

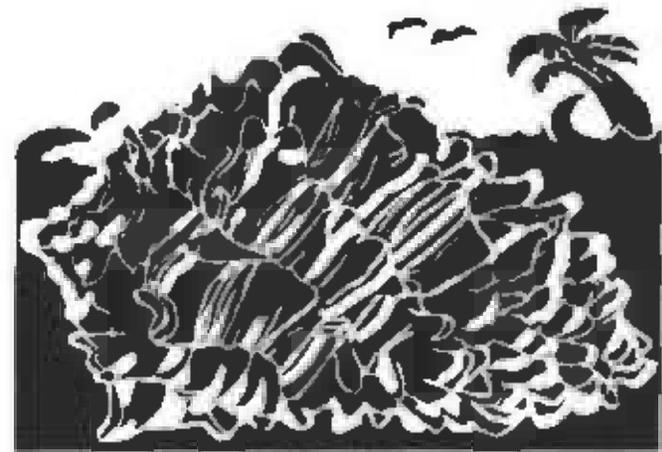
Northern
Lights '00



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2000
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Shell
by Manuel Lim

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Acknowledgments

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Editorial Committee: Katherine Holman, chair; Maureen Molle, Shirley Evans, Jane Oitzinger, James LaMalfa, Elouise Rossler, Lynn Heritsch and David Stevens

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Patterns by Elouise Rossler

A man weaves his own tapestry
By the patterns of his life,
From the day's beginning
To its closing hours.
There are small threads
Being woven into new design.
The strands may be of music
As it's played note by note,
The threads may be of art,
Made of drawing, hewing, sculpting;
The strings may be of words,
The spoken and the written;
The fiber may be for building
As in large or small designs.
Though the warp may be colorful,
Its unique beauty is created
By the interlacing of the weft,
Held together by love and joy,
Some sadness and some sorrow,
Interwoven to give the highlights,
To distract from the imminent flaws,
To add depth and bold richness
Which only living fully can produce.
A man weave his own tapestry
By the patterns that he lives.

The First Time I Met My Professor
by Ye-lin Shen



No Masks
by Shotaro Matsumoto

I have many good memories of working with Professor Brooks in the graduate school of the University of Tennessee. One of my special memories is the first time that I met him. That interview gave me a deep impression. I will never forget it in all my life.

Five years ago, I passed an English test which was required for foreign students who wish to attend American colleges. I registered for the graduate school of the University of Tennessee, at Knoxville. I was in a high pitch of excitement at the prospect of studying and doing research at the University of Tennessee. That had been my dream for a long time.

Before I entered the Materials Science and Engineering Department, I thought that I would find a professor to be my advisor. I imagined my professor's character and image. He would be friendly, humorous and frank. He would be erudite in the materials science area. He would have white and black hair in disorder (like Einstein) and wear a filthy laboratory coat. His office would be messy. Everything would look disordered. Usually, I saw scientists in movies like that, and so that was what I expected to encounter.

I checked all the professors' names in the Materials Science and Engineering Department at a catalogue of the University of Tennessee. I paid attention to the name, Dr. Charlie R. Brooks. He had been elected as the outstanding professor in the University of Tennessee and in the American Material Society for several times. He had published about twenty books and two hundred papers. Wow! He was the professor whom I wanted to find. I would like him to be my professor.

I came from China. Though I passed the English test, my English was still poor, especially for oral communication. I was too shy to talk to anybody. To me, every person spoke too fast. I did not know whether I could understand Professor Brooks' talking. I did not know whether he would accept me as his student because of my poor communication capability. I had to talk and ask him to accept me as his student. But how?

Late in August, I went to the Materials Science and Engineering Department. My heart beat fast. I felt so nervous about the meeting with Professor Brooks. I saw many students who were busy like bees. They went in and out of the department building. In a computer laboratory, many students quietly sat in front of a computer and concentrated at their work. I said to myself, "I will be one of you all this semester." I checked every office door to find the name of Dr. Charlie R. Brooks.

Finally, I found his office. The door was closed. I stood there about 5 minutes or maybe longer. I did not know what I should do or what I should say. Suddenly, I felt that no air was around me. I needed fresh air. I quickly walked out of the department building.

As I stood outside of the building and looked at students going in and out of the department, I encouraged myself. "Elaine, go and talk to Professor Brooks. Everything will be fine." I turned back to his office. The door still was closed. I took a deep breath and knocked on the door. The door was opened. I saw a person. I looked him up and down. He stood about 5'10" tall and weighed around 150 pounds. His hair, a silver-gray color, was neatly combed. He did not wear a laboratory coat but gold-colored glasses. His face was lined with wrinkles from years of hard work. He looked like a normal person, more like a grandfather. He was somewhat different from the person I had imagined. I thought that maybe he was not Professor Brooks. I looked around his office. Everywhere, even on the floor, in his office were piles of stuff. There were books, material samples, a computer, a telephone, and overhead transparencies. Papers were scattered on the table. On the wall, there was almost no empty space because of the many pictures of material metallographs and frames of awards.

"What can I do for you?" he asked.

"Are you Professor Brook (Brooks)?" I was nervous.

"Yes," he said.

"My name is Elaine. I am a new graduate student." I paused, and felt warmer and warmer.

"I would like you to be my advisor." I continued.

Then, he asked me a few questions about my background. I emphasized that I had working experience for several years in the metallurgical area and had done a lot of materials failure analysis cases. He seemed interested in my technical background.

"I have four projects right now, and I am going to explain them to you," he said as he looked at me.

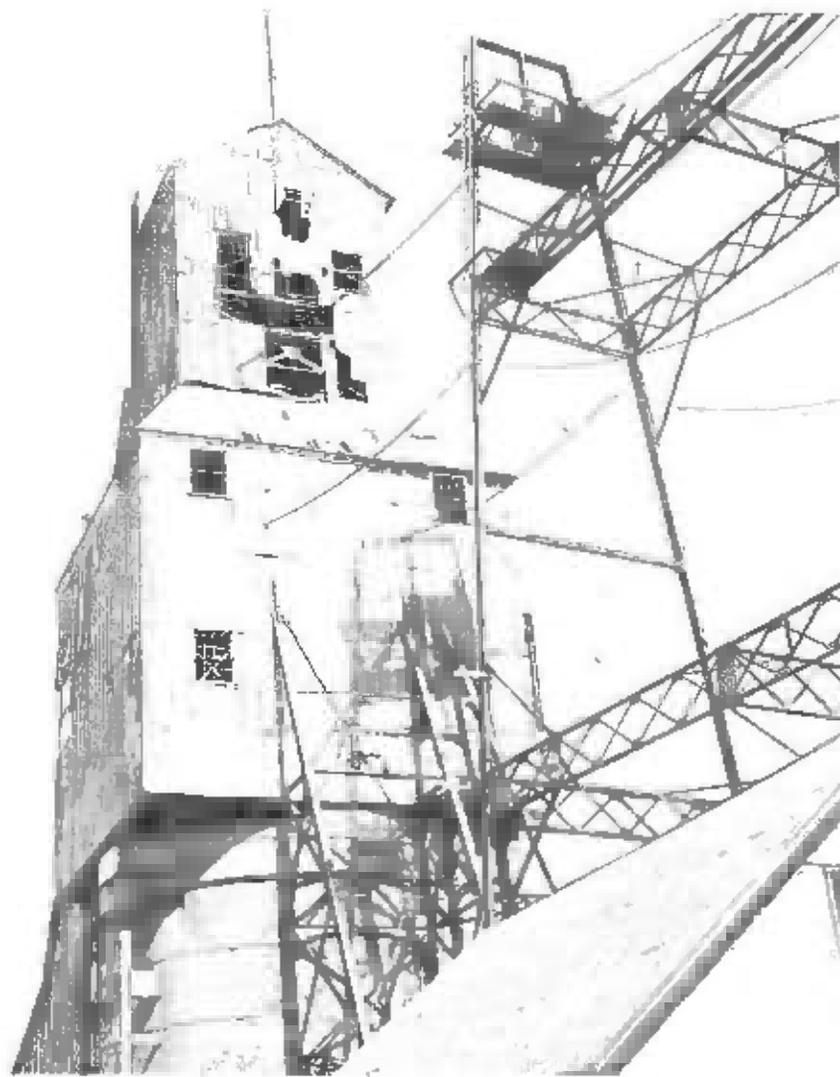
"Fine." I started to concentrate on his talking.

