GLENVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

WRITERS BLOC

GLENVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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WELCOME OUR NEW TEAM MEMBER

Contributed by Daphne Collins, Criminal Justice Major and Student Staffer in the Department of Language and Literature



Isaiah Hill, a Glenville resident, started working as an administrative assistant earlier this year. Isaiah Hill brings his love of technology and willingness to help others to his job. He enjoys helping students register for classes or making sure faculty have the supplies they need. Outside of work, he can usually be found listening to basketball and podcasts, gaming, or spending time with his girlfriend and their four cats. I recently had an opportunity to visit with Isaiah.

Daphne Collins: Tell us a little about yourself.

Isaiah Hill: I was born in New Port Richey, Florida. I moved up to West Virginia when I was, like, six months old, so . . . I really didn't spend a lot of time there. But I have some family that's still down there. I lived on River Street before we finally moved out to Van Horn. I grew up there for three or four years, and then I finally moved out to Glenville. Kind of just played outside a lot. The youngest of six, so, I'm the little baby, but I'm the biggest out of my family. Now I live in a three-bedroom apartment with my girlfriend and our four cats. I love trying new foods, gaming, and keeping up with basketball. I am also a huge Cincinnati Bengals fan. I love wearing my orange and black stripes to show my support, although I would say I am more of a basketball fan than a football fan. I like the Bucks and the Suns, so it's one from each conference.

DC: Are there any other sports that you like?

IH: I'm a big [pro] wrestling guy. I try not to say it, because, you know, a lot of people think it's kind of weird. I can understand it, but also, I've watched it since I was a kid. I'm not blind to the fact that it's all fake, but I can respect the fact that it is fake more. I would love to do it myself, but I'm not a very active person like that. I'm more of a "you need that moved over there? I got you." They had me change the water in the office a little bit ago, and they were like, "Come on, big man." I was like, I got you; I can do that.

DC: Why did you choose to work for GSU?

IH: I've been here in Glenville for a while now. Before working for Glenville State University, my first job was at McDonalds, then Tudors, then I went to the nursing home. I loved working at the nursing home because I got to work with people. I came here to make more money, because I was making minimum wage down there and it was just not working out.

Daphne's interview with Isaiah continues on page 5

Theatre Club Update

The Little Kanawha Drama & Theatre Club will present

Macbeth: A West Virginia Tale

at 6:30 p.m., November 12 and 13 in the President's Auditorium
Here is who you'll see on stage:

Phineas Bone as Fleance, Young Macduff, Young Siward, and the Messenger
Elijah Carr as Macbeth
Emma Clary as Macduff
Daphne Collins as Porter
Michaela Dobbins as Seyton
Michaela Dobbins, Daphne Collins, and Chloe Gentile as the Murderers and the Witches
Jana Floyd Polumbo as Hecate and the Nurse
Larry Lemasters as Duncan, the Old Miner, and the Doctor
Draygon Pate / Shawn Taylor as Donalbain
Kimberly Skinner as Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff
Rory Taylor-Young as Malcolm
Dr. Michael Vozniak as Banquo and General Siward
Jennifer Wenner as Angus Lennox Ross

This version of the play has been adapted to take place in West Virginia during the Mine Wars. Come check it out. It's **FREE**!

Posts & Publications

Congratulations to **Dr. Amanda Chapman**, Department Chair, on being elected to a three-year term on the Children's Literature Association's Article Award Committee.

The ChLA Article Award is given annually by the Children's Literature Association to recognize outstanding articles of literary criticism published in English on the topic of children's literature within a given year. The Article Award Committee consists of six rotating members elected for three-year terms and a chair appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Board for a term of three years. Terms begin immediately following the ChLA annual business meeting.

Dr. Jonathan Minton has three poems appearing in the current issue of *Cul-de-Sac of Blood*, a literary journal devoted to celebrating horror films. Read Mintons poems, "I Walked With a Zombie (1943)," "The Beast With Five Fingers (1946)," and "I Was a Teenage Werewolf and Invasion of the Saucer Men (Double Feature) (1957)," on the *Cul-de-Sac of Blood* website: https://www.culdesacofblood.com/jonathan-minton-1

Associate Professor Melissa Gish has a poem appearing in the debut issue *The Submission Fetish*. The poem is one of the first pieces in a collection about four centuries of sideshow performers. Read the poem "Admire the Creator in His Creatures" on *The Submission Fetish* website: https://www.themeansofproduction.press/the-archive/admire-the-creator-in-his-creatures/

