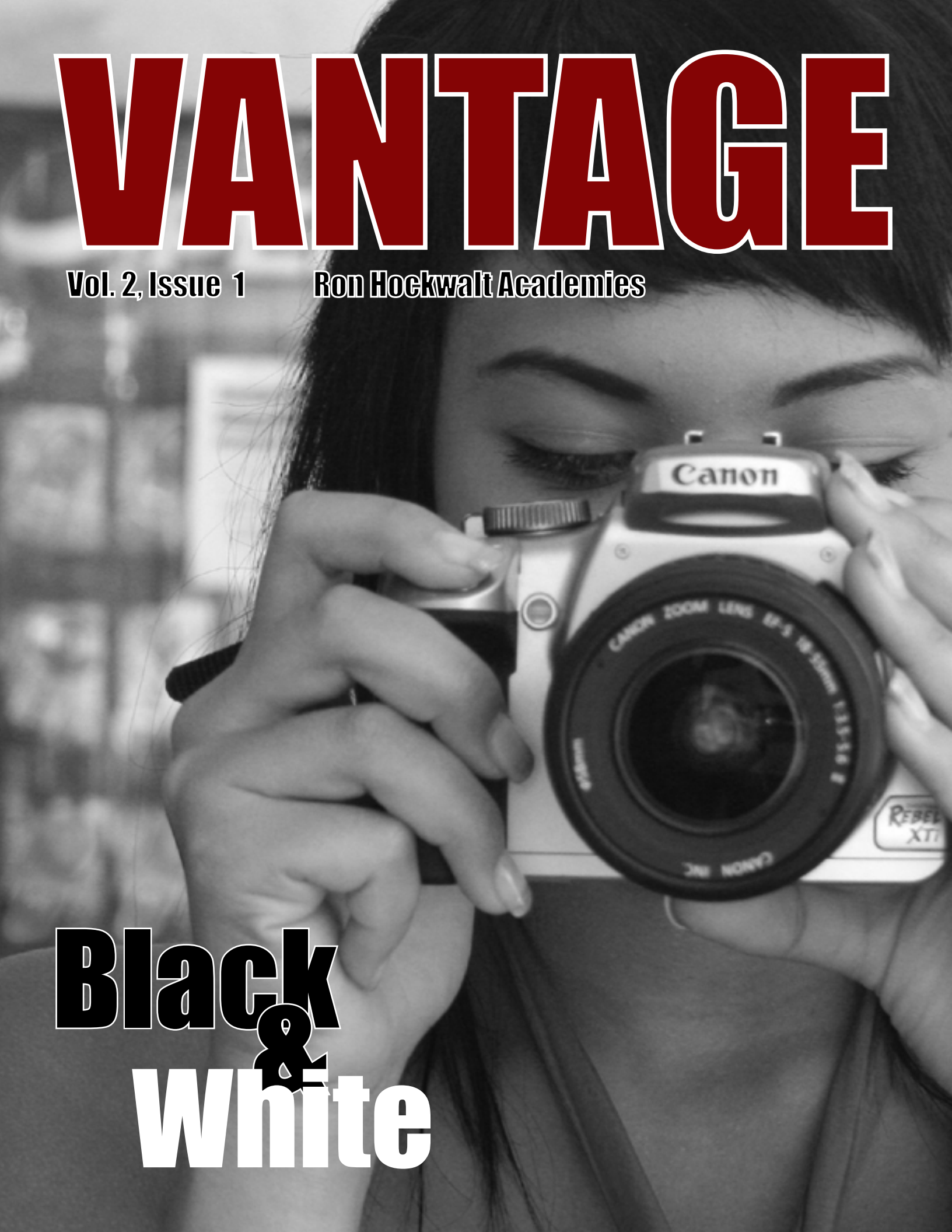


# VANTAGE

Vol. 2, Issue 1

Ron Hockwalt Academies

**Black  
&  
White**



# **WANTAGE**

**Vol. 2, Issue 1**

**Ron Hockwalt Academies**

**Winter 2009**

# **Black & White**

Ron Hockwalt Academies  
467 So. Lemon Ave.  
Walnut, CA 91789

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# VANTAGE

Feature:  
**Black and White 6**

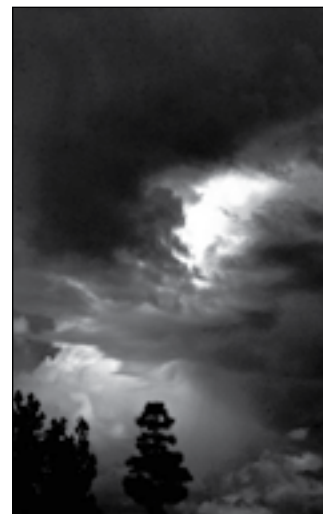
Students balance the opposing force of "black and white" to create dynamic realizations.



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# Letter From The Editor

Vantage is a magazine created by students like myself. This publication gives us a chance to see how a business really functions together as a diverse group.

Being both a student and editor of the magazine, it is my goal to try and open your mind to the many sides of reality in a gradual way.

The process in which our magazine transitions from black to white pages is a transition from darkness to light, ending in ideals to a well rounded and reformed mind. The magazine staff encourages you to actively write down your feelings and expressions whether it be in the literal sense or through expressions

by drawings or photography. This magazine isn't solely based on our ideas from the magazine staff, but expresses common feelings from students of any high school who want to speak up and tell a story.



If you want to submit your work to Vantage send to:  
**vantagesubmissions@gmail.com**

Or if you'd like to directly contact me, send it to:  
**Mcajasvantage@yahoo.com**

**Front Cover: Kaylene Oliveira**  
**'Joker' Pastel: Omar Gomez**



# Vantage Staff Box

**Managing Editor**  
Matthew Cajas

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Maria España

**Senior Editor**  
Sabrina Thatcher

**Production Editor**  
Nanci Lucio

**Assaistant Production Editor**  
Kevin Anderson

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Desiray Ramirez

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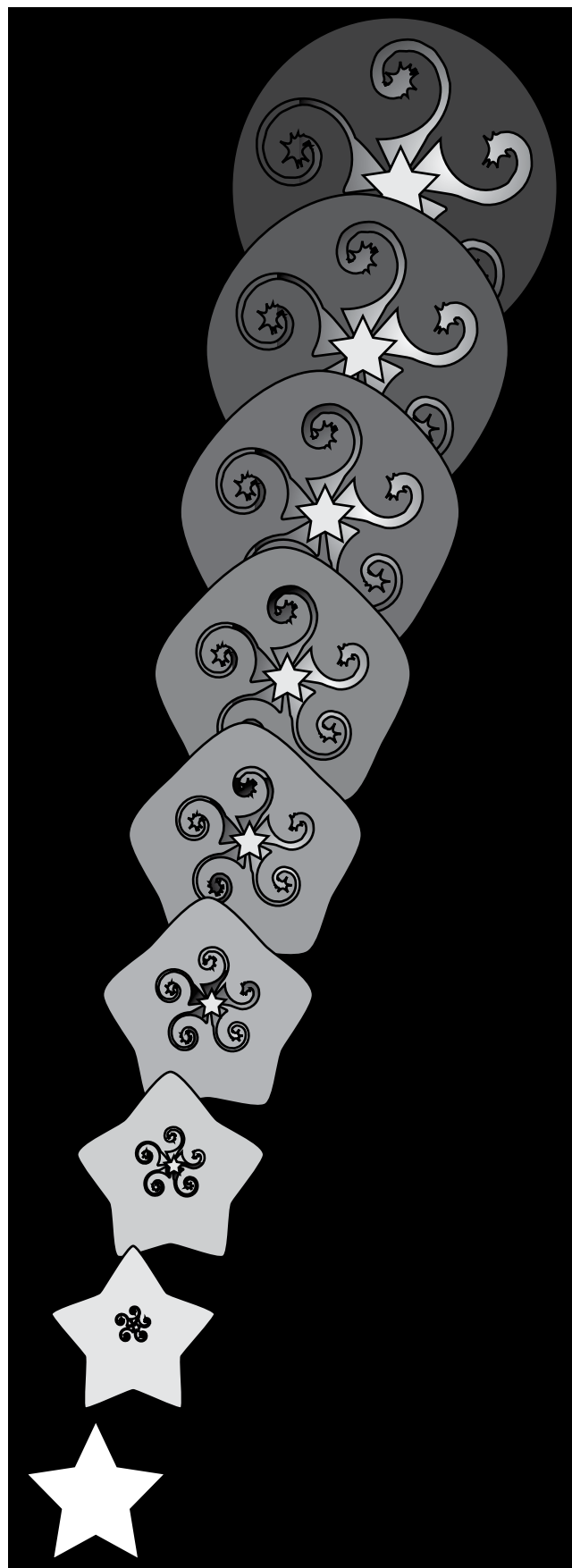
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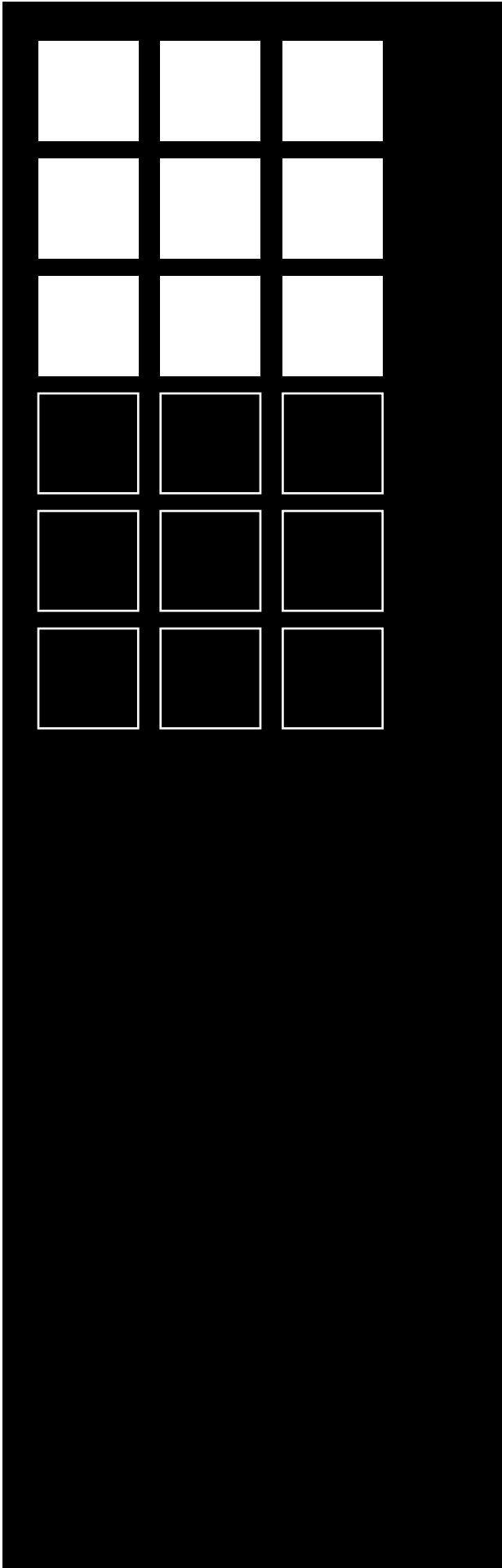
**Advisors**  
Jeffrey Nicoll - Richard Root