"You will tell me your ideas about them," he said seriously.

He explained each of the projects and drew some phase diagrams on a blackboard to show me his ideas. He spoke so quickly that I could not catch anything except a few words such as iron, nickel, and molybdenum. Even though it took about a half hour for him to explain the projects, I felt that I stood there like a puppet for one year.

"Do you have any ideas or suggestions?" he asked.

"Yes." I replied pretending that I understood most of his talking



Calumet Mine
by James LaMalfa

because I worried that he would not accept me as his student if I said that I didn't understand most of what he said.

"Tell me your ideas," he said.

But I could not say anything. He stared at me and waited. I was too embarrassed to tell him the truth, but I had no choice. I told him I had caught only a few words. He said that he knew that because he could tell from my face. My face showed everything.

"If you do not understand it, you should say so; and I will explain it to you again, but do not pretend you understand it," he said.

"OK," I thought that it was finished. If there were a place to hide, I certainly would be there at that moment.

"Can you accept me as your student?" I tried one more time.

"After one week we will see," he answered. I had a mixed feeling of happiness and worry. He continued, "Do not be too glad or too worried; there will be a lot of work which you need to do." He gave me three books and 20 papers and said, "Go home and read them. After one week, tell me your ideas. Then we can make a decision."

After one week, I submitted to Professor Brooks a reading report that exhibited my ideas about one of the four projects. He carefully read my report, and corrected my English writing. "Your ideas are good, but your English needs to improve. We can work on that," he said. "I agree to accept you to be my student, but one condition is that we have to work hard and if you have any English problems, talk to me. Give me your plan for this research project tomorrow." I was so happy and excited, and did not know what I should say. "By the way, my name is Brooks, not Brook," he said with a smile.

I worked with him for three years, and obtained strictly technical training and learned a lot of things from him such as how to be nice to people and work hard, and especially not to be afraid to show my weakness. Since I worked for him, I have remembered that if I do not understand something, I must not make believe to understand it.

The Generation Gap

by Elouise Rossler

It was just an old trunk
Brought down from the attic,
When grandma's house was sold,
The children clamored to open it,
The release snapped, the lid flew up,
The contents spilled
To create a world of the Past,
A place held fast only by memory,
Silk slippers—barely worn
Had a story to tell of dreams—
Grandma had been a dancer
Until
She met a striking young man,
She'd left the world of dance
And beautiful costumes,
But this love wasn't true;
She returned to her first love;
The satin slippers still fit,
Dance partners were many
The shows were frequent,
Until one night, late in the year,
A new partner missed cue—
She fell hard,
The shoes were hung on her bed
Hoping the broken ankle
Would take note,
She met a love true,
In a year of two,
The shoes were tenderly laid
With a dress of lace
In the old trunk.

Quietly the children left,
One by one,
Each with his own thoughts,
The slippers fell into the trunk,
Cushioned by the lace,
Did they gently sigh,

"What might have been?"

(Inspired by a painting and its set-up by Betty Osbourne)

A Woman's Century (Revised)

by Anne Truitt

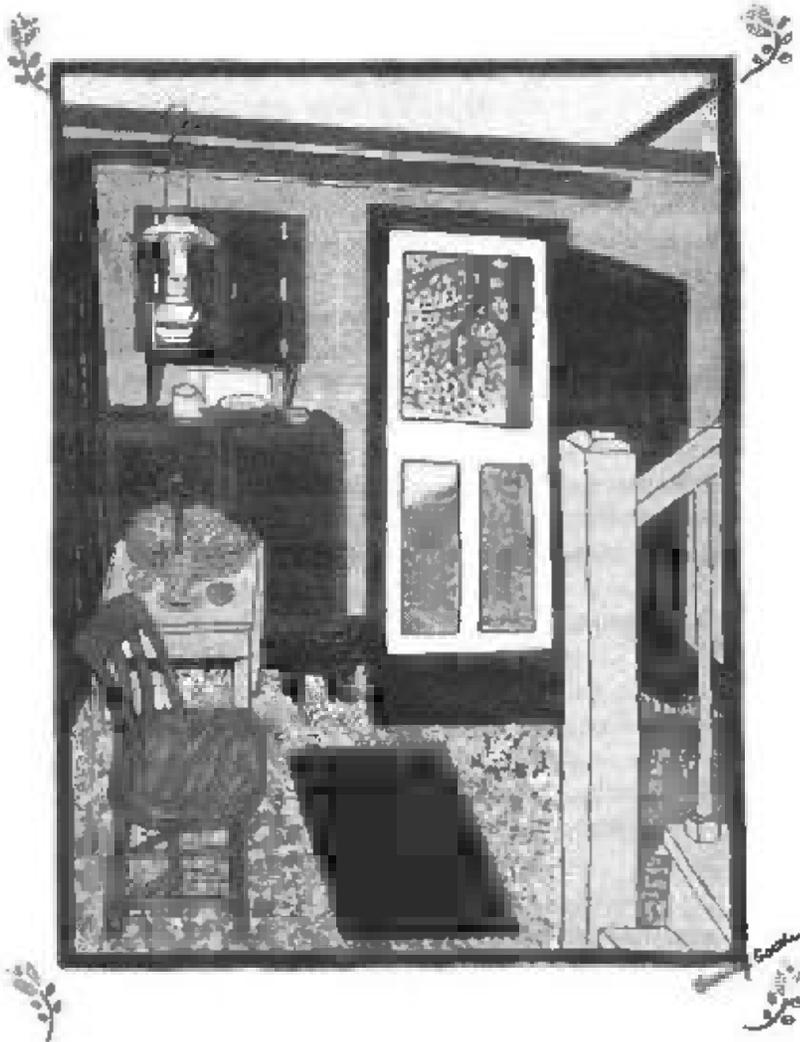
A small woman opens the door to the house. She has snow-white hair and flashing blue eyes. My great-grandmother, Anne Maria Katherina Josephine Johnson Bichler was born on March 3, 1905, in Flat Rock, Michigan. She is the mother of four, grandmother of fourteen, great-grandmother of twenty-four, and great-great-grandmother of two with two more expected this summer. "If you don't know what to do with yourself, be a grandmother," she tells me.

She motions with her hand to follow her down the hall. We are going to the Vault. It is not a place many people have seen. She usually keeps the door locked. Reaching the door, she turns around and gives me a wink. She reaches down the front of her shirt and on a thin gold chain is the key to her vault. It has been many years since I have been in "The Vault." My hands are starting to sweat with anticipation.

Finally, the door is open. We walk in quietly with Grandma Anne leading the way. The morning sunlight is streaming through two long windows. There are so many things to see in this room that my eyes have trouble focusing on any one item. They dart back and forth from shelves to pictures to stacks of magazines and newspapers.

