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.
He was huddled in a pathetic heap, whimpering. A loud shot and... silence. The corpse lay still against the brick wall of the grimy alley, the dark stain on the starched white shirt illuminated in the harsh glare of the flashlight. Then, I turned and walked away. The figure faded back into the pitch black shadows and pounding rain of the stormy night.

Many think I am an extremist. I prefer vigilante. The facts must be faced: The city of Glenbrook is riddled with crime gangs, corruption, and terrorists. Death has become an inevitable reality. Prison breaks are common to the point of prison simply being a temporary inconvenience to criminals. I have vowed to rid the world of these psychopaths. And one ruthless mass murderer in particular, The Face.

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I climb into my car, which creaks and groans under my weight, and turn on the radio, tuning into the local police station. The serial killer murdered three more civilians tonight, the latest in a horrific string of unsolved homicides.

I am only eighteen, yet I have experienced death my whole life. My mother was a teacher whose generosity was equal to none. She died from a massive heart attack when I was only three. My father was a police officer, always intent on doing the right thing. He was convinced that even the worst criminals could be rehabilitated. But then he was murdered on this very night seven years ago.

I still remember the night vividly. The house seemed unusually cold, even for a night in the dead of winter. My dad had helped me build a fire in our fireplace, gently helping me lay the logs on top of the dry kindling he had chopped earlier. Huddled around the cozy fire, I began to feel sleepy as it roared gently in the background.

The next thing I knew, my father was screaming. Then, he was lying there, eyes gazing blankly up in space, his lifeblood seeping out of dozens of stab wounds and pooling on the hardwood floor. In his dying moments, he uttered nothing, but his face was frozen in a mask of intense shock. At that precise moment, I perceived a Face in the window, a Face I will never forget. The pale oval stood out against the dark of night, smeared with the blood of my father, a maniacal look twisting its fierce, animal features. And the eyes... Cold, calculating, emotionless – they seemed to pierce my very soul: these were the eyes of a ruthless killer. This was the Face that would haunt me for the next seven years.

The next period of my life is a blur. I mostly remember objects and emotions. The strong, searing grip that wrenched me away from reality. The white coats and harsh bright lights. And worst of all, the voices. Laughing, crying, screaming. They echoed around me. Inside me. Pounding, trying to escape. They enveloped me in an endless cacophony that tortured my soul and ripped it apart. And the Face. It was always there... But I escaped. I held onto the last emotion I had left: vengeance. I remember the intense flame that rescued me, illuminating the dark and slaughtering the voices. I had seen so much death that I embraced it. I became an agent of death, bent on finding the Face that had started it all. And in my endless quest for justice, I vowed to make all criminals pay. They had taken away my father. They would pay with their lives.

The crackle of the radio brings me back to reality. Another killing discovered. I’m close. I feel it. After seven years, I have finally found the Face. No one else would be capable of getting away with this amount of bloodshed. I sped along the narrow road, sheets of rain pounding the foggy windshield of my car. The meager glow of my headlights barely penetrated the tall, dark shadows of the trees that loomed high above. A bedraggled raven flew through the sheets of rain, a faded...
black outline against the dark sky above me. It issued an ear-splitting shriek that was clearly perceptible even over the howling of the rain. I ignored these menacing omens and kept driving. The Face was lurking out there somewhere... And I wouldn’t stop until I found him.

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Above, the storm grew. Rain fell in endless sheets, each individual drop hurling itself at the ground with a vengeance. Thunder clapped across the heavens, shaking the trees which cowered in fear. Huge gusts shook foundations and ripped up roots. The narrow roads were suddenly illuminated in an unnatural sheen, the harsh white glare reflecting off of the soaked pavement. And then, it was dark again. The storm had passed as quickly as it had started.

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I lay crumpled in the car. It had come so suddenly, a bolt sent from the heavens. I could feel intense pain in my side. And then nothing. Numbness. Suddenly, the fog lifted. I could see clearly again. And I saw something that shook me to my core. Shivering, I saw the Face. The same cold, ruthless eyes. Blood smeared across the sharp animal features. Shattered into a million pieces, reflected along the web that ran out across the windshield. The harsh truth of reality had finally caught up. As if in slow motion, the damaged windshield collapsed inward. With one last distressing thought, I sank into the darkness. Forever. What have I done?

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Officer John Greene of the Colorado State Police Department handed the report to Commissioner Granger.