LKRS Hosts Chapbook Winner

Contributed by Chyna Nguyen, English Major

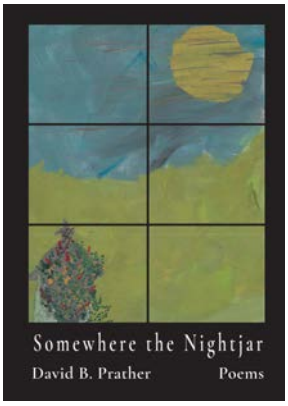
On October 20, the Little Kanawha Reading Series hosted poet and LKRS Chapbook Contest winner David B. Prather.

For the second Kanawha Reading Series event for the Fall 2026 season, David B. Prather came to the Robert F. Kidd library to talk about and read from his poetry chapbook, *Somewhere the Nightjar*, winner of the Second Annual Little Kanawha Reading Series Chapbook Contest, which was selected by guest judge John Hoppenthaler.

This charismatic writer isn't foreign to winning poetry contests, as he also won the 2025 Arthur Smith Poetry Prize from Madville Publishing and the Just Uncommonly Good (J.U.G.) Award from the West Virginia Writing Center.

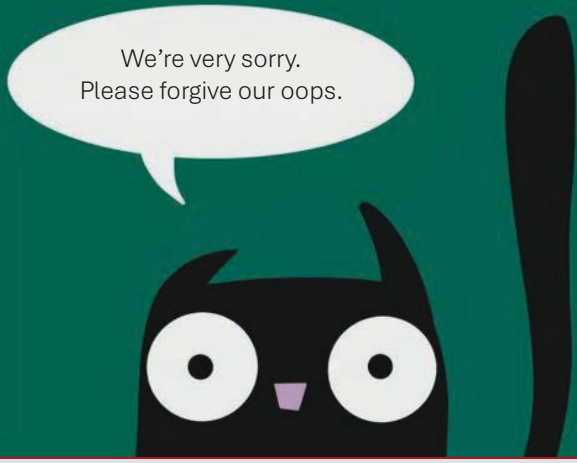
Somewhere the Nightjar's cover art was created by GSU Professor Emeritus Marjorie Stewart, and the book was designed by Associate Professor Melissa Gish. Stewart attended the event, where copies of the book were available.

In Prather's writing, themes include Appalachian nature, family, uncertain identity, and many others. Similar to the work of an earlier LKRS speaker, Doc McLemore, Prather's poems are primarily a reflection on his life. But unlike McLemore, who wrote about the culture that Appalachia presents, Prather wrote about Appalachian nature from his childhood perspective. As a huge part of his childhood, nature frequently appears in his poems, showcasing beautiful and dangerous sides of nature.



Scattered around Prather's poems are mentions of his family, including his sister and father. During the reading event, Prather mentioned his grandmother and great-grandmother. Prather's introspective writing is a way to acknowledge the past and use his observations as touchstones for his future.

We apologize for misspelling Laura McCallister's name in the last issue of *Writers Bloc*. Please visit our website HERE to download the corrected version.



An Autumn Evening on the Porch

Contributed by Alyssa Grogg, Freshman General Studies

After coming home from work, I decided to take a seat on my porch swing in the crisp, cool, beginning-of-autumn air. As I sat there, I noticed how comfortable I felt for the first time in a long time; not too hot, not too cold. There are many leaves beginning to change their colors now. Fall is my favorite season of the year; it is so beautiful.

I was hopeful and almost certain that I would at least see a bird in the trees nearest my house. I thought that I might get a chance at seeing a squirrel too, but no luck. I watched a buzzard soar across the sky, above the hill. Those birds have always interested me. Nature's cleanup crew. Always taking care of what I prefer not to; my stomach is too weak. That was the only bird I got to see for the entirety of the time I spent out there, which really shocked me. The birds are usually most active earlier in the day, but for the past few days I've noticed that there is less birdsong in the mornings. It appears that this time of the year is when "many species, particularly insectivores like warblers and vireos, undertake long-distance migrations to areas with more consistent food availability, leaving their northern breeding grounds" ("Where Have"). I also suspect that the nearby construction and evening traffic are causing them to stay away, as "of course, cars perpetuate mayhem on critters" (Bromka 140).