Finally, they settle on one particularly beautiful piece of clothing, the family christening gown. A baby doll is wearing it too now. This summer, it will be taken off her and put on yet another Bichler baby. Grandma's eyes start to shine at the thought of another baby in the family. She tells me that over 57 Bichler babies have worn the gown, myself included. The Bichler wedding veil is next to the gown. This has not been worn so much. She says it is cursed. Four brides have worn it and four brides have died before their fifth anniversary.

The room is not a large one. It is about twelve feet long by nine feet wide. The walls, ceiling, and floor are all covered in a brilliant white. The curtains hanging on the wall are white handmade lace. Once they were hung with pride in my great-great-grandmother's home in Sweden. They date back to 1885, the sales ticket pinned to them has the store, date, and manufacturer written on it in Swedish. On the wall to the left of the windows is a picture that was taken in 1928. It's Grandma's wedding picture. She and Grandpa Harry are a bright shining couple surrounded by 42 other Bichlers and Johnsons. The next picture on the wall is of my grandma and someone else. It is a picture I have not seen before. Grandma laughs when I ask her about it. Walking over to a newspaper pile, she pulls one out and shows me the picture on



Childhood Memories "My Home"
by Bethany Goethe

the cover. It's a picture of Al Capone. The caption under it states in bold letters, "CAUGHT." I look from the picture on the wall to the newspaper in my hand; it's the same man. She met Mr. Capone while working for the Michigan Liquor Control during prohibition. He wanted her to steal kegs of whiskey that were kept in lock down in Jackson. She says she refused and then starts laughing. I wonder if she did refuse.

The next piece of history to catch my attention is a small gold ring. Every person in my family knows the significance of it. It is really nothing special to look at. The ring is very plain with no decoration, but on the inside of the band, there is a small inscription, "Our Dream." Grandpa Harry bought it for Grandma the first time she got pregnant. Seven and a half months later, Baby Ruth was born. Grandma says she was a happy baby who never cried unless she was hungry. Sadly, Ruth died of pneumonia when she was only eleven months old. Grandma took off the ring after the funeral and placed it in the Vault. Over the years, the ring has become a symbol of hope for Grandma; if hard times come, good times will always follow.

Next to the ring is the family Bible. The leather cover is cracked with age. All the edges of the paper have long since yellowed. The family's favorite passages are marked with small white papers that look out of place next to the yellow. The back pages contain the family names. Every birth, marriage, and death since 1857 has been recorded in this book. My grandmother reminds me that sadly every divorce is in there too. The only one of us who can read out of the Bible is my Grandma; It's written in Swedish. There are only a few more spaces left before it is all filled up. Grandma shakes her head and tells me it is our job to find a new one. She shuts the Bible and turns around. Walking to the door, Grandma pulls out the key. Silent once again, we leave the Vault. The soft clicking of the door as it shuts echoes through my mind. Grandma crosses herself, recites a prayer, then turns, and walks away from the door.

Another visit to the Vault is finished. Another story in my grandma's life is told. Over the years, we have learned more about my grandma and ourselves by visiting the Vault than anything else in the world. Funny, it is just a room, but it demands respect and silence by what it contains. Ninety-four years of life and living is contained within four walls and that is why we call it "The Vault."



Of Times Gone By...
by Stephanie Bruno

Winter Roses
by Lynnae K. Neuberger

It was early Fall, 1920. Three young women sat at the kitchen table, poring over a Sears and Roebuck catalogue. This was shopping at its finest, for these three sisters were 50 miles from the nearest town. And there was a wedding in the making.

"But Hattie!" protested her sisters. "You must have real roses for your bridal bouquet. The silk roses just don't look real."

Hattie shrugged, "Yes, that's true, but real roses won't last; silk roses will stay beautiful and I can keep them forever." The sisters knew there would be no arguing with Hattie about the flowers; she always stood her ground.

So the wedding was planned, and in December of that same year, Hattie married Albert, with a bouquet of soft peach silk roses in her hand.

A year later, tragedy struck when the young couple's neighbors lost their first-born son. Only a few weeks old, he had succumbed to pneumonia. Heavy snows and blizzards had been hitting this farm community, hindering the arrival of the county doctor, so the child was lost. These storms also prevented the preacher from traveling to the farm to conduct a funeral for the child. He had hoped that perhaps sometime in January one could be given.

During the neighbor's loss, Hattie and Albert helped out in any way that they could. But something was troubling Hattie about the funeral. One evening, Albert asked, "What's wrong, Hattie? I know you're upset about the neighbor's son, but there seems to be something else bothering you. What is it?"

Hattie looked at her husband, and shook her head sadly. "How can that child have a proper funeral without flowers? We can't get into town to buy any, and if we could, I doubt there would be any to buy. The grocery trucks haven't been able to get to the stores in weeks."

"Well, flowers would be nice," Albert replied gently, "but you know as well as I do that there just aren't any flowers to be found at this time of year."

But this wasn't the answer that Hattie was looking for. With determination, she knew what she had to do.

On a cold but sunny day in late January, friends, neighbors, relatives and the preacher gathered for the child's funeral. A tiny coffin was in

the middle of the largest room in the house. And on top of the tiny coffin was a beautiful flower arrangement that Hattie had made—from the soft peach silk roses from her own wedding bouquet.

In memory of Hattie, my great-grandmother, who was a real "rose."



Lynn
by James LaMalfa

Thank You, Dad
by Lynnae K. Neuberger

In the first grade, we were the best friends—
just me and Holly. In the second grade, we
were best friends—just me and Holly. In the
third grade, we were best friends—just me and Holly.

But one day that changed when you saw us on the play-
ground together. A rude shock of words greeted me at the
door when I got home—"what the hell are you doin' with a
goddamn dirty *Indian*?" you screamed.

Until then, I had never seen Holly Lone Deer as being any different
from me or my other friends. Now I saw the braids in her long black
hair, her dark skin, the beaded bracelets that her mother made for
her. She was different—she was not *white* like me.

Our friendship fell apart; I don't know why. Oh, I suppose she
knew that I saw her differently; at least, things weren't the
same.

So, thank you, Dad—for introducing me to your
racist ways. Maybe someday Holly and
I will be able to forgive you.

And
I
hope
someday
Holly
will
be able
to
forgive
me.



Majestic
by Bethany Goethe

Prairie Dentistry by Lynnae K. Neuberger

Back when my grandpa was a young boy growing up in the Depression years on the prairies of North Dakota, he, along with his brothers and sisters, was very involved in the family farm. This included doing many kinds of chores. One afternoon, he and his brothers were chopping hay for bales, since hay needed to be chopped before it could be fed into the baler. As most of us know from county fairs, the farm equipment from the "early" days was much cruder than today's sophisticated machinery. And there was nothing safe about this particular hay chopper.

As the chopping machine was being fed, something became stuck; I was told this was not an uncommon occurrence for this "beast." My grandpa, being the oldest son of the farm, quickly grabbed a pitchfork and jammed the handle into the mouth of the chopper, hoping to loosen whatever was stuck. This attempt was unsuccessful, and in fact, turned out to be quite injurious. The machine gobbled up half of the pitchfork handle, groaned in agony, and then flung the remainder of the handle at my grandpa.

Grandpa was struck directly in the mouth. All of his front teeth were knocked inward, and were so loose, they were lying flat. He thought he would just spit them out so he could finish working on the hay chopper, but his father, who had witnessed the incident, sent him back to the house instead.

