

# UWHARRIE DREAMS

CREATIVE WRITING CLUB

The  
Beauty  
in Each  
Moment



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Uwharrie Dreams supports and advances RCC student endeavors in all genres of creative writing and the visual arts. We encourage creative exploration, self-expression, teamwork, and the development of skills in current and emerging media.

Uwharrie Dreams is a club for students interested in creative writing, operating under the auspices of the Student Government Association. It began in 2003 as part of the fine arts activities for Randolph Community College students. This group helps students prepare submissions to RCC's Writers Contests, sponsored by the SGA.

For more information about the Uwharrie Dreams club, contact its faculty advisor: Victoria Davis ([vlDavis@randolph.edu](mailto:vlDavis@randolph.edu)).



STUDENT  
SHORT  
FICTION  
WINNER

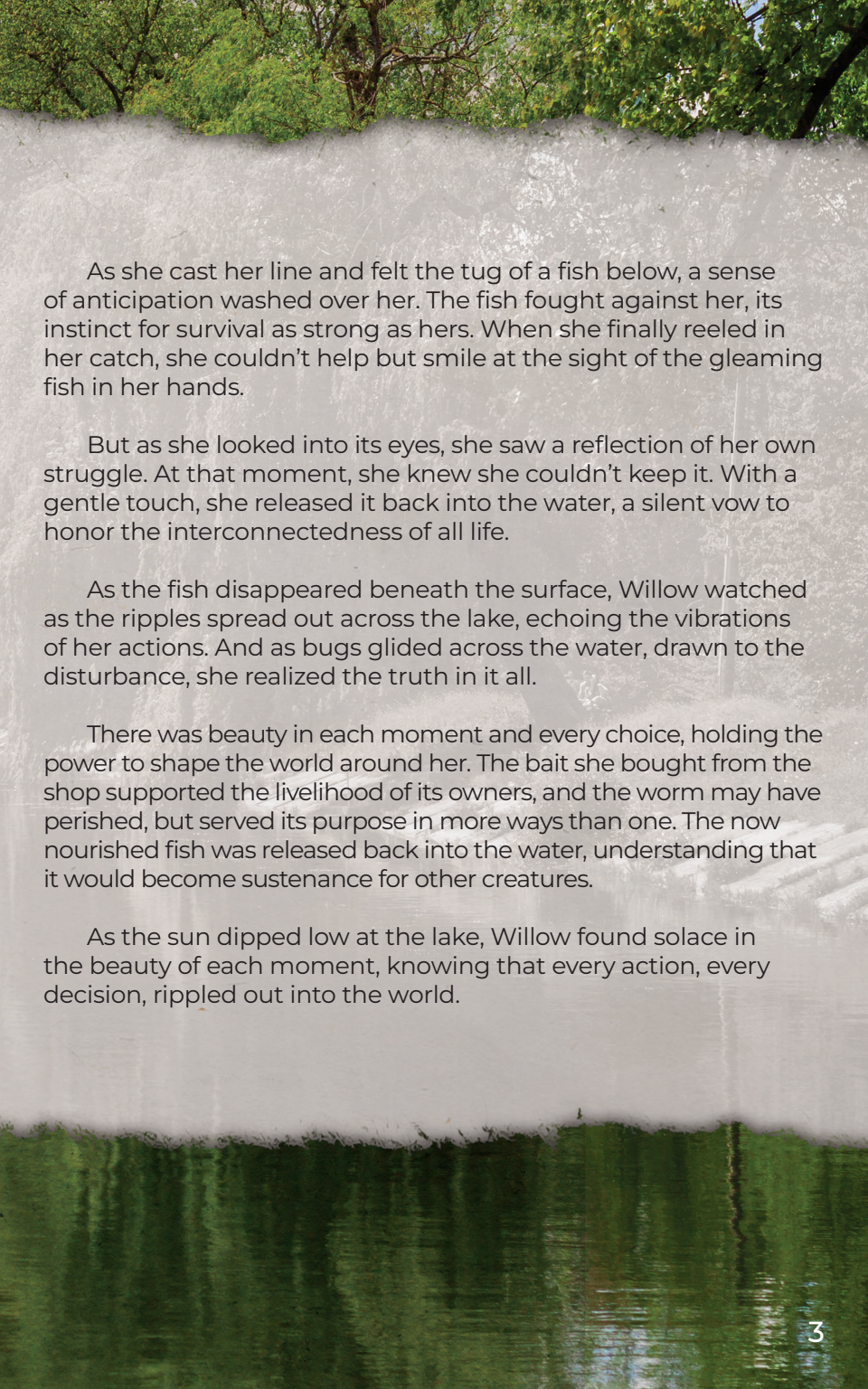
# Echoes of Beauty: Embracing Each Moment

