



Hills Review

Journal of Student Poetry

Spring 2018

Acknowledgements

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Special thanks to Minister Bailey Bear Ashlock for the photograph on the cover. Fall of 2018, Bear plans on transferring to the University of Iowa where he will continue to pursue his interest in creative writing.

Also, thank you to the Indian Hills Marketing Department for their time and effort.

The Editors

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Foreword

All of the poems appearing in this edition were written and submitted by IHCC students, many who took the Creative Writing Poetry class. By writing poetry, students discovered how to use language imaginatively to express personal reflections and honest emotions. Thank you to the students who took the risks of self-discovery and public recognition by writing and sharing these poems.

Special thanks to a small group of students who self-selectively formed a writing group, meeting for two hours each week from September through May to share poems, gain feedback to improve their writing, and to encourage and support one another, at times through cheerful laughter and at other times in solemn tears. They helped organize the poetry readings and served as Assistant Editors for this edition of the *Hills Review*. My sincere thanks to Jaime Wright, Juan Aldaba, Baylei McClelland, Minister Bear Ashlock, Kaitlyn Amborn, and Xiaoxia Fu. As you move forward in your lives, like the birds who do not forget their summers here, may you always remember where you grew new wings.

Professor Joy Lyle

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I am Lost

In my own world that is falling
Messed up and drowning
In a castle that is flooded
Broken Walls
From self cannons
Flags speared into the throne
By my own Demons
But nobody knows
For it's the world of my own
A world where silence lingers
And I'm alone
With my own thoughts
My Grave
My Love
Nobody Knows
This is my true
Home
It's ok
I like this place
Kinda
In a way

But
That is
Ok

Kaitlyn Amborn

Somethings

It's something about the way yellow looks in the rain
The way that color makes me take the long way home
Something else about those days I can't remember –
Did I know I was going to forget them when I walked by?
And there was something too – about that fish I had that lived
 too long
And how I knew it was gone – where did it go?
There's something there –
I think I heard it in the frog song inside those warm summer nights
From under Orion's belt when I counted myself to you
Where do my somethings go when they are gone?
Are they resting in those smiles I never learned to crawl out of?
It's something about one moment to the next
And how they collect like pennies in a jar
Something about that yellow and the long way home

Jacqueline Aparicio Ruiz

Bloom

The flowers blossomed,
Colorful, bright as can be.
Focus, one more time.

The Sun, a Luminous Star

It's the feeling of a warm embrace against your skin,
A tickling feeling that shows us we are alive,
Like a tangerine hovering from a small delicate branch
 in the tree of life,
A luminous star.
Rising early and setting late
On an early October morning,
A chilly ear biting wind blows softly,
And you catch a glimpse of a light rising,
The Sun.
A burning ball of fire
Too bright for our eyes to stare at too long.
Squinting at the Sun, you feel a sense of relief,
A set reminder that even when you feel alone, the Sun will
 always be there
When you need it the most.
From the moment its rays shine like lightning bulbs across the sky,
To a plethora of watercolors dancing and setting upon the sky,
 its canvas.
Shades that remind us that the start of a new day is upon us.
The Sun shines brightly over the grassy meadow and the dogs
 howl loudly.

Minister Bear Ashlock

I Apologize

I Apologize

My Irish guilt weighs me down
Putting pressure on my chest
Regardless of if I deserve it.

I Apologize

That you think I'm not good enough
Some days I might agree
But it's no longer your problem.

I Apologize

That up till now I've let you hurt me
A precedent should have been set
And that's on me.

I Apologize

I've tried so hard for so long
But you pushed me down when I tried to rise up next to you
Now I'm done trying.

I Apologize

That you think I need to be sorry
But I'm done apologizing

Tammy Barrera

Fishing at Dusk

As I grew up,
Many mornings turned to night.
I sat on the pond banks,
Fishing from morning until twilight.
Never catching a solitary fish
But never giving up the fight.
As all I caught was green moss,
The fish became over me the bigger boss.
I never dismayed to the fact I had failed
To catch a lonely fish,
Breathing through his gills.
I still dreamed the biggest tale,
Of the fish that I wished.
It was never meant to be,
The catching of the big one,
As I sat on the pond banks,
From morning to setting sun.
But to this very day,
I still will try,
And the enjoyment shall stay with me,
Until the day I do die.

