Eastern Illinois University
The Keep

The Vehicle, Fall 2008

Phillip Gallagher
Grace Lawrence
Steven T. Cox
Amanda Veale
Mary Lieske

See next page for additional authors

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Hop Scotch Bebop

Jake Dawson

Sweet silly slumbers of jazzy June
jabber and jive to mumbling melodies
—soothing diddle of dragonflies
scatter hum drums of hopscotch bebop
to beats of pitter pattered jump ropes

as last calls for lemonade introduce
fuzzy buzzed street lights soliciting
dichotomized ditties betwixt
metronomic movements of
hopeless Huckleberrys’ hollering
down Beat Street.

Pink, purple, baby blue hues
dance around zig zags of zoot suit butterflies
flutterin’ to a jump jive and wail of
backyard barbeques, cricket concertos,
and cooish meows from Cool the cat.

Shaded sun slaps sweaty palms with thumb nail moon
a gregarious greeting galvanizing shimmered stars
as salutacious symphonies begin the night time overture
—Fusty fugues flow and foam from
night time owls conducting furious
flights of fireflies, polyphonic parades
of harmonic hickory bugs, and budding
breezes of percussive chirps leaping
leaf to leaf.

Bulbous bulging bullfrogs bellow
billowing ballads—a Barber Shop Quartet—
while whistl’n Dixie lick’n fingers
from homemade fly pie.

Alabaster beams bob back and forth
between rusty rooftops retiring
hopscotch beboppers to bed time bliss as
luscious lullabies lift their sweet souls to
that thumbnail hammock on the moon.
Empty Room
Amanda Veale

backyard peach tree shadow full on bare floor

dirt smudge toeprint
well-ground in carpet grain

and the drip-drop of a ceiling leak
not muffled now by usual things

and the dents and the creases
those things left behind

and the peach tree—
the peach tree is bursting.
Mantis (from memory) Muddy Shoes
Gina Marie LoBianco

For the love of bicycles chained at light post light foot
Brown sneakers and londoning sunset leaving the tick tick tick tick...
To sidewalk cobblestone counting down cigarette smoke
Two Marlboro's- where I first saw you- they were Lights.

Crickets mimic bicycle ticks to yr ghost where you'd been- Mantis
And now souls shuffle around us and I see two butts carelessly
Flicked to the ground of the same species and I think about you and
About me and what things that might mean for us
   I check
Every time I pass that sidewalk; scan
   Same time of sunsetting Old Europe
Put yrself together pack a day
   Like ghost of Christmas Past caroling in chains
Left me just a footprint made of bubble gum
   And bongo drums muling androgynous complains
Let them laugh at my hoping high
   The skyscrapers flat foot passerby's
Cause I've never seen such a silhouette of Autumn
   Leaves so haunted by its own prayer
And the ghost of ragweed pesticide that always comes back
   To claim its footprints crickets
Mocking bird movements
   An attempt at keeping time
How those legs rubbing in the dark
   And they master the deaf desolate whine
But this mantra, Mantis, chisels sun from our eyes

   Sound of brakes & mosquito bites
Smoke to the filter in the dirt along with yr pangs
   Waiting for you still, Mantis, the people are
Starting to lookit me kinda strange
   And the martyrs bet on horses to kill the
Time they cannot tame
   But we are stained-brown -shoes
Sidewalks in which we've made alla the grooves
   Long distance my ma's putting an end to God
“Ritual & Dogma”
   And where were you that day?
Mantis- Don't you ever pray?
   Don't you get tired?
Don't you ever want to throw the cure away?
   We are the ones that they invade!
And rocking chair crickets creak
   Munching Tum's like candy canes & waving prescription papers like
American Flags & labels for the Saved
And the horse shoe miseries that Mantis squints to obtain
Made wishes on the airplanes/
And the horse shoe miseries that Mantis squints to obtain
Sung to sleep by earthquake gaps
Yr vacant tune so far away
   And a little less audio able this time of day.
Safe
   Save a dance, the Mantis hands
Stay a while
   So that when the ghost of pharmaceuticals comes out of exile
And Jimney's puppet is drained
   O the sound of the thing
Convinces the prophets that only the haughty remain
   A daisy in a mud puddle
Sympathy seeking Eskimo's steal spokes
   And build sand castles out of flames
The second coming specter serenade

In
   Yr
Place
Safe
A while waiting
For any time that you have saved.
   Ghosts as real as remembering
Time's impregnable belly for now...
   Bicycle racks any time of year
I couldn't be anywhere else but here
   Sidewalked & crosslegged & crushed & dream
Still just a Mantis (sure as a cough come back)
   A mental moon hallucination brown shoe eclipse ring
Trampled just crazy can't dance.
   If you want it that bad, check the garbage can...
MEMO
Samuel Cloward

MEMO
Re: Communication
We have shut and locked the open door policy. We will decide what you have to complain about. Thanks, MGMT

MEMO
Re: Payroll
You are now expected to do the work of three people and you will receive no extra compensation. Thanks, MGMT

MEMO
Re: Cafeteria
The prices in the cafeteria will raise beginning next week. It will now cost a week's wages to have the mashed potatoes. Thanks, MGMT

MEMO
Re: Family Benefits
We have decided that you will work for free. We are going to sell your families into slavery. Thanks, MGMT
MEMO
Re: Corporate

We have just merged with every other company on the planet and are in charge of the world's workforce.

Thanks, MGMT

MEMO
Re: Human Resources

It sucks to be you.

Thanks, MGMT
I’m falling into a sea of numbers connected by dots and lines and waves. They tumble over each other – end over end – inside their planes attempting to find the solution.

The pool of ideal numbers, constants and variables, mixes together in a meeting of weird, amicable, friendly, sociable; formulaic dances of swimming divisors that fall into line step by step, stroke by stroke, into row after row of marching numerals. Solitary and sublime and deficient gather together to build the underwater caverns of equations that may, one day, show that the ultimate answer to everything lies within mathematical reason.

It is a river that slowly - slowly - narrows into a stream, then into a creek, then into a trickle; a concrete equation refining and defining itself into an answer.
To a Little Black Girl  
Justin Sudkamp

That's what you will be named  
"Black Girl"  
Due to the chocolate color of your skin.  
Despite the shadow  
Of your Mother's pale hand.

You, Morning Child,  
Will walk in-between  
Night and Day  
The supposed, endless gray  
Of Life's Mosaic.

You, Evening's Daughter, will grow.  
Out of your mother's embraces,  
Through your father's shadow,  
Beyond your own stride.

I hope you find strength  
To march for the manacled  
As well as the slaver.  
Understanding enough,  
To sing for the strangled,  
And the tightener of the noose.  
Bravery, to look upon Mama Africa,  
To hear the tales of her forests, plains, deserts,  
And hold her equal to Lady Liberty.