“It was a highly unusual case, sir,” he said incredulously, gesturing to the file. “The sheriff assured me that they didn’t alter anything.” Commissioner Granger nodded, and took the bundle of papers:

**Edward C. Vince, 18 years old. Unknown mental disorder. Convicted of patricide at age 11; arrested and taken to a psychiatric facility in Washington state. Escaped Nov. 2, 1953, murdering 5 fellow inmates and 2 facility staff members. Proceeded across Oregon, Idaho, Utah, and Colorado. 11 additional murders: unknown links between victims, presumed to be randomly targeted. Evaded authorities for 41 days. Died Dec. 13, 1953, in car crash. Presumed cause of crash: lightning strike. According to highway patrol, suspect was found dead in car, which had flipped over and was crumpled beyond recognition at the base of a mountain trail. The car had been found exhibiting peculiar singe and burn marks that suggest the presence of lightning.**

Granger gently closed the file, and massaged his temples tiredly. “It’s good to know that the serial killer case is finally closed. Eighteen deaths across five states and a resulting national manhunt on an unprecedented scale.” Commissioner Granger shook his head solemnly. “He escaped the authorities for forty-one days, hiding in the wilderness, and then when we eventually find him, he’s dead from a lightning strike! And not only did he get hit by lightning, he was struck down in the middle of a narrow trail sheltered by tall pines. Of all things...” He opened the file once more, and after confirming the evidence, shook his head incredulously.

“It’s somehow fitting that a freak of nature was killed by Mother Nature herself.”
Matthew Hyde - Self Portrait

Wesley Carlton
The MBA Junior School
Art Purchase Award

Mac Russ
Paul McGinn - Self Portrait

Cabe Tachek - Self Portrait  Collage

Zach Rutter - Self Portrait  Collage

Will Burke - Self Portrait
“Birth from Fire”

By Adam Wang

A huge beast
Roaring, and crackling
Opening his wide, gaping mouth,
Tendrils engulfing everything in a giant blaze of red and gold
And then it dies
Starved and broken

In its place lies a foreign landscape
The blackness of destruction
Has engulfed everything

But deep down, encased in a wooden shell
All that remains of the once mighty oak
Lies a tiny creature
It peeks out, a tiny green tendril
Reaching for the warmth

The life-giver shines high
Smiling on the creature that has emerged
From the black ruin
And embraces it in a golden sheen

The creature feeds,
Planting itself firmly in the ashes of destruction
And pulls from the heart of each particle
The nutrients hidden
Waiting to be discovered

It grows strong,
Calling to its brethren to join it
A benevolent force
Protected from the elements by a thick coat
And growing stronger and wiser

The mighty ruler
Standing tall in the center of the serene, sunlit copse
Harbors life in his far-reaching limbs
A gentle giant over a tranquil glade
That has existed since time immemorial

Continued on page 8
“Birth from Fire”

By Adam Wang

A dry summer night
Foreboding clouds looming far overhead
And a spark
Started in the heavens
That gave life to the roaring beast

Hungry
It once again bounded upon
Everything, feeding
Engulfing, Destroying
And leaving behind a layer of ash
From which a tiny green shoot
Peeked out

Jack Roberts - “After Acrimbaldo”
Honorable Mention Scholastic Key Award

Peyton Phillips - Self Portrait
Don’t cry little one.
Today it pours,
Tomorrow it will shine.
And with a little time,
You will see the shine of tomorrow.

Look,
The trees are growing,
And soon you will play among them,
Just as I did.

So I tell you now,
Don’t cry little one,
For with a little time,
You will enjoy these days.

And with a little more time,
You’ll look in a mirror,
And see the past,
As you watch your future,
Looking for the shine of tomorrow.
“The Controller”

By Samuel Kinch

The week turns to weekend and there it is, in its place eating up its power like a hungry child.

Waiting there.

Its white, smooth skin, ready to be grasped by the handle and held for hours on end.

And if fun is not produced, lifeless it will lay.

Its produce is worth the skill, but at certain times it is not.

The memories could be shrouded in epic moments, if others were not so prominent.

It sucks its users like a vacuum, Only letting go until an outside force comes into play.

Clicking back and forth is a sound of happiness and comradery, but also despair.

It transmits, working form the highest peaks to the lowest valleys, and allows those who shares its gaze to share revelations that would otherwise be impossible.