I never really realized how much I enjoyed watching the birds and squirrels in the morning, until I didn't see them this evening. I hadn't noticed before, though, because the evenings are when I am usually inside cleaning or unwinding. I think that this winter I might put out some suet for the birds and fatten them up a bit. My grandma and I used to always go to Walmart and pick out suet to last the birds for the winter. I would always want to eat it myself—it just looked so delicious. I've been wanting to carry on her tradition and display my own bird feeders, but I haven't had the ability since living on my own. Plus, if I feed them, it will keep them around since my dogs enjoy watching them.

I remember when I would be at my grandma's watching from the kitchen window, and like those described in an essay I read, the squirrels were "bushy-tailed terrorists who view[ed] my bird feeders as their personal all-you-can-eat-buffet' (Olsen 144). They were always so hateful to the birds and refused to share. If only my observation assignment was later in the semester, I might have observed a flock of birds enjoying suet while sitting on my porch.

Works Cited

Bromka, Michael. "Critters and Us." *Between Earth and Sky*, edited by Melissa Gish, Sabre Lake Publishing, 2026, pp. 140-143.

Olsen, Katie, "The Bear and the Bird Feeders." *Between Earth and Sky*, edited by Melissa Gish, Sabre Lake Publishing, 2026, pp. 144-148.

"Where Have All the Birds and Squirrels Gone?" Science Insights, 10 November 2025, https://scienceinsights.org/where-have-all-the-birds-and-squirrels-gone/.

Weird Question of the Week

It's November, and we all know what that means: Holiday sales. But don't be too quick to buy gifts without first learning if your friend or loved one already has a favorite they won't part with.

Michelle Clowser
Scholarship Coordinator, GSU Foundation
"I have a favorite comb given to me in my teens. It is my favorite because it works the best on my hair and I never go a day without using it."

Shayli Burr, Dual Enrollment
"I have a favorite pen that I use every day to mark off things on my weekly to-do list."

Kathy Gilbert, Director of Aquatics & Recreation
"My special drinking cup is an Owala that was given to me by co-worker Patrick Montgomery. It looks like our GSU Swimming Pool! I love it! The only quirky thing is I hate to use it's lid. I also hate straws. This results in occasional spills, but it's worth it."

Micah J. Moore, Dual Enrollment
"My everyday item is this certain pen."

Dwight W. Heaster
Associate Professor of Business Administration
"While I love my professional clothes by day and how they make me feel, when I walk into my house of an evening, it is loungewear. There is no greater joy than the high-stakes race to get home, shed the professional clothes, and step into the comfortable lounge pants that society dictates I never wear in public. It is the perfect uniform for shutting out the world and achieving maximum coziness in my chair with my dogs."

Amanda Jones, Head Cashier
"I have two favorite pens. A smaller ball point pen for when I need to write smaller in a limited amount of space, and the other when I'm in a hurry to write down something. When they run out of ink, I'm on the hunt for new favorites usually in the Financial Aid 'pen bins.' Financial Aid always has tons of pens they give away!"



Reese Woodford, Dual Enrollment
"My favorite everyday object would probably be my hairbrush."

Amanda Chapman, Associate Professor of English
"I have a favorite blanket. It's blue, and chenille, and comforts me. I am firmly of the opinion that having a blankie as an adult is nothing to be ashamed of."

When Wildlife Know the Weather Better than We Do

Contributed by Casey Smola, Title IX Coordinator

I own a farm for a variety of reasons outside of what some would only consider monetary and sustenance needs. Truth is, I very much enjoy watching the animals and their behavior from my rocking chair on the front porch. It's quite comical to watch our large rabbits have their Kung Fu matches in the daily designated spot to assert their authority over their ladies and their territory. I'm not sure that our Red Sex Link hens understand that they are chickens because they insist that I fluff their feathers and pet them from across the yard. I love to listen to them sing and watch them waddle around. The cattle are always present and in reality you wouldn't imagine a proverbial Golden Retriever to be so large and as vocal, but here we are. The squirrels litter the tree line and the birds are teaming.

This is actually the primary reason why I have chosen farm life. Never a dull moment. But not today. Today is eerily quiet and quite out of the ordinary from what I usually experience. There are no rabbits in the yard running. The cattle have bedded down and my large vocal animals are nowhere to be found. Even my feathered ladies aren't nearly as insistent on company as they are far too busy stuffing their gullets with food. My view is strange and quite different today. Even the air isn't behaving the same. There is no breeze and everything feels calmly cautious like something is coming. I can hear the birds and squirrels in the distance, but I can't see them and their calls are much different today. Just like that, my entertaining entourage of wildlife is busy and on a mission so it would seem. Animals are not just fun to observe but they can show you things you wouldn't otherwise consider. It really is just as Michael Bromka states "Sometimes encounters with critters can seem portentous" (142). Something is coming and they all know it as if to say, *Pay attention*.