# Why Black and White?

**B**lack and white, dark and light, evil and good, yin and yang, winter and summer. All are opposites that create the fullness of the world in which we live. This issue's theme "Black and White" tells a simple story, not only in contrast but in mood as well. In school, visual arts teachers most often begin instruction in black and white to isolate certain essential skills like light, contrast, shading etc. Upon reviewing the work for our visual arts students and the mood of the writings and projects completed by our other students through the course of the fall and winter, we have arrived at a little story we would like to tell you. It concerns the birth out of darkness, a gradual rising of the light, that only ends in blinding yet eye-opening realization. Turn the page and witness what can grow from a single droplet in a frigid pool.

Advisor, Richard Root





Photographer Above: James Castellanos  
Below: Jazmin Sotelo





Photographer Above: Sonali Chauhan  
Below: Garhett Johnson



Photographer Above: James Calise  
Below: Rosa Becerra



Photographer Above: Ruben Ramirez  
Below: Kyle Tassinari



Photographer Above: Alina Arias  
Below: TJ Chieng

# FREEDOM WRITERS REVISITED

By Nanci Lucio

*Vantage Magazine promotes the act of journaling to discover ones true self. Below is an explanation of the original "freedom writers" book and film, a true and motivating story.*

This is for the people who have not seen the freedom writers movie or the book. The freedom writers were a group of students who succeeded

203 in Woodrow Wilson High School in the city of Long Beach. Room 203 had gotten lots of teachers in and out until Mrs. Erin Gruwell went in to take over

the class. Students used to bet on how long teachers would last. For Mrs. Gruwell they said 3 weeks. Students were worried when she passed the 3 weeks. No one paid attention in class. When they would go outside to lunch Mrs. Gruwell noticed something odd. She saw that the Asians, Blacks, Hispanics and the Whites were all on opposite sides of the school. A Black person wouldn't go and talk to a Mexican because they would start to

fight, leading to escalating school tension.

although they were living in poverty. Lets say our schools are better now. Not in a sense that everyone is jolly and all, just that different kinds of people can hang out. The freedom writers went through a rough patch that some still have now. Racism was a big deal then and it still is. The movie or the book start the same, but the only difference between the movie and the book is that the book tells you more personal stuff. The movie doesn't show you all their diary entrees and the book does. This story starts in Room

**"The freedom writers went through a rough patch that some still have now. Racism was a big deal then and it still is."**

Mrs. Gruwell tried to cope with all the racism. Her students didn't like her because she was white and "rich". To make a long story short, everything



changed when a Hispanic person drew a picture of an African American with big lips. Mrs. Gruwell got mad and compared the drawing to the time of the Holocaust. No one knew about that time so she was in shock. Mrs. Gruwell then assigned a book to them that she thought they could learn something from, since they had experience in violence and abuse. The book she assigned them was “The Diary Of Anne Frank.” Anne Frank was a little girl who



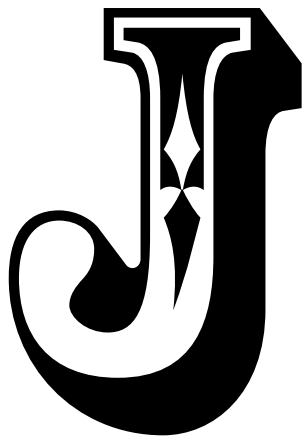
grew up in a war zone and had to hide out because she could have been killed. When the students started to read the book they couldn't stop reading it. She wanted them to open up and talk about their experiences. So she gave a journal to all the students and told them, “You'll have something to tell people.” The students began to write in their journals. They would write about their experiences, emotions and their every day challenges. Other teachers at the school began to get mad at Mrs. Gruwell because all the students wanted to transfer to her class. After

a while, Mrs. Gruwell began to read their journals and some of the kids went to her a lot. Some had been raped and some were forced to stay in a gang because it was a family thing. Through Anne Frank's book, she opened their eyes. Also, she told them how writing has helped them cope with their situation. Eventually, all the students were hanging out with each other; Blacks, Asians, Whites, and Mexican's. They became a family. They went from being delinquents to straight A student's. Mrs. Gruwell and her students then held fund-raisers. Those fund-raisers were able to bring the Dutch woman who helped hide Anne Frank to the school. They also visited the Museum of Tolerance. The year ended, all the students moved on to the next grade, and successfully petitioned for Mrs. Gruwell to follow them through their remaining years of high school.

■ ■ ■ ■

**Many of these students are now teachers themselves. Mrs. Gruwell now teaches college. If you are interested in what this inspired group is doing now go to: [www.freedomwriters.org](http://www.freedomwriters.org).**

**Vantage Magazine continues in this tradition promoting true and “real” expression within the educational experience.**



# JOURNALING

Journaling has been a form of personal expression, or even self-therapy, that has existed throughout the ages. The film *Freedom Writers* has assisted in a resurgence of journaling as an integral part of many educational systems. What appears here is a series of journal entries collected from the classrooms of Nan Kirkeby and Richard Root, as well as individual submissions from students throughout Ron Hockwalt Academies. The works move from dark and tumultuous beginnings in the first half of our magazine, proceeding to bright and hopeful pieces in our second half, shedding light on some of our teenager's most pressing issues.

## God

By Robert Ortega

I believe God is a woman. I believe that after she created the Earth, she created us. We thought that everything would be okay, that we could do anything we wanted to: kill, cheat, lie, steal. God saw how we turned out, and she was disappointed, so she left us. Now, she doesn't watch over the good and keep us safe. We disgusted her, pushing her to form another planet, to start life once again. Her new creations pleased her, so she forgot about her failure and watches over them. They live with no disease, extreme intelligence, and no conflict. Her new creations are an extremely advanced race. They got that way because after God created them that way, knowing they would be flawless, unlike her earlier earthlings. Therefore, that leads to me saying that I also believe in aliens. They will eventually invade our planet and wipe out humans to do God a favor and please her by abolishing her previous failed experiment, most likely in the year 2020.

## I believe God is a woman

## Athiest

By Dylan Miller

I am an atheist. I do not believe in God. I believe in the theory of evolution. Whenever the topic of religion comes up, I choose not to get involved. Not because I don't know what I'm talking about, but because I don't want to argue with eight people at once. I was force-fed religion at a young age, and for a while it was fine. As I got older, I start asking questions like, "Where's the proof?" This upset my mother. One day, I just came to the conclusion that there is no God.

