

**2019  
Arkansas  
Anthology**

# PREFACE

The year 2019 marks the 19th volume of the Arkansas Anthology. Sponsored by the Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts (ACTELA), the goal of the Anthology is to encourage and reward the writing and creative excellence of students and educators throughout Arkansas schools. In the tradition of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) ways of lifting up student voices through the language arts, this publication of creative works by young authors, artists, and photographers honors excellence in writing—both prose and poetry—as well as multiple mediums of art. Every piece of writing, photograph, and artwork are submissions from students.

ACTELA board members edit and produce the Anthology each spring. It is available on our website at <http://actela.weebly.com/>

We encourage students and teachers to plan ahead to submit writings to next year's Anthology. The process for submitting works has changed; see the page 4 for detailed instructions.

The authors published in the Arkansas Anthology retain all the publication rights of their respective works.

**Member of the NCTE Information Exchange Agreement**



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# 2020 ARKANSAS ANTHOLOGY CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

We showcase and publish the writing and creative work of Arkansas students!

Submissions accepted through March 20, 2020.

Send all submissions to [ARAnthology@gmail.com](mailto:ARAnthology@gmail.com). Format requirements: Google Doc for written works, JPG for images, MP4 for video, MP3 for audio.

Include ALL contact information including email and phone number and a statement that you wrote or created the piece (that it is original from you).

If possible, students should send their own submissions. For teachers who submit for students, please limit submissions to no more than 30 entries. Tentative publish date: May-June 2020

For 19 years, the Arkansas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, a state state affiliate of NCTE, has enhanced the excellent work of ELA teachers in Arkansas by opening a space for students to publish their creative and information writing, along with artistic expressions of photography, art, and multimedia.

Please submit BEST writing rather than lots of writing. Submissions must be edited and polished for publication or they will not be considered. Whenever possible, students should submit.

## Guidelines for Formatting

PDFs of text will not be accepted. We prefer single spacing, 11 pt font text with 14 pt bold for titles, Arial

Include titles for all submissions

At end of submission, please list: Author's name, grade, school, teacher's first and last name

Provide contact information: School and author address (include zip codes), phone numbers, email addresses

Provide a statement of originality: "I wrote this poem," or "this art is my original work." Do not plagiarize.

## Love is

Love is a fragile flower that opens up to the warmth of  
spring  
Love is a war that breaks out when someone gets hurt  
Love is when you find the one thing you care about the  
most  
Love is fragile, loyal ,caring, and respecting  
Love is your family, friends, or anyone else in the world  
that means a lot to you  
Love is us

**Hanah Pegg, grade 6**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

## The Poet

The poet is like an ocean  
How her sweet waves of emotion crash  
onto the reader's eyes  
Splish, splash  
How she is filled with so much baggage  
and waste that she's itching to get it out  
People awe at her  
But have no idea how much garbage is  
on the inside

How messy and nasty and ugly it can  
look underneath the water sometimes  
But all of that mess adds up to one  
beautiful picture  
And people from all over the world  
come just to admire her waters

**Morgan Taylor**  
**Lavaca High School**  
**Cindy Green**



***Distant***  
**Jeron Charlton, grade 6**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

## **A Natural Poet**

A poet is the wind.  
It catches us by surprise  
Bringing our attention to the leaves on  
the trees.  
Or to empty limbs.  
Without the wind,  
Life is silent, clouds unmoving.  
Just a whisper  
And the stillness ceases.

**Maggie Gavin, grade 12**  
**Woodlawn High School**  
**Cindy Green**

## **Night Light**

There is a night beyond our life.  
It calls to us  
Claws at us  
Fights us for our living soul  
To take what is ours by mistake  
And to take away our hope  
But there is a light within the darkness  
Many do not know where to find  
It blooms within the soul  
And lights the darkness of the night  
It brings us peace  
It brings us solace  
It dampens the sorrows of our misery  
Only those who believe in the night light  
can ever see it  
And the others delve into the dark  
abyss  
Never knowing  
What that light  
Could have been