This something, as you may ask, is called Isaias. Isaias is a hurricane that hit landfall nearly two days ago on October 8th, 2026 in Destin Florida and has slowly been making its way up the US East Coast to my home here in rural West Virginia. The animals have known this and prepared for days and suddenly I realized in the words of Katie Olsen "I was the invader" (148). Here I was sitting on my front porch expecting all of the usual behavior from the wildlife but they had bigger fish to fry and my entertainment was definitely not among their top priorities. Animals sense these things and will do incredible things to survive. According to an article in *Biological Reviews*, fire ants will "create their own refuge by forming living, floating rafts that consist of hundreds of thousands of individuals" (Koen et al). That's really quite amazing and shows a level of perseverance that is hard to match. So for today I will leave the animals to it and save the expectations for another day.

The air here in Braxton County, West Virginia is still strangely calm and even though I haven't witnessed any Red Fire Ants using their bodies to build life rafts, my Red Sex Link girls are hard at it. I'll leave them to it and make sure the generator is prepped instead.

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Koen, Erin L. et al. "How Wildlife Responds to Tropical Cyclones: Short-term Tactics and Long-term Impacts." *Biological Reviews*, vol.101, no. 5, Oct. 2026, *p. 2081*. *WileyOnline Library*, https://doi.org/10.1002/brv.70166.

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Getting to Know Our Administrative Assistant

Isaiah Hill interview, continued from page 1

DC: What do you do as an administrative assistant?

IH: It is funny that you asked this. Before I worked for a bit, every single person who would ask *what will you be doing at GSU?* I did not know. Now that I have worked for a bit, I can tell you that I answer emails, help students register for their classes, and purchase class supplies for the Fine Arts Department. If the department or one of its classes needs something, such as a certain number of canvases, I order those supplies online. I also handle paperwork and help make sure it gets to the right people. I send it to [Dr. Clements], it gets sent back to me, and then I make sure it goes through the right person.

[Editor's Note: Isaiah is also the one who sends *Writers Bloc* out to our campus community! — Thanks, Isaiah!]

DC: What part of being an administration assistant do you enjoy the most?



Photo provided by Isaiah Hill

IH: I love that I'm back on the computer, because I was in Nettech at the Career Center in high school. So I was working on the actual hardware of the computer. And I grew up a computer kid, playing Minecraft and stuff. So I'd sit there on my mom's desktop playing Minecraft, and she'd yell at me all the time. I'd be on Skype, playing Minecraft in Roblox, and she'd be like, *Get off that game.* I know I'm not playing video games, obviously, but it's just the feeling of being on a computer working and doing something different, because I've only worked food service jobs my whole life. I worked McDonald's, Tudors, and at the nursing home, I was a cook. So working with a computer brings me back.

DC: Earlier you said something about your 4 cats, would you like to talk about them?

IH: Yes, I have four cats currently. My first cat, Phantom, is the most spoiled cat I've ever met in my life. If you are sitting down, he wants to sit on your lap. And if you don't let him sit on your lap, he gets lippy with you. My black cat, Boo, is the most vocal cat I've ever met in my whole entire life. He does not meow; he chirps. One time he was up in the morning, and he was sitting on the chair for our table. I didn't know he was lying on it. So, I went to pull the chair out, sit down, put my shoes on this morning, and I whipped this chair out, and he's like wobbling all over it, and he just looked up at me. And, like, in the most mourning voice that a cat can get. Gus—he is an orange cat who is crazy. Then there's Ash; he's a little, gray cat. Ash is like a little runt. I love them to death, man. I wouldn't trade my cats for anything. They mean the world to me.

DC: What are some of your favorite hobbies and interests outside of work?