## Misconceptions

By Daniel Anderson

There are a few people who know who I really am. The rest of the people just come up with their own opinions about who I am. So, as a result of this over the past 9 months or so, I fed into the misconceptions about me and it was fun seeing the reactions of people. But I'm done with that now. It got me some attention although most of that attention was negative and weighty. It got me some admirers, but that's not why I did it. The worst part of this experiment is that it left some of my friends puzzled and confused, which is a problem that I will fix on my own time. While feeding into these misconceptions I found that my presence made some feel comfortable and happy while it made others feel uncomfortable or even insecure. It was a good experiment though, because I love being misunderstood. But the difference between me and the people who labeled me is that I try my best to not prejudge people before I actually talk to them. The bottom line is if I didn't say it it's probably not true, and if you would like to know who I am or what I'm about all you have to do is ask and I promise no more social experiments.

## Depression Week

By Kevin Kim

My biggest challenge this year is the overwhelming situation I put myself in last week. One week ago, I was caught with four other friends smoking marijuana at a different school. A week later, I sit here writing about

my experience at suspension school.

The worst part about getting caught was the giant disappointment I see in the eyes of my family, my friends, and my teachers. The ride from the school to my house was crushing, and I felt the tension building in the car. When I arrived home, my dad was already waiting on the couch. For almost an hour I listen to the angry shouting of my parents, and I saw as their as eyes filled with tears of sadness and disappointment. Soon, they stopped talking, and we sat in a depressing silence. I had a feeling that my parents thought that this was somehow their fault.

This made me feel so bad, because I knew that this was a situation I got myself in, and it was my fault and mine alone. I was given my punishment and sent to my room, where I just sat for hours thinking about what I had done. The following week passed slowly, and I, having to endure the awkwardness and disappointment of speaking to my family, kept to myself, shutting myself in my room and reading all day long (I had no computer, no phone, and no contact with anyone. Seriously, I must have read five Harry Potter books this week). I would also take long naps so that time would pass by quicker.

As Monday arrived, my situation worsened. My parents had met with the principal and they found out that expulsion was a big possibility. I started to panic, and I found myself praying every other minute that an alternative punishment could be found. I thought of so much that week, like how I put my school and family through so much embarrassment, how I had disappointed my team, how cool Mr. Root was, how I was going to handle expulsion, how I would ever get into a decent college, and how I may not be seeing my friends for a very long time.

But, as I wallowed in sadness, God started to answer my prayers, and things started to look up. We befriended our suspension school teacher, and the vice principal of the school promised to put in a good word for us. We found out that our superintendent was working to prevent our expulsion, and our parents were also trying their hardest to persuade the school. As the week went on our chances of expulsion seemed to lessen and lessen. We all worked our hardest to show that we were remorseful and understood that we had made a big mistake. We sent the school and our coach letters of apology. I still do not know what will happen to me and my friends, but I just hope I will be able to use this experience as an eye opener that will keep me away from drugs for the rest of my life.

## Poetry

# A Dim Light

*Fear, a phobia of monsters of the dark.*

*No matter how complex the fear,  
you mustn't let it overwhelm you.*

*The struggles of life is a necessity,  
suffering to achieve joy,  
dying to live.*

*Hope, a sense of chance in the darkest hours,*

*no matter how simple it is,  
helps to overcome fear:*

*a light at the end of the tunnel,  
living to see another day,  
pushing, striving, hoping,  
so that we won't be crushed.*

*We will never be crushed,  
all due to a small dim light  
and a spirit in our hearts:*

*triumph and salvation,  
the blood, the sweat, and the tears of life*

*By: Matthew Cajas*



Right: Cecil Tantay, *Scream* pencil on paper  
Below: Parker Winans, pastel on paper





Above: Jessie Yi, *Scream*, pastel on paper  
Below: Ricky Lee, *Scream*, pastel on paper



Right: Sergio Zavala, *Scream*, pastel on paper  
Below: Matthew Cajas, *Still Life*, charcoal on paper



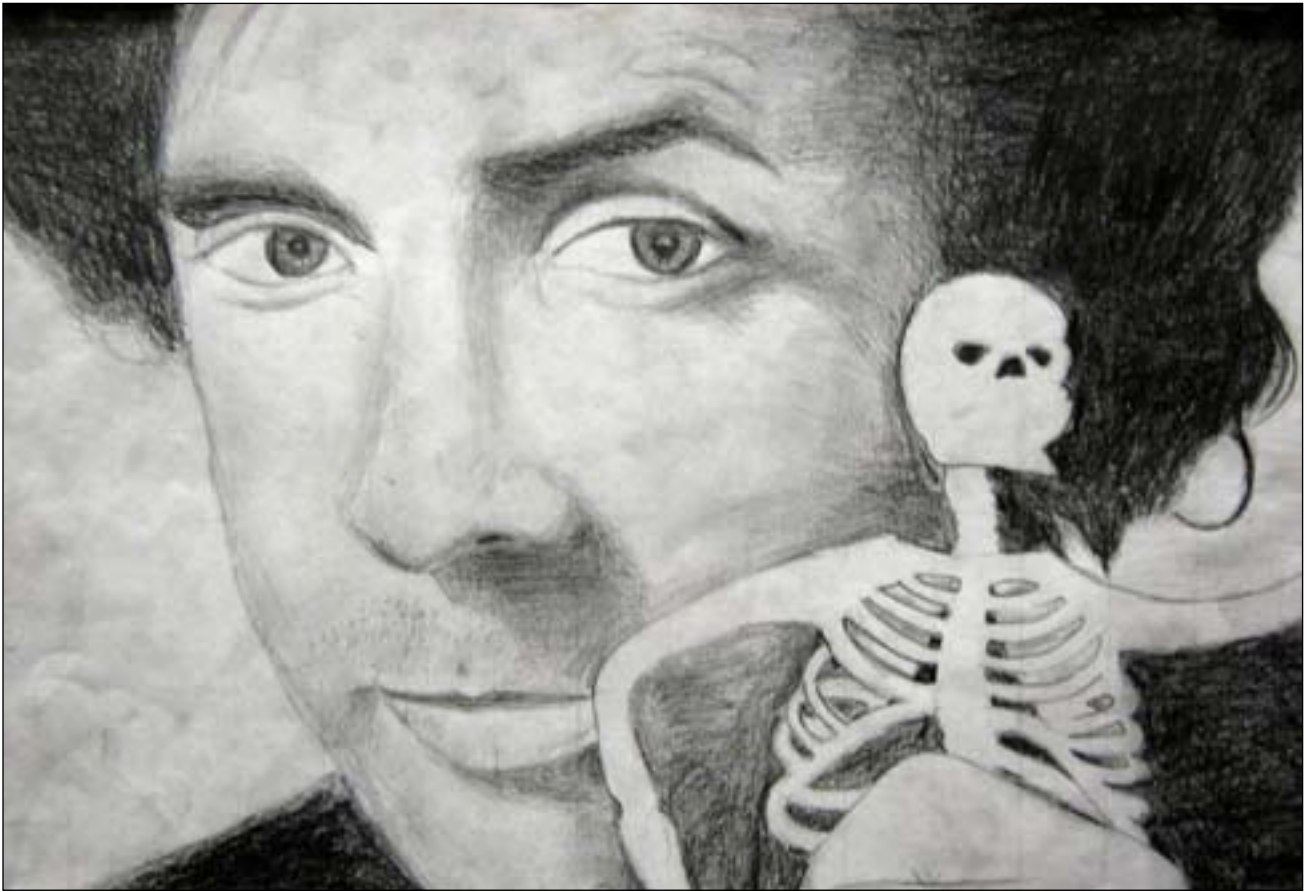


Above: Parker Winans, *Kevin Smith*, Pencil on paper  
Right: CJ Tantay, *Jessica Alba*, Pencil on paper



Left: Kevin Mondongo, *Portrait*, pencil on paper  
Below: Margaret Carol, *Portrait*, pencil on paper





Above: Sharon Pineda, *Tim Burton*, pencil on paper  
Left: Coco Apenyo, *Jim Morrison*, pencil on paper