**Casey Colvey, grade 12**  
**Highland High School**  
**Cindy Green**

## **Love is**

Love is a fruit tree.  
It bears wonderful fruit, and rotten fruit.  
Love can be earned, but not bought.  
Love is as sweet as sugar.  
Love pushes its way to you.  
Eventually, love finds you and saves  
you.  
Love is challenging, and disappointing.  
Love is beautiful.  
Love matures.  
You never forget love for another  
person.  
Love is calm, and never hates.  
Love is not fear or uncertainty.  
Love is compassionate and  
considerate.  
Love is the sweetest fruit. Love is a  
battlefield.  
Love is like a rose. Beautiful, but the  
thorns leading to the rose hurt.  
Love is calling to everyone.  
Love is whispering to everyone to follow  
the lead.  
Love is something that everyone needs.  
Love is love.  
It isn't a bad thing. Love is special.  
Love is addicting and hard to throw out.  
Love is what everyone deserves.

**Sarah Tinsley, grade 6**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

## **Society**

What is your idea of perfect?

I'll tell you mine.

It's young women starving themselves thin and frail.

It's dark skinned girls being told they're not beautiful until they've bleached their skin pale.

It's toxic masculinity telling you to be buff, to not cry.

It's the white police officer always having an excuse or an alibi.

It's been four years since the law was passed,

Yet gay people are still beaten until their eyes are black.

Until love is no longer love, it is loathing and hate.

Like the little boy who was shot in the back when he was eight.

People will tell you, "Be who you want to be,"

But I am society, and you belong to me.

**Autumn Criner, grade 8**

**Watson Chapel**





***Flattering Flower***  
**Aubrey Michaels, grade 5**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

### **My Heart**

My heart is a door  
It opens and closes  
To let people in and out as they please  
The problem is I have no lock  
The difficulty of keeping the infectious  
society out  
Causes my inner soul to blacken  
I can close the door  
But through the cracks underneath  
I can't keep them out

**Jordan Wilkie, grade 12**  
**Woodlawn High School**  
**Cindy Green**

### **The Artist**

The poet is like an artist  
He puts his passion on the page  
Structure comes from the lines  
He uses red to show rage  
He moves between tones  
To change what people see  
He colors the page with emotion  
And gives the work meaning  
This work takes time  
But finally, when the piece is done  
He will get to enjoy  
His finished creation.

**Nicholas Austin, grade 12**  
**Woodlawn High School**  
**Cindy Green**

## Why It Rains

I saw an angel at the base of my bed  
I woke with a start and held my head  
She looked at me with her wings awry  
As I saw that pretty angel cry

She stared at me as tears ran down  
As rain began to tumble to the ground  
I sat right up in a near lobe  
As that angle stared at me in hope

I held my hand for her to take  
As that poor angel's black wings began to  
shake  
She told me she wanted to fly  
So I told her that she mustn't cry

She wiped her tears and tried to stand  
proud  
As raindrop tears still hit the ground  
I told her again as I pointed outside  
I told her again that she must not cry

She nodded again as the rain stopped  
I nodded as I saw that her pain had  
dropped  
I stood right up as I held out my hand  
She took it as I watched her wings expand

As they flare she smiles galore  
As her wings filled with a rainbow of colour  
She let go as she flew straight up  
And I then knew how that I had struck my  
luck

**Morgan Jones, grade 10**  
**Salem High School**  
**Jeffery Cummins**

## Dollhouse

Dress me up like a Barbie  
Doll me up for your own reputation  
Present me, play me, display me for your  
Mad Hatter's tea party

Curl my hair, fasten with a bow, paint me a  
smile with a sharpie  
Sit me in front of your crowd, forget my  
frustration  
Dress me up like a Barbie

Keep me still, threats are your key  
Prance me around as a trophy, we now  
have no relation  
Present me, play me, display me for your  
Mad Hatter's tea party

Cut all our ties, silence me  
Maintain your composure, keep me in  
station  
Dress me up like a Barbie

Fastened in place, now you leave me  
You cash in your money with desperation  
Present me, play me, display me for your  
Mad Hatter's tea party

You leave pockets full, so shall it be  
Your cruelty and empty heart only add to  
this situation  
Dress me up like a Barbie  
Present me, play me, display me for your  
Mad Hatter's tea party