IH: I'm a big gamer; I love gaming. Any games, really. I was really big into *Call of Duty* for a while. I was in the top 500 in *Warzone*. I'd wake up, put on a custom game with the bots, and I would set the score to 1,000. Then I would get 500 kills with everything turned off. I'd turned up the game sensitivity, spy. And then once I got 500 kills, I'd switch it back on and it feels like you're hacking. It was to the point where I had people straight up telling me in lobbies that I was hacking. I got close to top 250 there for a while. There were a couple big streamers who I had a couple games with, and they were like, *you could do something with this,* but I haven't really been playing it lately. I've also been playing *Fortnite* with my girlfriend. She makes me play with her because there's these sprite things that she is collecting, and she goes crazy for them. I don't play a lot of those games, but when I do play them, you can tell that I've played a lot of *Call of Duty* and stuff like that. I'm a very competitive person when it comes to stuff. When I was younger, my siblings used to call me a sore loser, and honestly, they were right! It is not that I am mad when someone beats me. I am disappointed because I know I could have done better. Kobe Bryant was a big inspiration to me, and he was my favorite basketball player of all time. I admired that competitive mindset and the desire to keep improving. I have also loved video games since I was a kid. I remember playing the old WWE games and creating my own characters, decorating them, and making sure they looked as decked out as possible. I am still a big wrestling fan, too. I watched it growing up, and there is something about the sport that has always interested me. I would love to try it myself, although I would not necessarily describe myself as the most active person.

DC: What is a fun fact about you that people might not know?

IH: When I was younger, I used to do a lot of voice impressions. I would imitate Macho Man Randy Savage, Mickey Mouse, and Sumo from *Clarence*. When I was a kid, I wanted to do voice acting because I loved doing different voices. I remember sitting there listening to characters over and over again, trying to get their voices down. I would keep listening until I felt like I could imitate them. It was something I really enjoyed doing growing up. I also love cooking. I have been cooking since I was, like, two years old. That's why I liked working in food service as much as I did at the nursing home.

If you'd like Isaiah to help you with a registration question or would just like to say hello, you can reach him here:
212 Heflin Administration Building
Phone: 304-462-6103
Email: Isaiah.Hill@glenville.edu

Halloween Contest First Place Art: *Mt. Calvary Cemetery*

Contributed by Kathryn Caldwell, Education Major



The Department of Language and Literature recently held its Third Annual Halloween Writing & Art Contest. The First Place Prose Award goes to graduate student **Aimee Huddleston** for the ghost story "The House on Otter Lane." You can read this story in the 15 October 2026 issue of *Writers Bloc* [https://www.glenville.edu/departments/language-literature/writers-bloc].

The Second Place Prose Award goes to Education Major **Olivia Pursley** for the story "The Shadow." The Third Place Prose Award goes to RBA Candidate Avis Lake for the story "2088." Both of these stories are included in this issue of *Writers Bloc*.

The First Place Art Award goes to Education Major **Kathryn Caldwell** for the piece "Mt. Calvary Cemetery." The Second Place Art Award goes to **Andrea Randolph** for the piece "Spectre's Rest." Both of these pieces are included in this issu of *Writers Bloc*.

Be sure to catch us next fall for our annual contest. Prose, poetry, and artwork of any kind will be welcome. No AI work, please.

Halloween Contest Second Place: "The Shadow"

Contributed by Olivia Pursley, Education Major

As the clock hit midnight, I jolted awake, soaked in sweat from a haunting nightmare. I quickly turned on my lamp to make sure nobody was there. As I quietly shifted over towards my window, the curtains were shut tightly as if someone was there. I thought nothing of it and brushed it off. So, I turned back over and tried to fall back asleep. As I was dozing off, I had started to hear footsteps getting louder and louder until they stopped. I lay in my bed stiff as a board, trying not to breathe. I wanted to get up but I couldn't, it was like I was paralyzed. I let out a shaky breath hoping this thing was gone. Oh, how I was wrong. I began hearing footsteps again, but this time they sounded like they were headed to my room. When the footsteps stopped nearby, I slowly sat up to see that a shadow was under my door as if someone was there. "Hello, is anyone there?" I said in a shaky voice. No response. Then the shadow was gone, and the footsteps grew quieter and quieter until I heard nothing. I eventually fell asleep to only be awakened by my alarm for work.

The next day at work, people kept asking if I was ok, like they knew what happened. Even though I had said nothing, not even about last night to anybody, I kept thinking to myself if it was just another bad dream or was there really someone there. As I kept thinking to myself, an unsettling feeling of doom set in. I told myself that nobody was there, but the feeling in my gut tells me that someone was in my house not only to scare me but to hurt me too. It had to be somebody I knew but I couldn't be sure, at least not yet. I refused to let my mind play tricks on me, but I had one big question I asked myself over and over. How did they get into my house? All the doors were locked including my basement hatch and all of the windows, and there was no sign of break in. After I finished closing up and clocked out of work, I got in my car and drove home. When I pulled into my driveway, parked, and shut my car off, I froze in fear looking at my front door. It was wide open.