Oh, Dusky Daughter,  
The life I see in you.
The room is full of people.

I take a number: 36

The counter on the wall: 54

I'm advised I must wait till my number circles round again.

Poor ventilation causes the air to be warm, stagnant and humid.

A woman begins the first of a series of coughing fits.

I see particles from her mouth lingering in the still air.

A man across from me sneezes.

I see particles from his nose suspended in the humidity.

The man next to me wheezes and wheezes and wheezes.

A headline on the newspaper lying next to me reads:

"Flu Vaccine Ineffective This Year."

At the counter a man argues with a civil servant.

He needs a different form than the one he was told he needed the day before.

A policeman monitors from near the entrance doors eager to escort the man out.

Two other employees stand talking ignoring the waiting crowd.
First

Kellen Fasnacht

Before I could
slip my key
past the lock
you came
rushing
whispering my name
begging me to wait
because you could not
not tonight
in the silver
puddles of this
this granite
skyline

(We collide)

like the slow
descent of
autumn leaves
floating
falling
settling
gently upon
the fading
summer green,
resting together
exchanging breaths
in the late
october air

(I open my eyes)
and you're there
smiling
blushing
waving
good night
through the soft
applause of
hovering moths
their velvet wings
reciprocating iridescence
independent of everything

except each other
Seeking Artichoke, Call Me
Amanda Veale

If you were a pomegranate
I'd throw you away,
your complicated pieces
would muddle my day.

If you were a green bean
I'd steam you flaccid,
spoon you for a side
and pass you on rapid.

If you were a peach
I'd blend you smooth
pull pit, peel fuzz,
purée for my use.

If you were a pickle
I'd have you on a stick,
pre-speared, sequestered,
easy to lick.

But if you were an artichoke
so gently I'd tender—
prune spines to find heart,
love you all through dinner.
Trumpet

Sarah Fairchild

My window
meshed screen
does not cut the melodies
rich notes, heavy and fat with Jazz
That's the Stuff

Jake Dawson

Look out, baby
I'm in a dangerous mood,
Don't know
Just what I'm goin' to do

You give me that look out baby
I'm in a dangerous mood song,
Lord have mercy,
You ain't know nothing bout the blues.

Look out, baby
I'm in a dangerous mood,
Got a lot on my mind
Think I need go have a drink

You got a lot on your mind?
You know what those boys done today?
I need the drink if anything.
Lord have mercy,
You ain't know nothing bout the blues.

Look out, baby
I'm in a dangerous mood,
Work treats me so
Low down dirty and bad

You think work treats you so bad?
What you know bout work round this house?
Try one day at home! Then you'll see
what low down dirty and bad really is.
Lord have mercy,
You ain't know nothing bout the blues.

Look out, baby
I'm in a dangerous mood,
I had to steal a little time, baby
A little time away from you
Look out, baby
I'm in a dangerous mood,
Heart aching
Dreams gone down the drain

How come you get to steal a little time?
When am I goin' to get mine?
Sometimes I just don't know what to do!
Lord have mercy,
You ain't know nothing bout the blues.

Your heart may ache
Got a lot on your mind
A job treats you low down dirty and bad,
What about me?
You best look out, baby,
I'm in a dangerous mood
A woman raisin' a home
Now that's the stuff of the blues.
Your Hair is Thinning
Amanda Veale

And I think of the smoke from your cigar in the café that winter when you were a stranger and I only loved the smoke the way it blurred in your breath—

And I think of the spray on Long Island where it was grey at sunrise and the mist was cold which made us want everything and touch to ease the wanting—

And I think of the rabbit down left around the nest after we watched the fox in our oaks and sighed—
And I think of the steam in your teacup, the fog you like on the morning ground, and Lulu’s fur stuck on your sweater—

And I would like you to shave it but then all of this would be gone.
Unable

Donica Miller

In my dreams you are drowning. Arms and legs thrashing about, gulping, swallowing a gallon of water, the word "help" impeded by gargling, gasping, choking. Unable to help, I cry.

Your eyes (deep like the water in which you struggle), they drew me to you so long ago. Inside of you, I was safe.

Your spirit haunts me as if it were lost trying to find its way back to a body that's dead. Night frightens me. For fear of unspeakable terrors, my eyes remain open long after the moon appears. I cannot sleep before dawn.

The nightmares look and taste real. Your black cries ring in my ears long after morning arrives. My dreams of you are alive.
I slept in a different world
a Gypsy Witch's domain
Where Drew Carey didn't give away prizes,
and slept in a hammock all day.
Jerry Van Dyke was drowning
in lakes of sky and puddles of earth
While black boots waited in white closets,
and bodiless maidens wailed.

.....

I slept in a different world
a house without windows or doors
The fleeting impressions were crimson,
and the veil of waking was white.
Semis rolled throughout the night
down roads leading to nether realms
While little children prosthetically played
with posable mechanical limbs.

.....

I slept in a different world
I stay there every night
Walking in a clearer place
filled with fantastical delight.
When at last my stay is over
I awaken back to daily life
in a world where living is work
and men march to military fife.
Leftovers

Amanda Veale

Her shoes are displayed
on a decorative shelf,
molds of stompingstinking still of country earth
menacing living room's fancy.
Her watch is forgotten
underneath unwashed hankies,
to tick lonely through nights
louder than anyone's dreams.
And her blind black cat
waits under porch steps
mewing mourning songs
to prey,
crying for
her body
that was slit and stored and slipped
neatly beneath the earth
by a Mohawked teenage boy.
the bog

Grace Lawrence

the smooth glass surface is untouched
black as night
and miles deep

white stars shoot across the top
moving steadily
in all directions
pure unadulterated chaos

i want to dip my hand
and feel the thick black ink
drip
drip
from my fingertips
to hold the small stars in my palm
white bright light seeping between my fingers
before returning to the blackness
untamable

it sounds dangerous
so instead
i throw the rock

waves ripple across the never ending mass
that once was peaceful
and
i am unable to contain my excitement
for the cataclysmic events
that just unfolded before my eyes
Visitor’s Morning On Earth
Steven T. Cox

Painfully bright.
What manner of world is this?
Such luminosity,
Such heat.
How do the natives of this world
Not go blind?
How do they keep from going
Insane?

Perhaps they do go blind;
Perhaps the heat boils their sanity away.

For what other reason
Would beings of such intelligence
Occupy their time finding ways
To destroy each other;
For what other reason would
They convince themselves they
Must be alone in so vast a universe?

We would do well to avoid this place,
My brethren; the natives here are dangerous.

It seems we were wrong in our thinking;
How intelligent can these creatures be?

The Non-Mortal
"The Moon Man"
Philip Gallagher

The smooth, glassy surface is untouched
Black as night
And silent deep.

While stars shoot across the sky
Moving steadily
In all directions
Pure unadulterated stars.