D'tresean Burge

Creator

In case you find me
My bones ache so give me light
Be gentle I break

Thirst

No shoes no service
I just want some water, please
The heat, I cannot

Identity

Skin, Controversial
Idea, they can't fathom it
Innate, Concrete, Black

Kodi Dailey

Her

She is like an ocean,
Waiting for someone to drown in her waves.
Like the wind,
Waiting to knock someone down.

She is like a shark,
Ready to tear apart her next victim.
Like the lion,
Pouncing on its prey.

She is like the wolf,
Alone, and without love.
Like the leaves in changing seasons,
Waiting to take her turn.

Jolie Erbacher

Autumn Run

The air is cool in the warmest of ways; it's summer in your
small town Iowa.

The sun has left me, but in a way where the dark blue isn't so dark
and the stars shine through and so do the clouds,
black compared to the deep sky. During this time I am free,
my feet pounding the pavement,
my lungs and heart working harder,
the cord to my headphones bouncing off of my chest with
every stride.

My mind is empty in a way
where I only think, "this is where I stop,
this is where I turn, this is where I go."

I can hear the aglet of my laces bouncing against
my shoe with every pounding step;
this can be heard as the songs are ending
and during these few seconds of quiet musical transition when

I can also hear
how hard I am breathing, how hard I am working,
and with every heavy exhale

I realize how alive and free I am.

When these fleeting four seconds are over
the music begins again.

I am working on the best Jolie I can be.

Alisha Freese-McCabe

Hummingbird's Purpose

By the lilies I watch you dance
never once breaking concentration.
Soaking in nature's beauty.
Sweet hummingbird I marvel at your endurance.
My mind flies much like your tiny body.
Always hovering over greatness but never landing,
Almost as if there is something more to stay in motion for.

Your blue breast feathers shimmer in the sun.
Your weak legs never a hindrance
for your majestic wings carry all the weight of your world.
Your needle-like beak pointed high as if to show your independence,
your chest stuck out in pride.

I envy your bravery
entering territories unknown,
finding your purpose in each place.
Sure of your truth,
you fly without hesitation.
You travel to survive,
your infinite beauty leaving me in awe.

My heart flutters like your wings,
but my purpose is not as clear.

Maybe someday I will find it.

Until then I will watch you from this rusty old swing
and imagine life as a hummingbird.

Waiting for Death

以为他会来,	Thought he was coming,
静静地, 静静地,	Silently
坐在那儿等待,	Sat there waiting
觉得他会来,	Felt he was coming
惶恐地, 惶恐地,	Fearfully
坐在那儿等待,	Sat there waiting
不知道他什么时候来,	Didn't know when he would come
专注地, 专注地	Concentrated
感受他的迹象	Felt his sign
一个六岁的小女孩,	A six-year old girl
孤单地, 孤单地,	First time in my life
等待他 - ,	Alone
死神	Waiting for - Death

Antonia Garcia

Spring

Flowers are blooming
Animals are popping out from a long winter
The sunshine shines bright like fire
The spring air smells like sweet honey
I go out of my house
I look at the blue sky with clouds shaped like angels
I know it's God's way of saying spring has arrived
I'm star struck by the beauty of spring
I'm reminded by God that nature can be a beautiful thing

Was It Even Real?

The feel of cold, crisp, winter air and yet no snow on the
Ottumwa ground.

The day our eyes met is one I keep in the chambers of my mind.
Playing like a record speeding on the player.
You. We. Us.
Something I always wanted.
You asked my name;
your lips formed it sweetly and smoothly.
You began to speak it more.

The day you asked me to be yours,
my stomach filled with the flutters of a million butterflies.
I flew to a place I never knew could be real.
You made me feel like more of a person.
A human being that became a star.
I never knew what I could be.
You gave me hope.
You helped me see the dreams that I never thought I could have.
You were there for me when others weren't.
How could it all be real?
Were we really meant to be?