Courtney Paulino

In the heart of a small town nestled between rolling hills and sparkling streams, Willow found herself drawn to a local bait shop. It was a humble establishment, a weathered sign swinging gently in the breeze. With a smile, she greeted the shop owner, a kind-faced man who seemed to know the secrets of every fish in the lake. As she was browsing the shelves, she was in awe at how many options there were, but still she decided to go with a bait she was most familiar with: worms.

With her purchase in hand, Willow made her way to the nearby lake, the water shimmering like liquid silver beneath the afternoon sun. As she settled on the shore, she felt a sense of peace wash over her. She could feel the heartbeat of the earth with every breath she took.

She baited her hook, worm squirming in protest. A bit of sadness tugged at her heart as she pierced its fragile skin. She had to remind herself of the sacrifice entwined with her pursuit of joy.



As she cast her line and felt the tug of a fish below, a sense of anticipation washed over her. The fish fought against her, its instinct for survival as strong as hers. When she finally reeled in her catch, she couldn't help but smile at the sight of the gleaming fish in her hands.

But as she looked into its eyes, she saw a reflection of her own struggle. At that moment, she knew she couldn't keep it. With a gentle touch, she released it back into the water, a silent vow to honor the interconnectedness of all life.

As the fish disappeared beneath the surface, Willow watched as the ripples spread out across the lake, echoing the vibrations of her actions. And as bugs glided across the water, drawn to the disturbance, she realized the truth in it all.

There was beauty in each moment and every choice, holding the power to shape the world around her. The bait she bought from the shop supported the livelihood of its owners, and the worm may have perished, but served its purpose in more ways than one. The now nourished fish was released back into the water, understanding that it would become sustenance for other creatures.

As the sun dipped low at the lake, Willow found solace in the beauty of each moment, knowing that every action, every decision, rippled out into the world.





# He Upon Nothing

Ariel Isolde

He who sat upon nothing, thought of nothing, and as he thought, examined the limitless scope of infinities that *nothing* encompassed.

Outré geometries tilted and twisted the multiple universes—intertwining in the limitless—like strands of DNA enmeshed within each other. He used these assumptions and presumptions, and complicated mathematics, to calculate the inverse proportions and metaphysical improbabilities of the principles which nothing could govern. He worked upon nothing for a countless amount of time and was praised for his greatest of achievements.

At length, he found nothing untoward in his determinings on nothing. Nothing was—for he said it was so. Otherwise, he could never have sat on nothing, while surrounding himself with nothing, and/or while thinking of nothing.

*Magnanimous! Stupendous! Remarkable! Brilliant!*

These accolades, and others, bestowed upon he who had thought of nothing as he'd sat upon nothing, enveloped and permeated by nothing.

Modestly, he bowed his head and exclaimed, "It was nothing."



STUDENT  
CREATIVE  
NONFICTION  
WINNER

# The Permanence of Change

Addisyn Routh

Near my home, by the edge of the gravel road, at the bottom of the hill's slope, there is an oak tree. It's one of the only oak trees left in the shroud of evergreen pine trees—the only one left that doffs its leaves in autumn and sprouts them back when the sun starts pushing into the evening time again. It's taller than all the others, and it was there when my great-grandfather was still alive, still young, when he cut down all the other oaks. It had been the only one that wasn't diseased.