But still, it sits like a Jack-in-the-Box, waiting to be used.
Coated and covered in fur colored brown
Always happy and yappy and running around
With eyes a dark hue and paws which were white
And a tail always wagging like bird wings in flight

He guarded against everything, including his reflection
And thus was big but still full of affection
Although ready to strike those with bad intent
His main purpose was keeping everyone content

I didn’t know happiness until I came across
A dog named Buster who fetched when I tossed
Cuter than kittens playing with yarn
A loyal defender who guarded against harm

Once I remember being alone in my house
Buster walked up and that loneliness was doused
It was hard, near impossible, for me to be down
As long as my favorite dog was around

But, in my case, bliss didn’t stay
Sadly the Fates decided that way
Because Buster protected like a brick wall
His aggression was deemed too dangerous for all

And so, after a teary hug and a wave
Back to the shelter went the one I couldn’t save
“There’s no way we can get there in time!” Edith said.

“We have to try,” Henry replied. “It’s our only chance. In two week’s cousin Jim’s land is going to be sold off to any random buyer. We could have acres of free land in California if we get there in time.”

“That’s the problem” Edith argued. “The trip all the way around South America would take far too long, and the plains are incredibly dangerous now that the Indians have taken complete control of them. All hopes of settling the plains ended when they formed a united tribe. There’s always going to be a divide down the middle of America.”

“We have no hope here,” Henry answered. “Wages are dropping in the factories, and if I ask for a raise there’s always someone to take my place. Why not risk it?”

“Because it’s going straight to our doom!” Edith shouted. “Some land on the other side of the continent isn’t worth dying over!”

“The war ended several years ago. I’m sure the Indians aren’t patrolling every part of the plains. We can find a safe way through.”

“If you insist on going to your death, I’ll come with you, but know that I think this is a bad idea,” Edith conceded.

“Then it’s sealed. We’re going to California!” Henry answered her.

It took a short time for both of them to pack because they had very few possessions. The next issue that they encountered was the issue of transportation.

“If we walked all the way it could take months to get there, and we don’t have enough money to buy a ox and wagon,” Henry realized.

“We could buy it with credit and pay it off by selling some of cousin Jim’s land.” Edith said.

“If that’s what it takes to get there I’ll do it,” Henry sighed.

Edith and Henry used what little money they had on a boat ticket to take them across the Mississippi river, food, and other provisions they might need on their journey. Once on the other side, they bought a ox and wagon with the promise to pay it back later. Taking the most direct route to waste as little time as possible they set out. For three days, their trip went smoothly. That all ended on the evening of the fourth day when they were setting up camp for the night.

“Do you see that dust rising up in the distance?” Henry asked Edith.

“It’s probably just the wind,” Edith said without looking up.

“I’m not so sure. It’s getting bigger and coming towards us fast. I think we need to get out of the way in case it’s Indians,” Henry replied.

When Edith finally looked up there were visible shapes moving towards them. They began to pack and prepare their things as quickly as they could, but it was too late. They had already been spotted by what could now clearly be seen as Indians on horseback. Henry and Edith got into the wagon and started moving, but they stood no chance. They were quickly overtaken and surrounded by the approaching riders.

The clear leader of the group came forward and addressed Henry: “State your purpose here white man.”

“I mean no harm,” Henry said. “I’m simply crossing over the Continued on page 13
plains.”

At this, the Indians roared with laughter, and the leader spoke again. “You are a white man intruding on our land. That is unforgivable. We will take you to the council that is being held in two days where you will be executed.”

Henry made a desperate attempt to pass through the line and attempt, but he was quickly stopped and lifted onto the back of one of the horses. Edith was also picked up, and the party began to move toward the location of the council.

After two days had passed they arrived at the site of the council. Henry and Edith looked around in wonder. There were tents as far as the eye could see in every direction. The group kept moving deep into the sea of tents. They stopped at a large clearing in the middle. A large pavilion like tent stood in the center. There they were greeted by a man covered in jewelry and wearing a headdress who came out of the tent. “Crazy horse, why to you bring white men here? We can’t have them running off to tell their leaders of our meeting.”

“I bring them as a gift. I thought that they could be executed as entertainment Red Cloud,” Crazy Horse responded.

“I make the decisions Crazy Horse. You aren’t even a chief, yet I am the leader of every tribe and nation. I will execute them, but only so that they don’t escape with any information,” Red Cloud declared.

As Crazy Horse began to leave he was stopped by Red Cloud. “Leave the prisoners,” Red Cloud commanded.