The answer to that question was no.

The lips that once said my name became so bitter.

It didn't last as we thought.

As ...

I thought.

The end came so fast like a freshly popped bubble burst in the reality.
My feeling shattering; ice crumbling under my feet,
I fell into the dark water alone.

"Two people can love each other and not be in love.
We aren't meant to be."

My brain would play those words over in my mind.
Months before were wonderful.
All of the dreams,
We clicked,
Now crumbling down,
And I ask myself,
Was it even real?

Diane Hofstetter

Stolen Mountains

She adored the mountains
They belonged to her
Where are her mountains to view?
Calming mountain streams
She cannot see her mountains
Rushing waterfalls
Her heart and soul despair
Where are the comforting mountains?
Troubles family fear
What is another year?
One day she will return to her mountains

Baylei McClelland

Perpetually Yours

I'll paint you a picture
Anything you want
All you have to do is ask

Ask me to paint dew drops on blades of grass
Wish me to add green to your eyes
Need me to put blue flowers on the ground
Tell me to add a constellation to the starry sky

I'm perpetually yours
Anything you want
All you have to do is ask

Ask me to bring you laughs as easy as air
Wish me to surprise you with flowers every day
Need me to love every inch of you
Tell me to go away, without a word

All that I knew was you

I am shattered

Anything you want, I would still give.

Shannon McLain

Sacrificing Strength

Her body moves with a rhythm
that resonates in my soul.
Her moves leave nothing hidden
yet she has eyes of coal.
While she throws her head back
and acts perfectly fine,
it is her face that lacks
her eyes; they do not shine.
For on the outside
she is a princess.
On the inside
she cannot convince us.
A heart buried under stone
for she must always be strong.
She sits in her throne
saying she is never wrong.
She is strong and bold.
Yet sometimes very cold.
For she knows how to be
a princess warrior.

I Remember - High School

I remember my first day of freshman year.
I remember walking down the halls so terrified of the seniors.
I remember losing my best friends to their boyfriends.
I remember all the lies they said about me.
I remember my first boyfriend.
I remember the late Friday nights at football games.
I remember wearing his football jersey to all the games.
I remember getting asked to prom.
I remember my first heartbreak.
I remember the friends that were always there for me.
I remember getting my first car.
I remember wrecking my first car
I remember turning 16 and feeling on top of the world.
I remember watching my friend give everything to some boy
she barely knew.
I remember the sleepovers after breakups.
I remember the friends who suddenly were the ones who started
the rumors.
I remember feeling so alone.
I remember the one person who was actually there for me.
I remember the day I left it all behind.

The “Holler”

As a small child we lived in the Loess Hills
The valley, or as the older kin said, the “holler”

A gully between steep knolls covered in shrubbery
Provided abundant shade on hot summer days

We trudged to the summit viewing the immense vista below
Grazing farmland and glimpses of wildlife

As the older folks rehashed the old days amidst a chorus of cicadas
We children played games of our youth

Climbing decaying butternut hickory trees
While termites feasted on the pulpy innards

Playing king of the mountain on slippery embankments
Sliding on the mush of grass and mud

Photos captured and memorialized those years
Posed among towering cottonwoods and carpets of wildflowers

Land passed from generation to generation
Soil irrigated and cultivated by sweat and calluses

My spirit is drawn to those ancient bluffs
The smell of goldenrod and the feel of grass on my feet
And yearns for the melody of nature's choir

Reflections

Looking in the mirror,
I see myself
And all of what is me.
My hair wild and red,
My skin marred with scars.
My eyes dead and dull.
My lips forever in a frown.
Everything is wrong;
It's not perfection.

I look closer
And see the small beauty.
The vibrant blue of my eyes,
So lovely.
The shape of my hands,
Their unique shape.
The soft blue shining through.
The long, slender fingers I was graced with.
I push the negativity away.
Slowly learning
How to love myself.