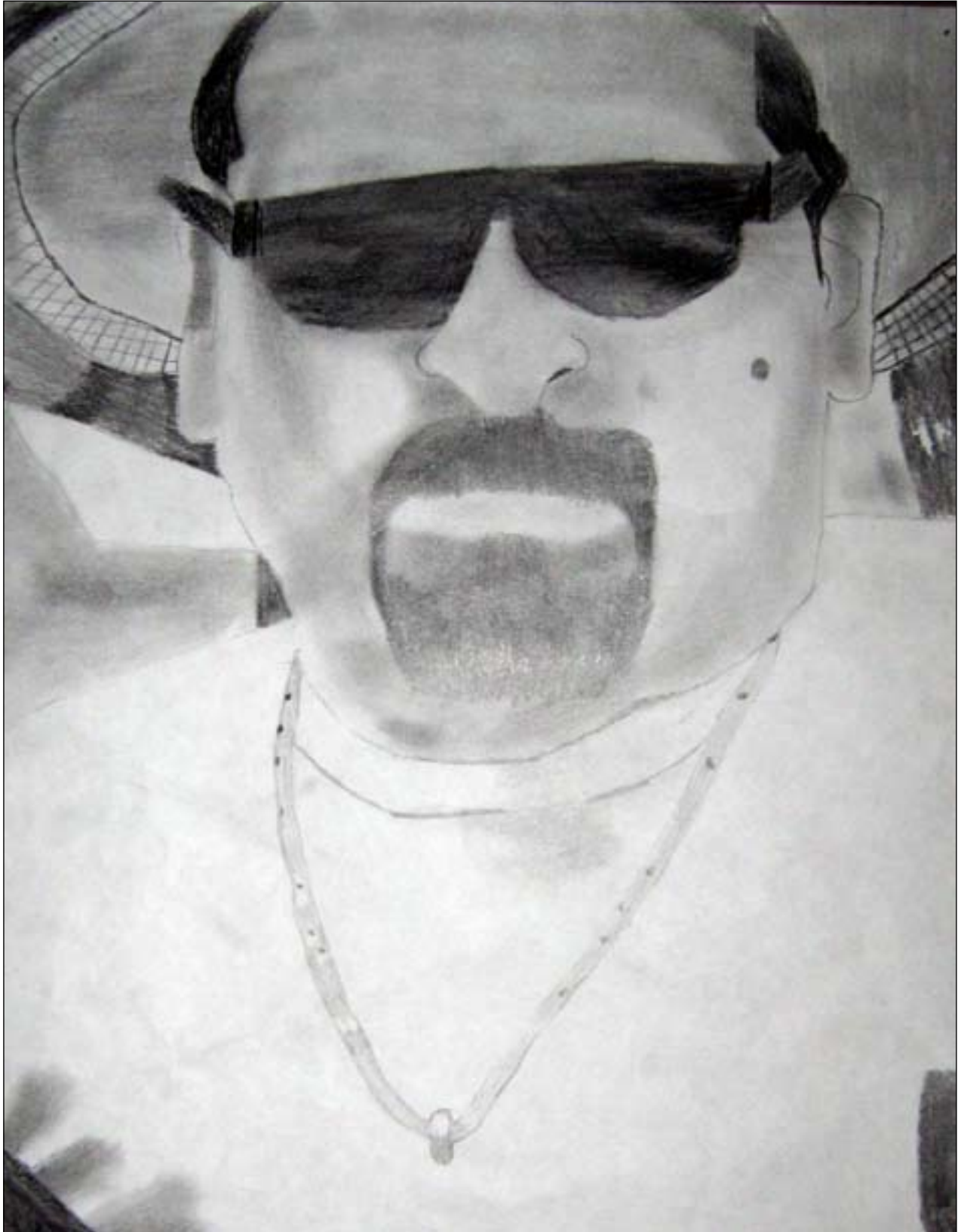
Ruben Ramirez, *Distortion*, pencil on paper



Left: Patric Patterson, *Portrait*, pencil on paper  
Below: Jessie Yi, *Still Life*, Charcoal on paper







Robert Dorame, *Portrait*, pencil on paper

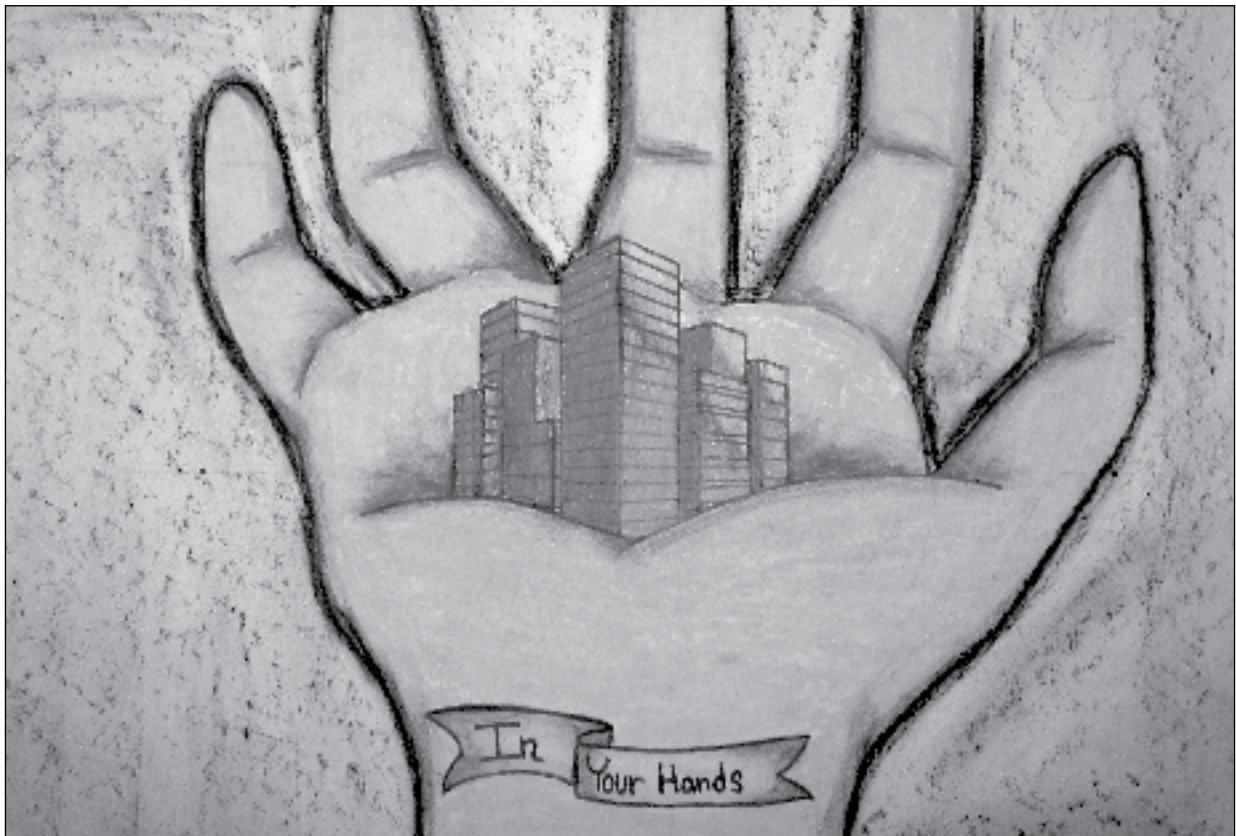


Left: Matthew Cajas, *Lennon*, pencil on paper  
Below: Kaylene Oliveira, *Still Life*, Charcoal on paper





Above: Sharon Pineda, *Portrait*, pencil on paper  
Below: Kaylene Oliveira, *In Your Hands*, Pastel on paper



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By Renn Diaz

Love is a funny thing. You expect it to be easy. You expect it to be a world of roses and laughs and perfect moments that you find only in movies. You expect her to always say the right thing, and always know exactly how you feel, or exactly how to react to it. You expect her to calm you down when you're yelling or to chase you when you run away. You expect so much that you feel entirely, and utterly defeated when something doesn't exactly match up with all of your plans. But that's the thing. Love isn't a plan. It doesn't have a certain beginning and it certainly has no end or visible finish line to those deeply in it.

Love happens; it is so incredibly messy. People around you can't comprehend why you do the things you do, or why you fight so hard for something that seems to cause you so much pain, because simply, they can't see. They can't see the invisible ring of insanity that surrounds you when you're in love. It's inconvenient and painful and devastating at times, but we can't live without it. What you don't learn is how hard love is. How much work it takes. How much of ourselves we have to put into it. How it isn't worth it until we are complete and utter idiots about it.

Love isn't her calming you down when you yell. It's her yelling, just as loud, just as hard, right back at you, right in your face to wake you up and to keep you grounded. It isn't him bringing you roses everyday or cute things that make your relationship appear more presentable.

It's after a long fight, that drains the life and bones right out of you both, and yet her showing up at your door the next morning anyway.

It's not her saying all the right things or knowing exactly how to handle you. So, no, it's not her caressing your hair and telling you everything is going to be alright. It's her standing there, admitting she's just as scared as you are. You have to remember that with love, you're not the only one involved. You've unknowingly put your life, your heart into the palms of another person's hands and said, "Here. Do what you will. Mash it into mince meat. Or forget I ever handed it to you. As long as you have it."

It makes us crazy. It makes reality invisible and it erases all the lines that we shouldn't cross. Because love isn't about fencing ourselves in; feeling safe, feeling sure about the future. It's about scaring the sense out of every nerve in our body, but pushing forward anyway. Because all the fighting and all the tears and all the uncertainty is worth it. And it's much better, than being 100% happy without someone to show us that there is a world of a difference between feeling "happy" and feeling whole.

