Images 2007
A Literary and Fine Arts Magazine

by
Students and Staff
of
Monroe County Community College

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The Humanities/Social Sciences Division
Acknowledgments

This is the twenty-fifth consecutive year we have published the creative efforts of our students and staff.

We sincerely appreciate all the excellent work submitted this year. Each entry has received careful consideration.

The editors are extremely grateful to Penny Dorcey-Naber, Nancy Churchill, and Jerry Morse for their expert assistance in preparing this year’s volume. Without their efforts, there would be no magazine.

We are already gathering material for our next issue. If you are a student or member of the staff of Monroe County Community College and would like to have your work included in our next issue, please submit your material to one of our co-editors:

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Creative writing may be submitted electronically to lcouch@monroeccc.edu or pdorcey@monroeccc.edu.
“Deus Ex Machina - Creature” – Digital Image
by Aleksandr Shcherbakov
Love

Love.

I enter a trance,
watching the bubbles rise to the top of my fluted glass
only to burst.

The sweet taste of wine,
like biting into a freshly picked red cherry.
Slowly swishing it from cheek to cheek
so every taste bud has a chance to experience its sweetness before

choking on the pit.

A wine bottle waits to be opened.
Ageless perfection
exposed
bursting with eagerness.
Sniff, swirl, taste,
slow at first
then enjoying the glass.
As it nears the end taste buds grow tired
and long for something new.
The remainder is discarded.
Left with an empty glass and a

dirty dish.

by Shawnda Carey
“Butterfly” – Mixed Media
by Amanda Spencer
“Two Keys” – Graphite
by Darren Schuerer

“Fish of Steel” – Graphite
by Richard Hopkins
Winding

A beginning barely distinguishable
Through the misty shrouds behind.
The end: certain, but not in sight.

Forward, I must go, but
I hardly know where to step.
The road is always winding; seldom straight.
Its boundaries are not clear at first.

Lined with shadows of what could have been,
Sometimes smooth as glass, my steps come easy.
At others, it is roughly hewn.
The sharp gravel punctures my soles.

But I keep walking,
Drawn by some mysterious force
Toward the end I know is there.

Sometimes, through the black ambiguity
That surrounds the winding road I tread,
I can see the roads of others.
We walk together for a time before
Their roads veer back into obscurity.

But I keep walking, as do they,
To the certain yet unseen end.
Before I get there, who knows
What I shall encounter.

At first, I was guided on my path
By others more experienced than I.
Now, I have earned the right
To choose my own steps.

One fork leads left, the other right.
Both ways lead to the end.
I follow the delicate butterfly
Upon whose wings my dreams are carried.

_by Amanda May_
“Pool Balls” – Graphite
by Patrick Hawkey
People Who Pretend to Care

many years have slipped by
unannounced and unappreciated
dense smog and a dry bitter mouth
are all that come to mind
when others force an explanation

perhaps tomorrow I will wish for company

for a chance to speak foolishly
while people who pretend to care
half heartedly pretend to listen
but not today
today it is better to keep silent

for others to keep silent
even the wind craves an audience
and rejoices when noticed
hanging on to sweet autumn
for an extra few days

by Barry Graham
“Bee-Ware” – Mixed Media
by Megan Williamson
Simple Pleasures

The building used to be one huge house, but now it is four small apartments. The white paint is worn and could use a paint job. The porch extends across the entire front of the building and is flat gray wood. The porch roof matches the washed out white of the building that it is attached to. The front steps are concrete and jut out from the middle of the long porch like a badly fitted set of dentures. The decrepit steps are flanked by low flat bushes that someone has decided needed fake spider webs strung all over them. The effect only serves to make the bushes look as old and withered as the house. There are several mix and matched chairs on the porch, but none look like the kind of chair one would have to treat with deference. They look inviting, comfortable, and used. Two of the chairs appear to have been recycled from an office somewhere, with their burlap fabric seats and backs. The other two are green plastic lawn chairs. The entire scene looks lived in and homey. One could imagine that the folks who live here are down to earth, with no time to put on airs. They will probably offer visitors coffee or iced tea and insist that you tell them all about the new happenings in your life.