**Ashlee Tolar, grade 12**  
**Highland High School**  
**Cindy Green**



**Yellowflakes**  
**Ansley McKeen, grade 6**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

**I Am Just like you**

I am not evil  
I am just like you  
Please, love all people

Do not think you are regal  
We are just a few  
I am not evil

Grant me reprieve  
I am not yet due  
Please, love all people

We are primeval  
It was just not knew  
I am not evil

I will soar like an eagle  
And you know it true  
Please, love all people

It is now legal  
Love will pursue  
I am not evil  
Please, love all people

**Krista Cox, grade 12**  
**Buffalo Island Central**  
**Cindy Green**

**A Shining Light**

Be a shining light, whatever your lot.

I was taught to always stay in the light.  
Defend the poor and needy without thought.

Be like iron, shaped by Jesus. Be wrought.  
To be suffer shame for God is my delight  
Be a shining light, whatever your lot.

For the amount of hatred Jesus got,

Is more than mine, I shall not be affright.  
For with his blood and strength, our sins He  
bought

Satan tried to alter God's greatest plot,

God is in control. For us, He will fight.  
Be a shining light, whatever your lot.

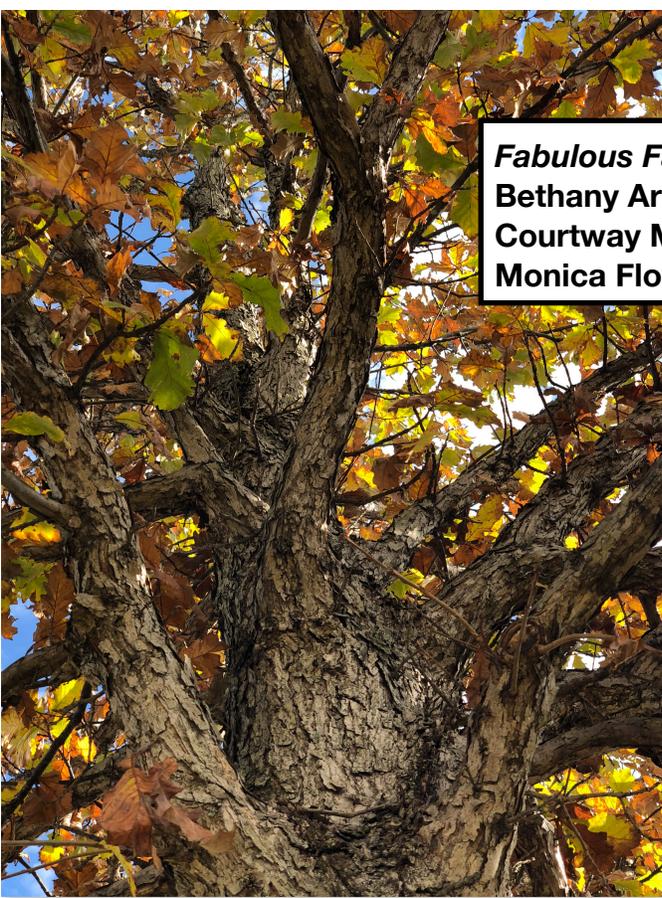
If Him we don't trust, our name shall he blot

From that great book of Life, He will unwrite.  
We are to be as lambs, pure, without spot.

Living for the wonderful God, we ought.

In the end, it will be worth the long fight.  
I will not go soft into this world, whatever my lot.  
As for our life, we need to take great thought.

**Paige Siemens, grade 11**  
**Clarksville High School**  
**Cindy Green**



***Fabulous Fall Leaves***  
**Bethany Arbeene, grade 6**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

### **Ode to Veterans**

Many have fallen,  
Many have been hurt.  
Many have had to go all in,  
And pick themselves up out of the dirt.

Veterans have everlasting scars,  
Visible or not,  
Fighting for the stripes and stars.  
I hope they know we have not forgot.

The war will never end for them,  
It is always there.  
It is always a problem,  
Always seeming to stare.