# WHAT MATTERS MOST

By Maria España

**W**hen asked “what matters most to you,” some people might answer “friends” or “family.” To me, what matters most in life is the ability to be caring human beings toward each other. Now-a-days, our world is full of discrimination, hatred, war and senseless killing. But when those few bright lights begin to shine through these darker times to help fellow humans out, to give each other a helping hand in times of need, it inspires me. It stirs this dormant hope within me that perhaps we will accomplish the idea of world peace; that, perhaps its not impossible.

I suppose the problem with our times is that the future is not what it used to be. Its not filled with dazzling flying cars and servant robots. Instead, its filled with worry about global warming and who has the most crude oil in their possession. What we should be doing, since we are all humans, is coming together in order to help create solutions to help our own communities. Nobody wants to die, and there is never a reason

to kill. We are all humans; we are all family. Its time to start proving it to society, as well as to ourselves.

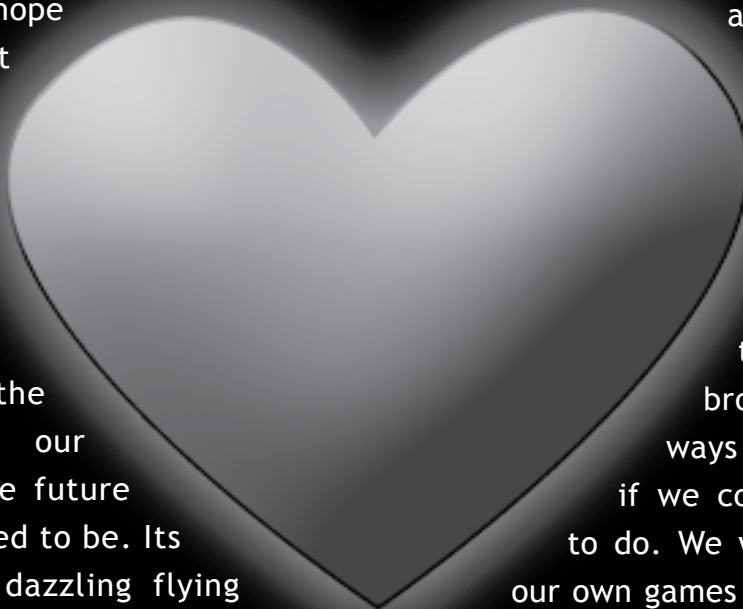
By Melinda Lara

**W**hat matters most to me is my brother. On January 7, 2009, my brother and his friends were in a major car accident. My brother was the only one wearing a seatbelt, yet he still got badly injured.

The other kids went home after spending a week in the hospital.

My brother matters most to me, because ever since we were little, we did everything together. My brother and I would always use our imaginations if we couldn't find anything to do. We would even make up our own games to play. One day, we went into my mother's room and took off one of her mattresses. We took it and put it next to the stairs. Then we grabbed my dog, jumped on the mattress, and slid all the way down. At first, my mom was mad, but we didn't care. We just went back up the stairs and did it again.

A few years later, my brother and I



didn't get along. I would always tell my brother I hated him, that he wasn't my brother, even that I wished him dead. I had always known why I said these cruel things to him; because I never liked the things he did. He had always been mean to me, often choosing to hit me. I didn't like it. He would tell my mom that his friends come first.

Before the car accident, my brother and I started to talk, and we didn't fight once. If I could go back to when I had said all those mean things, I would take them all back. I would have told him that I loved him, and that if we had spent more time together we would probably have a better relationship.

When I woke up one morning to go to school, my grandmother called me into her room. She then proceeded to tell me that my brother had just gotten into a car accident. It was serious, and possibly deadly. He might just die from this. When she had uttered those words, my heart just exploded with pain. I felt like a bad person, like this was all my fault. On our way to the hospital, I was thinking to myself that this was definitely my fault, because my brother hadn't been home, and what I said would happen did indeed happen.

It's been one month since my brother has been in the hospital. He had been in a coma for nine days, so as he awoke, he began weeping, knowing God had given him a second chance. When my

brother is released from the hospital, I am going to show him that I am there for him. I am going to be a better sister, and I'm going to tell him that he is, and will always be, my brother. But, first of all, I'm going to tell him that I love him, and that he matters most.

"It's me and you, together, forever..."

By Richard Root

**"the problem with our times is that the future is not what it used to be."**

**W**hat matters most to me has nothing to do with me. My goodness and immortality resides in the existence of any and every random person who crosses my path. They are my mission, the only

concrete joy that is real and eternal. The laugh of the cashier, lost in the tedium of beeping bar signs. The student who understands why he punched the plaster wall. Better because I listened. My own child, who is afraid to even dance, who pirouettes across the gym three days later - beaming. These minor moments, even if forgotten, will become the creation of a whole person moving one inch nearer to the light. What matters to me most is the small and bright, that will linger long after I am gone.

By Keirra Pulu

**I** hurt in places I didn't even know existed. The pain is unimaginable, and I only pretend to forgive. But under the surface of my smile is a lingering ill for him. A grudge.



Have you ever felt so dependent and irrevocably in love, that you just couldn't let go of the one who betrayed you? I have broken into pieces, each piece feeling something different. I go up and down between self-loathing and misery, praying that once piece will have the strength to break free.

Will I stay, or will I go? Is that even the question I should be asking? Neither option will release me from the agony I harbor inside. I tried to ignore it, but now all the pain I warded off rushes back to me. I have to face it. It is the only way to restore my happiness, one final antidote to relinquish the ugly tumor that in my heart. Forgiveness.

By Matthew Cajas

Imagine a nice, pristine landscape where you can plant anything you wished on your own land. That ability alone, the artistic mind, is what matters most to me. It's what helps us live out our daily lives, especially during the times when there is absolutely nothing to do. You could just space out and go off, traveling about in your imagination, interacting with new ideas. It may be something plain and simple, like a leisure activity,

or it might be adventurous, like a new bizarre world that you've created. The possibilities of a creative mind are endless and infinite. It is an ability you have fun with. Many new career opportunities have been offered in the graphic industry, searching for newer, more creative ways to advertise to customers. Without artistic minds, the world would be plain, dull, and boring. So, with this said, I ask you all to grab a pencil, a blank piece of paper, and your imagination. Start doodling, drawing, even scribbling. You never know what your mind is capable of making up, until you try.

**That ability alone, the artistic mind, is what matters most to me. The possibilities of a creative mind are endless and infinite.**

# JOURNALING

## My Style of Doodling

By Julian Sia

**Y**ou know that feeling you get when you're in trouble? The feeling where you can't stop thinking about what you're going to say when the interrogator walks in and your heart is beating really fast? I get that feeling almost every school year, sadly, but this one is probably the best and the worst. I can't believe I'm saying this, but getting suspended and going to a different school with a different teacher for four days can get pretty fun during the last 3 days.

The first day is more like a stare down with everyone else in the room. Today is the second day and this place is pretty fun already. I'm not very fond of writing, nor am I good at it, but when you just write out your mind, interesting stuff is created. Did I mention it feels like hanging out with friends in the first week of school? Now I did. It's pretty cold in this room; Kind of like sitting beside an AC unit set on low for 4 hours. You shouldn't stare at a box of Kleenex when you're stuck, writing. I saw this edition of Vantage Magazine the first day I was here. It had some very nice artwork, and the stories in it were better than most 100 page books I have read. There was this picture of Mr. Root that looked pretty cool. He has a green shirt and tie with a brown jacket. The stories in the magazine had some very sensible quotes; sentences actually. Time flies when you write without caring about anything else. For me, the easiest way to write is writing out your mind, meaning everything you think of.

I just realized right now that I keep jumping around from topic to topic. Just staring at the wall, I noticed some pretty artwork. Uh, oh, time's still flying and soon I will be on the bus, going to the bus stop by Starbucks, thinking about lunch and dinner, wanting and not wanting to go to school at the same time, and realizing that I still don't have a title for this es-

say. I don't call this an essay, I call this doodling language arts style. I finally thought of a title! This is called "My Style Of Doodling." Writing can be boring at times. Find the right time to write, and you can fly through time, having fun with something you thought would be hard to do.

**If you hold  
yourself all high  
and mighty, no  
one will respect  
you the way you  
wish...**

## Respect

By Matthew Cajas

**R**espect is a very honored ideal. It's hard to earn, and easy to lose, because it's all based upon how you're treated, and how you treat others. If you hold yourself all high and mighty, no one will respect you the way you wish to be respected. It's only when you show a sign of humility and equality that you will be shown respect. People with closed minds and little knowledge need to break themselves free from their shell and respect other people's decisions and mentalities. If we all respected each others ideas and input, the world would be a much better place. We would not only prosper from new knowledge, but improve our lives. I feel respect helps us understand each other better and much more clearly.

## Karma

By Maria España

Something I believe in that others usually do not is Karma. A lot of negative people do not understand that what you put



out is what you get back, ten-fold. Whenever I have ever been wronged, whether it be by a stranger or a loved one, I try to hold back my impulse to seek revenge, and let Karma handle it. I try constantly to do the right thing, whether or not people agree with my views, in hope that Karma will go easy on me for the wrong-doings I've committed. At times, I see my friends and family going down the wrong path in life, in search of wealth or other leisurely pleasures, and I can't help but remind them that what goes around, comes around; sometimes almost instantly!