I want to dip my hand
And feel the water wind
On rippled
From my fingertips
To hold the small stone in my palm
While bright light sparkling between my fingers
Before returning to the darkness
Indeterminate.

It sounds, slinkliness
Inexplicable
I hold the rock.

Waves march across the never-ending mass
That once was peaceful and
I am unable to contain my recollection
For the cataclysmic events
That just unfolded before my eyes.

by the lack
and fatigued
I'm refreshed
wet glass.

pebbles on
like cool
on my face

The water
spray.

the dusty
them in
I drag
moon shoes,

wearing my
the river,

Walking on
Earth.
on
Heaven
Of
the skies
high in
bounce high,
Watch me
Man."

"The moon
I am
watery space.
Floating in
of oxygen.

At six
birds began to sing
in great class
self elevated from crests
I was a tear over each
and planted them
with pricked style
under the flint and jasper where
I was a baby dog
would climb
and died
in the bottom
of hard-edged ambulance
and because
casting hammering looks
at grow as everywhere.

At seven
the springtime was angry
and loud
and filled with lurcuit.
When my brother
spotted a tornado
cresting our hill,
I quit hope in spring

Earth.
on
Heaven
Of
the skies
high in
bounce high,
Watch me
Man."

"The moon
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Floating in
of oxygen.

At six
birds began to sing
in great class
self elevated from crests
I was a tear over each
and planted them
with pricked style
under the flint and jasper where
I was a baby dog
would climb
and died
in the bottom
of hard-edged ambulance
and because
casting hammering looks
at grow as everywhere.

At seven
the springtime was angry
and loud
and filled with lurcuit.
When my brother
spotted a tornado
cresting our hill,
I quit hope in spring
Searchings

Amanda Veale

My blood drifts to me
from an obscure and lazy river
cradled in the wooly hands
of the pulsing Kentucky bluegrass.

Here there are mountains chiseled into
the shapes of men who wear
their stone hands to fists of calluses,

there are trees bent so to the wind and singing
that you would take them for women,
had no one told you otherwise,

and there is Aunt Peen—
veiled child born wrapped in legend—
who is the river and the river mud—
smooth tan clay and endless water—
from which it all came
and to which it all will return.

I saw her once in a dream
sitting in a rusty blue bathtub on her porch,
dust caked deep between her bare toes,
gnawing her famous cornbread.

She smiled a terrible white flash,
and a yellow snake bit my ankle.

Since then I've feared yellow snakes,
and cornbread,
and blue bathtubs,

but I still wade into rivers barefoot,
hoping to stir my blood.
Becoming Wise
Amanda Veale

At five
a flash of hornets
stormed my backyard fortress,
and fell—a graceful arc—
upon the apple rigged as a trap
for the legendary
neighborhood circus bear.
I cowered and closed my eyes
and died
and awoke brave
and dried of the dirty drench
hard play had won me.

At six
birds began to drop
in great clans
stiff breasted from treetops.
I wept a tear over each
and planted them
with plywood placards
under the furthest pine tree
where I knew our lazy dog
would never pee.
Then my mother told me about maggot
sand I fell ill
and died
in the hotness
of hard-edged delirium
and awoke
casting harassing looks
at graves everywhere.

At seven
the springtime was angry
and aloof
and filled with tumult.
When my brother
spotted a tornado
cresting our hill,
I quit hope in spring
and died.
I awoke in the sunshine
knowing about lies.

At eight
the night grew large
and witches crept
within its shadowy folds.
I fell one night to their nest
and died
silently
in their claws.

When I awoke the next morning,
whole-bodied and grinning,
I was immortal.

and there is Aunt Pen—
veiled child born wrapped in legend—
who is the river and the river mud—
smooth tainjoe and endless water—
from which it all came
and to which it all will return.

She smiled a wrinkle white flash,
and a yellow snake bit my ankle.

Since then I've heard yellow anaikes,
and cornbread,
and blue bathtubs.

but I still wade into rivers barefoot.
hoping to stir my blood.
At your funeral I saw
that they forgot to scrub the soil
from your fingernails, and
it reminded me of your marigolds,
how you planted them knowing
they would bloom only one season through.

You should have planted hollyhocks
and lilies—life with a chance
of blooming after the thaw.
But I'll have to let them go.
I'll have to watch your triumph brown, freeze away in the dirt.
1. Present

He's happy to see the city smile with sunlight and fluffy clouds; and even the noise of neighbors fighting reminds him that this is home. It will not last for long, but this is what he has yearned for, ached for, fought for.

2. Rain

He's sad and the city cries, the streetlights dim with tears. Gutters gurgle with sore throats, to swallow rocks and sticks, and there's a hush out on the road that only he can hear.

3. Past

He was shy and the city laughed, encouraging him with song and dance, telling him that his blush was cute and that he shouldn't be embarrassed. And even now, when the time is right, he can call upon that remembered innocence to ease his troubled mind.
4. Dark

He's afraid and the city tenses,  
the air heavy and thick.  
And the alley he sees is no longer  
the safe home of cats and trash.  
Every shadow lashes out, like an enemy  
threatening his home;  
every noise echoes like a whisper in his ear  
telling him to run.  
The scene is not yet over,  
the battle not yet won.

5. Future

He's old as the city moves,  
finding newer boys,  
younger, stronger, unspoiled boys,  
who blast their horns into the night.  
He's cradled in the arms of a hospital bed  
as he watches the city that he loves,  
watches it move on without him,  
ever-ending cycles of light and love  
and darkness.  
He lies there under the yellowed ceiling,  
counts the yowls of shrieking cats,  
and dies.
Desecration of a Relic

Amanda Veale

Umber stone and smooth burnt edges
monument
to nothing moments
protected in the grace of her hip
posed neatly
on beach towel—

She stretches, curves
seal-like raises nose to sunray
just as the canary passes,
shits,
and she twists painted mouth
to face me with
a disgusted white U.
New Life
Jennifer O'Neil

I saw a cardinal
On a branch today,
Standing out from
The stark, bare oak.

Bright crimson, he
Reminded me of life,
A life I had
Forgotten still exists.

A bit of snow dropped
On his brilliant head
And he squawked in
Surprise.

The sound penetrated
My window and I
Closed my eyes, wanting
To remember only that.

I opened my window
And let in a cool breeze,
Another sign of
Returning life.