May they all get good rest,  
And may their heads not fall.  
May they all be blessed,  
For God is watching over all.

**Ashlin Usrey, grade 11**  
**Alpena High School**  
**Cindy Green**

### **Jackpot**

I have hit the jackpot  
My luck has proven itself well  
Buy everything, I must not

I think I'm going to buy a yacht  
Then I can set off to sail  
I have hit the jackpot

I share my winnings with my friend Scott  
I made his life oh so swell  
Buy everything, I must not

Next I'll get a big woodlot  
Where I'll hunt and shoot shrapnel  
I have hit the jackpot

With all this money I almost forgot  
To treat my family well  
Buy everything, I must not

With everything I've wanted I'm still distraught  
I even had to bid my family farewell  
I have hit the jackpot  
Buy everything, I must not

**Kyle Thrasher, grade 12**  
**Buffalo Island Central**  
**Cindy Green**

## **Found Dead**

Her skeletal remains found in the drain  
A young life taken swiftly without care  
A family searching, hoping she'd remain  
A beautiful life; the loss hard to bare

Nights become longer; lights begin to fade  
Their daughter's report put in every ad  
They think if only she had not of strayed  
"Tell me where you are. I need you so bad"

They offer up fifty thousand dollars  
Prayers answered, but not how they wanted  
The wind yells, making noises like hollers  
Screams and phone calls would not be unwonted

Ebby, a once beautiful life, is found  
Everyone is crying; tears all around

**Katelyn Berryhill, grade 11**  
**Cutter Morning Star**  
**Cindy Green**

***Half Alive***  
**Peyton Magnum, grade 5**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**



**Fall Colors**

**Layla Zinno, grade 6  
Courtway Middle School  
Monica Flowers**



**The Race of Life**

Slowly she opened her eyes  
The soft blanket surrounding  
her  
Big windows revealing the bright blue skies  
Bright morning light causing her sight to blur.

“What are you living for?”  
Said a voice from beside her head  
The blankets slipped to the floor  
As she got out of bed.

She ran out the door  
And through the yard  
The air was chilling to the core  
But she continued to run hard

Familiar faces passed as she ran  
And the voice rang out above the rest  
The girl tried to stop as soon as she can  
The voice distracting her from her quest

The voice called out yet again  
Speaking in a hushed whisper  
The voice had depth, memories of back when  
Words so deep, it made the girl blubber

“My heart races when you smile  
Crashing upon this barricade you created  
My heart is in complete denial  
And my thoughts are serrated”

**Madison Jasper, grade 9  
Salem High School  
Jeffrey Cummins**

**Fall Leaves**

The leaves fall from the tree  
Red, Yellow, and Green  
Beautiful, Beautiful leaves  
Keep falling from the tree  
Dry, crunchy leaves,  
Drift through the wind  
Wonderful, Colorful leaves

**Bethany Arbeene, grade 5  
Courtway Middle School  
Monica Flowers**



**Spring Flower**  
Reagan Smitherman, grade 5  
Courtway Middle School  
Monica Flowers

### **All My Fears**

I'm scared of rejection  
I want to be desired  
I want to have a purpose  
But all this wanting makes me tired

I'm scared of the unknown  
The thought of not knowing  
Scares me to death  
It makes me wonder if the fear is showing

I'm scared of dying  
I do believe in a higher power  
I do think I'll be saved  
But when it's my time, will I know the  
hour?

I'm scared of losing a loved one  
The love I have for my clan  
It overwhelms my heart  
Losing them is not my plan

I'm scared of failing  
When I do something, I win  
Failure isn't an option  
To me, not doing your best is a sin

I'm scared of being alone forever  
I know my family will always be there  
But I still feel lonely  
Yet I know I have people that still care

### **Confessions of Narcissist**

Her hair lies, golden as the evening sun,  
Atop her head and beneath her halo.  
I sit idly by and watch her come undone,  
she's a fire, burning one moment and the next, mellow.  
Oh, how she is needy, how can I deliver to her demand?  
I paint her face in gold and dance to her favorite music,  
I caress her face and hold her hand,  
hoping all this love is therapeutic.  
She is the only love I will never regret,  
even through tears and broken promises.  
She is as beautiful as the evening sunset.  
I dare say she may compare to ancient goddesses.  
My mirror, she breaks, when faced with such elegance,  
my love, she is so humble and possesses such radiance.