On the sidewalk, two children play. The little girl, who appears to be about seven or eight, is the leader. She is about four feet tall, with caramel colored skin, dark brown braided hair, a gap toothed smile, a chunky belly, and a contagious laugh. The little boy, who looks about three, has blonde hair, is about two and one half feet tall, giggles uncontrollably at the slightest hint of fun, never seems to walk—only run, and is clearly the follower. Every single thing the little girl does, the little boy tries desperately to mimic. As she rides a sleek, shiny, silver scooter down the walk, he comes behind on a red, plastic, wide wheel motorcycle. Back and forth in the late afternoon sunshine they go, wheels grinding off of the pavement, legs pumping like little pistons, oblivious to the ever-increasing chill in the air or the gradually dipping sun on the horizon. A woman, their grandmother, sits on the sagging porch, watching the children play. She looks radiant; her cheeks slightly flushed from the crisp air, her eyes twinkling as she shouts encouragement to the racing kids. It would appear that she too is unconcerned about anything except who will win each relay. She holds no magazine or book with which to pass the time; she never takes her eyes off her grandchildren.

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Her red hair blows slightly in the cool fall air, and she shivers from the sudden dip in temperature. I notice her raise her head and tip it to the side—does she also smell the burning leaves that are so familiar in autumn?

To these two children and their grandmother, it would appear that time is unimportant. Their current priorities are the thrill of the race, the chill of the breeze as they ride back and forth, the barely lingering warmth of the fading sun, the comfort of familiar surroundings, and the joy of one another’s company. They need no television, no computer, no McDonalds, and no toys. They have one another.

This simple pleasure, so often overlooked, is the real spice of life. After watching this family together, I went home and hugged my daughter, and we carved pumpkins, roasted seeds, tried on our Halloween costumes, and just enjoyed one another. I hope anyone who reads this will feel like doing the same thing.

by Tennery Hicks
“Still Life with Turtle Shell” – Ballpoint Pen  
by Amanda Spencer

“Unplugged” – Graphite  
by Vanessa Burkett
“Black and White Factory” – Acrylic
by Mary Foster
Let Hope Live

May every step you take  
Bring you closer to your purpose.  
May every wish you make  
Upon a shooting star be granted.

May the cup of your life  
Always run over with successes.  
May the road bumps known as failures  
Fail to strip you of your dreams.

May the Lord’s hand lead you to  
A prosperous ending, and  
May every ending bring you  
An even sweeter beginning.

May you always travel forward  
On an ever-changing path.  
May you always let hope live within  
In spite of life’s many trials.

Lest you let it die in  
A dark and dreadful hour,  
May you carry with you always the knowledge  
That I shall be there to revive it.

So may all your days be good ones,  
May the bad ones later be laughed at,  
And may our friendship outlast  
Every star that has ever been wished on.

by Amanda May
“Cattle Skull” – Graphite
by Alyse Giznsky
beneath the trees
there are strong roots
roots that ensure
they will never fall
when the wind
blows too heavy
or the rain
falls too hard

I heard somewhere that all trees
are potentially immortal
their only weakness is growing too big
reaching immeasurable heights
that frighten and inspire
then gravity performs its duty
and that’s it
god wins again

by Barry Graham
“Reclining Woman” – Conte Crayon
by Michelle Fockman

“Dove” – Graphite
by Chrystine Bourbina
Tides

I only allow certain eyes to watch me while I am at work, writing what I hope will one day become a published novel. Among them are the eyes of the turtle knick-knacks on the shelf above my monitor; an elaborately patterned, light blue candle I purchased at Cedar Point; an ancient coin bank once owned by my mother; a small pewter statue with a curiously tilted head, and the obtrusively bright, bean-filled turtle, whose size promises me protection against intrusions. Their presence is more than enough to remind me of the greatest morning of my life and the horrific night that preceded it.