I finished checking the house by looking in every single corner and felt slightly relieved. I finally decided to go to my room and open my art supplies and listen to music to get my mind off of everything that has happened within the last 48 hours. I heard a noise downstairs and instinctively reached for my nightstand, which held a knife inside, then I slowly got up and crept down the stairs. I reached the last stair, and it creaked, so I slowly peaked around the corner into the kitchen and surely enough I saw someone standing there dressed in all black, almost like a shadow, and I couldn't see its face. As soon as he took the first step towards me, I turned around and bolted back up the stairs back to my room but this things footsteps were in pace with mine, maybe getting faster as it chased me. I instantly slammed my door shut and locked it. Then shortly after I locked my door, I heard a scratching noise along the other side of my bedroom door. Was it a claw or a knife? I reached for my phone to call 911, but the line was dead like it had been cut. I started crying and eventually yelled, "What do you want from me?" scared that at any moment this thing would break down my bedroom door and kill me.

The scratching noises grew louder by the second until they stopped. I was standing in the middle of my room in silence. The silence was so loud that it felt unreal, as if something unseen outside the door was holding its breath, waiting for something. I ended up getting enough courage to lay on my floor to peek under the door. Nothing. I got up and walked over to the door quietly until I heard the handle start shaking and the shadow was back underneath my door again. What was he doing? I panicked; he was unlocking my door. I started to think of something I could do, run, hide, anything other than just stand here and wait for the shadow to break in and kill me. My first instinct was to hide underneath my bed, but that would be way too obvious. My second and last thought was to jump out of my window even though it was a two-story house. I had to think quickly. As the door to my bedroom swung open, and the figure was standing there with a knife, I had no choice but to jump out my window now.

Once I hit the ground, I screamed, I had sprung my ankle. I got reluctantly up to hopefully make it to the woods to hide before the shadow could catch up to me. I was about to reach the forest line when I felt someone grab my shoulder and swing me around to face them, I was trying my hardest to slip away, but I couldn't no matter how hard I tried.

"Are you ok? I heard you screaming and you're limping."

I sighed in relief, it was my neighbor Jeremy. "Yeah, I'm ok." I said, "I just thought that someone was trying to kill me."

"Jesus, are you sure you're ok?" I tried to speak but he interrupted me. "Jumping out of a two-story house, you must be crazy."

I tried to speak up again, but he interrupted me again. What a jerk. "Hey." I eventually spoke up, "Have you by chance seen a figure dressed in all black?"

After I asked him that, he started acting suspicious and said, "No, is that why you jumped out of your window?"

We stood there in awkward silence for a moment. "Yes, it was." I spoke. Then after we chatted for a bit about what happened and what I was seeing, I was finally calming down because I was finally getting everything off my chest that I had been bottling up for a while.