**Emily Stover, grade 12**  
**Woodlawn High School**  
**Cindy Green**

**Breanna Wallace, grade 9**  
**Salem High School**  
**Jeffrey Cummins**

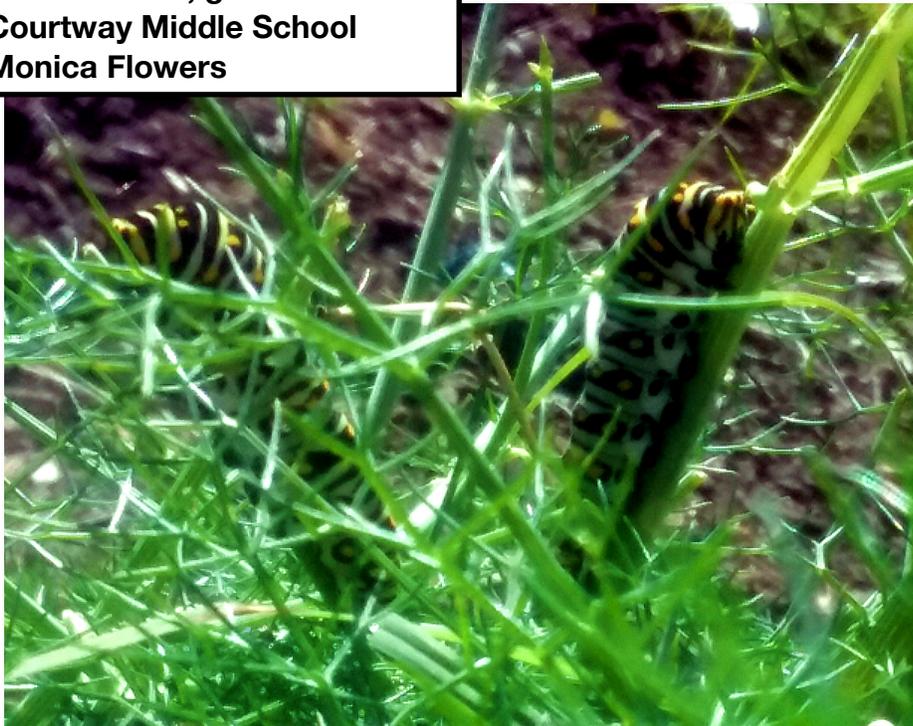
## **Colorful Butterflies**

There are butterflies everywhere.  
They are very colorful and beautiful, too.  
They are many different colors like blue, orange, red,  
and green.

I think you would like them, too.  
So, if you see one fly by, try and catch it and look at it.  
They are quite a sight.  
If you catch one and do not want it, then bring it to me.  
I would gladly take it.  
They bring a lot of happiness.

**Peyton Magnum, grade 5**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

***Black Swallow Tail Caterpillar***  
**Semiah Dean, grade 5**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**



## **Death Do Us Part**

I may have met you before,  
But I don't remember you.  
They say you loved me so much,  
And I know I love you.  
I may not know you now,  
But I loved you then.  
I may not understand why he took you .  
How could I?  
I was so young.  
I'm sure he has a reason.  
You've missed so much,  
But I'll tell you all about it when I see you  
again  
Death won't stop us,  
From seeing each other again.

**Gunnar Stover, grade 12**  
**Woodlawn High School**  
**Cindy Green**

## **Gun Control**

People today care most about their rights  
Mainly their right to keep and bear a gun.  
When bullets fly, should we stay and fight?  
Or look for opportunities to run?  
The innocents are doomed to die in vain  
And kids are heading off to school in fear  
Because of all our leaders who won't change  
The pleading of all the people they won't hear  
Are weapons worth the loss of someone's  
life?  
Because people don't want regulations  
They don't want to offend or cause more strife  
But I possess higher expectations  
Control the guns so that we can survive  
Stop all our fears and let the people thrive

**Riley Swafford, grade 12**  
**Beebe High School**  
**Cindy Green**

## **Death Do Us Part**

There is no rest for those who pry,  
No matter how hard they try to sleep  
They always have open a wandering eye,

Even when they try to say bye  
They never make a peep  
If they did they would surely die

The suffering is realized with a sigh,  
They have gone in too deep  
Though this could be their last pry

Their soul is what they chose to dye  
The inky black that once filled their sleep  
Now they even choose to lie

Lie in bed 'till the time is nigh  
Time for them to count the sheep  
Then when they fail they want to die.