Machine Body

Some people think that other people are made from a machine
Expecting you to work long nights and days without a fuss
You not wanting to disappoint your loved ones
Taking on the weight of the world
Feeling as if your back could break any moment now
You struggle with the pressure until your arms can't carry
the weight anymore
Until the weight of world brings you down to your knees
Your body is weak and running on empty
Mind can't focus
Your body is begging you for rest
Slowly forgetting everything
You can't remember anything important anymore
Fighting to keep pushing through
Eye lids starting to feel like bean bags
You start looking like a shadow of what you were
Forced to take a look at yourself
Really take a look at yourself
Realizing that you are taking on too much
Telling yourself
“I AM NOT A MACHINE!”

Marionette

I hate what you do to me
how you pull me in
with your marionette strings
How you play with me for a while
But at the end of the day
you drop me
down
like I was nothing to you
except a doll on strings
when a new one came to town
with a more pretty face

I hate how you act
like you wish I was back with you
for a few days
but only when she isn't around
And then you act
like you don't know me
because she has the crown

I hate that I love you
even after I've moved on
and found someone
who only wants me
yet I still want you
But I guess I heard once
you only accept the love you think you deserve

Heather Smith

Strong as an Oak

Strong as an oak
Your base is powerful
You have always towered over me

You give us a path to follow
Our family roots run deep
Because of you

When we weep you stand -
Strong as an oak
Surrounding us with your embrace

But now you are beginning to weaken
Even though you try to hide it,
I can see

Your strength is fading
Making it hard for you to tower
Still, to me you will always be
Strong as an oak

Last Salute

The sun shines brightly, clashing with the mood
Sticky late summer air hinting at rain to come
The wind blows, tousling hair, rippling clothing
A lonely trumpet sounds
distinctive notes sending chills down the spine
Gunshots sound, jarring even though you brace yourself,
knowing it is coming
The spent casings of twenty-one shells fall to the ground,
landing with a soft ‘thunk’
Everything seems surreal, too close, yet too far away all at once
The flag drapes tiredly, as though weighed down
by hopes and dreams unfulfilled
Such a weighty thing a flag, for something that weighs so little
Heavy with significance, this flag will wave no more
The twenty-one gun salute rings in harmony with taps
in the ears of all who bear witness
as crisp white gloves salute

* Note: This poem was written in tribute to my Great-Grandfather, Raymond “Junior” Stites, who served in the Marine Corps in WWII. My Grandfather passed away on September 17, 2017.

Complexity in Simplicity in a Contradicting Living (My Goodbye Poem)

What the ideal world would be,
Is fairy lights, writing, art, and tea,

A couch the color of rich burgundy but never high dollar,
And a living room of an array of windows and colors,

A kitchen with an island and slick floors,
For sock sliding, and easy clean ups for rain pours,

Time that stretches out like a lazy cat in front of my days and nights,
Like I could spend hours counting freckles on the back from where
my love lies,

Covered in paint from leg to cheek, and lead kissing on my hand,
A forest surrounding my peaceful home, adventure to walk on my
own land,

Classrooms full of hopeful hearts, curiosity, and lightly warmed eyes,
Stacks of books, knowledge to the brim, I suppose, what school,
implies,

I hope to reach out to the youth who have shattered glass
as self-esteem;

I want them to find solace in my world, know they have an ally
within me,

The world does not need to scream my name in a crowd to echo,
But I want them to know my name by the time I find to let go,

I want the earth to ripple with my last breath because I made
a difference,

I hope that when I finally fall, that the trees rustling will stop,
and listen,

I do not worry of climbing the obstacles with their jagged promises,
For I have known a life slim of wins, but riddles with unfortunate
losses,

The skin on my bones is tougher than I wear my heart to be,
But the heart is what will be the silver lining, the light I use to see,

I have a love so strong that the moon sometimes coos with envy,
Because he kisses the scars that built me and say that I am lovely,

So when we face shadowed memories and tormented insecurities
as our enemy,

Our hands welded together feels stronger than any new-fangled kind
of army,

The ideal world to find in the arms of him would have to be one
with simplicity,

Bike rides, kitchen dancing, baking brownies, and the blooming
of a belly,

May I have kind babies that do not ever carry burdens in
their backpacks,

I hope to always patch and seal with cement the loves in my
life's cracks,

Money isn't what will make my soul lift the weights it may
today carry,

I find that cash, coins, checks and all currency just make my
mind weary,

I do not wish for riches, nor do I wish for fame or glory,
I believe in love and kindness, and that will be my favorite story.

