



S.T.E.P LITERARY JOURNAL

Collected works from the Wayfarer Center

WINTER . . . AND THE COLD



S.T.E.P. Literary Journal

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These are our thoughts and our words . . . that we wanted to share with you . . .

What it is to be cold . . .

There's cold high on a mountain, there's cold blowing through the trees, there's cold between enemies and sometimes between even families.

There's coldness of water and coldness of snow, there's coldness of hate and lives that are low.

When you have a cold heart, and don't care for the poor, Satan is proving its you he can lure, so warm yourself up and show you have love, show to all you came from above from God!

—Elisa B.

Freezing out side . . .not having somewhere to get warm. Being homeless. Woodland PD is cold. Parole is Cold. Not being able to see my kid is Cold.

—Diavicio Vasquez

The last seven days have been hard on my family because our Jeep has transmission problems so we have been spending everyday OUTSIDE. It's been COLD and WET. Time passes so slowly when you and your family are COLD. My family and I were sick. Why, because of the COLD. MOST can turn on their heater in their home or go to a friends or family's house, BUT WE DON'T have any, just each other. SO, the COLD helps me moving ahead until the day when we have a home and we won't THINK OF THE WORD . . .COLD!!!

—Roddy.

When I think of cold, I think of the weather. I think of snow, rain, windy days and wintertime. I grew up in Bishop, California which is 30 miles south of Mammoth Lakes, California. I spent my entire youth as a snow skier and have skied the Mammoth Mountain front and back. There were days when the weather didn't reach the 20 degree mark. The cold air was always fresh, smelling like the pine trees. I used to have ice on my eyelashes once I reached the bottom of the ski slope. There is no greater moment of serenity than a cold, enjoyable ride up the chairlift to the top of the mountain. No matter how cold the weather was, I never missed a "ski day" with my school. Now, as a mother, I have taken my children up to the ski slopes in Tahoe, Nevada and I enjoy watching them learn to ski, just as I did when I was a little girl. Sometimes the funnest things to do in life take place the cold, cold, weather. This is what cold means to me.

—Ruthie Fields

Concrete dead metal.
 A flood of funeral
 Filled the soldiers mind.
 No fire not fight
 They were chained to
 The sight as a plague
 Rattled the frown on
 The face of their fate.
 Who?
 Our congressman?
 Responsible?
 Dead at the throne
 Cold as stone.
 Germany?
 Hungry when fed.
 Monster of power
 Insect mind bled.
 Drained, maimed & hated
 A witness of waste
 He had his own chemist who created
 a monster
 A leader to endless memories
 Of torture, he filled men with
 Fear and washed the minds
 Of hungry cold souls.
 Amassing for warfare
 He is said to be dead
 Through slithers through the curious
 Mind of man?
 Who do you believe?
 I am ashamed of his name and will
 Not say
 —Ian

Cold is a feeling you have when the weather is gloomy and gray and you are all wet. The wind goes right through you. And you are in a town where don't know anyone. Or have any "family or friends" and don't know which direction to go, on the highway. When your hitch-hiking! And Have no DESTINATION!

—John Drecil

To me cold means a lot of fresh air, wintertime is coming quick. Hopefully won't get sick with the Flu. Having a warm place to go to get out of the cold. It also means that Christmas time and the New Year is coming. When it's cold you can grow some plants like poinsettias and other winter type plants, and some vegetables like Broccoli and Artichokes will grow in the cold. The cold also means that you can see your own breath in the middle of the day, and it also means that there will be frost on the ground. When it gets cold could be bad, because pipes can burst and propane tanks can explode if not properly wrapped. It will rain and snow and be very windy. This is cold to me.

—John Smith

Cold. Being without a home, out in the cold with temperatures were its freezing. Were it causes you to catch a lot of things, such as a cold, nasoni, chest cold, head cold. It doesn't matter whatever it is. It's not nice, but we would all prefer to be indoors were its nice and warm, cause nobody wants to be out in the cold. Cold is what you think about. Ice, snow, winter wonderland, ice skating, a cold glass of water. But it is not what we want to think about, we want to think about a hot cup of coffee, a hot cup of coco, a nice bowl of chicken noodle soup, a warm bed.