Do not chose to pry,  
Rewards are not something you will reap,  
Love for you may shrivel and die,  
And you may have to say goodbye.

**Jonathan Qualls, grade 11**  
**Clarksville High School**  
**Cindy Green**

## Sorry

I was told a bad habit of mine,  
Is I say sorry too much.  
I never understood why it was a bad habit,  
It's like I'm not supposed to apologize  
For being human.  
Humanity fell the moment love  
Became an excuse,  
When sorry was a supernova  
A little star exploding, left dead.  
You say sorry because you know you feel  
Bad for something that happened.  
Sorry has such a negative effect,  
No meaning, no sympathy.  
So change it, replace the negative  
With a positive.  
Replace "I'm sorry" with "thank you"  
"Sorry I forgot" to "thank you for reminding me"  
Your sorry may be broken into nothing,  
But my sorry has a million fireflies waiting to shine,  
An ox that can be no longer moved.  
Humans lost the real meaning, so we have to prove we're sorry?  
Our words no longer matter, we simply  
Speak to hear our own voice radiate above others.  
Sorry is an adjective, which means to describe.  
Sorry describes an emotion.  
That emotion I feel is sorry.  
I am sorry, whether you believe it or not.

**Taylor Jones, grade 12**  
**Rogers High School**  
**Bailey Aguilar**

## Ghost

I am a ghost  
I am nothing  
I am invisible  
I am not seen  
I am not heard  
I have no words to say  
I have no voice  
I have no ability to speak  
I have no eyes to see  
I try to speak out  
I try to see what's in front of me  
I try to hear what others say  
I yelled for help  
I yelled panacea

**Alexis Mayer, grade 12**  
**Rogers High School**  
**Bailey Aguilar**

***Bench by the Pond***  
**Joy Dickey, grade 5**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**



### **Surreal Life**

Countless times I have lived  
And countless times I have died  
If I said what I wanted to,  
I would have nothing else to give.

Midnight memories dance along the shore  
And a useless muse lives upon the moor  
If I had given my dagger for the kill,  
I would be knocking on death's door.

Steal a heart for me--as mine no longer  
beats  
And use your force to make it release  
All the things that I will need  
And take a dollar for yourself, please.

My teacup is chipped and broken  
It leaks out like a river into the ocean,  
Hand me a golden spoon to eat life's fruit  
So that I may grab the ultimate token.

**Dakota Padilla, senior**  
**University of Arkansas–Fort Smith**

### **Grandpa's Guitar**

A piece of wood sits upon the floor.  
Six strings of brass run down the middle;  
Probably to be used nevermore.  
The life it has lived: extremely sentimental.

The strings have been strung countless times before-  
This instrument is far more than a fiddle.  
Now I fear the strings will be strung nevermore.  
He pieces his memories together like a mixed up  
riddle...

First came Parkinson's when he thought of putting it  
down,  
But the sound of the guitar was still around.  
Then dementia came during a dark December,  
And these special times I wish you could remember.

In heaven you'll be there, and for me please wait;  
Because when I arrive I'll love you just the same.

**Mary Smith, junior**  
**University of Arkansas–Fort Smith**  
**Dr. Janine Chitty**

## **My Home**

My favorite place in the world is the Saline River.  
There's no place I'd rather be,  
Than out on the muddy water between those banks.  
It's where I call home,  
Down there in Herbine.  
There's no better life.

All of my life,  
Loved nothing more than going to the  
river.  
Hop in the truck and drive to Herbine,  
Right where I want to be.  
To go to my home away from home,  
On those muddy banks.