Grandpa made his way back to the farmhouse where his mother was washing dishes from the noon meal. He smiled a wide, toothless and bloody grin at her. Undaunted, she picked up a tooth, wiggled it, and then set them all straight in the correct position on his gums. She mixed up some salt water for him to rinse his mouth. To hold the teeth in place, she wrung out her dishcloth and placed it across them. She told him to bite down on the cloth and to keep his mouth closed for the rest of the day. She then sent him to go lie down quietly.

Grandpa did as he was told, and later that evening, his mother removed the dishcloth. The teeth had been reset. He was able to eat a soft meal, and the next day, he was back in the field battling the hay chopper.

My Grandpa is now 78 years old; he does not wear dentures and his teeth are perfectly straight. The only scar from the chopper incident is a slightly chipped tooth where the handle had made the initial impact. Grandpa is quite proud of his mother's "dentistry," especially since the only tooth that he is missing is the one that was accidentally pulled by a real dentist!

Police Women on the Prowl by Jacquelyn Adderley

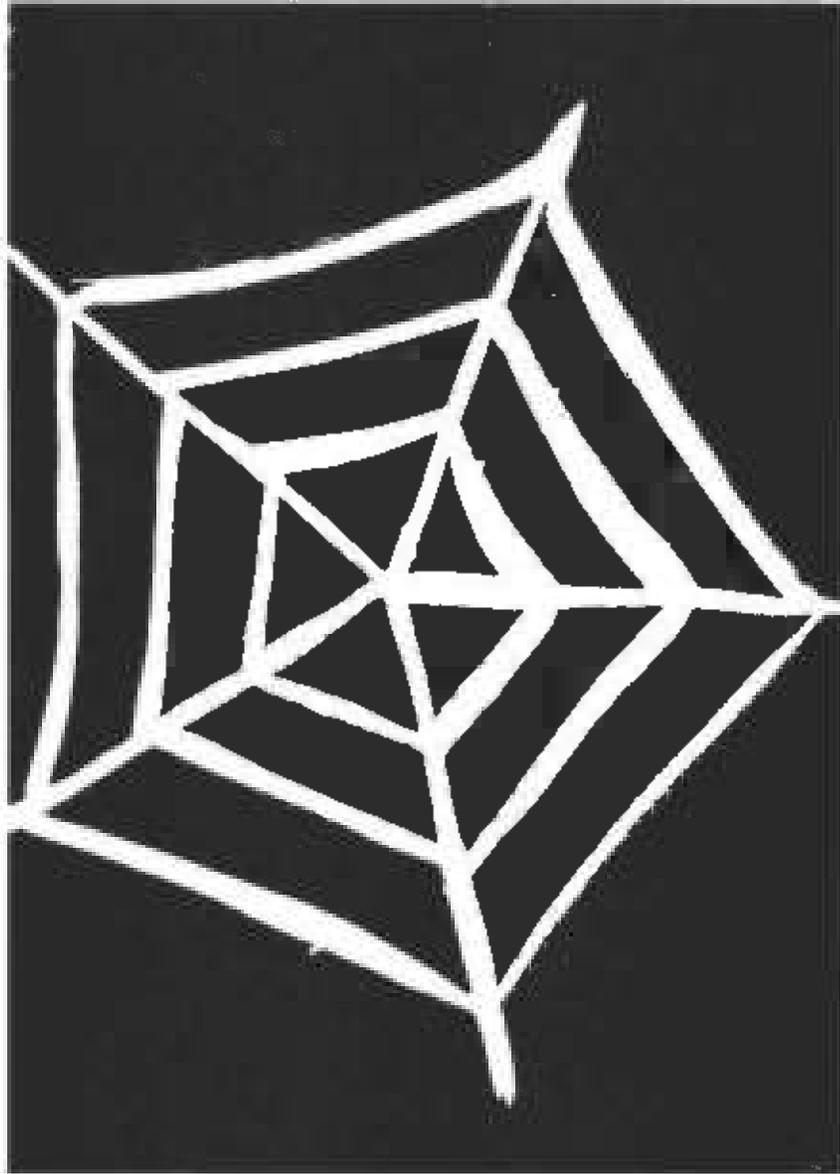
I arrived at my girlfriend's house at 6:33 pm. I was surprised to see that we were both wearing long black coats that came down about three inches past our knees and the same black pants with a button on each cuff of our pant legs. I know we didn't have this planned because clothing attire never came up in our telephone conversations prior to making plans.

At 7:00 pm we finally left for the taverns. The few taverns that we went to were dead as a door nail. I was getting depressed. I wanted action and I wanted it now! We decided to go to the local bowling alley and have a drink. I drove through the alley with my mother's 1986 silver, four-door Chrysler Cordoba, which had a spider web crack in the windshield caused by a small round pebble, and attempted to find a parking spot.

We saw two men stagger out of the bowling alley. The two men looked underage and very intoxicated. I told my girlfriend to follow my lead. I dug deep in my purse looking for my billfold and trying not to pull out the kitchen sink. I then proceeded to follow these two drunken fools down the alley. They got to the crossroads and staggered across the street and down the next alley. When they were halfway down the alley, I raced across the street in the vehicle, made an abrupt stop, and flashed my bright lights on them and flew out of the car yelling, "Freeze! Police! I need to see some ID!" One of the men, who was probably a minor, took off running and Nicole, my girlfriend, went after him.

I took care of the man who was just standing there mumbling to himself and rummaging through his wallet looking for his ID card. With trembling hands he handed me a piece of paper. It was a non-photo ID. I then told Tom (that was the name on the ID), "I have to bring you down town. I would have given you a warning, but your friend took off like a bat out of hell." I read him his rights, as I escorted him to the pretend undercover police vehicle. I put him in the back seat and put the child safety locks on and took the keys out of the ignition. He didn't give me any trouble because either he was not twenty-one years old or too intoxicated to know better.

I proceeded on foot to locate Nicole. I saw her pulling the drunken man out of the huge, leafless bush in somebody's back yard, and attempting to pin him on the cold ground. I believe he was stumbling through the yard and fell on the bush. The scene took everything I had to refrain from laughing. I got a handle on the situation and started