—Rey Vazquez

Nuestro Frio

"Para mi"; es es cobijo del ano Viejo yel

Anuncio de un Ano Nuevo.

"Para Los Arboles"; es un cambio de hojas y

Un Comienzo de Nueva Vida para

Brindarles a todos.

"En la imaginacion de todos Solo nos queda decir asi"

Es un anuncio de un Nuevo Cambio de esperanza

Y Sueno para todos deserrandolo con Fe y Esperanza.

—Jesus Vazquez

It is Christmas . . .

I am thankful for the chance to be able to be back in my home state of California after 17 years of living elsewhere. I am thankful God put me in this wonderful town called Woodland where I have a chance to get my sobriety and meet and befriend many wonderful people.

All I want for Christmas is for all people to find Faith, hope and love in all things.

All I want for my community this Christmas is enough affordable housing for everyone.

—Elisa Baskin

I am thankful for my life, this shelter and my love that I receive from the love of my life and the love I give to others.

All I really want for Christmas is to be with my love and be drug and alcohol free.

All I want for my community is job opportunity for all and affordable housing for low income individuals.

—Joseph Rojas

I am thankful for all the wonderful people in my life who have helped me for the last 2 years while I've tried to straighten out my life.

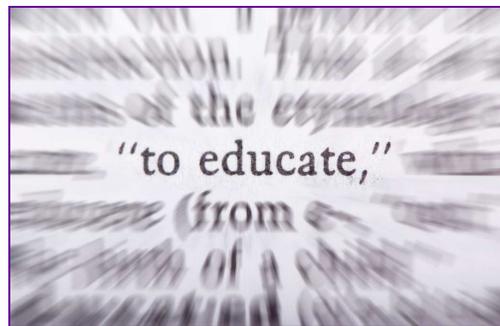
All I want for Christmas is a place to stay and to find a job.

All I want for my community is the continued support of all the charities that are already going out of their way to help those who are less fortunate.

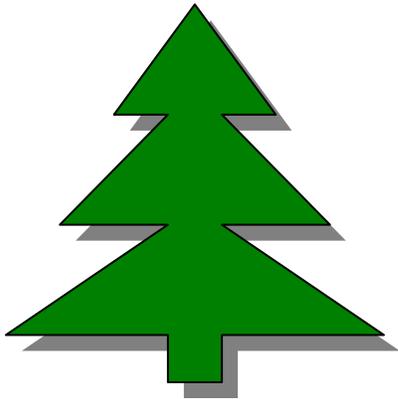
—Mike Richardson

My life is nothing: I know why it is this way. What can I change today?

—Linda Ellasces



COLLECTED WORKS FROM
THE WAYFARER CENTER



Editors note . . .

This is the seventh edition of the Wayfarer Literary Journal, and I am very proud of the work within these pages. The pieces are a product of the “writing class” Mike Elfant teaches on Monday and Thursday nights, and the words are those of the author’s, as written with all the humor, passion, sadness and joy that goes with them. I am proud not only of the work itself, but of the openness and courage it takes to share them.

Dear Woodland . . .

As we enter the Holiday Season, we need to reach out to those in the community in order to better the lives of local residents. We believe that the future of Woodland is directly linked to the youth in town, who we feel have been neglected in the past.

Woodland’s youth sport programs have been highly successful for years, but opportunities for youth not involved in sports is seriously lacking. The town has very few activities and/or venues for teens, and has been this way for quite some time.

With the success of the new Senior and Community Center, the next logical step would be a youth center. Giving teens an outlet such as this would only help the community by keeping youth off the street, which would hopefully lead to a decrease in gang activity.

There are many possible locations that the town could use for this endeavour such as an empty warehouse space of the soon to be vacated Mervyn’s at the County Fair Mall.

This Holiday Season, think of those who need help, and help by spearheading this project so the next generation can grow and become this town’s future leaders.

Sincerely,

Mike Richardson

Tamara Cotham