I refuse to let my loved ones ache in the moment at the emptiness
of me once I am dead,

Instead, I wish for them to smile, flicker through memories, and say:
"Do you know what she would have said?"

That kindness doesn't cost a cent, and it's better to love everything
than to hate anything,

To tend to your hopes and dreams, be writing that book, traveling,
savor that chocolate tasting,

Drink your water, sleep in, have a bubble bath, and don't forget
to breathe,

To remember me, but not to dwell, just fondly grieve and sip some
peace, as I let go, and leave.

Autobiographies

Juan Aldaba graduated from Ottumwa High School in 2016 and enjoys theatre and writing poetry.

Kaitlyn Amborn is 24 years old and attending her first year at Indian Hills Community College. Pursuing Fine Art, Kaitlyn plans to continue her education after receiving her A.A. degree. Her hobbies include creating art, reading literature, writing, and traveling.

Jacqueline Aparicio Ruiz was born on July 24, 1999, in Zacapu Michoacan, Mexico. She is currently attending Indian Hills Community College and plans on getting an A.A degree.

Minister Bear Ashlock is a writer who graduated from Indian Hills Winter term and continues to attend for Poetry Workshop. Fall of 2018, Bear plans to transfer to the University of Iowa where he will pursue his interest in creative writing and poetry.

Tammy Barrera lives in Farmington, Iowa. She writes poetry for relaxation. Her intention is to capture the minds of her readers through the stories of her poems. Tammy has one dog and five cats; animals are a huge part of her life. When not writing poetry, Tammy enjoys reading, crocheting, drawing, baking, sewing, rescuing animals, and pursuing her degree in college.

D'Tresean Burge is a twenty-year-old sophomore at Indian Hills Community College trying to figure out life one step at a time. He enjoys writing, performing, and being himself.

Kodi Dailey is currently a senior at Pekin High School. She has a rather large family consisting of six brothers and three sisters, along with two sets of parents as her parents both divorced and remarried. Sometimes the thought of having such a big family overwhelms her, but these are the times she writes about and can look back on to see her siblings by her side.

Jolie Cara Erbacher was born in Bakersfield, CA, and moved to Sigourney, IA, at the age of twelve. She intends to graduate from The University of Iowa with a master's degree in clinical social work. Jolie's interest in poetry first sparked when she took a creative writing course through Indian Hills Community College; it was there that she learned there was so much more to poetry than she had originally thought. The course was so impressionable that she has continued writing since the course has ended. She is currently living in Iowa City, IA, and is still walking past countless poetic inspirations every day.

Alisha Freese-McCabe grew up with a mother and step-father in a small town in Iowa. During childhood she developed a deep love for literature and quickly started consuming as much as she could. Her parents helped her achieve a pretty impressive collection of classics, poetry, and mystery novels. She devoured them all with a great appreciation. She realized as a teenager she had to do something with literature for a career. She could not imagine not having it be a focal point in her life, so she chose to go to college to obtain a degree to teach. Plot twist, life happened, and she met her husband at age nineteen and put her college dreams on hold. At age twenty-four, she was finally ready to go back to college and start pursuing her dreams.

Xiaoxia Fu came from China in August 2016. She likes literature, especially classical Chinese. She has been interested in philosophy since she took the class at Indian Hills. Her childhood was during the days that destroyed all the traditional cultures. She is going to study her traditional culture and philosophy (both western and eastern).