“I captured them,” Crazy Horse retorted.

“I am your leader and you will do what I say” Red Cloud thundered.

Crazy Horse and his followers left the clearing and abandoned Henry and Edith to Red Cloud. They were quickly taken to a pole in the clearing by a man signaled by Red Cloud. He tied them up and went back to his business. Two hours later the clearing began to fill up with people. Once the clearing was relatively packed Red Cloud began to speak.

“We have a few white people among us. Courtesy of Crazy Horse.” Crazy Horse was quickly met with a series of jeers from the crowd. Red Cloud put his hands up for silence and strode briskly over to Henry and Edith. He drew a knife from his belt and slashed it across the throats of Henry and Edith. Their bodies went limp, and they hung from the poles, lifeless.

Henry and Edith may have seemed to have died vain. That couldn’t have been more wrong. They had unknowingly connected their nation to span the continent. Red Cloud had used Henry and Edith to humiliate Crazy Horse. Now Crazy Horse wanted revenge.

“I challenge you to a fight to the death for the leadership of the Indian nations!” Crazy Horse shouted to Red Cloud.

Red Cloud could not decline, or he would be thought of as a coward by his people. They would not follow a coward. “I accept your challenge,” he answered.

“Pick your weapon,” Crazy Horse demanded.

“I choose the knife,” Red Cloud responded.

Crazy Horse drew his own knife from his belt. Red Cloud was already holding his from when he had executed Henry and Edith. They slowly began to circle each other. Crazy Horse feinted an attack at Red Cloud causing him to jump backwards. Crazy Horse laughed sending Red Cloud into a rage. Red Cloud made a wild lunge at Crazy Horse. Crazy Horse smoothly

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grabbed Red Cloud’s wrist and pulled Red Cloud and the knife passed him. Using his own knife he slit Red Cloud’s throat and so became the leader of the Indian nations.

Crazy Horse then declared to the assembled Indians that they would wage war against the Americans. He was determined to take control of the west coast and rule the continent. Crazy Horse actually managed to win several minor battles in the west before the U.S. military became involved. They sent in General George Armstrong Custer to stop Crazy Horse. Custer fought with Crazy Horse at the battle of Little Bighorn and defeated him and his Indian army. With Crazy Horse dead the Indian nation dissolved into tribes once again which were conquered by the Americans. To finalize the defeat of the Indians the Americans built a railroad that spanned from coast to coast and ran straight through the plains. America was united.

Grayson Morgan
“Chartres up Close”
Honorable Mention Scholastics Art Award

Henry Krumm - “The Evolution of Man”
Left - Elliot Lyell
Lino Insect

Right - Joe Grant
Tool Collage

Bryan Zhang - Oil Pastel Landscape
Ryan DeCoste - Self Portrait

Hayden Kirkland - Chameleon

Alex Barnard - Chameleon

Rhett Hayles - Self Portrait
Hi. I'm Tyler Byrd. I'm the one writing this first part because Jack said I had a way with words. Anyway, we live in Bellville TN, a small, secluded, southern town with deep roots in the classic American South. That's what all the brochures say. Bellville is actually some brick houses on a pile of dirt. Sad, but true. I moved here two years ago, and I live in a nice little brick house on my own pile of dirt. I've gone to Jackson Public Elementary for two years now. I have a couple of friends, but they already applied and were accepted into different middle schools. Today is the big day. I will finally find out if I got accepted into Bellville Middle, the best (and only) middle school in all of Bellville. It was known for its shiny courts and nice comfy bleachers. You see, I am a baller. I play ball. Ball is life. You are probably thinking, “Oh gosh, this is one of those jocks that can barely spell his name.” I wholeheartedly understand. Fortunately, I am not one of those dudes. I can usually spell my name right, except for when I put the ‘r’ in front of the ‘y.’ Anyhoo, I am not a dumb jock. I just think of basketball as a way of life. Really just any sport that ends with ‘-ball’ I am good at.