It was my second time out of the Michigan-Ohio-Kentucky tri-state area in the fifteen years I had lived in the Wolverine State, the first time being a day trip to Chicago with the high school’s artist guild. However, that wasn’t to be counted as a vacation. Vacations for me meant unbearable warmth on the shores of a clean beach with sparkling blue waters and for a period far longer than twenty-four hours. Hunting Island, South Carolina, fulfilled three of those four necessities. The Atlantic’s hue was nowhere near that alluring cerulean often seen on commercials advertising discount trips to the Caribbean. Nevertheless, it was a huge step up from the murky shores of Lake Erie. The water was far less filthy, and the closest things to a dead fish I spied upon those cream-colored shores were seashells and sand dollars.

By the third day of the trip, I had had my fill of high tides. I took my first swim in the ocean, ingested my first meal at Sonic, climbed the entire 167-stair case of the Hunting Island lighthouse, and saw a wealth of wildlife no zoo could ever offer: an orange-bodied spider with black and white striped legs almost as big as my palm, a miniature whitetail deer, and even an alligator slithering through the pond beneath a bridge. But there were consequences to my overindulgence— a low tide for every high. Because I was constantly under the sun’s brilliant gaze, I looked like a lobster with tan lines by the end of the first day, and the rocking chair on the screened-in porch had viciously attacked my right foot. The laceration, though not serious, made it difficult to endure imprisoning footwear.

There were two cabins on the island we were concerned with: Cabin 7, which sat on the lagoon and was no more than two-hundred paces from the ocean shore, and Cabin 9, the beachfront cabin.
I had hopes of staying in the beachfront cabin, but that right was unfairly swiped away by my Grandma Burton (my dad’s mom); his sister, Cindy, whom I call Aunt Sissy; and her three children: Chelsea, Jayme, and Daniel. Their method was the underhanded use of my eighty-five-year-old great grandmother’s condition. “Grandma can’t handle those stairs,” Aunt Sissy insisted, referring to the steps of Cabin 7, a quaint wooden structure supported on stilts. They unfairly nabbed Cabin 9 away from us and condemned us Mays to the lagoon cabin. My mother, therefore, was rightfully resentful.

On the second day of our trip, my mother lost her temper. Just as the dangerous storm tide of her emotions was rolling in, I silently excused myself and took a lengthy walk along the beach. By the time I returned to Cabin 7, the tempest had passed. Traces of snow white clouds dotted the sky, allowing the sun to observe with abrasively warm humor the drama playing out below. The possibility that it was a preface to an even greater storm did not even occur to me, not even as a chorus of crickets and the gently rumbling drums of heat thunder sang me off to sleep.

It began as any typical vacation day would. I rose at 5:30 without the help of an alarm clock despite being up until 11:30 the night before, writing and indulging in the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Disappointed that the clouds had thwarted my chances of photographing the sun rising over the ocean yet again, I sat with my parents as they sipped steaming coffee. My great grandmother rose at around eight o’clock, and by then, the sun was out. Later on, I climbed the stairs of the lighthouse for the second time in two days, and with my Aunt Sissy and three younger cousins, I crossed the marsh boardwalk. Upon returning, I decided it was time for yet another swim, which I proceeded to partake in after changing into the proper attire. My return marked the hour of dinner: spaghetti and meat sauce, expertly prepared by the May family’s self-appointed personal cook, my father. His therapy was the preparation of food and mine the preparation of fine literature. It was the only point I could relate with him on.

With dinner came a noticeable tension that built as I sat down next to my three cousins. “What are you doing?” I inquired as Daniel rose from the table and pressed his face against my window.

“Just looking in your room,” he replied. The words gave me an uneasy feeling in the pit of my stomach. Ever since the time father
had walked in on me changing when I was twelve years old, a product of his inability to knock, I had carried with me a high value of privacy and a constant paranoia that it would be violated. Being an only child made me guard that privacy even more. It was precious to me, as precious as the words I wrote, and as confidential. His glimpse inside that window was a glimpse inside the book that contained my personal belongings. That was why a deluge of apprehension rose within me.

“Why are you looking in my room?”