Antonia Garcia is an eighteen-year-old senior at Pekin High School. She lives in Fairfield, Iowa, and has been taking online classes through Indian Hills since the beginning of her junior year in high school. She plans to graduate early to attend Indian Hills and enroll in the nursing program. After she finishes two years at Indian Hills, she plans to transfer to the University of Iowa. Her dream job is to work at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital as a pediatric nurse.

Hmae is a student at Sigourney High School. Fall of 2018 she plans to attend Indian Hills to study Culinary Arts and Music.

Diane Hofstetter writes about her love for the Smoky Mountains in North Carolina, which to her feel like home.

Baylei McClelland was born in Washington, Iowa. She is a freshman at Indian Hills and hopes to continue her education and become a mental health therapist and help people become stronger in the face of adversity.

Shannon McLain is a senior in high school who is very involved in her school and community. When she is not working at the local grocery store, she can be found with her goats, chickens, rabbits, guinea pigs, dogs, and cats. She plans to attend the University of Iowa in the fall of 2018 to major in Business Marketing.

Kylie Noel grew up going to a very small school and living on a farm in Southern Iowa, which she loved very much. She was raised to work hard and not to give up on what she really wants.

Susan Pabst is a 48-year-old wife and mother. Susan and her husband, Bob have been married over 26 years. She has three children: Brandon, Alex and Colton. Her marriage, children and extended family are her greatest blessings. Susan grew up in Hamburg, a small rural town in the southwest corner of Iowa. Part of her youth was spent living in the “bluffs” west of Hamburg. Susan’s mom was her greatest supporter and wanted Susan to go back to school. She knew Susan’s desire was to write and encouraged her to follow that dream. Susan recently lost her mother to an inoperable brain tumor. Her mother only lived 27 days after she was diagnosed. Her death has had a major impact on Susan’s life. And because of her mother, Susan enrolled at IHCC and found a new passion in poetry.

Sarah Peters currently lives in Albia, Iowa, and is a high school senior at Albia High School currently enrolled in classes at Indian Hills Community College. In the fall of 2018, she will be attending the University of Iowa for a major in psychology. She plans to eventually work in a hospital setting or in a prison, helping the mentally ill. She participates in Academic Team, drama, and band in high school. She works at a resort nearby as a housekeeper as well as a janitor for her church. She owns two lovely guinea pigs, four cats, and a dog.

Andrea Quick was born in Milwaukee, WI, on Dec. 13, 1991, and moved when she was eleven to East Moline, IL, to be closer to family. On November 1, 2013, she moved to Marion, IA, and still lives there. Throughout her life she always used writing as an outlet to express her feelings. She has a daughter named Dynasty who is six years old. Early this year Andrea followed her dreams and started an online women's fashion boutique which she named after her daughter: Dynasty's House. She is a free spirit with a heart of gold who loves to travel to new places.

Saylor Rex is a senior at Pekin High School in Packwood, IA. Saylor is the daughter of Sterling and Sara Rex, as well as having two older siblings and a twin sister. Saylor works as a part-time assistant manager at Rue21 and enjoys her job and coworkers. Saylor is a wrestling manager, Ruritan member, and has previously been involved with softball and volleyball. She also loves to spend time with her boyfriend, Austin, and her dogs. Saylor has had a love for poetry since she was sixteen years old when she first took a creative writing class at Pekin and now enjoys writing poetry to express her feelings.

Heather Smith has lived in Southeast Iowa all her life. She married her high school sweetheart Aaron in 1997, and together they have two children, Abby twelve and Zach ten. Heather has always had a great love of poetry and writing. Family has always been the number one priority to her, and her writing reflects her experiences of her past, present, and future.

Laci Terrell grew up in Promise City, IA, and graduated from Seymour High School in 2009. She will graduate from the Health Informatics program at IHCC in May of 2018.

Jaime Wright is a biracial singer, writer, artist and your everyday struggling paradox. Going into college for Special Ed. and English, married to a beautiful man, she lives in Illinois.



Assistant Editors:

Minister Bear Ashlock, Kaitlyn Amborn, Baylei McClelland,
Juan Aldaba, Xiaoxia Fu, and Jaime Wright

April 24, 2018