The morning of the application day, I had my last elementary ball game of my career. I was leading my struggling team to a very promising season. We were 10 and 2, thanks to my playing and some improvement in the interior. This last game was the state tournament game. The other team, Greensboro, were the favorite to win. I played my best that game. I scored 47 points in 31 minutes. Most of my teammates, however did awful. There was one thing keeping us afloat: a tiny shooting guard named Will Turner. I had no idea who he was, because he moved up from B team, but boy, was he good! He sank every shot he put up there. We edged ‘em out by 2 and won the state tournament. I went out of that gym feeling amazing. The team even had their own press conference. They called Will and I the new “Splash Brothers.” I was Steph, and he was Klay. We did combine for over 70 points (mostly because they didn’t play defense). I was feeling great as I got into my mom’s car. It was a great season, especially because everyone was so small. Our center was 5’9” and was the tallest boy in the school. I was 5’2” back then, one of the taller kids on the team.

My mom told me that I got into BM! I was so happy! After my ISEE, I threw up. I didn’t do very well. I was amazed I got in BM. I couldn’t wait. There were a lot of new and really good kids that got in too. All summer, as I did my summer work, I was thinking about the shiny courts and comfy bleachers. That summer, we had a preview day, where we signed a large spellbound book and went to ten minute classes to get to know our teachers. I loved all of my teachers, especially my math teacher, Mr. Cunningham. Coach C, as everyone called him, was the high-school A-team basketball coach. He said that he’s heard of me and can’t wait to coach me next year. I told him I hoped he could coach me this year, and he just laughed. “I like your ambition,” he said “But its very hard to make A team as a seventh grader.” “I can do it, coach!” I said and tried to believe it. It turns out, football tryouts are just around the corner. I have always loved basketball, ever since I got a hoop up in Portland. Football is the next best thing. I was a wide-receiver/running back ever since I could

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remember.

As soon as I arrived at Ward, I found out how hard it is. It isn’t really the homework load, just the pace of the units and the tests. It was difficult to play basketball and study at the same time. The football tryouts came, and I made the first team. Goff and Turner did as well. Turner and my basketball group grew to 2 on 2, the spoiled kid, Goff, joined and a quiet kid, Jack Jennings, joined. Our basketball group was unstoppable. After our football season, we started to prepare for our basketball season. Our basketball group expanded to fit Goff, Jennings, me, and another kid, Chase Feltman. He calls himself “the bully of seventh grade.” It’s ironic because all he does is make bad jokes and puns at our expense. He is really big for his age and is a great center. When tryouts rolled by, I was feeling pretty good about my chances as a starting guard. I had tryouts right after a packed school day with three tests. The head coach’s name was Coach Jablonowski, and he told us to call him Coach J. After warming up, we scrimmaged. I had 24 points and three assists. I made all of my threes. It was incredible! The team that I was on wrecked the other team by 14 points. Coach J told us that the results would be posted tomorrow on the wall at 7:30 sharp. Wow, what a day!

Jack

Hey, I’m Jack Jennings. We decided to trade off narrating. I couldn’t wait to see the results of the tryouts. I was sure I had made the A team. I got to school around 7:15 and waited. Coach J gave me a warm smile as he walked out of his office. When I saw the results, I was overjoyed. I had made the A team! The A-team starters, from point guard to center, were Tyler Byrd, Will Turner, Jacob Goff (ugh), yours truly, and Chase Feltman. We were the first seventh graders to start on the A-team since Ben Warley. The gym is called Warley gym in honor of his great honor and sacrifice. After the tryouts, an eighth-grader named Malcolm Hall walked up to Tyler and talked to him for a bit. I didn’t notice it then, but Hall asked Tyler to meet him outside at the park after school. I noticed Tyler acted worried, and asked him if he wanted to play a pickup game. He said,"No, I have to do homework," which was a lie, because he had three tests yesterday and had no homework over the weekend. So I stayed behind and practiced in the gym until my dad came to pick me up. When my dad pulled up, I could hear kids’ whispering about “old man Jennings.” So my great-grandpa picks me up everyday from school. I couldn’t care less. Me and my stupid grandpas, they all say. Honestly, I think my grandpas are stupid too. As soon as I was born, my dad said,” I can’t wait until he gets into West Point.” I was destined to be in the army as soon as the doctor said that I was a boy. But I liked basketball better. So that’s why I worked my butt off to get into BM. That’s why I worked my butt off to start on the A team. Because I am not going to be selfish, rude, and arrogant like my dad. I am better than that. Those were the thoughts going through my head as my great-grandpa drove me to the family mansion, an hour away in Nashville.

On Monday, we had our first practice. Coach J started with some layup drills, then we did some mid-range work. He said that he needed to find out if we got the green light on shooting or not. Jacob was talking all about how great he was from “beyond the arc.” That’s probably the only basketball phrase he knows, and he got it from 2K. Well, it turns out that Jason was not nearly as good as he said he was from three. He went 4 for 20. I think that’s pretty self explanatory.  