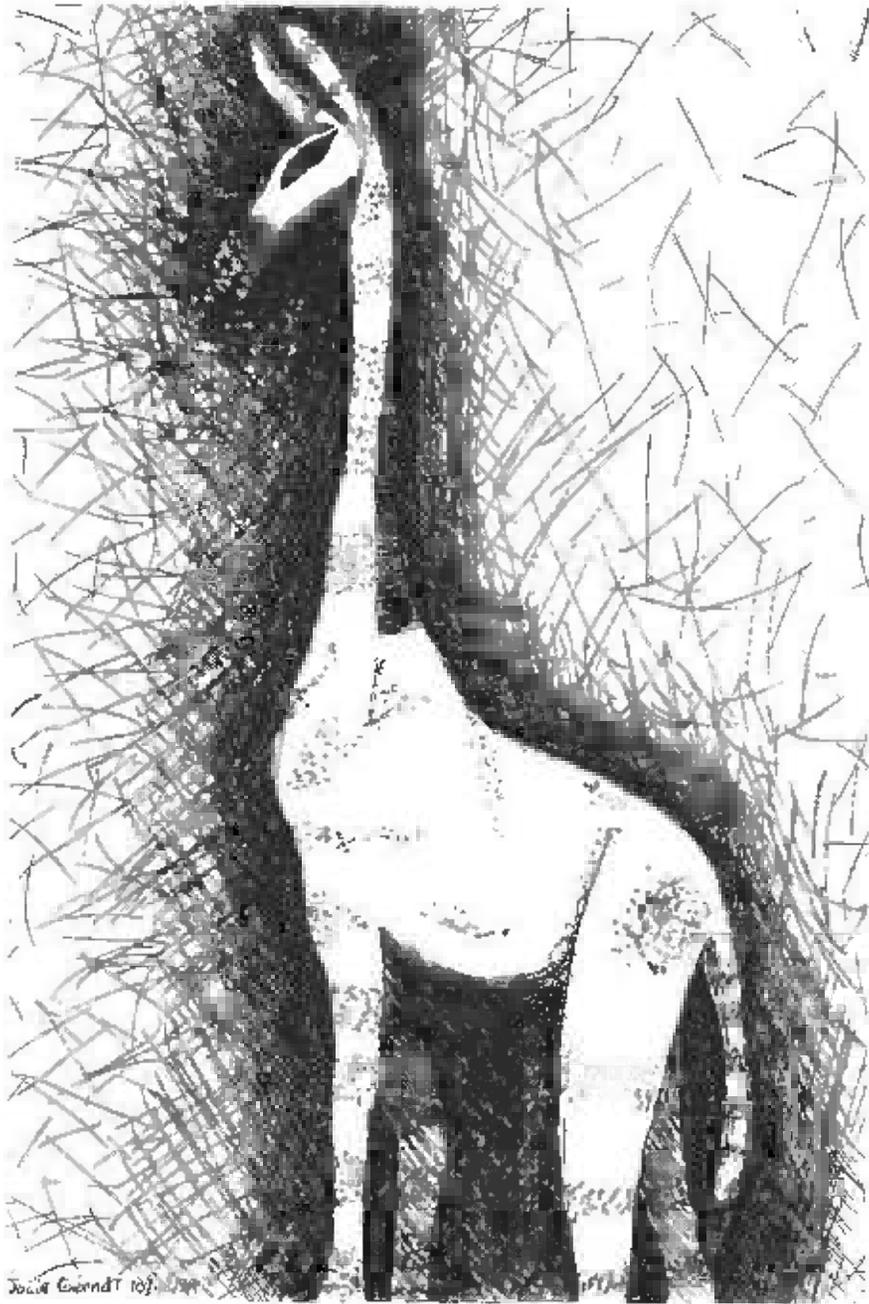
Web
by Nino Kvnikadze

reading him his rights. He was very uncooperative. Nicole and I literally had to carry him to the car. For fun we had him walk a straight line, but he kept stumbling over and lost his balance. Thank God Nicole and I were there to catch his fall or he would have been kissing the pavement. Next, we had him open his arms wide, close his eyes and touch his nose. He attempted the small task but kept hitting his cheek. Lastly, I asked him to recite the alphabet as fast as he could. In the beginning he was doing quite well, but when he reached the letter L, he started slurring his words, and skipping letters.

Finally, we had enough: I unlocked the doors and Nicole threw the man in the backseat of the vehicle where his friend was and slammed the door. I actually drove these two drunken bozos who were rambling on to each other not noticing the vehicle I was driving had no police radio, to the Menominee County Jail which was only a couple of blocks away.

Once we arrived, Nicole escorted the men out of the vehicle while I kept the motor running. As they attempted to walk toward the jail, I yelled through Nicole's opened door, "If I catch you in any bar again, I will throw the book at you." Nicole jumped into the car and we drove off like Bonnie and Clyde, laughing up a storm.

For being two bored women looking for action, we handled ourselves like real police officers. After going through the motions of make believe, I realized that it could be a very physical job if the person being arrested doesn't cooperate. You need to be physically fit and have patience when dealing with the public. All I know is that we pulled it off, and I think the underage drinker almost wet his pants when he thought he was going to jail. We all learned a lesson that night.



Jocile Coenndt 107

Giraffe
by Stephanie Bruno

The Trophy That Mattered

by Sally Weber Hasenfus

When I was a child, I often wondered why the hunters made such a big deal of going deer hunting every November. I compared their excitement to how I felt the day before Christmas. Yet I wondered why they would be so excited about going outdoors in the cold just to sit and wait for an innocent deer to kill. I was even more confused when they arrived home perfectly happy with nothing except great stories. No buck, no doe, just these great stories I loved hearing. It was the stories I believe they most looked forward to.

The stories they told were not of just the big kill, but of other things they saw in the woods. Finally, I decided to go with them to discover the magic first-hand. The first morning I found the perfect spot and just sat there waiting for my buck to come along. I had no intention of shooting it, but couldn't let on to the guys. So, like Aldo Leopold says in *Sand County Almanac* while he is preparing the sky dance of the woodcocks, I had found my "place and the hour," waited, and watched for their arrival (33). I was not disappointed. Within an hour several doe walked through with a huge beautiful buck trailing. They didn't seem at all bothered with their audience. Maybe they sensed my admiration. With the silence of the woods, I finally understood the beauty of why many of the hunters loved this so much. With the silence of the woods came life that would never be noticed anywhere near busy roads or the city. There were birds and critters everywhere.

I am not sure what time I most appreciated, the dawn or the dusk. Both carried the elegant silence and language of the natural settlers. Both furnished the exquisite performances of nature. It was certainly the most beautiful, theatrical setting possible. Both here and in Colorado, I have often gone hunting since then. I have never killed, and will never kill anything. But for argument's sake, I have continued to take the rifle. For a few years, I had lost what I had as a child when I would often wander in the woods and take my naps among the heavy growth of wooded life. I had no fear of the woods then or now, and appreciated all of the critters that many feared.

Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac* describes some of the beauty we often ignore. He says, for example, "He who searches for spring with his knees in the mud finds it, in abundance" (28). If we look carefully enough, we can sometimes see something we have never seen before, like, the little *Draba*, the smallest flower that blows. While I know many hunters don't go hunting for this reason, I found out that many of my family, who just never seemed to have any luck but came home with the best stories, never intended to shoot anything either.



The Senior
by James LaMalfa

O' Sam
by James LaMalfa

O' Sam was a railroad bum.

He wasn't a bad person, just liked to hang around the crew shack and watch trains. All the conductors, switchmen and brakemen knew him and didn't hassle him, believing he was harmless. He never showed up drunk and, although he never seemed to hold a job, he was known to help anyone who was down and out.

On cold winter nights when they were waiting for the evening freight to stop in Marinette for a crew change, the boys would invite him into the depot, brew some good, hot steaming coffee and talk.

Sam could spin stories about how things used to be and any good railroad man was a sucker for that kind of yarn. Things were changing on the railroad, so a man liked to remember how it was, 'cause the future looked uncertain.

What with those new-fangled diesels, well the management types for the railroad might just decide steamers took too much work to keep running and coal was getting too expensive to boot. When the diesel came in, people got laid off. So the crew at the yard liked to hear O' Sam talk about how things were in the good old days.

Sam had once traveled all over the world with his wife. But on one of their excursions abroad, she was killed and Sam took it hard. For a time he took to drinking, then became a railroad bum.

He kept the brakemen and conductors and the occasional engineer entranced with his stories of his travels in Europe, the great cities he had seen, like Rome and Paris. So, he was always welcome to share a cup of coffee around the cast iron woodstove in the crew's warming shack, just north of the coaling tower.

It was a bitter cold January night. Sam rapped on the door of the crew shack and was invited in. He scraped the snow off his shoes and joined the crew, who were gathered around the woodstove, roasting their front sides and trying to keep their backsides from getting chilled.

"10:30 freight on time?" Sam asked the conductor, Johnny Johnson.