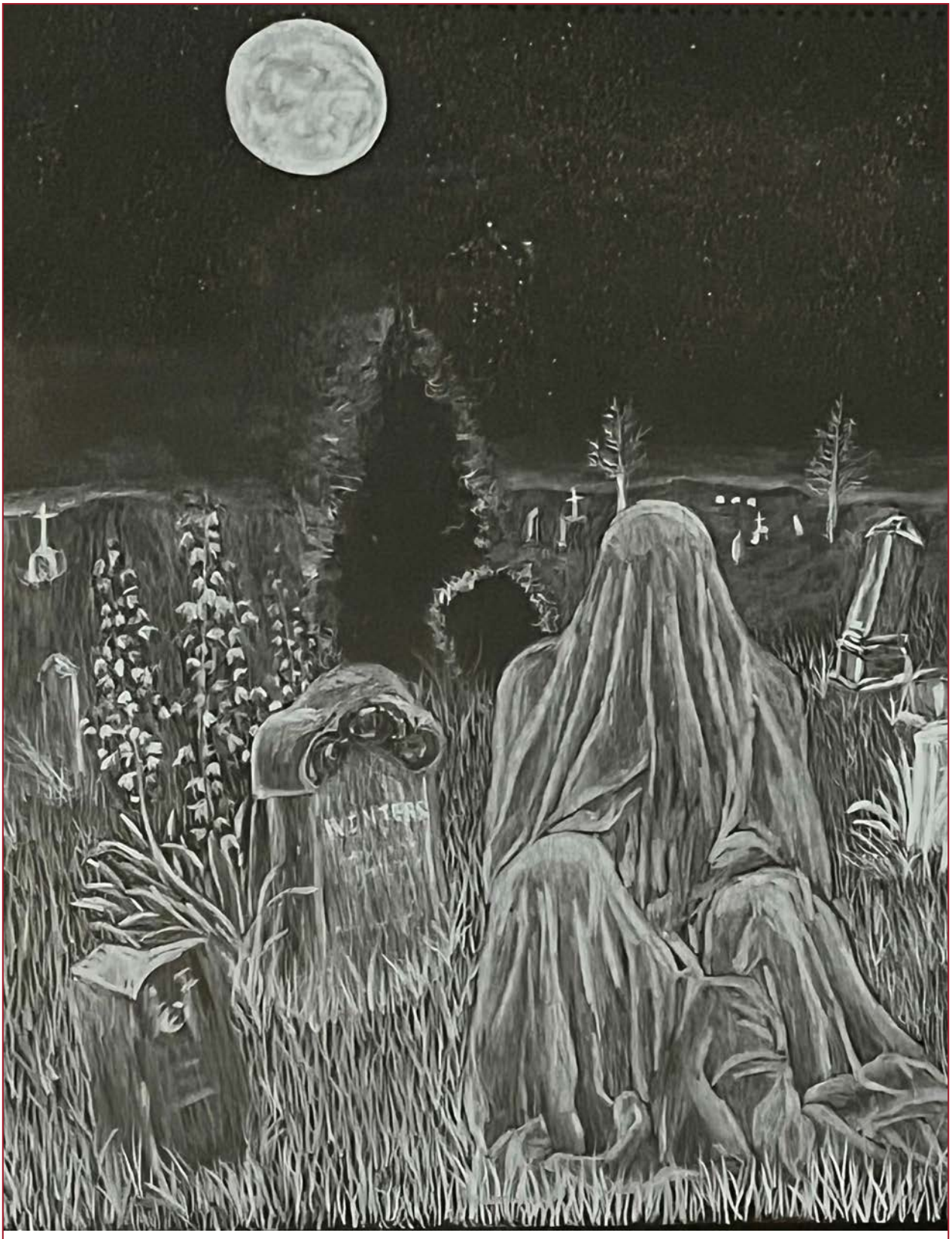
"Thank you for coming to check up on me and talk to me but I should head inside and figure out what I should do with my window before it gets dark." I spoke.

Before I turned around to walk back to my house, he said, "You're welcome my friend." but he said it with a smirk. When I was limping back to my house to ice and wrap my ankle, I thought to myself why did he smirk? Did he know something I didn't? Later that night, after I had put a plastic cover over my window so I wouldn't get cold, then I grabbed all of my spare keys to my house and put them in my nightstand then set my alarm for work the next day. I finally laid down and dozed off surely but slowly.

Suddenly I felt a sharp pain in my stomach causing me to wake up screaming bloody murder. As soon as I opened my eyes from the excruciating pain, I saw him. I saw that figure, the one before I jumped out my window. Then eventually darkness started to consume me along with the distant sound of sirens fading. This was it, this is how my life came to an end and I couldn't do anything to stop it.

Halloween Contest Second Place Art: *Spectre's Rest*

Contributed by Andrea Randolph



Halloween Contest Third Place: "2088"

Contributed by Avis Lake, Regents BA Candidate

I waited. My hands cupped the liquid pouring out of this foreign individual.

The year was 2088. Not much I could change at this moment . These individuals were different. Anatomy's not matching ours. I stood there at 7:03 a.m. While witnessing a collision before my travels. I always considered my family when thinking of growing old. I didn't expect Covid-33. In the year 2088 all darkness is here. We learned the agenda of the HitSteins. As our world warmed theirs did too. As did variants in diseases, visitors, prophecies.

Covid-33 wiped out billions of individuals worldwide via the HisSteins agenda. A high- alien race who pledged to decrease our planet's populations in hopes of planet preservation and disease elimination in this case. They signed political long term contracts with all nations, breeds, lands. Even so, are planet was saved because of them. We hold them in close regards for stopping the rise of tensions between Gen J robots, the demons, aliens, and humans. They fought as if it was a civil war. No regards to where the differences crossed with the bushel of them all. War still prevailed on this old planet.