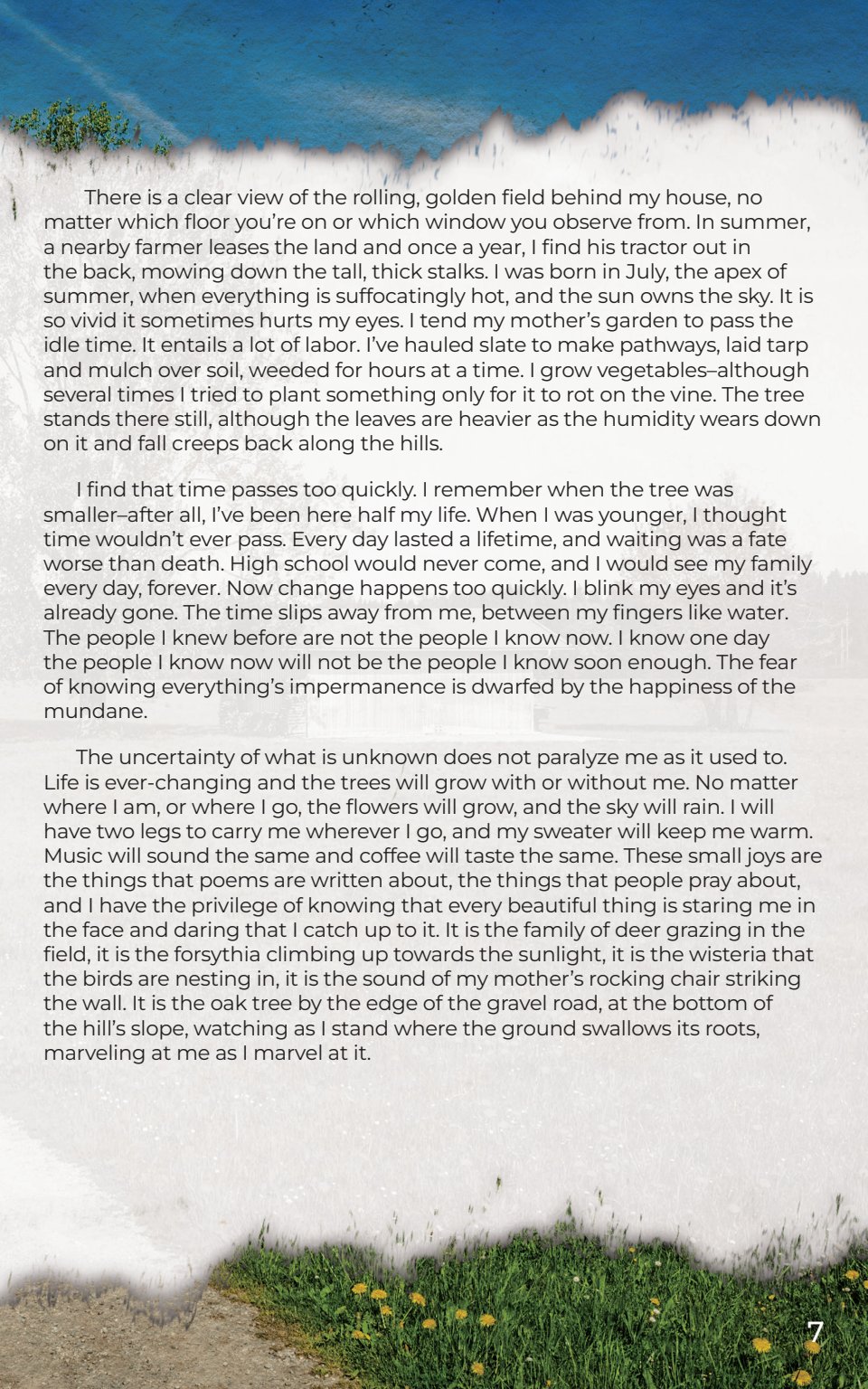
I walk that road at least once a day. I can stand at the very bottom of the tree, where the soil swallows the roots, and stare directly up towards its peak, and I still cannot see the very top. Its limbs and knotted branches, centuries old and with centuries longer to grow, form a shifting, whispering canopy which rain doesn't penetrate.