Kicked back on the banks,  
Living the life,  
Right where I call home,  
The Saline River.  
The best place in the world to be,  
Down those back roads in Herbine.

I'll probably end up in Herbine,  
Close to those river banks.  
That's where I want to be,  
To spend the rest of my life,  
Living on the Saline River,  
My home.

One day my home,  
Will be in Herbine,  
Right down from the river,  
Walking distance from those banks,  
The rest of my life,  
Paradise, that's where I need to be.

Maybe one day I can live where I need  
to be, Goggan's Road in Herbine.  
My home, down there close to those  
banks.  
The rest of my life, at the Saline River.

**Peyton Sandine, grade 12**  
**Woodlawn High School**  
**Cindy Green**

## **Beautiful River**

The beautiful river flows fluid.  
The river has been everywhere from the highest  
mountain to the lowest rock.  
The river stretches itself to reach everyone.  
The river is never ending.  
The river with never have a dry spot in it.  
The wet rocks make the river sound so peaceful.  
The river is such a beautiful and peaceful  
place that can relax the wildest person.

**Gavin Filson, grade 6**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**



***Colorful Fall***  
**Bella McNeil, grade 5**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**

## **Beware the Girl with Hair of Fire**

Beware the girl with hair of fire!  
Her gleaming eyes an emerald sheen.  
Run until you can't hear the choir.

She comes along and plays the lyre,  
And she creates quite the scene.  
Beware the girl with hair of fire.

She seeks a certain squire,  
One that shall make her queen.  
Run until you can't hear the choir.

She comes from the land of briar.  
All are safe until they see her eyes of green.  
Beware the girl with hair of fire!

As she passes many admire,  
But she has quite the spleen.  
Run until you can't hear the choir.

Donning her fine attire,  
She looks so serene.  
Beware the girl with hair of fire!  
Run until you can't hear the choir.

**Thomas McFall, grade 11**  
**Buffalo Island Central**  
**Cindy Green**

## **A Beautiful Night**

The sky is beautiful this night  
It will be cold outside so you don't want to get caught  
The stars are shining so bright  
But they will be gone by daylight  
It's not cool out, but it's not hot  
The weather is perfect tonight  
After today, being outside is alright  
It is just as pretty as i thought  
The stars are making me smile so bright  
The moon is looking just right  
This is the type of night you sought  
You don't see these stars every night  
Nights like these are such a delight  
I love looking at the stars, I'm so glad I was taught  
It is so beautiful and bright  
I was such a sight  
This night, so much joy it brought  
How could I ask for a more perfect night  
I closed my eyes and it was still bright

**TyMBER Hodnett, grade 12**  
**Hampton High School**  
**Cindy Green**

### **A Sonnet for Sears**

Perhaps nostalgia is what makes me sad,  
Whatever reason, I release cold tears  
For changing times, which to me seem so bad.  
Extreme pity have I for failing Sears.  
A company that once made billions  
Has now filed for bankruptcy, but why!  
Is online shopping, websites by the millions,  
Replacing what I love so much, I cry?  
As I weep, I see a horrid truth,  
That Sears-Roebuck brought this upon itself,  
And so, despite fond memories from youth,  
A Sears today cannot stock but one shelf.  
My weeping must stop, time to move on,  
As companies have come, so have they gone.

**Byron Louk, grade 12**  
**Fountain Lake High School**  
**Cindy Green**

### **In the Pouring Rain**

Even in the pouring rain  
When you start to feel down  
I can take away your pain

Others think it looks feign  
When you're walking around town  
Even in the pouring rain

When you try to refrain  
From ever making a sound  
I can take away your pain

It's starting to look like a stain  
When you wear a constant frown  
Even in the pouring rain

So when your brain  
Tells you to drown  
I can take away your pain

Never be afraid to be vain.  
Not even if it makes you feel like a clown.  
Even in the pouring rain  
I can take away your pain.

**Emili Copeland, grade 12**  
**Buffalo Island Central**  
**Cindy Green**



**Sarah Tinsley, grade 6**  
**Courtway Middle School**  
**Monica Flowers**