“Just curious.” I relaxed as he returned to the table, but the uneasy tide had dropped prematurely. “There’s a bra in there on your bed. I know why you wear a bra!” he added and quickly thrust an accusing finger towards the reason. I noticed the two bikers peddling along the gravel path, likely a married couple, rubberneck as his vociferous comment was drawn out to sea by a sweeping tide of silence. In a typical situation, I would have wordlessly accepted the possibly unintentional violation or silently allowed my argument to be thwarted. But I was tired of hiding in my shell. At long last, as my mother had the night before, I fought back.

Outraged, I spat out the most senselessly violent threat I could come up with. “I’ll smack you in the freaking head; I’m not even kidding!” I shouted as the sands of violation swallowed my composure. I was fortunate to have the self-control not to carry out my threats. Being eighteen years of age, the cops probably would have incarcerated me for child abuse.

The commotion did draw the attention of my aunt, who exited to the porch where my two female cousins sat in silent horror, the young boy in devilish amusement. “What’s the matter?” she asked. I proceeded to explain the situation to her, though my spite greatly affected the manner in which I presented my case. “Well, he lives with three girls. He already knows about those things.”

“I know that,” I responded obstinately. “It’s a matter of privacy.”

“Well, he’s only eight.” Aunt Sissy would go to any lengths to defend her precious little boy. He was blameless in every sense of the word, regardless of circumstances.

“I’m going to eat inside,” I said heatedly.

“Well, maybe that’s for the best.” Her tone plainly called me a childish fool. Infuriated, I seized my plate and entered the house, where those within seemed to sense my boundless resentment.

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“What’s wrong, doll baby?” my grandmother asked. The nickname was not reserved solely for me; she called all her grandkids that. Irrately but with slightly more composure than before, I explained the situation a second time, emphasizing how improper his comment had been and my high value of privacy. “Why don’t you just close your blinds?”

“I shouldn’t have to; it’s my room,” I argued. “I have a right to my privacy.”

“Don’t take it personally,” she said almost immediately after my words had faded away. “He doesn’t know any better. He’s only eight.” That damned excuse again, an excuse I lacked the logic to effectively counter, but before the subject could be dropped, the least likely person came to my defense.

“He should know better, living with three women,” my father commented. The argument proceeded for less than half a minute before he shouted in a tone that often gave me the chills, “Tell me, would you tolerate that shit from an eight-year-old?” To see it implemented in my defense against his own mother shocked me beyond all reason.

“Well, no,” she offered feebly; then, in near tears, “I’m going home,” meaning back to Cabin 9. Very soon, the only people left were the occupants of Cabin 7.

“It’s a matter of privacy,” I reiterated when attempting to convince Chelsea and Jayme to stay and finish their dinner. “It has nothing to do with you. I want you to know that.” Somehow, I don’t think they believed me, and I’ll never know whether their retreat was a product of their own choice or their mother’s order. Shortly after their departure, forty dollars worth of food became the object of my father’s rage. It was banished to the front porch and sealed unceremoniously in a black trash bag.

By the end of the night, we were half debating whether or not to go home. Once my great grandmother had a firm grasp on the situation, she ardently stated, “They’ve got that boy ruined.” It was nice to see that someone agreed with me. In the end, we decided to wait until morning to make the final decision. I went to bed questioning whether I was right for taking a stand, brooding on my resentment for conflict. Thinking back on it now, I was never good at defending myself. During junior high, bullying had slowly eaten away at my self-esteem. Various injustices dealt to me by the

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counselors eventually drove me to complete silence. If someone made an untruthful comment about me in my presence, I merely kept my mouth shut and withdrew into my shell. But I never let anyone call me stupid, and I never let anyone tell me I was wrong when I knew I was right. The only problem was I couldn’t decide whether I was right or wrong for acting as I had. A nasty feeling of ambiguity eroded my conscience, and I slipped off to sleep wondering if we would still be there on Friday.