The branch on which
He sat had started
Already to bud, growing
That new life at last.
Dance Partners
Samantha Sauer
I Still

Megan Mathy
Incandescence
Sarah Fairchild
Stone Crane
Brendan Hughes
The Road Taken
Samantha Sauer
You

Megan Mathy
Zhangjiajie National Forest Park, Zhangjiajie, China

Brendan Hughes
Before I graduated from high school, I used to spend four weeks or more every summer with my grandparents. Grandma tried to teach me to cook (Gramps hated that—"Cooking is for women" he'd always say), and Gramps made me watch Purdue football games or do woodwork and help him fix things in the garage. One summer, he decided I needed to learn how to make birdhouses. I told him I didn't want to learn how to make a birdhouse, but he insisted I make one anyway. "Just in case you ever feel like making a birdhouse for your future wife," he'd tell me. I told him I didn't want a wife, and he laughed and said he never wanted one either, but look at the witch he has to live with now. I did make a birdhouse, a sad and pathetic looking thing, and Gramps put it on a pole and proudly displayed it in the middle of Grandma's front garden. Grandma went out the next day and moved the birdhouse to a spot near the garage—back where it wouldn't ruin her garden. She must've yelled at him about it because I remember Gramps barging in on me while I was watching Nickelodeon and complaining about women being too damned picky about their flower arrangements. I think the birdhouse must've eventually fallen apart, because I haven't seen it outside the past few years when my family visits.

I don't like the church Grandma picked out for Gramps' funeral. It's like a maze with tall ceilings and eerie stained-glass pictures of a dying Jesus staring down at me from every angle. I'm not sure Gramps would've wanted us to take him to a place like this, even if he did grow up Catholic. It gives me the creeps; my brother doesn't seem to like it any better. I don't think he wants to be here though, regardless of the morbid windows. When he was a kid he never got shipped off by our mom to Grandma and Gramps' house like I was forced into (I told him it was because Grandma and Gramps didn't love him as much as they loved me). I don't think Nate really cares about Gramps the way I do.

Grandma still lives in the house she and Gramps raised five kids in. It's a tiny house and I never understood how five kids could grow up in that place without wanting to kill each other. Hell, Nate and I didn't even share a room and we were at each other's throats all the time. I guess it was a good place for Grandma and Gramps after all the kids left and they had the house to themselves. Well, maybe it wasn't so good to have those two holed up in such a small place, because mom says they fought like wild badgers and should've divorced a long time ago. I was only around once during one of their fights. Aunt Pam was
visiting during the time I was there, and she practically shoved me down the basement stairs before slamming the door behind me. She didn't tell me until after my high school graduation that she made me leave so I wouldn't hear any of the nasty things Gramps said to Grandma. After times like these, I wasn't sure myself why Grandma stayed with him.

I don't know any of the people at Gramps' funeral. Who are they and why are they here? Grandma looks like she's about to droop off her seat. Mom and her sisters are all bunched up around her, crying and holding Grandma's hands. Grandma hasn't started crying yet, and I'm not too sure she will during the funeral, but she might after everyone's gone and she's home by herself. Grandma can be funny like that.

Gramps was in The War. He was a military grunt in a cannon fodder unit stationed in Italy. I think most of his unit died because Grandma told me Gramps never contacted anyone he knew from his unit after The War ended. Grandma also told me she had met Gramps through a friend of hers who also had a brother out fighting. The brother and Gramps were in the same unit in Italy—friends through warfare. Grandma's friend suggested they both write letters to the brother and Gramps while they were away during The War. Gramps and Grandma wrote letters back and forth for a few years and got hitched as soon as Gramps came home. I was about nine when I decided to ask Gramps about his fighting career and make him tell me all the details—the more blood the better. On my way outside to the garage where Gramps was whittling at a chunk of wood and whistling some tune that went out of fashion in 1940, Grandma intercepted me on the doorstep and asked what I was up to with an arched eyebrow. I decided to tactfully tell her it was a secret mission, which, of course, made her hold me to that spot until I 'fessed up what I was really after. She told me never to ask him about The War, because he would never tell me anything, and I would only make him angry. I didn't want him angry with me, so I never asked. Nobody else in my family ever asked, either. Now I kind of wish somebody had.

My mom and aunts are walking away from Grandma towards the line of people shaking hands with Gramps' close family members. Uncle Loo-ee ("See that man over there, Tyler?" my mom had asked me. "That man is your Great Uncle Loo-ee") and another of Gramps' brothers are already shaking hands and hearing "I'm so sorry for your loss" from each person in the line. Grandma sits by herself in the front row, staring at the open casket where Gramps' big nose sticks out from the top. I'm afraid of Gramps' casket because I might see the best parts of my childhood covered in makeup and folded between his hands. "I'll be back later," I mutter at Nate before starting the odious task of tripping over people and chairs to get out of the aisles of seats. Nate shrugs and mashes buttons on his Game Boy. I wonder if
he'll have enough time to defeat Bowser and rescue Princess Peach—or whatever the hell he's doing—before the visitation's over.

About seven months ago, six months before Gramps' heart started failing him, he and Grandma got into a bad fight. It must've been a lot worse than their normal fights, because Gramps got into their car (I can't think of the last time Gramps drove a car), drove about a block, lost control of the car and slammed into the side of someone's house. The house took a lot of damage, but so did the car and Gramps. The car was sent to the junkyard; no one would've wanted to buy it, even if they had fixed it up, because the car was so old. Gramps was sent to the hospital in an ambulance and was kept there overnight. Aunt Pam was nearby and stayed with him in the hospital that night. Pam told my mom that Grandma was in shock the whole night and couldn't make herself go and see Gramps while he was connected to a bunch of machines. Pam also told mom that Grandma wouldn't tell her what the two of them had been fighting about. Gramps wasn't in the hospital as long as anyone expected. He recovered quickly and moved around just fine. The doctors told him he couldn't over-exert himself because he might wind up in the hospital again. I didn't know exactly what was wrong at the time the accident happened because mom was too upset by the whole thing to tell me. Back then, I was angry at Gramps for being stupid and driving the car into someone's house—he promised me that car would be my car when I turned 16 and now look at what he'd done to it—but now I just feel upset with him because he wasn't able to keep a grip on himself. He made Grandma sad and worried over a stupid fight.

Grandma is still staring at the casket. I don't think she even notices me. She seems like she's in a trance and I'm afraid of snapping her out of it. Nobody has come up and said anything to her since mom and my aunts left her there. I don't think anyone knows what to say. Somehow I've managed to walk up the aisle and get in the seat next to her without looking at Gramps; I'm not able to look at him yet.

The last time I saw Gramps was when he was at our house for Christmas. It wasn't even a month ago when he was still snoring on our couch during his naps after lunch. Nate and I didn't do much with him because we always got shooed out of the first floor and into the basement while the women talked and cooked in the kitchen and the men grunted at one another as they watched a football game in the living room. Grandma seemed to be doing everything she could to make Gramps happy and would ask him constantly if he wanted something to eat, or if he would like to take a nap on the couch, or if she could get him anything at all. I think being fussed over by her annoyed him more than the times she bickered with him over petty things and gave him the cold shoulder the rest of the day. Though Grandma pestered him through the rest of the Christmas visit, but he
still seemed to enjoy himself well enough. A week later Gramps died from heart failure. Another week after that the whole family, some I've never even seen or heard of before now, gathered together in this church with all the Jesus windows.