"Set your watch by 'er," Johnny replied.

"The Nor'western's got a big Berk, 2809, pulling a freight drag outta Milwaukee. The hogger on the throttle's a damn good engineer. How about some java, Sam? Not much to do for an hour. Pull up a chair," the conductor added.

Sam did as he was bidden, warming his hands around a huge mug of steaming black coffee.

"Now, Sam," said the brakeman, Bob Pierce, a stoutly built man with a red face from all the winters he had seen. "spin us one of your stories while we wait. Have a hot biscuit, too. Rolly just made a batch."

Rolly LaPlant, the second brakeman, was the cook. Every crew had at least one man who could cook well. Once they boarded the caboose, when shifts changed, the men would sleep and eat in the crummy and a good cook was highly valued.

Sam pulled his chair up to the iron pot bellied stove, which glowed red from the burning oak logs inside.

"Have you ever heard about the hellbound train?" he asked with a sly grin.

"Can't say that I have," replied Rolly.

"I'll tell you about it," Ol' Sam said.

They all pulled their chairs closer to the fire, as there wasn't much to do on a freezing January night until the big Berkshire locomotive pulled into Marinette for coal and water.

Besides, they all knew from experience, once Sam started spinning a story, you just had to listen, he was that good at speechifying.

Ol' Sam's Story

It was shortly after my wife was killed and I was hitting the bottle a bit too much. In fact it was New Year's Eve and I had just done the death walk through all the bars in Menashaunee. I decided to walk off my stupefaction. It was colder than Hades and the wind cut your face like to freeze a man to death. I walked from Menashaunee head'n home, when I decided to cut across the railroad tracks by Mickey Lou's restaurant. It was midnight and there weren't any trains supposed to be coming through Marinette 'til 4 am.

I looked toward Peshtigo and through the woods I could see a single headlight away off near old 41. I stopped to let the train pass because in my condition, I didn't want to try beating the train.

The engine was an old American type, 4-4-0 and no number on it. The brakes screeched as it slowed in front of me, like all the bananees in hell were twist'n each other's tails. The cab was dark, except for the red hot firebox. It glowed red on the engineer's hands, but his face was dark, with his cap pulled over his eyes. Between his gloved hand on the throttle and his shirt I saw the gleam of something white. A bone, polished up like ivory.

This wasn't any engineer I knew, but I guessed who he was.

"I've got a woman for you, Sam," he said.



Copper County Wreck
by James LaMalfa

"I'll fix you up right proper. You know the terms. You know my price."

I knew the price all right. This was the hellbound train my granddad told me about. You get on, but you never get off.

This train goes straight to hell.

I was pretty liquored up and not think'n too straight, so I walked past the tender, grabbed the iron railing, cold as ice, and stepped on board the first coach. The shades were all drawn, but once inside the lights were all ablaze. The coaches were woodsided varnish, with oil lamps hanging from the ceiling. The first coach was the gambling car, with roulette wheels, dice games, and card dealers all as thin as skeletons. The dice girls were half naked and screeching like cats. Nobody had any money, but you didn't gamble money on this train.

As I walked through the coach, I pocketed a couple of dice, figuring I could roll the bones on the way back. There was more to see and figured if I was go'n to hell, I would see it all.

The second coach was the diner and there were men and women eating to beat the band, shoveling food in like a coal stoker pushing coal into a steam engine running a high ball at a hundred miles an hour. I walked on through the diner to the last car, it was the club car. The porter waved me on in. He looked like no porter I had ever seen. His face was covered with hair and his eyes were glowing like red hot coals.

"Welcome, Sam," the porter said.

"Your bride awaits you," he added with a wicked leer.

"She'll love you for all eternity. Passion's her fashion."

The heat inside was unbearable and the booze was starting to make my head spin. I looked toward the end of the club car and thought I recognized a painting on the wall, a painting I had once seen in Italy. It was the Venus of Urbino, by Titian. There she lay on a couch, shameless and gleaming like a piece of china, not a stitch on.

I blinked hard. The painting was beckoning to me! In my drunken state, I thought I was looking at a work of art.

But it was a real woman.

She smiled and held her arms out to me. She had red hair like Titian's women all had, or at least like he'd painted them. The train started with a jerk and I stumbled forward, toward the red-haired siren.

As I got closer, she began to change. Her red hair seemed alive, writhing like snakes. Her white flesh began to melt and run like hot wax. In a minute, there was nothing left of the temptress. Instead, a great black widow spider reached out to grab me. Her eight legs were tipped with sharp knives that whirled in the lamps of the lurching train.

I grabbed one of the oil lamps hanging from the clerestory of the old coach and flung it at the huge, black, hairy spider.

The lamp broke and flaming oil spilt over the spider, which emitted a piercing scream like a steam whistle gone mad. The porter turned on me and I saw that his jacket had fallen off, revealing a goat-like satyr. I flung the two dice in my pocket at the porter and he burst into flame.

I bolted for the door as the coach was now burning fiercely. The train had not yet come up to speed but was just inching across the iron bridge over the Menominee River. I jumped out of the coach, gained my feet and began running for all I was worth back toward Marinette. As the train headed north, the sound of insane laughter drifted back to me and the black train was soon lost to view.

I was now totally sober and headed back to my little house. When I got home, I put on all the lights, locked the doors and got down on my knees and prayed. I stayed there till the gray dawn began to encroach on the darkness. After that, I vowed to come clean, gave up drinking and turned my life around.

#

The only sound in the crew shack was the crackling of the oak logs. You could hear a pin drop. Rolly, who had tilted his chair back, suddenly yelped and fell backward. That shattered the mood and everyone burst out laughing. Rolly laughed too, even though he had spilled coffee on his shirt. Ol' Sam's yarn was enough to make the hair on the back of your neck stand up.

The steamboat whistle of the big Berkshire locomotive echoed off the buildings as it hit town.

As the caboose at the end of the consist hove into view, the crew left the snug warmth of the shack and headed toward it. They were replacing the crew that had ridden north from Milwaukee.

Before boarding the crummy, they turned to wave good-bye to Ol' Sam but he had slipped away in the darkness. All the way north to Ishpeming the three men were quiet, each lost in his own thoughts.

Each wondering,

Would they ever meet the hell bound train?

And would they accept the offer of its dark engineer with the gleaming, boney arms?

Diesel Smoke, Milltown Blues

by James LaMalfa

Rolling through my dreams

A diesel horn salutes the frozen stillness
Of a moonlit January landscape.

Irritating wail to some,
But not to me

It is the voice of things well remembered;
The smell of burning wool when you laid
Your frozen mittens on a furnace-hot woodstove
After rolling snow to make a man outside
'Cause is it was good packing that day.

Mind pictures return, columns of smoke and steam

Carried skyward at the depot,
Belching from the smokestacks of great engines
Patiently waiting for their passengers
Before their exertions
send rolling thunder across the city.

I recall warm spring nights when crickets

Kept me awake,
I on the cusp of becoming something
other than a child.