I slept in the next morning until 6:30. The sky was clear, so I swiftly seized my digital camera and proceeded in pajamas and flip-flops to the beach. Subsequent to taking a photograph of the sun rising over the Atlantic, another vacationer in a red-striped shirt passed me. “I think there’s a turtle down there,” she said, pointing to the crowd of six or seven people. We jogged towards them, my eyes following the clumsy reptilian prints in the sand to the majestic, massive Loggerback Sea Turtle resting on the shore. She was being slowly coaxed back into the water by the park’s staff. I didn’t stop hitting the camera button and offering verbal encouragement until she disappeared among the early morning surf. The rangers then proceeded up the beach and explained to the clueless tourists that Loggerbacks were endangered, that they came up on the beach during high tide at this time of the year to lay their eggs, and that because of the nest’s position, the eggs would have to be moved. Despite my inappropriate attire, I more than gladly pitched in. Two hours later, one hundred ten eggs had been excavated from the site. It was hard for me to fathom: one hundred ten lives, all of which could have been swept away by the approaching storm tides. Though the tides of the ocean were still receding, my own emotional tides had risen considerably.

I was ashamed to learn upon my return that my father had gone back to his old ways and made up with his mother so soon, almost as if the argument the night before had meant nothing at all. So I thought instead of the turtle: wise, tentative, clumsy in the sand but sluggishly graceful when among the waves. If her strength wasn’t enough to carry her through, she always had a shell to hide in. I decided to be more like a turtle. Wisdom comes with maturity, and a huge part of it is learning to think before you speak.

The tides of that day are receding, dragging with it memories both pleasant and unpleasant, but with the end of this semester,
they will rise again. My mother, father, and I are returning to make memories better than those that preceded them. The eyes of my own brood of turtles gaze at me, and I question once again whether I was right in defending my privacy, or whether there is a right side at all. Was the manner in which I defended it, a manner that nearly cost me four days in paradise, the way an adult would do it? Then I realize, as a wave of knowing crashes on the beach of reason, hissing pleasurably at the approaching high tide, that one is never too old to grow.

by Amanda May

“Lidded Vessel” – Ceramics
by Darlin Nothnagel
“Beach Rocks” – Photograph
by Joy Schroeder

“Niagra” – Photograph
by Tennery Hicks
Star of Night

Star of night burning bright
Casting away the darkest night
Relieve me of my burden tonight
And shroud me in your gentle light

Find within me a heart so cold
And warm it into something bold
Strong enough to make sure
That my love will endure

Free me from this prison cell
Buried deep within my hell
And lift me to a lofty place
So I may see your lovely face

Lift from me my woes and pain
To give me a reason to live again
For my love for you is bright
So, take me from this endless night

Break me free of my stone crucifix
Find my heart and make it fixed
Warm me with light from above
So I may be free in your love

by Mike Beers
“Turning Point” – Acrylic
by Rosemarie Mikrees
An Unexpected Hand

I wore white. Actually, all five of us were wearing white. If I had it my way, I’d be wearing a skirt less old fashioned; a shirt that was brighter and friendlier; and an outfit that didn’t make me look ten pounds heavier. But during this time, rules are followed. Rules are always prominent and required in Kappa Delta Sorority.

With all of the rules to follow, I started to wonder what I had gotten myself into. Only a couple of minutes I had left to back out of this because I was being initiated any minute. Our pledge mom, Char, would walk in through the door to retrieve us. Her job was to watch over the new members, along with teaching us everything we needed to know about Kappa Delta in order to pass the written test we took only five days ago. I already had paid the four hundred dollar initiation fee, so I knew my mother would be livid if I backed out now. So here I sat, with my pledge class of four other girls—Kimmie, Gloria, Karen, and Heather.

All five of us were smashed into a room, and I can honestly say now I know what sardines feel like in their package. I can’t call it a room, though. It had a five by six parameter, with a small bed taking up three-fourths of the room. On the foot of the bed there laid a pearl white bedspread that looked presentable, but used at the same time, and the softness gave an unusual sense of comfort. At the foot of the bed was an afghan with the olive green letters “KD” at the top. Under the letters KD, written in a sewn script, was Kappa Delta’s Creed.