Grandma finally notices me, I think. I don't know how long I've been sitting here now, but it feels like forever. She rests her hand on my knee and says in a quiet voice, "It'll be okay Tyler; Grandpa is in a better place now. We'll always feel him in our heart if we look for him there." Gramps would've laughed at her for saying something so cliché. Grandma stood up after a few silent moments between us and started walking towards the casket. Halfway to Gramps she stops and looks like she might fall over. I quickly move to her side to wrap my arm around her—when did she get so much shorter?—and walk with her to the casket. Neither one of us wants to see him there, but we stand and gaze at him because we know we have to. I'm waiting for Gramps to open his eyes, grin at me and say, "Chin up, Ty!" when Grandma says to me, "Tyler, you should come and visit this summer. I think your Grandpa would like that."

"Yeah. Sure. I'll visit, and I'll make you a new birdhouse. Maybe this time it'll look nice enough to put in your garden," I say, knowing a second birdhouse attempt will look just as bad as the first. But if Gramps taught me anything, it's that it'll be alright if the birdhouse is a little rough around the edges.
The gardener kneels alone.
There is an intoxicating rush of colors and smells.
There is the mildew and moist dirt,
The faint perfume,
Of the bluebells, periwinkles, and orchids.
They push away his frustrations,
Into workable silence.
He clears and sorts through the foliage,
Separating the imperfections,
From the beauty.
His hands work second to nature,
No thoughts necessary.
He is long, lost, and forgotten,
The only mark of existence,
The imprints in the soil.
The Reasons Why
Mary Lieske

Celebrate for joy the reasons why
the dog cannot stay inside her fence.
She is not content with cages,
and goes to find her friends when they do not find her.
She greets me with love and joy each time I see her.
She sneaks out to roll in the mud.
For running in the snow and playing in the streets,
for bringing back the ball,
for not minding the feet that trip over her,
for never growing up,
we celebrate her life.

Cry out in frustration and sorrow
for the dog that cannot stay clean.
She tears out trash and makes muddy trails on cream carpet.
She praises the moon and the squirrels with her voice at night.
For leading when she should follow,
for following when she should lead,
for never staying in one place,
for behaving like a child,
these are the reasons we cry.
Today a young belle suicide
I straightened and slapped
on my stainless steel table,
soothed rigor mortis
with serums and strokes
but so stiff I had to snip
muscles to make her lie back
and look calm.

I worked cream into every crevice,
renewed skin's supple repose,
slipped cotton beneath drooping lids,
into sagging nose and slack mouth,
down throat soaking up purging fluids.
The mouth I wired shut and shaped
into a faintest grin
and the eyes I glued
into slumber's easy close.

Veins opened without protest
and blood drained quickly from heart
while I pumped pink chemical fluid
from syringe into nearby artery
Color plumped upon her cheeks
via magic dye.

Vagina I packed
with gauze to be engorged in
spare fluid.

(Here I stopped for a brownbag lunch—
eight small carrots
warm tuna fish sandwich
on soggy rye bread,
a green apple,
one cup cherry jello
—and reviewed my work.)
Gases I drew out
with pointed metal tube
punctured through navel
into stomach, bladder,
large intestines, lungs
and filled them fresh
with formaldehyde.
Holes were patched and mess
was washed and dried.

Last touch to tender her look—
sun fire red curls spun on hot iron,
apricots seeded on cheeks
and dusk blossomed on lips,
nails swept to circles and shined
and fingers glued polite on belly,
wax piece to replace hole in head,
and a wisp of a white dress
to make her look just like

a dried dandelion
wished upon and waving
in the wind.
Blues Mad Fools
Jake Dawson

Well it's Monday mornin', and my woman's locked me out
Oh Monday mornin', and my woman's locked me out
I ain't got no money, no food, no place to go

Acoustic bard tell'n broken heart tales,
sway'n and croon'n to a pale tune
whispers of those broken blues.

Rough chords

L
I
D
E

Off old strings plucked from mahogany.

Fingers trip over faded frets, ring, ring, ring,
Stomp! goes his foot to the beat of that tune,
Play that tune you blues mad fool!

Well, I'm a feelin' all empty sweet darling
Come on baby, let me come on home,
Oh my sweet little baby, won't you please let me come on home,

Tan handed poet crafts his sentimental verse,

bobbin and noddin' to a gloomy tune
whispers of those mad, mad blues.

Rough chords—

prunk

chunka proodunk

Chunka

proodunk chunk

CHIP! off his shoulder.

Chomp! goes his hands carving those ivory keys,
dancing over black bricks of melody,

Play that tune you blues mad fool!

Now I see baby I see that I was wrong,
I ain't got no excuses, no reasons for right and wrong
I am just a man baby
Walkin' out is just what I'm made to do
A beat conductor drives that rhythmic locomotive
slapp'n and tapp'n that old snare drum, boom'n
thick notes from old moon shaped drum,
Rough beats—

Choom-cha-doom

Choom-cha-doom

Heaves and sighs that heavy train.

Crash! goes his hands and feet,
hitt'n the brakes to that old blues train
Play that tune you blues mad fool!

Well, I'm a feelin all empty sweet darling
Come on baby, let me come on home,
Oh my sweet little baby, won't you please let me come on home,
Huddled fingers slide and sway
whin'n that old Tennessee tune of the bluegrass whisky blues
a catch and release of bent over hymn
Those rough chords—

Waaaaaaa-wedo-wow-wa

Waaaaaaa-wedo-wa-wa

Howls that harmonic
choo-cha-
doom train.

Wowaaaa! Goes his hands and lips,
All aboard this heavy blues chug a lug!
Play that tune you mad blues fool!

Well, I'm a feelin' all empty sweet darling
Come on baby, let me come on home,
Oh my sweet little baby, won't you please let me come on home,

Do that thing fellas!
Hey, Hey let your sorrows run free!
Play that tune you blues mad fools!
Good Woman
Jake Dawson

I remember those days
When you said
I was a good woman
that was when you used to
kiss my forehead before you left for work
and make love to me when you got home
and protect me instead of walking twenty feet behind
and
that is when you always held my hand,

that was when you
wouldn't give up no matter
how many time I shot you down at
that bar on Beat Street,

that was when I
gave up and finally said
YES!

that was when you
tried to play that
old blues harmonica with
Honey Edwards and
were terrible—I didn't say anything,

that was when I
slept in your bed
and we didn't
do IT!

that was before
we started to
fight all the time.