Humans treated their closest partners now Gen J Robolife like slaves. Humans admittedly were cruel to them. Gen J ran our economies and globes. Fifty years ago humans turned on them due to the decline of human jobs. Homelessness rose by 78%. People died of disease. Famine. Age.

I lost everyone I loved. And now I sit at the precipice of being the odd one out.

As I adjust down more trying to contain the liquid seeping though my fingers like sand in a bin. The liquid was cold. Unmoving. One could not tell the difference between life and death except a small dim light behind the machine's ear. It faintly glowed blue indicating a bracket of life.

"I have help coming." I said it calm and slow. As if each word I spoke only held prevail for hope.

All you heard was the zimming hums as the electric current stream allowed for our transporters to pass though above us.

I just happen to be seventy-one and own ground property, making me stop once or twice a week to check on it. Forced to pay crop tax as part of the Share Reservoir Treaty.
Raised all my babies here. This War took them all . . .

It was still though. Quiet. Night-time like. Glitchy even. An endless early morning just enough to see the monsters, that is what this era came to know. The stars replaced the sun. Steady low light escalated and radiated the area. Lumiscently. And it allowed folks to keep what ground land they did have. Farms funny enough still sat at the top of this now economy. The Earth was in bad shape. Winters no longer occurred. Rain was scarce minus tall wells collecting rain waters on large scales.

The world was on its last legs. Revelation was everything you imagined but worse! Many said the aliens were the demons when they came. It was them all. As uncertainties arose and time was running out. Humans found themselves face to face with a war beyond us much older.

In the streets every entity lined up after one another. All hours of the day and night with one word contracts. It was simple, sign your soul over while here, help as a recruiter for those to come, doing so allowed human comforts and leisures we called contracts.

This is where we lost eighty-five percent of the population to addictions. As times got worse, solutions came at an easy price. Drugs, sex, time-hops, over feelings. It wasn't enough to be bad in the old world. You PLEDGED and upheld the contracts for the entities in this one.

Cloning was guaranteed to entities if they chose this route. It allowed them to move in between times for recruitment purposes. There were laws for them too of course. It basically allowed all the bad things to be celebrated, allowed, and contracted leading up to our current times. It was all connected.

Many tried... That should be recorded. And by them refusing, disputing, they use the pre-historic tunnels of the underground kingdoms to connect now.

Forcing tunnels to expand to areas of soils, minerals, herbs, plants. It was an odd world. One we read about as a past world in books. How the land was before. Uncivil.

"Will. You. Pray. For. Me."

A small mundane, tiny, and narrow remark made it out of the robot's carcass. For a tiny molecular minute we mirrored humanity.

Out of all the first hand experiences I have had with them, this was different.

To hear such a request something very unexpected happened to me instead, tears slowly gathered in my eyes. Wanting salvation for something else.

Simple.

I looked around. Streams silently marking my face. I sat there holding what portrayed to be a sixteen year old robolife. Free because of humanity's price.

I knew nothing of God but everything of humanity. Life is still life and this one's still ending in my hands.

* * *



Photo from Robostore.com

Little Kanawha Reading Series

Thursday, November 12, 2026

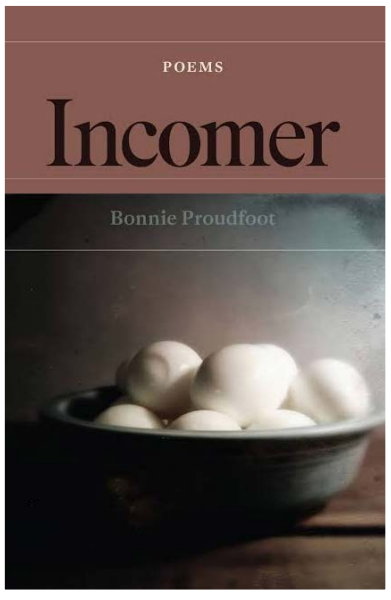
4:00 p.m. Robert F. Kidd Library

on the campus of Glenville State University

Bonnie Proudfoot



Bonnie Proudfoot received a fellowship in the arts from the West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History. Her novel, *Goshen Road* (Ohio University Press/Swallow Press, 2020) was selected by the Women's National Book Association for Great Group Reads, long-listed for the 2021 PEN/Hemingway Award, and awarded the Writers Conference of Northern Appalachia Book of the Year. Her poetry collections include *Household Gods* (Sheila-Na-Gig Editions, 2021) and *Incomer* (Shadelandhouse Modern Press, 2026).



All Readings are Free and Open to the Public

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