On the walls were pictures in lime green frames—one with a bar in the background, another with a beach paradise. All of these pictures were of Andrea, Kimmie’s older sister, and her sorority sisters. Andrea is now an alumni member, but she still holds true to Kappa Delta. Andrea reaffirms what it means to be a Kappa Delta for life. Is this what I am looking for here? Am I looking for pictures of fun times to show my children and grandchildren in the future?

At this time, while sitting in Andrea’s room, we were not allowed to talk to any of the other members, so we anxiously gathered bits and pieces by whispering of what we imagined this ceremonial initiation would be like.

“I heard that we have to tell the sisters our deepest, darkest secret,” Karen said.
“Oh yea, well I looked in the box where the initiation stuff is kept, and there is a black robe and a dagger! What in the heck are they going to do with that?” Kimmie replied.

With the surrounding tension, I stepped back and asked myself why I was joining, and why I couldn’t have just made friends in my dorm. Wouldn’t that have been more convenient and cheaper? But what I was joining offered not only friendship—but a sisterhood. But seriously, is there a difference?

Since a child, I wondered and imagined about what a sisterhood would be like. Would it be like MTV—with half naked girls running around a house doing each other’s make-up? Would it be like a gigantic sisterhood with a bunch of best friends? This experience brought an abundance of uncertainties.

With having a countless amount of uncertainties, I then began thinking about the person I would become if I joined a sorority. Would I become a stupid lush? A stupid lush is how I perceived other sorority girls. But I knew at least half of the sisters in Kappa Delta for at least six weeks now, and they all seemed successful and the opposite of a stupid lush.

My roommate was even already a member. Her name was Lindsay, and she was majoring in pre-medicine, like me. She had a fulfilling family life and an amazing boyfriend. Lindsay had a web of friends in her social net. Isn’t this what I wanted and wanted to associate myself with? Didn’t I want to be part of the Greek student body?

The Greek student body gives a student affiliation with Wayne State University. Eighty percent of the students commute at Wayne State University, and I live on campus. It seemed like everyone went home for the weekends, which made the sixth floor I lived on resemble an old ghost town from the Southern United States. Every weekend, except when I needed toothpaste and the other necessities from home, I stayed in my dorm and constantly did homework, which got boring at times.

The sorority sisters always had something to do on the weekends. Sorority members go to Fraternity mixers; ice cream socials with the girls of the sorority; or just hang out and watch reruns of “Full House” and gain a greater bond within the sisterhood. Could this be the reason in a couple of minutes I was going downstairs to an unknown place to pledge myself to these girls? My palms became damp as I rubbed my hands together and thought about what was ahead of me.

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Downstairs we heard an echo of what sounded like the Christmas Carol “Oh Christmas Tree.” I thought the singing sounded out of the ordinary. Are they going to sing Christmas carols to us all night? Before I could ask another girl if she heard the same Christmas carol, we heard a knock on the door. Slowly, the door creaked open, and we saw fingers with a petite diamond ring. Was it finally time for our initiation? Butterflies fluttered through my stomach, and I was sure the girls sitting just inches away from my body had the same feeling. A bony hand peeked through the opening between the door and wall. Then, an arm and a tan leg with newly polished, white stiletto heels and pedicured toes entered the room. We suddenly saw blonde hair we weren’t expecting! It wasn’t Char; the girl entering the room was Stephanie, the President of Kappa Delta.

Stephanie entered the room with paperwork we had to sign before the rituals started. It stated, “I, (person’s name), promise to not pledge to any other sorority. If I disaffiliate (leave) the sorority, I will not be able to join another sorority for an entire academic year. I promise to make the best of my Kappa Delta experience, and pay my dues on time.” I signed, almost with a feeling that I just gave my life away.

After signing, Stephanie left the room and all five of us glanced at each other, not knowing what would come next. I looked over at Kimmie, and she had this look of despair on her face, like a lost puppy looking for its home. I looked at her foot, as it gently fidgeted against the floor. Before I could ask what was wrong, we heard another short knock at the door.

Instead of seeing Stephanie’s blonde hair this time, we saw Char’s dark, smooth hair and her face, which had a Filipino complexion.

“Are you girls ready to become an official member of Kappa Delta?”