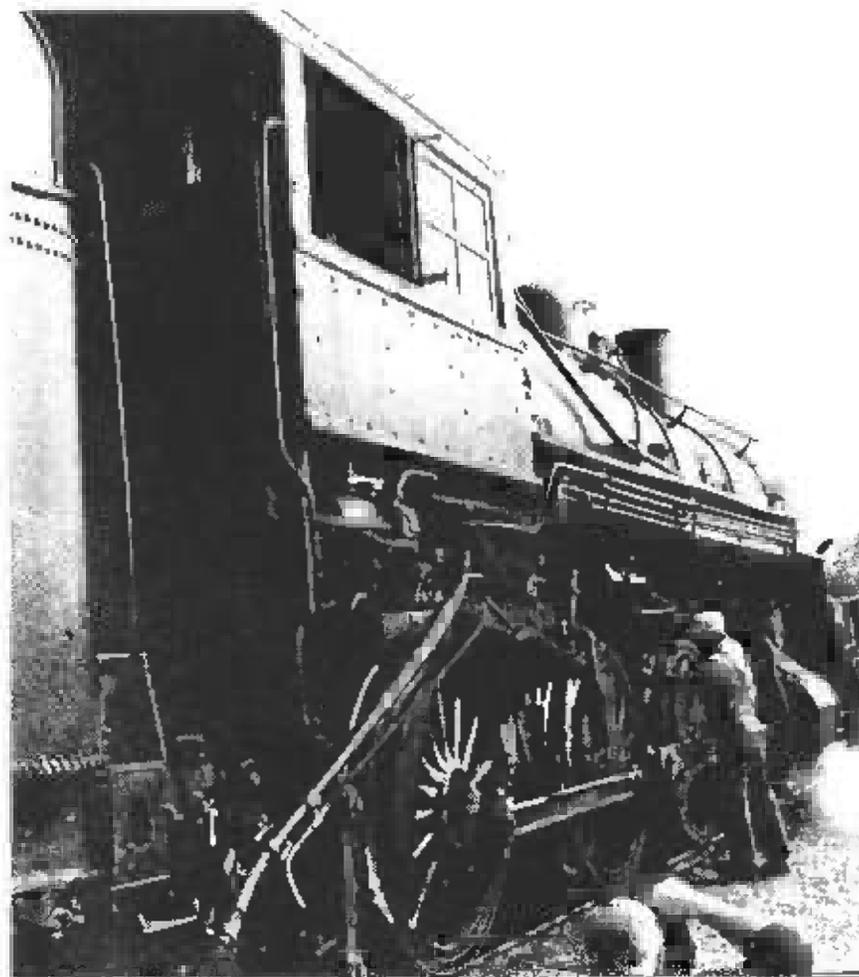
Listening in the somnolent evening,

Steam switchers humping boxcars
Sounded like great beasts,
Sparring.

"Chuff, Chuff, whump" they said
Slamming their couplers together
With a collision I felt,
as well as heard.

Other nights I could hear the North Shore Electric away off,

Crossing Capital drive,
Heading north toward Port Washington.
Its sound of passing began with a faint rattle,



Under Steam
by James LaMalfa

Like small stones tossed on a tin roof,
Then swelled to a whining roar,
Sucking air in its wake.

I would leap out of bed unmindful of the cold floor
rush to the window for a glimpse
Of passengers going from night to morning
Of a world I could only guess at,
And being a child,
Guessing wrong.

The electric coaches flashed by,
a blur of light and blue sparks
Against the winter night sky.
Passengers haloed by yellow light,
were acting out their lives
while I was waiting
To grow up,
Yearning to be with them.

But when I was old enough to buy a ticket
The North Shore,
The Chicago & Northwestern's 400,
Milwaukee Road's Hiawatha,
all the great passenger trains were gone,
Declared obsolete by a brave new world
Of jet planes and interstate highways,
Efficient and ugly,
Devoid of art,

Poetry on the rails died with them.

Yet, still, at 3 am, when the diesels
send their mournful music
into a hostile night
I remember.
And celebrate all that lost beauty.

Memory Frustrations

by Dorothy Demarce

We are told our memory is compared to a computer system. Since I have been using the school computers and my new computer at home, I can verify this as a true statement by personal experience.

Every time I have a deadline for a paper, when my time is limited, and I need to type my report or essay as quickly as possible, it never fails that something will happen to my program. I have a very difficult time finding different program conveniences once they disappear. More time is spent looking for sections I wiped out than it would take to type the entire paper. All the new techniques available on the new and improved computer programs could make life so enjoyable with all the different things you can do, but first you need to know how they work and how you can manipulate the program to do what you want, when you want. This is comparable to the memory, because we are always looking for ways to improve it and modify ways of remembering to improve our learning capabilities.

I experience the same frustration, or system failure, when I need to rely on my memory for important issues, for example, a test. The retrieval process comes in bits and pieces like a puzzle, and I am not always able to fit them together correctly. It is not that I don't know the material, but have a computer overload and the necessary data just refuses to show up on the screen. The longer I attend school, there has been some improvement, and maybe by the time I graduate my memory will be more cooperative.

One thing I have learned during my studying attempts is, if I write things instead of just reading or listening, the information will stay with me longer. I have not conquered studying for tests, and most times I feel I did better than I actually did. It is not to my best interest to memorize, because I don't feel learning is taking place at that time and will not stay with me, but only be a temporary fix. Repetition is extremely helpful and examples of real life situations help to keep the lesson alive in my mind and it makes more sense to me.

Because my time is so limited and my schedule very tight, I need to practice all avenues of the learning process. It is imperative for me to attempt to train my memory to maintain as much information as possible the first time which in turn will free up some of my time for something else. Maybe my memory really isn't full, but instead there is so much extra space where information is just floating. When I learn more, it will fill up the extra space and information will be easier to retrieve because it will have less space to look for the information I need.

Grandpa's Girl
by Chereé Demarco



Danielle
by Ron Winters

During my younger years my grandfather was that special person who occupied most of my free time. He meant more to me than any other family member. He and I had a bond that could not be broken.

Our relationship started as soon as I was born. My mother told me that when I was just a tiny baby, we would venture over to my grandparents' house every Sunday after church. When the tavern wasn't busy, he would always want to bring me downstairs to show me off to the few people that he knew. Grandpa was quite proud of me.

At the age of four or five, I started remembering wonderful times with my grandfather. He lived in an apartment attached to the tavern they owned, and it was traditional for my grandparents to baby sit me every day. Visits with my grandpa were the best times of my life. People would see us and say that we were like two peas in a pod. We would spend hours playing dolls or house, and I can still remember helping him clean up the tavern in the morning after a busy night. He allowed me to play around the bar until it was busy. My family's friends used to come in, and I would crawl onto his lap, give him the puppy dog look, and ask to stay just a little longer. Like the great guy he was, he agreed to let me stay in the bar with him. I would shoot pool with him or with one of our friends. I could cue and walk around the pool table thinking I was Minnesota Fats. I imagined and was certain no one in the place could beat me, but between you and me I think they let me win. Sometimes he would let me pour some of the drinks. I pulled the handle down on the most popular beer known to every guy that ventured through those doors, Pabst, but I had more foam in the glass than beer itself.

During the summers he would take me fishing. I had to prove to him that I wasn't afraid to put the slimy worm on the hook. I adopted the attitude that whatever he could do, I could do. I wanted him to think I could do anything. It was time for the big test. I picked up the unattractive worm, slid it on the hook, brought the pole behind my head, and gave it a toss. Wouldn't you know it, the worm went flying off the hook. So, I had to do it all over again. It took a lot of practice, but we still spent many days under the hot sun trying to catch us some dinner.

Spending time at camp was also a great memory. I would ask him to take me through the woods to see all the deer blinds. I wanted so badly for him to take me hunting, but both my parents and grandparents thought it was a bad idea. "Wait until you are older," they would tell me. I felt robbed every time hunting season came around. It was two long weeks of not seeing him. My grandmother tried to take his place, but she wasn't Grandpa.

Not having an enemy in the world, he was the type of person who would bend over backwards if anyone needed anything. He was well known and respected in the community. During our long walks, there were always a few people who would stop us to say hi. It was like hanging out with a well-known celebrity.