Now three months
have passed and
you call about three time a week
now,
I lay awake at night a sleepless dreamer tossing and turning now, when you call I always pretend to have someone on the other line now, where did it all go wrong? You said I was a good woman, but that was a different place and different time.
Good Man

Jake Dawson

I remember those days
when you said
I was a good man
that is when you used to
sing me to sleep with your silly little lullabies
and scratch my back when I got home from work
and walk beside me on the sidewalk instead of twenty feet ahead
and that is when you always held my hand,

that was when we
was jiving and jabbering to
Keb' Mo' and King at
that bar on Beat Street,

that was when I
could not stop staring
at you,

that was when you
introduced me to
Honey Edwards and he learned
me the blues harmonica under the
old streetlight,

that was when you
slept in my bed
and we didn’t
do IT!

that was before
we started to
fight all the time.
I lay awake at night sheets on a cold bed that used to be warm now, when I call you always got someone else on the other line now, there ain't no more of what it used to be. You said I was a good man, but that was a different place and different time.
And I Miss You

Donica Miller

I'm glad you never grew old and weary,
But I never had the chance to tell you
that I wanted you to walk me down the aisle.
Now you'll never see my Wedding Day.

But life goes on
And I miss you.

Memories flood my senses:
Smell of your after-shave,
Rough tickle of your beard,
Deep rumble of your voice,
Faint whiff of peppermints.

I remember
And I miss you.

Days pass and storm clouds gather
Not ominous, unthreatening.
A low reverberation of thunder
is soothing, not disarming,
not aggressive, not bad.
I love the early summer because showers
come and pass so quickly.

The sweet shimmer of summer rain
And I miss you.

Days pass and the Sunshine
presses his lips against my cheek,
Warm, gentle kisses.
The summer breeze caresses my skin,
Whips and whirls my hair
Uninvited and unasked.
But soon the days will grow cold again
and I dread the sight of white snow falling.
I cherish summer's warmth
And I miss you.

I think of my unborn children
and how you'll never see them grow.
You'll never get the chance to say,
"You act just like your mother did at that age."
The greatest sorrow I know is
considering the undeniable truth:
Those children will never know you.

I acknowledge this truth
And I miss you.

Some days it's hard to breathe
Because my thoughts revert to you
In each situation that confronts me,
good or bad.
I drift away in empty thoughts
and get so caught up
And I forget to remember
that you're really gone.

And then
I really miss you.
Motivation
Mary Lieske

Four walls, one exit, and a window.

Four drawers, one closet, and a bed.

How dull my apartment is, all numbers and shapes and sizes with no reason to their placement, no explanation for their purchase beyond 'I needed it.' There are no pictures of my great-aunt who died when I was young, no reminders of her special candy recipes, nor any signs of my little sister's eighth grade graduation last week.

It's just me, my cats, and an old bedroom.

Yes, there is the kitchen that is a part of my suite, and the bathroom and the sitting-room-turned-study, but I spend most of the time I'm not working here, in this bed.

I stare up at the ceiling and don't bother to count the cracks anymore—I've done it so many times before that I've memorized the number. I don't tell the landlord about the noise from upstairs or about the noisy dog downstairs who's gotten loose again and is yapping at my door. He's frightened the cats again; the girls are cowering in the closet while the one male cat is either hiding or lazing under my bed—it's hard to tell with him.

The phone rings, and I don't answer. Why should I? What good would it do? If it's Mum, she'll wonder why I'm not at work, or out finding myself a good girl. If it's someone else, I don't want to hear it either. I'm not sure why. Maybe I'm tired, or maybe I'm just lazy. Maybe I'm fed up with my lack of a social life—although I feel no urge to correct it.

Whatever it is has me up and leaving, keys to the apartment in one hand as I shrug on a heavy winter coat. I gently shoo back the dog to get out of the door and lock it behind me. I don't know where I'm going.

I don't know that it really matters.
You left your shirt
under my bed
or on my floor
where later I toed it away.
It was a stupid shirt,
Hawaiian pattern,
mocked your big body
and pale skin.
I am writing to say
that it is decaying,
and you should collect it
at your earliest convenience.
I am allergic to dust
and mold
and to memories left
under my bed
without anyone to come
and clean them away.
A girl in a blue shirt sits in a bar quietly, calmly, watching sweat drop from cold beer. It pools on the dark Wood counter top.

"Mavericks"
Philip Gallagher

"it's boring," my friend said, "You have to make it fun" but the girl in blue sat quietly, alone.
she sits there dressed in her best blue blouse

that she bought twenty years earlier to go out in
in the corner of the horseshoe she sat, silent
while re-sellers and farmers talked of acquisitions and work

stories of trucks, new tractors, and other sold stuff.

hung in the air with wisps of cigarette smoke and the pungent smell of stale alcohol cons spoke loudly of running from the police

while middle aged drunk women danced to music

out of place—as I watched liquor pour

polished to a brilliant shine with nicks here and there
It's 10:15 p.m...

the door
is wide open

Everyone's comin' in

the place
is really hoppin'

Old friends meet up,
shaking familiar hands.

Costume rhinestones *shinin'*
on Older ladies' necks

balls\ /up

-racked-
V

And

broken-sprawling on the table

Door spinning... "Hello Joe!"

Crown

Royal

blowin' (in the air,)

smoke ~rollin'~

the law's sayin' no

rough riders say,

"Hell Yeah,"

Mixers

pouring

down

"I've never had it, but it tastes Great!"
"Try it,"
"...ok..."

ringing...

phone ringing quiet...

Reflection is jamming'
playin' good ol' tunes

the place is
jumpin'...

Somber face stops me.

"...Who was that?..."
"What's goin' on?"

"a stand up mom's..."

dyin'

"...gotta week to live..."

"...Chemo's not workin'... doc says, "make final arrangements."

Click, quiet, depressed look
on once happy face...

The band rocks on,

happy people dancin'

but sitting at
the bar

things get serious

money burns up like

Zig-zags

And liquor pours f

a

s

t.

It's 10:16 p.m.
Spotlighting the 2008 Chapbook Winner
Glen Davis

Each year, beginning in 2007, Sigma Tau Delta and the Vehicle staff have offered Vehicle award winners the chance to compete for their own chapbook—a small volume of their own work to be published during the Fall semester.

This year, winners in the categories of "Best Poetry," "Best Prose," and "Best Overall" for the Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 editions of The Vehicle had their work anonymously judged over the summer. Glen Davis was awarded the honor of having a chapbook published and it is the pleasure of the Vehicle staff to feature one of his pieces, "Lessons"—which won second place in the category of "Best Prose" last Spring and is also included in his chapbook—along with an interview with Glen in this edition of The Vehicle.
The cigarettes flipped and tumbled in the air as they made their leisurely arc over the table and into the grass. I watched this happen every day, the careful rolling of a single pinch of tobacco. I watched him delicately tuck one end to keep the tobacco from falling out and into his mouth. I knew about cancer even then, but as soon as I could, I was going to roll and smoke tobacco just like my grandfather. I wanted to inhale the smoke that had been killing my family for generations.