Yes! The strenuous tension slowly diminished, due to the fact that the time had almost come for my initiation.

Char handed out an olive green rectangular blindfold to each of us anxiously waiting to walk down the stairs to the ceremony. On the upper right corner of the blindfold were the letters inscribed in white “KD.” My heart began beating faster. I thought, “I’m almost a member.”

When I took the blindfold in my hand, I wondered why I needed it. I wanted to know the reason that I needed to cover my eyes,
because of the assumption I had of Kappa Delta not hazing its new members. I guess that Char saw the worried looks when we were about to wrap the blindfold around our heads because she assured us that we didn’t have anything to be worried about. We weren’t going to be hazed.

All five of us lined up in alphabetical order, according to last names. I felt a short, sweaty squeeze on the palm of my hand, from Kimmie, who stood only five inches behind me, as an attempt to comfort both of us during this predicament.

I glanced down at my hands. They started to quiver. I tried to convince myself that this whole initiation wasn’t an immense decision in my life, and these were only going to be friends whom I saw only for an hour meeting on Tuesday nights in the bottom of the Student Center of Wayne State University.

Char told us we had to put on our blindfolds now, as an attempt to block out the outside world. Slowly, I raised my hands and tied a loose knot around my freshly primped deep brown, curly hair. Just breathe deeply—I told myself. Everything will be over in a couple of minutes.

The time had come to head downstairs after my KD blindfold was secured in place. I led the line of our five uncertain young ladies. One foot in front of the other—left, right, left, right. I could tell we were entering the kitchen because I could smell the delicious aroma of the cookies, muffins, and brownies, which were made for our party after the events downstairs.

“Watch your step girls!” yelled Char; she didn’t want us to trip over any of the miscellaneous bags lingering on the floor.

We had now reached the top of the basement stairs. I felt a hand guiding my body in order to insure that I wouldn’t miss a stair and go tumbling. This guiding touch is what I had been searching for. This is the reason that I was joining Kappa Delta. Not for the fraternity parties or the increased social life, but for a hand to guide me—a hand that has already been through certain experiences.

On that journey to the basement, I learned that Kappa Delta is different from my friends from home. The older girls have been through the experiences which are often horrifying to a young college student, such as being away from home for the first time. Kappa Delta would give me an association in my life outside of schoolwork and would not fade away four or five years after I graduated. I will

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always be a Kappa Delta. It’s an everlasting spirit of belonging to a prominent group.

My friends from home would always be there in a flash if I found myself in a terrible situation. But what if I couldn’t reach them? What if they didn’t understand where I was coming from? Kappa Delta members come from a variety of backgrounds. A sister is always readily available, and not only sympathetic, but empathetic, because she may have been through the same situation. My sorority sisters are my family when I am here at school. Kappa Delta is a gigantic, irreplaceable support system. Kappa Delta holds a history to be learned and rituals to follow that date back a hundred years. How could anything compare to this? “Nothing can compare” was my final thought as I sat down at my seat in front of my future Kappa Delta sisters. I gently untied the blindfold knotted in my hair and awaited my initiation and future as the newest member of the Greek System. Someday I’ll have pictures enveloping my walls, just like Andrea, and great stories to share with my children and grandchildren about my college years in the immaculate and irreplaceable sorority of Kappa Delta.

by Rachael Bailey

“Gears” – Acrylic
by Monique Reaume
“Reaching for the Sun” – Photograph
by Mark Spenoso
THE CASE

In a musty box starved of light
The Gucci-heeled dealers shuffle decks.
Stale air dries tears,
Beads of sweat.
Hot air rushes from the bowels
Of leather cases as they close
Whisking a dried flower petal
To a twisted position on the floor.
Failure is extremely
Uncomfortable.

by Tim Spoehr
Expectations – Life’s Painting

I began to paint a picture
It would be my masterpiece

The idea was born, nurtured, fed and grew
The blank white canvas was intimidating yet free
The excitement grew as each brush stroke opened a new possibility

