flakes.

“…It wasn’t until after I left the U.S. Military that I joined the police force…”
I just got interested.
“How old were you?” I interrupted.
“About 28. How come?”
“I’ve always wanted to be a policeman. Working with 911 emergency sounds exciting.”
“I never did that,” replied my granddad. “I was in the investigation department. I had some interesting cases. How much time you got?”
“Till tomorrow night.”
“Perfect,” said Granddad.

Although I was clueless, it sounded reassuring, which reminded me of someone…

* * *

I was so excited the day I joined the police force. It felt as though I became a true American citizen that day. It took some time to earn my respect from my superiors, but I definitely got there. My top case lasted over two months, and required 25 hours of work a day. I’m still not supposed to talk about it, but I guess I can make one exception.

A pair of best friends were dining at a restaurant one Fall evening, when a gigantic man entered, looked, and then whispered to one of the friends. He left after he noticed my fellow officer was seated across from me at the restaurant. We went back to the station to talk in private, when a murder was reported behind that same restaurant, no more than 30 minutes later. When we arrived at the crime scene, we found the friend that was whispered to dead as a doornail. He was bleeding from the chest area from what seemed to be a bullet shot, and all signs pointed toward the tall man that interrupted the victim’s meal.

He was around 26 years of age. He had light blonde hair and a paralyzed right arm. We conducted all the tests we could. Traced the bullet, researched the victim, etc. The victim seemed to have been close to a murderer

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“My Grandfather’s Clock”

By Mauro Mastrapasqua

that died recently after his court case. That might explain his leaving the restaurant when he saw my deputy.

My deputy and I interviewed the prime suspect. He was very quiet and obviously didn’t want to be there who would?

“What did you say to the victim?” I asked him.

“I asked him who his friend was and why he didn’t meet me at my place an hour ago,” he replied.

“Why would he have met you at your place?”

“Uh, we were gonna go out to lunch I guess, I dunno.” “Interesting. Where?”

My deputy interrupted. “That’s irrelevant. Next Question”

“Actually Officer I was gonna go to the same restaurant he was when you saw him,” said the suspect.

We waited for some time before I asked my next question. “Do you have any relation to the man that was sitting next to him?”

“Not really. I’ve only seen him a few times recently with my friend the victim, but uhh other than that no.”

“Thank you. That will be all”

My partner interrupted again, “No sir. We are most certainly not finished here”

I interrupted, “Actually sir we are finished here. You are free to go. Your interview was much appreciated.”

“Thank you, Officer,” replied the suspect. The suspect left the room. “What was the for? I had more questions!” said my deputy. “Don’t you see it?” I replied.

“What?”

“Come on! Quick!” He followed me as I bolted to the police car. There was no time to waste. Our siren was blaring as I was racing down the highway. My deputy was so clueless. But there was no time to explain.

I got out of the car and ran into a house I had never seen before, but I knew where we were. It look somewhat abandoned.

“Where are we?” asked my deputy.

“Shhhh! Silence!” I led my deputy as we crept up the stairs with our pistols ready and looked through all the rooms. We went into one and heard a floorboard creak behind us. We were petrified. We turned around only to find a man with a pistol pointed right at my deputy and me.

“I’ve got you right where I want you!” said the new prime suspect. I put my gun down. “What do you want from us?”

“Just hand me your gun!” said the culprit, only to be shocked from his blind spot by none other than our Chief Officer. The culprit was startled and pulled his trigger. His bullet took the right arm of my deputy, and he’d never get it back.

It took our Chief Officer about twenty seconds to suffocate the culprit. Those twenty seconds were the last he’d serve, which he announced once we returned to the station.

“I’m putting my badge to rest as of this Friday. I would like to see all those who think they have what it takes to step forward.” My deputy and I were the only ones that stepped forward, but my deputy slowly stepped back.