To be fair, my great-grandfather wasn’t aware that smoking would kill him. Even my grandfather wouldn’t find that out until after he had smoked for most of his life. He started when he was ten. I was eleven when I realized that I, too, would become a smoker. I wouldn’t actually start smoking until I was thirteen, but everyone knew I was going to do it. I’d been getting the lectures about not smoking since I was eight, always from someone holding a cigarette. My own grandfather gave me the lecture once while lighting one of his hand-rolled cigarettes.

"Never start smoking, it’s a terrible habit. I wish I’d never started." There was a quick flash from the lighter and the lecture was over.

He quit for almost two years at the end. He died from cancer before he could make the two year anniversary. My uncle quit after they removed part of his lung. He was already terminal by then, and even he said there wasn’t much point in it. There was a book of matches in his hand when he died and a small pile of cigarette ashes on the picnic table in front of him.

I watched both my uncle and my grandfather get sick, all the while rolling and lighting my own cigarettes. My father has emphysema now; they check his lungs every year for spots. He quit smoking early, early for my family. He was forty five. He claims that he’s never felt better, and that quitting was the best thing he ever did. He says this as he hungrily watches my cigarettes flip through the air and land gently on the grass.

I tell my own son to never start smoking. He’s three now, at least ten years too young to start, but I tell him every day. I tell him how his great-grandfather died from cancer before he even got to meet him.

I try not to smoke around him. I close the garage door, hide it from him like an addict. He doesn’t understand the lectures, but I keep telling him anyway. I tell him about his grandfather and about his great-grandfather. I tell him about his great-grandfather’s hands. How well they could hold a chisel and a plane, and I show him the tool box that those hands made. I point out the perfectly formed dovetail joints, and the perfectly smooth planed surfaces. I make him feel the joints and I let him play with the dangerously sharp chisels.
and spokeshaves that live in that box. Most of all, I tell him about how I wished my grandfather would have showed me how to use those tools. I tell him about how much there was to learn from that one grumpy old man. I tell him about how all I ever learned from my grandfather was to manufacture cigarettes and flip them into the air when their usefulness had expired.

There just wasn't time for anything else.
Interview with Glen Davis

By Rebecca Griffith

The Vehicle: What sorts of things do you tend to write about? Why? Where do you draw inspiration?

Glen Davis: I don't really get inspiration. Every once in a while, I see something and I think, 'That would be a great story to write.' Most of the time, however, I just feel like writing and I have nothing to start with. When that happens, I just kind of write down the first thing that comes into my head. It might be dialog, it might be a description, and might just be random words. The initial writing usually brings up some questions. If it's dialog, I might ask who would say it and in what context. If it's description, I might ask why it matters. In what context would this description have meaning? Eventually, I get a picture that I can work with, and sometimes that turns into a story. More often, it just turns into a few hours of writing, and that's okay, too. If I'm amused for those few hours, I don't consider it wasted time. I can still use pieces of the stories I don't like, and often these pieces seem better when they show up in different stories. The characters and settings seem more concrete for me because we've known each other for a longer time.

I seem to write about death a lot. I'm fascinated by it. I think it comes from my interest in horror movies. I've always wanted to write a really good horror novel, but so much has already been covered. I don't know if I actually have any original ideas anymore. I'm not willing to spend time on a new zombie or vampire novel. What could I cover that hasn't already been written? I think the horror influence is apparent in my writing, but I do try to cover it up a little. Eventually, I am going to have to write a haunted hotel story (I've already started one), but I have no intention of it being of interest to anyone other than me. I just kind of feel like I have to do it.

V: Do you have a philosophy concerning writing?

GD: I think my philosophy towards writing is pretty simple. The writer's job is to present information. It doesn't really matter whether it's a research paper or a story—the end goal should be that the reader can understand it, and, to some extent, participate in it by reading. Readers are often hindered by flowery language and complex sentence structures. If the bigger words really do add something important, or if manipulating the sentence structure adds a different reading to the work, then I'll add it. If it's just there to make me feel more like a writer, it should get deleted. I think that writers should focus on the reader and not themselves. That's probably the closest thing to a writing philosophy that I have.
V: Who are your "literary heroes"?

GD: As I've already mentioned, I love horror stories. I've seen most of the movies, and it takes a lot to really get to me. This rules out a lot of writers. Stephen King could do it once, but I don't know if his recent work really gets to me. I saw The Shining when I was nine, and it was amazing. It's still pretty cool now. This is the movie that probably got me interested in horror. I like King's early stuff, but the new stuff just doesn't seem to work as well. I still read it, though—it's compulsory, I think. Clive Barker has some really good stuff. Again, I tend to like his early stuff better.

I don't only read horror novels, but I do seem to keep coming back to them. I admire anyone that can tell a really good story. For me, it seems to be all about the story. I often find that I really like a book, but it's the story I like and not necessarily the writer. When I pick up a second book by the same author, I'm often disappointed. I can't think of any authors that hold out through every work they've written. If I found that I liked everything an author wrote, I guess that writer would become a sort of hero for me.

V: How would you describe your writing style?

GD: I'm not sure that I actually have a style. I don't write a lot of long stuff because I'm a very disorganized writer. I tend to write flash fiction because it doesn't require me to remember things for very long. In writing longer works, I have to keep notes. I often have post-it notes with characters' names and details on them that I can put on my monitor while writing. If I don't have these notes, characters tend to get new names every few pages, or a mechanic might become a bar tender. It's a lot of work for me to make sure everything stays consistent. Flash fiction is a lot easier in this respect. There is a trade off, though. I don't have to remember anything about the characters I use, but I have to get some kind of message or emotion to the reader in just a couple of pages. I find it very challenging.

I'm not sure I really answered the question there. I think I might still be trying to find a style. If you have one I can try out for awhile, let me know.

V: What do you see as a writer's role in society or culture? Do writers have specific responsibilities to readers or is their work meant mainly to entertain?

Responsibilities? That's a lot of pressure. I think the primary role of a fiction writer is to tell stories. That should be the main focus. If a writer can tell a really great story that people want to hear, then that is a
good thing. If that writer can, at the same time, put a message in there that stays with the reader, that's a really great thing. As a writer, I don't feel it is my job to be a moral compass for my readers. If that were the case, I'd probably have to stop writing such creepy, horrible things. I think that there are things in my writing that might influence a reader. If the reader gets something from reading my stories, then that's awesome. If they really only get a good story out of it, then that's okay, too. I think it's important for a writer to try to get some kind of deeper meaning in there, but this deeper meaning should never cause trouble in reading the story. The story has to be there first—the message is secondary.

V: When did you first know you wanted to write?