For example, I once had a very nice trinket, that meant a lot to me. I left it with one of my "friends" while I went to go get a drink. When I came back, he was gone, as well as my trinket. My friends wanted to go find him and get my property back, but I just told them it was cool, let Karma handle it. Sure enough, my friend Margaret saw the guy a few weeks later. He told her he dropped the trinket and broke it on his way home, that same day that he took it. Moments like that have proved to me that Karma really does exist, and it shows me to have patience and not be spiteful. Sometimes you've just got to let things go.

---

## Picture Perfect

By Johnny Ma

**A**right, well, I call this article "Picture Perfect." Ever imagine something that you want to have when you didn't have it? To do something when you couldn't do it? To become something that you weren't? Well, picture perfect means those traits listed above. You gotta close your eyes and dream, dream big, but remember how to fulfill that dream. Sometimes there isn't a certain way of doing it, but you just have to believe in yourself.

Imagination takes you places. People that can be successful in life don't complain about what they don't have. They are proud of what they do have. When you add hope and ambition together, you can do great things. And I'm writing this to those out there that don't know what to do with their lives, or don't want to know. I mean, life is like a lesson, a class; you can even call it a subject! Everything just comes at you, and when that happens people stress out and panic. I mean, they don't understand what life's teaching them. You have to be ready for bumps or other ups and downs in your life. You only get one life, so make the most out of it. Put happiness and joy into

other people's lives. I'd like to meet this type of person. Oh, and remember: Never forget where you started.

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## My First...

By Brittany Godinez

**I** remember the first time I ever went to an amusement park with a boyfriend. It was just last year. The boy I went with is my boyfriend Robert. I started school here at Ron Hockwalt Academies at the beginning of my junior year. I had another boyfriend, but we were having problems. I then started talking to Robert.

We were friends for a couple weeks before we started "talking." He had asked me twice at the beginning of that school year to go out with him. I turned him down both times. About a month later we decided to go to Disneyland together, and we were BOTH single. So we went that day, as friends, and we were having a GREAT day, so far. Then around 9:30 the fireworks started and we were watching them, hugging. Then, I saw him texting behind his back! I was so mad!! But I didn't want that to ruin my night, so I ignored it. But I was still mad! Then my phone started vibrating, so I took it out and read the text. The text was from Robert! I was kind of confused about why he was texting me. So I opened the text and it read: "Will you be my girlfriend?" I looked over at him, and realized that's

why he was texting behind his back. So I gave him a big hug and a kiss and I replied back to him, "OF COURSE I WILL!"

So we began to hug and watch the fireworks. I then looked up at him and asked: "Why did you text me asking to be with you? Why didn't you just say it to me?" and he replied back to me: "Because I didn't want to talk and ruin the fireworks for you. I know it's your favorite part!" I then smiled, kissed him, and the rest of our night went on. We finished our night NOT single! We officially got together on November 10th, 2007, at 9:33 p.m. We have now been together for one year, one month, and seven days!

**...life is like a lesson, a class; you can even call it a subject! Everything just comes at you, and when that happens people stress out and panic.**



Photographer Above: Irwin Otico  
Below: Sara Manuel



Photographer Above: Maria Velez  
Below: Garhett Johnson



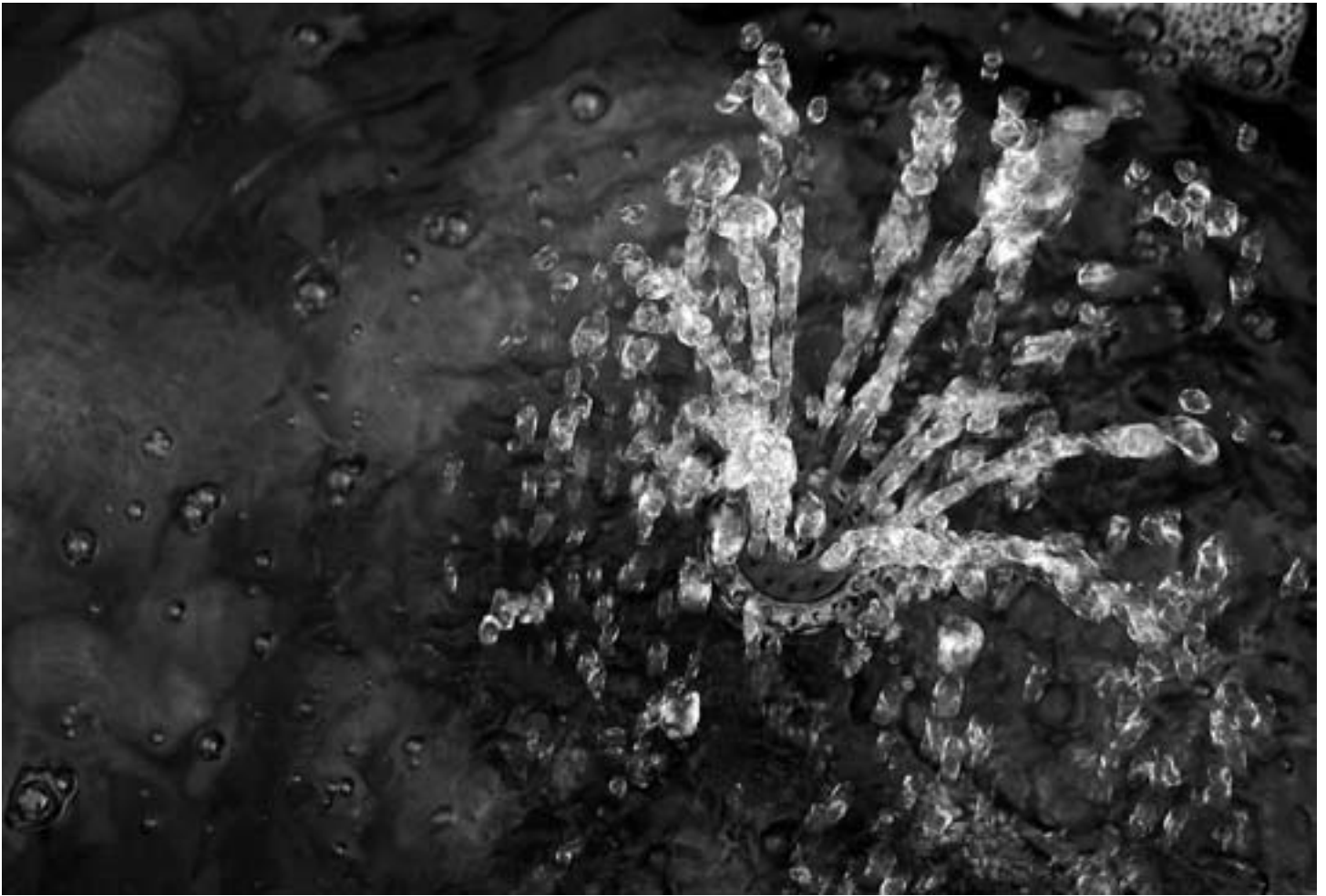
Photographer Above: Stevens Elmes  
Below: Ruben Ramirez



Photographer Above: Narmin Sawiris  
Below: Maria Velez



Photographer Above: Kaylene Oliveira  
Below: Geoff Batista



Photographer Above: Alina Arias  
Below: Tracy Barrera



Photographer Above: Maria Velez  
Below: Jordan Stringham



# Oh, The Spanish Moss

By: Fernando Islas

Oh, The Spanish Moss are an up and coming band from the slums of Downtown Whittier. They are making their way onto the underground blues rock scene in a big way, rocking out almost anywhere they can to get their music across. The downfall is they only play at bars and nobody under 21 is allowed in. This band is not like others and they get their distinct sound from their inspirations such as Jimi Hendrix and The Black Keys. "Coal Black Lungs" is a crowd pleaser and so far their most requested and favorite song to play.

Ricardo, the drummer, Tom, the lead singer/rhythm guitarist, Chris, the bassist and Ian, the lead guitarist, make up the band. These chaps have been touring up to Santa Cruz, Reseda and even as local as Brea. They are working hard in the studio and trying to get an album



Photo by Jennifer Caddick

out by summer when they will play San Francisco. Their strange band name was concocted one Saturday evening when all four were drinking and couldn't decide on a band name. "Oh, The Spanish Moss" was one of the options they threw into a bowl and picked out of it. Fall Out Boy and Panic At The Disco! were the reason these guys started playing because they got mad when the radio played those kinds of bands claiming them to be rock, so these guys wet out on a mission to bring classic rock back.

# SO DEVOUT

## “A Vantage interview with Chad Albers”

**C**had Michael Albers is the lead guitar and vocals in his band. In fact, he's his own band. It's just Chad and his guitar. Ever since March of 2005, Chad has been writing his own songs and music. He hasn't been wasting time either. Chad plays at a lot of shows and has actually sold some CD's. He calls his band "So Devout". The word "devout" means a person who is dedicated to their religion. In other words, he is a devout Christian.