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“Street Ball”

By Carter Ozburn

I went 8 for 20. Will went 13 for 20. Tyler went 10 for 20. At the end of practice, we scrimmaged as coach gave Tyler, Will, and me the green light for threes. It was great! At the end, Coach J was smiling! Actually smiling! The only coach I’ve seen smile like that was Butch Jones after he beat Florida back in ’16. Anyway, after a couple practices, we were looking pretty good for our season opener against Rearden. They had this one guard named Trey Katar. Wow, he was good, but we were better. We beat them by 8. I had 14 points, 10 rebs, and 2 asst. A pretty good game. Tyler ball...
“Street Ball”

By Carter Ozburn

that I was a better person than she thought, apparently she didn’t think I had the guts to apologize. But I sensed a change. She didn’t shrug me off, she actually said “Goodbye.” So now I know how to impress Amanda. Don’t try.

Will

Hey, I’m Will Turner. I am interrupting Jacob’s attempt at romance for good reason. I heard something I wasn’t supposed to hear. First of all, I am a very capable free safety and that sometimes gets the girl, Jacob. And I went out with Amanda one stinkin’ time! I didn’t really want to. But she chose me, and I had no choice (By the way, she told me how much of a turd you were when we were talking). Anyhoo, onto to my secret. You see, after our first game, when Coach J went to talk to the principal. I went that way to look for my watch. They had no idea I overheard their conversation. Anyway, Principal Hall threatened to fire Coach J if he didn’t let Hall start. Coach J was going to say something, but he didn’t. Then Principal Hall left. I was mentally freaking out. And then Tyler was bullied into letting Hall start. And then, after two more games with Tyler starting, we hear that Coach J was fired. I mean, what the heck? Then I knew that our real enemy was Principal Hall. He was the reason, we were 1 - 3. We only had six games left until the tournament. So I sent Principal Hall an letter, asking why he was doing all of this just to let his kid start on the A-team when he knew Malcolm was bench-material. The day after I sent the letter, he called me to his office and called my letter a piece of garbage(I submitted my letter into a writing contest at the library and won a hundred bucks, so I knew it wasn’t garbage). As a parting gift, he suspended me for a week. The suspension itself isn’t bad, but when Michael finds out about it, it’s torture. My brother Michael is like my dad, or my personal drill sergeant. He is really tough on me, but I know that inside, he loves me. Ever since my dad left, he has been acting like a dad to me. When Michael finds out, the punishment is going to be much greater than normal. When I got home, I told him about it before he got the phone call. He just told that I couldn’t play Xbox for two-weeks, and I need to be training for the next couple games. Then, when Mom left, he asked me if I wanted to tell him what was going on. I told him everything I knew. After a while, he told me that I could play Xbox, and the suspension was bull crap. He also told me that he was going to think more about it and get back to me. Then Sarah came over and shot with me. Fun fact: Sarah Wilson is not my girlfriend, just a friend that’s a girl. She encouraged me to go to the park and see if any of the guys were there. We went and, to my surprise, all of them were there. They went, against the school rules, to come and cheer me up. We played for a while, then Tyler told me that Michael explained the entire situation and all of them went to see the principal. “Right before we said a word, he gave us all suspensions!”Jack said. Right then, I knew what we were up against. But the time had not come to retaliate. MLK said that “Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love.” So we will not retaliate, we won’t fight hatred with hatred. We will find someway to love Principal Hall into letting us start. After some thinking, I sent him a letter apologizing and asking what we could do for him. I got a ton of signatures to sign the letter, thanks to Jacob, Amanda, and Jacob’s sister, Laura, who are all popular. The principal told us that he was sorry about the whole lineup fiasco, and that he was amazed we actually apologized. This goes out to all the middle-schoolers and teens out there. Don’t fight hatred with hatred. Only love can fight hatred. The stronger person is the one who doesn’t retaliate. And if you ever need help, come down to Bellville, we’re happy to give you a helping hand!
Carter Gold - “Golden Guy”
1st Place in 8th Grade MTRSAAE