GD: I had a really boring, but well paying, job as a machine mechanic when I got out of high school. I was good at this job, so I tended to do less actual repair on the machines, and more of just sitting around waiting for something to break. I really wanted to read, but reading on the job was discouraged. It was common practice, however, to keep notes on the machines and their setup. I started writing little stories in the margins of my notebooks to pass the time. They were awful. I wasn't a big fan of spelling or punctuation back then (still not that great at it), but the stories were amusing and it passed the time. Writing is just like anything else. If you do it long enough, you get better at it. I kept doing it and the stories got better. Eventually, I liked one of them enough to let someone else read it. I just kept on writing whenever I got bored. It became a way to avoid doing the things I didn't really want to do. I don't know that I ever really thought about becoming a writer. It just sort of happened.

V: What has been your most positive experience as a writer?

GD: For me, the most positive experience is reading something I wrote and seeing more in it than I intended to put there. I love when I see connections that I didn't intentionally write in. I can take these connections and make them more prominent. That is an amazing feeling for me.

V: How about your most negative experience as a writer?

GD: I think the negative experiences come when I really like a story, but readers just don't seem to like it. For instance, when I submitted
to *The Vehicle* [Spring 2008], I sent in three stories. Out of the three I submitted, the one I liked least was chosen [for publication]. That’s kind of sad for me, because it means that the other stories missed their target. I still think they are better stories. I just failed to present them in a way that the reader could identify with.

I usually don’t let other peoples’ opinions affect how I feel about things. If the readers don’t get it, it’s because I didn’t get it down as well as I should have. The story is as much for me as it is for them. If I like the story, it is a good story. The reader just didn’t get it, and that’s my fault as a writer. I should have presented it differently. That’s about as close to negative as I really ever get.

V: What advice would you give to other writers hoping to hone their skills? What was the best advice you yourself were given?

GD: I usually give writers the same advice someone gave me about playing the guitar. The only way you’ll ever get good at it is to practice. I still can’t really play the guitar, but then, I never really practice. I’m starting to become a pretty good writer because I write a lot. I get better each time I do it. There are no shortcuts. If you are willing to do a lot of writing, you will eventually get good at it.

The only advice I ever got about writing that I remember was from a writing teacher at the community college I went to. She read something I wrote, and really liked some parts of it. She pointed those parts out to me, and I had to tell her that the parts she liked weren’t strictly the truth. She looked at them again and said, “Then you’re a really good liar, maybe you should do it more often.” She mentioned fiction writing, and it turns out you can lie all you want as long as you’re writing fiction. I’m a really good liar, and I kind of feel like I should focus on my strengths, so fiction is definitely for me.

V: Where do you find yourself doing most of your writing?

The setting is unimportant for me. I’ve met people that have to have everything just right—they have to have a desk and a room with no windows so that they can stay focused on their writing. I avoid all of this stuff. If the story I’m writing isn’t more interesting than watching the birds outside my window, then it isn’t worth writing. I do a lot of my writing outside. I have a table on my back porch that I can sit at and write, or I can put a lawn chair in the front yard and write out there, if it’s nice outside. The trouble I have most often is the limitation of my laptop battery. I usually have to find a way to plug [it] in somewhere. Once I start writing a really good story, I just kind of lose track of time. There have been times when I have written for a whole day. When
the laptop battery goes dead, it just kind of interrupts my thoughts. I try to eliminate this kind of distraction, but if a squirrel, bird or bug catches my attention and makes me stop writing, I'm okay with it. I probably needed a break anyway. It means that I'm not really focused on the story anymore and something needs to change. I need to find out where I got bored with it, or maybe I need to work on a different part of it. I use interruptions as a means of judging my stories. If it was a really great story, would that stupid squirrel have taken my attention away from it?
Contributors

Samuel Cloward—"I’m a really cool guy."

Steven T. Cox (The Non-Mortal)—An English lit major considering a Creative Writing minor who transferred from Parkland College. "I’ve been writing, with a primary focus on science fiction/horror, for four to five years, but, until now, have not been published."

Jacob Dawson—First year Creative Writing graduate student who is at work on a novel.

Sarah Fairchild—Freshman English major with a Creative Writing minor. "I like to write poetry, preferably short contemporary sorts. I’m a total bum."

Kellen Fasnacht—Junior English major with an Education minor. "I’m from Charleston, IL. and have been sober since October 10, 2007. I’ve been consumed with happiness ever since."

Philip Gallagher—"As a poet, I have been down many paths of creation. I have walked the roads of bliss, hardship, and confusion that the great masters themselves have trodden. I float through the senses. I am the enigma, the voice of life born out of the chalice of mechanical construction. I have created, deconstructed, inverted, and twisted language with the torsions of possibility. I have paid to be published, I have been convinced to publish, and I have sought publication on my own. For ten years I have waded through the poet’s sub-aquatic world of desperation to avoid drowning or being swallowed by the void. My
My thanks go out to those who have encouraged me, guided me, and find solace within me.”

Leslie Hancock—Senior English major with teacher certification and an African American studies minor. This is her first time being published in The Vehicle. “Creative Writing is a hobby for me.”

Brendan Hughes—Senior Theatre Arts major with a minor in Asian Studies. His featured photographs were taken in China while on study abroad in May 2008.

Grace Lawrence—Junior English major. Hobbies include reading, listening to music, and watching America’s Funniest Home Videos.


Gina Marie LoBianco—Senior English major.

Mary Lieske—First year graduate student in English. Her areas of interest include Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance literature. She lives just outside Cincinnati, Ohio with her family.

Megan Mathy—Junior Mass Communications major.

Donica Miller—First year graduate student in English. Her areas of interest are the Gothic novel and Medieval romance. She
enjoys spending time at home with her family, including her husband Jeremy and dog, Neo.

Jennifer O’Neil—First year graduate student in Literary Studies with a Creative Writing emphasis.

Samantha Sauer—Sophomore History major and Film minor from Sycamore, IL. She has an interest in studying abroad and writing and plans to a lot of both in the near-future.

Justin Sudkamp—English major with a Creative Writing minor. “I blame my mother and father for introducing me to literature and music since the cradle. Thank You.”

Amanda Veale—Senior majoring in English and Psychology.
Submission Guide

Submissions are accepted before midterm each semester. As specific dates vary, please watch for flyers, posted throughout Coleman Hall.

Please e-mail TheVehicle@gmail.com with any inquiries.

Reading Event

All readers of The Vehicle are invited to attend a reading event highlighting this semester’s talented writers. This Fall, the reading is scheduled for Thursday December 11 at 5pm in the Effingham Room on the third floor of the Union. Glen Davis, winner of the 2008 Chapbook contest, will be the featured reader of the evening.
"I am writing in the garden. To write as one should of a garden, one must write not outside it or merely somewhere near it, but in the garden."

—Frances Hodgson Burnett