Personally, I have always loved Chad's music. His song writing abilities are amazing. He also has done a few cover songs from Gym Class Heroes, Metro Station, Leona Lewis, Stevie Wonder, Mayday Parade, Akon, etc. I always end up preferring his version of the cover songs he does rather than the originals. He mainly writes songs that have to do with love. It's really easy to relate to his songs, and that's only one of the many reasons I listen to his music.

### Q's and A's

**\*who influences you?**

-Jesus Christ  
 mayday Parade  
 kellinguinn  
 nevershoutnever!  
 a rocket to the moon  
 the scene aesthetic  
 the maine  
 acceptance  
 forever the sickest kids  
 paramore and so on...

**\*what about your major influences influence you?**

-lyrical creativity. song writing ability as far as melodies, dynamics, musical difference//ability.

**\*what genre of music do you put yours under?**

-acoustic

**\*how long has so devout been around?**

-since march of 05

**\*what is your favorite song to play and why?**

-"dont let this go". I feel like it shows my influences the most and is the easiest song to relate to out of the songs I've written.

**\*whats your favorite thing when you're performing in a show?**

-attendance. the bigger the crowd the happier I am. the more people that haven't heard me the better, it spreads my music. & then hanging out after with everyone.

**\*do you ever plan on playing other types of music in the future?**

-I have so many musical influences that certain songs convince me to pursue other types of music. I would like for all of my influences to be evident in my songs.

**\*where are you hoping your music will take you in the future?**

-as far as I can go. I have high hopes but I like to stay realistic and enjoy playing music while I still have the opportunity.

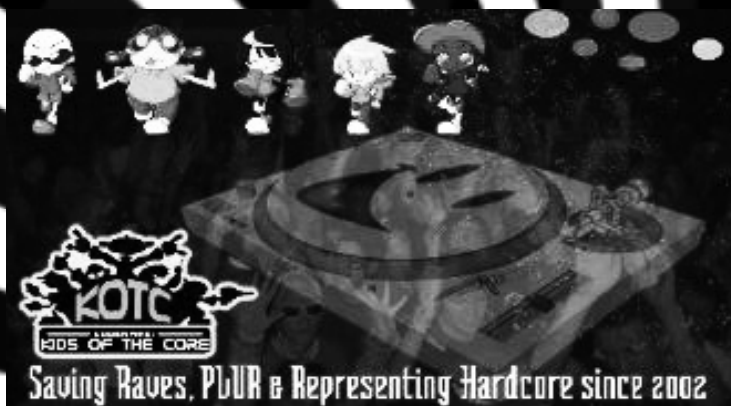


# INSIDE THE CREATIVE MIND

**T**he electronic music scene is a world of escape. To forget life's conformity and to become unique in your own way. The DJs who are loved the most are those who provide moments of beauty, clarity, inspiration, and the hope that not everything in this world has to be perfect. An example of one DJ who provides this is DJ En3rgy. He's been deejaying in the electronic scene for 14 years now. Style of choice: happy hardcore, hardstyle and much more. Through out this time, he's been making his way to the top, performing as a headliner, bringing in the crowds, and keeping the old school vibes alive. Anyone can become a DJ. It takes those who are special to impact peoples' minds, bodies, and souls, keeping them begging for more. DJ En3rgy does just that, earning himself the nick name as "The Hardcore Hero".



Not only is this man an amazing DJ but he's also responsible for putting together "Kids Of The Core," an organization that believes we are all united between one sound, one love. No music is greater than another. He believes in one common beat. Therefore, K.O.T.C. states: "What's your Core?" This organization has put together the famous year round "Miles of Smiles," and continues to provide some of the best events in this scene.



# Reviews

*prepare for the future*

## *Epic Game or Epic Failure?*

### Fallout 3's chance to recover from the wastelands.

**F**allout 3, a Bethesda Production, is a long awaited game by its followers. But was it worth the wait? In Fallout 3 you play the role of a wanderer or a "Vault dweller." Abandoned by his father, he is a well known scientist throughout the game. You begin your journey trying to first figure out where your father went and what he was involved in before you were born, which slowly leads to learning who you really are as you uncover clues he left you.

The story line is a great pull factor for the user because you get to choose whether to follow a corrupt life or bright life, constantly being tested to do both good and bad. The game has both a distinguished and dramatic theme infuse with sepia tones as a visual accent, which is well adapted for its surroundings. Another attractive feature is the appealing lighting; who doesn't like to look at shiny objects ... and then blowing them up?

You also get to customize your appearance as well as your name. However, any gamer who has played any Oblivion title will pick up its distinct

feel of roaming about and waiting for loading scenes. Bethesda could have at least have tried to change its feel a bit more.

Also, guilds they have in the game, such as "The Outcasts," don't allow you to join their group because you are a wanderer (it seems a bit weak that all you are to the guilds is an errand boy/girl). Game conversations have severe consequences, such as people becoming angry with you causing certain quests to become harder to complete. It's as if the game makers wanted to get the major part of the game - being your choice of dialogue - done and over with. Finally, how the game designers decided to end the game was very disappointing, It is forced upon you, leaving no alternatives. It shows a lack of seeing their ideas followed all the way through.

Finally I shall lay my judgment down on Fallout 3. All in all, I give it an 8 out of 10 for great visuals, a dramatic story line, and fun game play. However, for this game to be worth your money, you'll find yourself wanting to do every quest so you can enjoy the game rather than be upset by how sudden and abruptly the game ended.

# FALLOUT 3



Instilling creativity in any classroom can most often conjure up fascinating work from many students. Such is the case in Bonnie Sprague's English classroom where students took on the persona of a warrior during the horrific time that the monster Grendel haunted Europe's northern reaches.

## The Depths Of Hell

By: Wesley Voskeritchian

**D**ear comrade,  
It's been a day or two since the last time our warriors had come across Grendel the mighty beast that comes from the depths of hell. He is a giant beast with large talons. He has been following us for days, killing our warriors in their sleep. He can take out a whole army of our bravest soldiers with his eyes closed. I am writing you this letter in request for more of your soldiers to help us defeat this demon monster. We are afraid that he might sneak up during the night and kill our soldiers. We need your help, comrade. ■ ■ ■ ■



## Getting a Kick out of Killing

By: Marc Silva

Dear Comrade,

These past couple of months have been terrifying. The reason I say this is because some kind of monster or beast has been coming to the Mead Hall and terrorizing us by destroying it and killing most of our warriors. We don't know the reason why this beast is so evil, and every night it's worse and worse. He just gets a kick out of killing and eating our people.

Every night I worry more and more and I hope I'm not one of the warriors he decides to kill. As a brave warrior I'll admit I'm terrified of this beast and I hope and

pray I don't become one of his victims. All I can do is just be prepared for the worst and I'm glad you're not here with us, because that's just one less warrior killed. So, just please send your prayers for me and my fellow warriors.



## One Fell Swoop

By Daniel Anderson

Dear Fellow Knight,

You are so fortunate that you don't have to be here right now. This Grendel everyone speaks of is truly a spectacle. He is at least six-foot-eight, covered in hair, stronger than anything I've seen

Please send your prayers for me and my fellow warriors

before, fast and elusive. He is truly a monster.

Twice he has brought terror to our camp and twice I have slept through it. On the first night he killed three men in one fell swoop and then continued to beat them. On the second night he played with everyone by disturbing the camp then disappearing with one of my com-

rades. He was never found. I am afraid that the next time he visits I may be his victim.



## Teeth as Sharp as a Sword

By Maria España

Fellow Knight,

My country, Herot, has been under siege and attack by a demon named Grendel. He is such a horrifying sight. His skin is continuously seeping puss and blood. He has talons the size of my forearm, and teeth are as sharp as a sword.

Every night, this beast comes and feasts upon the flesh of my fellow country folk, and I am fearing the worst. Everyday there are more funerals, and every night Grendel returns to gorge upon more.

I am afraid no one will be able to save us from this demon's beastly appetite. We need a hero.