In the fall, it stands out like a sore thumb amongst the brush of the greenery around it. Bright and fiery orange, all alone as it dies, the trees all around as thick and as lush as always.

In the winter, everything around the house is grey and dormant. Not quite dead, not exactly living; waiting out the cold and allowing the frost to devour it, stiffened as much by fear as by the freezing temperatures. The quiet rolls over the hills while the birds are sleeping. The deer are nestled somewhere off in the woods and the bushes silent with the absence of the butterflies. The tree stands barren and grey, its leaves all fallen and whisked away.

Spring is my favorite season. I don't mind suffering through the chilly winds and storms of March because April is never long to come. I look around in the morning when I leave, and in the afternoon when I come home, for the first bee to stumble back into the newly blooming bushes. My favorite part of spring is watching the carpenter bees slowly find their way back, fat and bumbling around in the rafters of my porch. The tree is full of life again, its limbs heavy with leaves. Its trunk is so strong that when the wind barrels through the field, it is unmoved.





There is a clear view of the rolling, golden field behind my house, no matter which floor you're on or which window you observe from. In summer, a nearby farmer leases the land and once a year, I find his tractor out in the back, mowing down the tall, thick stalks. I was born in July, the apex of summer, when everything is suffocatingly hot, and the sun owns the sky. It is so vivid it sometimes hurts my eyes. I tend my mother's garden to pass the idle time. It entails a lot of labor. I've hauled slate to make pathways, laid tarp and mulch over soil, weeded for hours at a time. I grow vegetables—although several times I tried to plant something only for it to rot on the vine. The tree stands there still, although the leaves are heavier as the humidity wears down on it and fall creeps back along the hills.

I find that time passes too quickly. I remember when the tree was smaller—after all, I've been here half my life. When I was younger, I thought time wouldn't ever pass. Every day lasted a lifetime, and waiting was a fate worse than death. High school would never come, and I would see my family every day, forever. Now change happens too quickly. I blink my eyes and it's already gone. The time slips away from me, between my fingers like water. The people I knew before are not the people I know now. I know one day the people I know now will not be the people I know soon enough. The fear of knowing everything's impermanence is dwarfed by the happiness of the mundane.

The uncertainty of what is unknown does not paralyze me as it used to. Life is ever-changing and the trees will grow with or without me. No matter where I am, or where I go, the flowers will grow, and the sky will rain. I will have two legs to carry me wherever I go, and my sweater will keep me warm. Music will sound the same and coffee will taste the same. These small joys are the things that poems are written about, the things that people pray about, and I have the privilege of knowing that every beautiful thing is staring me in the face and daring that I catch up to it. It is the family of deer grazing in the field, it is the forsythia climbing up towards the sunlight, it is the wisteria that the birds are nesting in, it is the sound of my mother's rocking chair striking the wall. It is the oak tree by the edge of the gravel road, at the bottom of the hill's slope, watching as I stand where the ground swallows its roots, marveling at me as I marvel at it.



FACULTY/STAFF  
CREATIVE  
NONFICTION  
WINNER

# Seasons of Beauty

Denise Moore Greene

You know spring is near when you notice the yellow buttercups make their appearance. The birds sing loudly, and the colorful flowers surround you. Opening a window to let the fresh breeze drift throughout your home brings refreshment.

Spring represents the beginning of your life. During this time, you experience your first tooth, first step, and first word. Before you know it, you begin your first day of school. You have already grown into your unique personality and started making friends.

*Beauty in the spring of beginnings.*

When the night sky brightens, either from fireworks or a thunderstorm, summer is upon you. This period, despite the heat, brings beautiful experiences like walking barefoot on the sand along the seashore or climbing a mountain to discover a breathtaking waterfall.