“We saw your interview, Chief Officer Ford. You made the cut.”
Rascoe Bond Davis Creative Writing Awards

Second Place Prose
“The Voices”
By Tim Blaufuss

Third Place Prose
“Erik the Dwarf”
By Aaron White
“The Night Sky”
By Ashton Terrell

Sure, everybody loves daytime
But have you seen the beauty of the night sky?
The thrill to see the gleaming starts
Up in the sky so very far
Or to see the beautiful black and blue
The perfect color for me and you
And this is exactly why
You should love the night sky

William Tyrone
“Wanted”

By Sam Bartholomew

Someone to do my homework at night
   Must be smart as a whip
Good at math, science, history, literature, vocabulary, and grammar
   Must be able to get me straight A’s
Must not get distracted like I do, and play outside when there is work to be done
   Must help me understand how to do the work
   Must never take sick days
   Must always be early and never late
   Must never get tired or lazy
   Must do your job non-stop until summer
   Must enjoy to read
If you are good, the teacher will give an A and never a C
“Ode to Nutella”
By Scott Wallace

Mmmmmm…Nutella
So creamy and delicious
The only problem is
It isn’t very nutritious!

Mmmmmm…Nutella
Like heaven in your mouth
But did it make like a bird
And fly down South?

Mmmmmm…Nutella
Amazing between bread
But I still can’t find it
Least not at the eatery of the Big Red!

Mmmmmm…Nutella
The only thing I truly lack
But come and look
The Nutella is back!

Jake Stumb - Self Portrait
Jairo Santos
John Sewell
“Soccer Ball”

By Ian Bernatavitz

It sits there in the garage,
Made up of a blue, green, and yellow collage;

The whole ball smooth and round,
Bouncing off that rough concrete ground.

This ball I would play with no other,
Trying to take it, my aggressive annoying big brother;

When I kick the ball with an extra push,
It flies into the back of the net going swoosh.

It rises and drops across the yard like a shooting star,
Until it goes through the windshield of my mom’s car;

This ball with shards of glass is crying,
As you would cry if a dear friend was dying;

As I set the ball in the trash I say, “you were my best friend,”
After our last words, sadly, that was my dearest ball’s end.
Matthew Milam

Finn Houghton

Zach Thomas
Once I was happy for my chair was full with love and kindness,
    But after that one morn I have become weary.
My world is dark and full of blindness
    For this I am no longer merry

We grew old together with joy and laughter
    But now that is gone without a boom or clatter.
For she died quietly in the night.
    And the world lost its one and only light

I have woken up calling her name, forgetting she was gone.
I visit her grave every day calling, “why so soon.”
Now and forever forward I am alone,
To watch the passing of the Earth, Sun, and Moon

Now and forever on I mourn.
Cursing that forsaken morn.
“The Multicolored Dragon”

By Max Giorgio

Multicolored, mystifying

Absolutely sense defying

With scales of green and blue and red

The colors will enter your head

This lizard here is so divine

Look at the Navy on its spine

It's bulging black beguiling eyes

Will unto you hypnotize

The red is like a leaping blaze

The purple like a calming haze

And this why I love this thing

To me it resembles everything

It calms me on difficult days

And make me joyful in different ways

It carries many memories

In a time long forgotten beneath the trees

Eli Kampine
"Mocking Bird by Harper Lee"

By Bennett MacCurdy

My you were a mocking bird, and you have sung your son.

Others sing their songs, but never make a difference.

Coming from thoughts, persistence, and ink your song came.

Keeping others up when they are down.

In our thoughts and memories, you will stay.

Never leaving.

Go now and have peace.

Because you have made a difference with your song.

Incarnated in your books.

Reading helps us to know you better.

Discovering your hidden message.

Clay Crews

William Clark
How long it takes to write a sonnet
The grit it takes to make a masterpiece
is greater than the texture of granite
the struggle to create will never cease

All types of men can write haikus
It takes some skill to write this verse
If writing haikus needed great peruse
Then writing sonnets’ philosopher’s curse

Free verse is trash bin fast food junk
While sonnets feature finest cuts of meat
The sonnet’s flavor bursts with kingly spunk
Yet odes taste like the flavor dubbed as feet

As long as sonnets pride be kept preserved
The life of poem love shall be assured
Clay Overholt - Self Portrait