# Organisms Science Contest

*Kim Preble's classroom is a hot-bed of creativity. As part of Ron Hockwalt Academies newly instated design-based learning program, Ms. Preble went beyond merely studying pre-existing organisms to having her students invent organisms of their own design. Students had to include a habit to live in, a way to protect itself, a way to attack enemies, a way to disguise itself, a way to get energy and a way to reproduce. As one might guess, the teenage imagination took flight from here.*

## 1st Place, Writing

### Krab-A-Lot-O-Pus

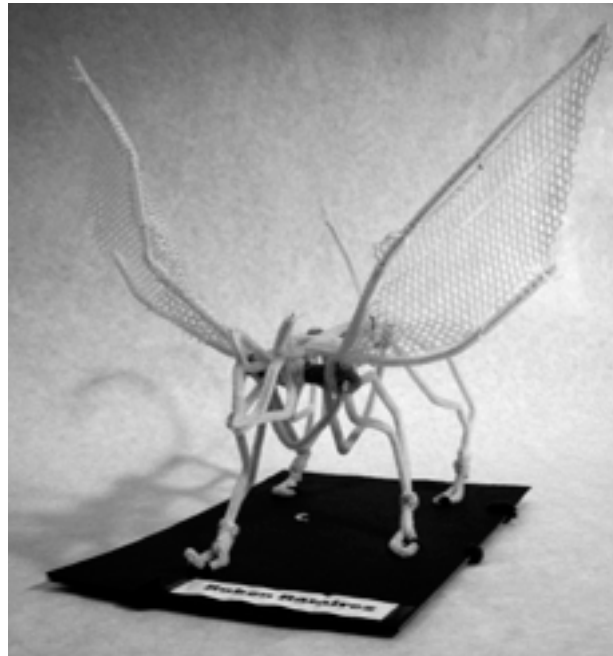
By Sara Manuel

This organism spends the majority of her lifetime in warm waters surrounded by her own kind hunting and flourishing together until pregnancy when she breaks away from the rest of the clan with her mate. They are most active at night, but during the summer months, they will emerge from the warm waters and climb on rocks to sunbathe. This is essential to their health, for they can not fully regain their strength after the harsh winter months without the boost of vitamin D their body produces. In the summer, the soft, quiet, squeaking noises made to communicate can be heard. Under water these sounds have a much higher frequency and can deafen prey or unsuspecting critters that are near. This is how the female kills her mate after he impregnates her. His body contains a potent chemical that would be lethal to her that gives a pain numbing effect necessary to carry her young. She then burrows into an underwater



cave where she will spend the rest of her life.

This creature contains several different defense mechanisms, ranging from camouflage to poison darts that have enough potency to poison prey when they pierce an enemy's flesh. To blend in with their surroundings, she flattens her body on the sea floor, and her shell, which resembles sand, helps her camouflage. These poison darts contain the same chemical found in the male body of these species which paralyzes enemies allowing her to eat her meals fresh. While pregnant, her method of protection is to simply burrow in underwater caves and hide herself as her young grow. Without her defense mechanism, she would starve because her mouth is located under her belly. If she tried to use her mouth for defense, it would leave her underbelly exposed which is the most sensitive area of her body.



Ruben Ramirez, 1st place, Design

The life span of these creatures is extremely short, and they require hardly any energy at all. The life cycle begins when the mother is impregnated. In one week's time, all one-hundred fifty of her young are fully developed but too weak to survive on their own, and they are in desperate need of nutrients, so they begin to feast on their own mother. For about seven weeks they eat her from the inside out until she is so fragile the slightest movement of her young can cause her body to burst. After this happens, they finish all of her remains

and by instinct and smell, they find the rest of their clan where they continue this life cycle. The pregnancy is surprisingly painless for the mother because of the chemicals she ingests from her mate when she eats him. She is oblivious to what is happening. Since these creatures eat mainly plants and small underwater critters, they don't get much energy from food. And since these animals are nocturnal, they don't get energy from the sun, so they must look elsewhere. When they are born, they will feast for the winter months and hibernate until summer. They will emerge from the waters and sunbathe for seven days, returning at night to sleep. This gives them a boost of vitamin D that will help them sustain their energy and health for the rest of their short life-span.

Though the life-span is very short, these animals' bodies are completely recycled through the birthing process, and one hundred fifty young come forth from two parents. They have an endless supply of food and energy that will help them sustain a healthy life and in the event one of them dies, their body will be consumed and provide nutrients for another. This is a species that will survive for many years to come.

## 2nd place, Writing

### Rufe

By James Castellanos

**R**ufes live in humid environments, but can also survive in wet and damp living areas. They are nocturnal and move about during the night and early morning. On their stomachs they have a small orb inside the skin that moves inside of them allowing them to travel. They communicate by noises from the throat and by squeaking.

Rufes look like a decent sized furry animal with

feathers on its forehead; however, it secretly has a retractable-venomous stinger in the back of its body. It survives by the feathers on its body and his soft fur that is soaked with venomous poison that immediately causes



Sergio Zavala, 1st place, Design

paralysis when entering the blood stream of the enemy. On top of that, Rufes have a very simple defensive mechanism. Rufes stand upright of their face and, from the inside, soaks its entire fur with the same venomous poison found of the top of its body

with its stinger fully exposed waving in the air, preventing any harm from being inflicted onto the Rufe.

Due to its large mouth, Rufes have the ability to eat animals greater in size or equivalent to its body size. Rufes gain energy by eating animals and drinking large amounts of water. This creature is also fond of eating planters, in order to keep a small body that is mobile and easy to escape quickly from dangerous situations.

Rufes rarely have sex, mating every 3 years in order to reproduce. Due to the fact they have such a small reproduction rate, Rufes are on the verge of becoming extinct. Occasionally, when people hunter deer or elk,

they lay traps on the ground and often snare Rufes, due to the fact Rufes are significantly smaller than Deer and Elk. It kills the Rufes. However, if a Rufe successfully reproduce through sex, then 2-3 Rufes are born from one act of sexual intercourse. In their young age, Rufes are extremely defenseless because their

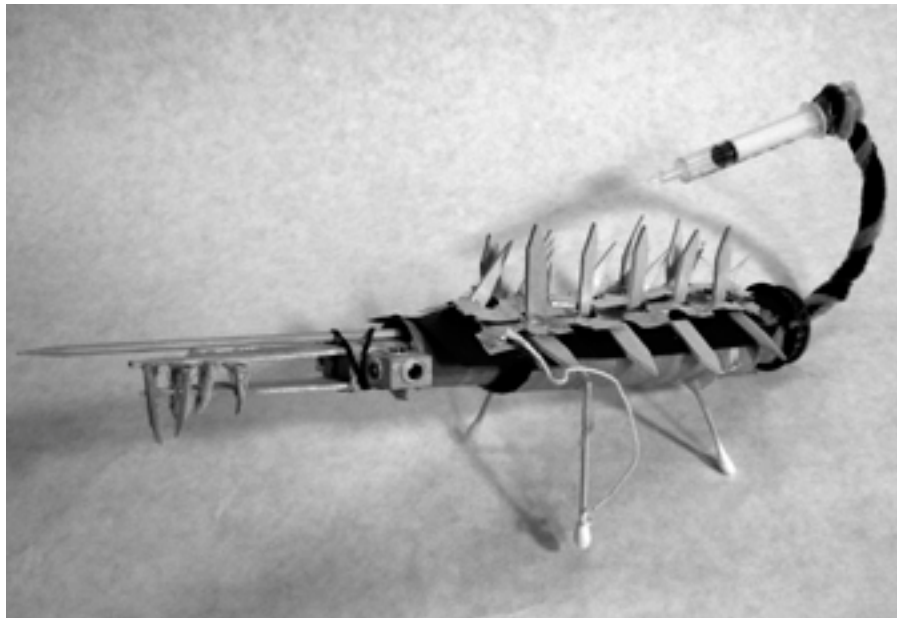
bodies have not been able to produce any sort of defensive mechanism. This means their parents must guard them with extensive care. Baby Rufes often travel in the





mother's mouth, because there is such a large amount of space and room inside of Rufe's mouth allowing them to store things there, providing the ultimate defense for their young.

Although Rufes are small and very defensive for their young, there are prime candidates of evolution and will most likely be seen for many generations to come.



Dorian Thais, 2nd place, Design

### 3rd Place, Writing

#### Sapinineus

By Robert Ortega

The Sapinineus can survive in all habitats, except in water or in very hot or cold places. He usually walks on all fours, but has also been seen walking upright. The Sapinineus lives in a clan of



about 15-20 others, where the male is the patriach. He communicates by a yelpish bark called a "roor." When a runt is born it is 5 feet tall and weighs up to 100 pounds. When the sapinineus is fully grown it is 8 feet tall and can weigh in at 300 pounds.

The Sapinineus protects itself with its venomous bite, and its ability to punch, kick and scratch. He can run as fast as a dog and has a powerful jaw, filled with jagged teeth, and has the biting power of a shark. Certain preys, when bitten, are paralyzed instantly by the

toxic venom injected through his fangs. He only uses this method when absolutely necessary to take down large, dangerous prey. He also has powerful paws with large claws that give him an advantage over others. Only the strongest females join the males on the hunt. When the food is captured, it is shared by all.

Unique to the sapinineus is his unusual, thick coat of green fur that keeps him cool during the daytime and warm at night. In the daytime, the Sapinineus' green fur, which contains chloroplasts, is used to perform photosynthesis. When the sun goes down, you can find the Sapinineus eating a wide variety of foods, as he is an omnivore and will eat anything he can get his claws on. As the patriach of the clan, the two males mate with all of the females once per year and each female produces only one runt. This is why Sapinineus parents spend much energy protecting and caring for their offspring, letting them fend for themselves at the age of three.