William Cook
Snow Goose Headdress
Silver Key Scholastics Art Award

Carson Hensler - Oil Pastel Landscape
The wind whistled; the leaves spun, and Howard was alone. It did not seem a crime to stroll the woods by himself, being that he enjoyed that kind of thing. The trees seemed to lead him on between them, and he knew not where he was going. The fog crept around him, and a moment of panic was stifled by a reassurance of silence, calmness, and comfort. Still walking, the silence was fractured by a nauseating sound. His stomach was bottomless; his eyes, larger than before. The disturbance cut into him like a blunt blade. Howling. Howling like death, like sharp cold blood. Howard became unable to think. The primal instinct that knew fear told him to keep walking. The forest still remained calm and comfortable. He could see something ahead, an opening in the trees. It could be the footprint of a road on which he could flee. As he paced that way, something caught his eye; it moved. It disappeared. Now the forest was alive, gaining breath and menace. He was still somewhat comfortable. His attention was given to the opening again, and with every step, he was closer. One step, a tree flew by. Another, A stump. One more, something gray. In came the wind, out went leaves. In came the wind and out went the trees, in out, in out, out in, out in, OUT, In went the teeth. Out went Howard, dragged away.

Simon was a boy not bothered by much. He did what he needed and nothing more. This night he was committed to learning as much as he needed of a volume and when he was done he turned to leave. Throwing his pack over his head, the attic groaned with his weight. The floorboards could feel his backpack too. But when he turned off the lights with the pull of a chord, he swore he could make out a figure across the room, and it turned to face him with the creak of a board. The stairs seemed taller and longer than before as he rushed down them. Then he was stumbling and rolling to the bottom, troubled by his fear. Was it fear? He could not feel such things, only the pain of his foot from the fall. He struggled to get up, but it was impossible. The floor was cold, and his ankle was hot. Then he became aware of a noise he was hearing but chose to ignore until it was unbearable. Thump, Thump, Thump, It was his heart. He breathed a sigh of relief and tried to pull himself to his bedroom where he could collect his racing nerves. Abruptly the race halted as he heard the noise again except now becoming louder and louder. Thump, Thump, Thump, Thump. He could not deny it! He jumped to his feet and screamed at the tremendous pain pulsing through his foot or the threat of the noise, he did not know. He slid around the corner and reached for his door, Slid inside and turned to close it. When the door slammed to the bolt a horrible crunch sounded and four bony fingers fell to the floor. The door was pulled open again, and Simon, himself, then fell to the floor. He was pulled through the door and down the stairs.

Colin was a sensible man in some things. Only when it came to tall dangerous places did he lose his stable mind. So with that in mind, he tended to stay deep below the ground exploring caves. He found himself one evening in a large system that seemed to envelop him in its darkness. Even so, he crawled, until he could go no more. His stomach now told him he was needing his sandwich which was available in his backpack. Eating happily, he could hear gurgling wrapping around the nearby corner. Naturally, Colin was curious, so the noise had to be explored. As he turned to go, he noticed the string that wound around the paths behind him was not present on the spool. It had run out; he had gone so far! He decided against turning back immediately and decided to give the burble the exploration it so desperately asked for. As he turned the corner another sound came
“Three Hearts”
By Wesley Carlton

from... Far below! Rocks, falling. Water, falling. But not him. No, he would keep himself together. Then the cave screamed with laughter, and Colin felt pressure against his skin. The cave itself wanted him off the precipice! He felt the flame of his lamp being pinched by the monster, and all fell dark. In went the beast; out went his breath. In came the beast; out went his heart. In out, in out, in out, in. Down. The cave laughed as Colin’s empty soul was sucked into its mouth.

I fear what they know. I know not what they know. I go far away. I take, and I keep. Something stirs in the wardrobe. It must be heard, must be nothing, must be explored. I open the door and find them.
William Holleman
“Plant in Charcoal”

John Wright Kesting - Self Portrait

Sam Nissen
“Earl Grey”
Monoprint
Scholastics Gold
Key Award
“Love of the Gods”

By Hill Odede

With his love leaving,
Leaving for his brother.
With his love and heart destroyed,
Destroyed by his brother,
He trusted no one and loved no more,
With his pride hurt from betrayal,
He cared no more and spoke no more.
His heart had been destroyed,
But yet she still needed his help.
She came back to him saying she was wrong,
Wrong to leave him.
He snorted coldly as he considered it,
This beauty never apologized, just used then threw away.
With her heart as cold as ice,
With her beauty rivaling the angels,
She was always the queen.
Yet when her beauty collapsed,
And her will was destroyed,
She came to the man who first loved her.
And who’s heart she destroyed.
She was known as Aphrodite,
The man whose heart she had broke was called was called Hephaestus.
This was the love of the gods.
“God’s Love”

By Miles Butler

Have you ever thought of our big, old world?
And how the universe was made from dust?
Well God created all with air He swirled,
Because of His amount of love for us.