I visited my favorite colors as often as possible – for they were family
Visions in my mind created on the canvas – small successes - like friends guiding me
My hand – my tool – began to ache as I became more focused on the details
Visions in my mind grew tired as days past
Ideas, dreams and creativity seemed to fade

Still I worked
Longing to see the completed work hung proudly on a wall
Something inside kept telling me to keep going someday it would be worth it
Everyone would gather around it and bask in its beauty

Hours turned into days
Days into weeks
Months into years
I worked and worked
Until finally the canvas was full
The paint dried up
The brush broken
My hand was wrinkled and too tired to hang it on the wall
I looked at my masterpiece I realized that I didn’t like it

I hid the painting in a closet
My family hung it up at my funeral

by Shawnda Carey
“Tennessee Treasures” – Graphite
by Danielle Needles

“Much Traveled” – Graphite
by Ashley LeTourneau
Contributors

**Rachael Bailey** resides in Monroe. She plans to obtain a bachelor's degree in nursing before attending medical school.

**Mike Beers** lives in Toledo, Ohio. He plans to pursue a career in English and teaching.

**Chrystine Bourbina** lives in Carleton. She is pursuing a degree in the pharmaceutical field and would like to own her own pharmacy or work as an active duty pharmacist in the United States Air Force.

**Vanessa Burkett** resides in Monroe and is working on an associate of science degree in graphic design. She plans to receive a bachelor's degree and one day own her own business.

**Shawnda Carey** resides in Monroe. She is pursuing a degree in early childhood development.

**Craig Demkowski** lives in Petersburg. He is pursuing a career in graphic design or computer science.

**Michelle Fockman** resides in Lambertville and is pursuing a degree in fine arts. Her plans include transferring to the University of Michigan, becoming a producer in exhibit design, and working on a master’s degree.

**Mary Foster** lives in Monroe. She plans to major in art education and would like to work at a college.

**Alyse Giznsky** resides in Monroe and plans to major in art. Alyse would like to work for Disney, creating animation.

**Barry Graham** resides in Blissfield. He is an adjunct instructor of English at Monroe County Community College. He holds a bachelor’s degree in English with a minor in addiction studies and a master’s degree in English composition and creative writing.
Patrick Hawkey resides in Temperance. He is returning to college after a twelve year hiatus. Patrick enjoys drawing and is considering a career which incorporates his interest in art.

Tennery Hicks has completed her associate’s degree and is currently pursuing a bachelor’s degree in psychology. She plans to work with children and their parents.

Richard Hopkins lives in Monroe and has received his associate’s degree in fine arts. He is currently working in the food industry, while looking for ways to pursue his passion for art.

Mary Kinsey lives in Monroe. She plans to major in visual art education and become an art teacher.

Ashley LeTourneau lives in Monroe. She is working on a degree in web design and graphic design. Ashley plans to open a photography and graphic design business.

Amanda May resides in Temperance. She is pursuing a degree in English. Amanda plans to focus on creative writing and to become a published author. She would like to teach at the college level.

Rosemarie Mikrees resides in Monroe. She is majoring in graphic design and is currently looking for a position as a graphic designer.

Danielle Needles resides in Temperance. She plans to major in special education and become a teacher after completing her degree.

Darlin Nothnagel resides in Newport. He is interested in ceramics.
Monique Reaume resides in Monroe. She is studying web and graphic design. Monique plans to do freelance work and start her own online business.

Joy Schroeder has a doctorate in musical arts from University of Michigan. She also holds master’s degrees in theory, performance, music, and arts. Her bachelor’s degree is in music education. Joy plans to keep performing and teaching music while working on her photography skills.

Darren Schuerer is from Ottawa Lake. He is working on a degree in automotive engineering.

Aleksandr Shcherbakov is originally from Voronezsh, Russia, and now lives in Monroe. He is studying illustration and graphic design.

Amanda Spencer resides in Dundee. She is pursuing a degree in fine arts. She plans to receive her associate's degree in graphic design.

Mark Spenoso resides in Monroe. He is employed by Monroe County Community College as a Digital Imaging Specialist.

Tim Spoehr is from Monroe. He is employed as a Technical Director at Monroe County Community College.

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