One summer, he moved out of the tavern, and I had the chance of a lifetime. I had the opportunity to spend the entire summer at Grandpa's house. At first, I asked both my parents and grandparents if I could spend just a few nights. Once thing led to another, and I ended up spending the entire summer. That was the summer I discovered the Cubs. My grandfather was a die-hard Cubs fan, who never missed a game in his life. One day, I came in from a hard day of playing and noticed the Cubs game was on TV, I sat next to my grandfather and watched for a while. Getting interested in the game, I knew we would be spending more time together watching the Cubs play. It was always my dream to take my grandfather to a game. It wasn't until the summer of 1998 that I was able to do that. We sat in the stands eating brats and drinking adult beverages. That game was significant, because that was the last year Harry Carrey was alive.

I look back on all the exciting times we went through, and I'm the luckiest girl in the world. It warms my heart to see my daughter carrying on the tradition. She is developing the same kind of bond with him that I had when I was younger. When she goes to visit, she is always at his side. He and she are doing the same things that he and I used to do.

The Mighty Oak

by Lori Pansch

A mighty oak standing tall,
thinking he will never fall.
Green leaves in full bloom,
never knowing any gloom.

Young lovers happy tonight,
holding each other very tight.
Believing that love won't die,
they will never say good-bye.

The mighty oak, cold and alone,
unable to stand on its own.
The leaves are all turning red,
soon they will all be dead.

An old man after many years,
his eyes are filled with tears.
All he has done is cried,
since his lover left his side.

Your Game

by Lori Pansch

In my soul you lit a fire,
feelings of passion and desire.
I felt cherished in your arms,
but fell victim to your charms.

All alone, wrapped in a sheet
my bed still held your heat.
My heart knew you were gone,
I was meant to be only a pawn.

You alone hold the blame,
I didn't know the rules of the game.

A Rival
by M. P. Ceccarelli

Within this fractured perspective,
impossible triangles rise from the table's floor.
At the distance, Escheristic possibilities,
scaled beyond reason.

Hard edges quaver, beneath the god's omnipresence.
Ascending to claim kinship,
association with the immortal.
As we arrive at Giza.

Yadda Happens
by M. P. Ceccarelli

Palaver stinted
timing staled
As the hours
wile and pale

At twenty after
Comes the pause
When chatter dulls
For lack of clause.

So logic fails you
As ne'er before
As words take flight
The audience bores

Communication
Has three parts
To capture laughter
Minds, and hearts

And lacking one
The others fail
As those who listen
Begin to bail

So hold them loosely
Let them flow
'fore trains of thought
are late to go!

Ya gotta learn
Ya gotta fill
'cause yadda happens
by force of will

And in your speech
Let eloquence ply
Turns of phrase
and metaphors try

The watch word stays
The Barker's couth
Let all you utter
Contain the truth.

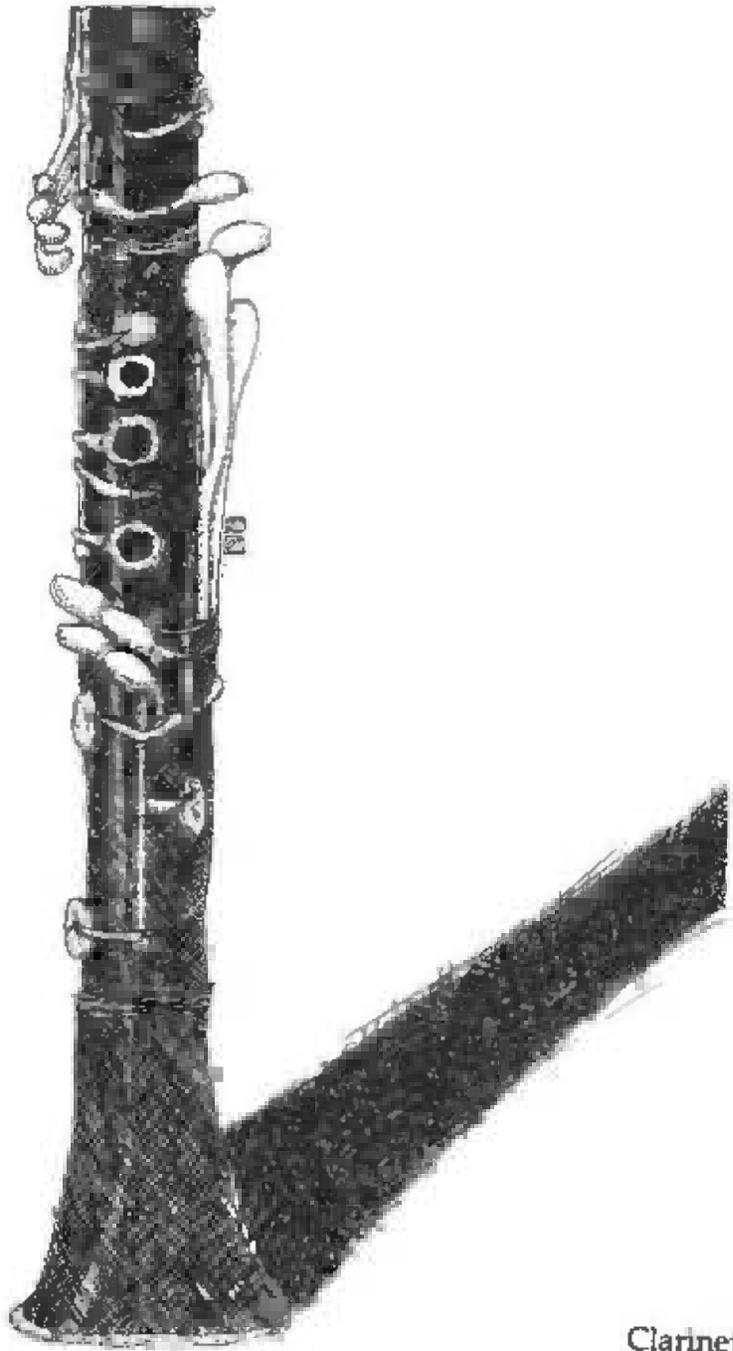
Old Man Wisdom
by Mary Marineau

Years ago in a place far from here a wise old man said to me, "the truth shall set you free." I visited this man often, and he said little, but always ended our visits with that same verse.

This town was sparse, with little vegetation; the sun was extremely hot for days on end. Often I would wonder why I was there, but not as often as I wondered about those six words the old man said. What did he mean? I was always honest in my speaking, and he acknowledged that. So, why did he always say those words to me?

Years passed, the old man did also. But the words have never left my mind or my heart. I still hear his voice, speaking to me. As I sit atop the tree stump, next to the creek near my new home, I ponder those words. I watch the deer eating happily on the grass and berries and leaves on the trees that are left! I watch the hungry coyote observe the few wolves, waiting for them to get their fill on the fresh kill, so that he can eat also. I listen to the chatter among all the creatures here. They speak of the pleasure it is to have some fresh clean water, free from pollution and they speak of how little of it there is left. I watch as the agonizing bear tries to get his exercise that he requires daily, but now he has to pace back and forth because his land area is running out! They all pass by me, as man is approaching again with all those loud machines. One of the creatures says, "the truth shall set you free."

The truth is, I feel things, I listen to my intuition and what I see happening all around. I know is not right. I have only one voice. However, if many voices joined together in harmony, while listening to their hearts,
OUR EARTH MAY SURVIVE.



Clarinet 1
by Jocelyn Gerndt