Have you ever thought of flowing water?
And how thirst is quelled of all things alive?
This was made from all of just a Father,
And it helps all us humans live and thrive.

Have you ever thought of luminous light?
And how it lights up all that we can see?
The light can greatly affect our eyesight.
And we think of light as something carefree!
Our thanks be to God for what He has done,
For from what He finished, we can have fun!
“My Dearest Blanket”

By Lain Orndorff

My dearest blanket,
I write this poem for your warmth
And love you give me.

Soft, brown, warm, and snug,
You become my golden fleece.
My Nemean Skin.

Like a net of heat,
Made for me to get caught in.
I'm your cozy fish.

I can remember
Those cold days spent in your warmth,
Shielding me from harm.

Drawing and writing,
Listening to music or
Welcome to Night Vale.

For you will survive,
Forever in my spirit,
Till this world I part.
“A Prehistoric Pet”

By Jack Forbes

A shell is a fortress encased with long connected lines of pentagons
Green and Yellow but streaks of black
Are present as outstretched claws
Paddle against the current made by your never-ending filter
Prehistoric just begins to describe
A body as small as a dollar coin
But a large look of curiosity instilled in long black eyes
A bustling curiosity that goes both ways between animal and man
Playing tag with your friend all day long on a rock
Floating, fooling even the best of geologists
Getting lodged between a rock and a hard place
Both literally and figuratively you were stuck with no hope of rescue
Until that slippery coat slipped slowly through the plastic and glass
Days you waited in hot sunlight by hundreds of friends
In the orange state, until you were scooped up abruptly with a friend
And taken to a new place with new people and a new environment
But to this day you wait, playing, hunting, watching
The old book is sitting across the way on the desk
Although years of use have left it weak no less
The pages still turn swift as a bird
Even if I don’t remember it word-for-word

*Monkey with a Tool Belt* was all the hype
in 2008 when its pages were bright
Again, and again, I would listen to it read
Sometimes on the floor, sometimes in my bed

The story of Chico Bon Bon is one my heart holds dear
Because it’s not about a cat, a mouse, or the Chinese New Year
But it’s about a monkey and his tool belt constructing phenomenons
When I could not construct a pool shaped like an octagon

*Monkey with a Tool Belt*
“Breakfast”  

By Chase Thor  

Click, click, click, the metal disc ignites in a blaze of blue
Two sausages in the pan accompany an egg
French press coffee brews on a five minute timer
The savory smell navigating its way to my nose
Take your pills, don’t be late for school
White bread out of the toaster, buttered and salted
Sausages off of the pan, egg onto the toast
The yolk flows as slow as molasses onto the meat below
Bon appetit
Coffee into a mug, drink it down
Clean the plates, clean the pan
Put eggs on the grocery list, there are no more

I remember the days where I would wake up
Chocolate chip pancakes sitting on a clean plate
In the shape of Mickey Mouse’s head
Ready to eat
No pills, no cleaning dishes,
Just me, my family, and a steaming breakfast for all
Bon appetit

Vincent Wang - Still Life
“The Book”

By Niles Meltesen

I ravage through the bin like a crazed lion,
Searching for the book yet again.
I throw toys and balls across the room
And finally, I find it

The book is old and brittle
It has a blue cover and yellowing pages
I flip through the thick pages and feel as though I can fly
The book fills me with excitement, tragedy, and happiness

When I close the book I’m back in my room
I feel as though my wings were clipped off
Like I’ve been transported back to normality
I open the book again

“Lights”

By Chanden Climaco

Stars, flashing before my eyes, like the fireflies flashing at night

Bound in a new world unfamiliar to me, a world fully made of fantasy,

Where am I? An arena? Jungle? Wasteland?

Strangers, worlds, places made by people with their fingertips,

Shaped with days and days of precious time.

Death cannot grasp its hands on my soul,

For I rise from the ashes time and time again.

When I’m bored or feeling down,

I take a leap into these imaginary worlds;

The exhilaration, the emotions, the elation when winning,

Is more than enough to overpower my boredom.

Go anywhere you want, be anything you want;

The lights definitely bring delight to me.