Time passes quickly during the summer season of your life. You are busy going through your school years, playing ball, and performing in dance recitals. As you age, you enter the stage of dating, driving a car, prom, then graduation.

*Beauty in the summer of busyness.*

Fall arrives with crisp nights. The leaves change to vibrant colors of yellow, orange, and red. After a time, the leaves cascade to the ground. You may grab your rake and make a pile of leaves to burn. On the other hand, you may choose to be like a child and see the pile as an opportunity to jump.

During the fall time of your life, you begin to change to the rhythms of adulthood. Responsibilities change. Your life may involve a carewse, and children. Each of these things will take a lot of time to juggle. The days seem shorter as you give time to all of those you are involved with.

*Beauty in the fall of change.*

Then frost occurs, and things grow cold. Wintertime arrives. A blanket of snow sets the tone of quietness and peace. Activities seem to slow down outdoors, and more gatherings are planned inside. The focus is on spending quality time with others.

Before you realize it, you have reached the season of winter. During this time, your body has slowed down. You may wish to share knowledge with a younger generation before you leave. In the blink of an eye, your season will end.

*Beauty in the winter of peace.*

How fast the seasons change. It is imperative to realize the beauty during each of these. Some of the beauty will shine through as the flowers in the spring. Other times, beauty will be disguised in the blanket of snow.

How is there beauty in a bad health diagnosis, financial struggles, or even death? It is there in the handhold of a loved one, the smile of a child, or the peace of the next season approaching. Embrace each season, living and identifying the beauty around you.

*Beauty in the seasons of life.*



FACULTY/STAFF  
POETRY  
WINNER

# You May Need to Speak Up

Stephanie Rietschel

Remember the woman you once were.  
Hug her and whisper in her ear, "I won't forget you."  
Let her heart talk to yours,  
Take the hard-won advice.  
For she remembers the girl before  
Who bent and swayed in the winds  
Who changed with the seasons.

The sun still shines on your face  
The air tastes of honeysuckle  
Warmed roots are about to spread.  
Pale green leaves ready to unfurl, to uncurl.  
Take the hard-won advice.  
Bloom.





STUDENT  
SHORT  
POETRY  
WINNER

# Beauty in Unexpected Places

Jayda Clodfelter

Each moment holds a beauty, so tender and rare,  
Whether in a gentle breeze, or in a loving stare.  
In the morning sun, or the starry night,  
In laughter shared, or tears I hide.

The rustle of leaves, the chirping of birds,  
In a babbling brook, or in unspoken words  
All tell a tale of life's simple pleasures,  
In every moment, is a beauty: a treasure



The smell of the rain, or a loved one's touch,  
The blooming of flowers of spring that I love so much,  
It's in the warmth of a hug, or the twinkle in an eye,  
In the moments that we cherish, as time quickly goes by.

Even in pain there is beauty waiting to be seen,  
It can be physical, or emotional,  
Raw and deep


But pain, it has a purpose too, it reminds us that we're alive.  
It teaches us what we need to do, and helps us to grow and thrive.  
For it's in pain that we learn to heal  
and find where to begin.  
To embrace each day,  
and to find the beauty that lies within.



A soft-focus landscape photograph. In the foreground, a dark tree branch with green leaves and small white flowers hangs down from the top left. The background is a bright, sunlit field with a house visible in the distance. The overall mood is peaceful and natural.

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**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:** Thank you all for your contributions to the Uwharrie Dreams Spring 2024 “The Beauty in Each Moment” issue. We appreciate all of the hard work everyone put into their submissions. Thank you also to Dorothy Hans, Sabrina Garner, the team in the Office of College Marketing (Kris Julian, Megan Crotty, and Hunter Crutchfield), the Office of Student Life, and the RCC Student Government Association for helping to keep our club afloat. We wish you all the very best in your future literary efforts and hope to see more from you in the near future. Look to the Uwharrie Dreams Moodle page for more information about the club.







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