

# A Slice of Rye

Volume 8 Issue 2

Rye High School

October 2013

## Rye High School Has Talent

**By: Samantha Ridings**

Kira Arnold, a sophomore attending Rye High School, is currently competing in the Colorado You Got Talent State Competition. A very talented singer, Kira has been singing since the age of four. Never having taken singing lessons of any kind, this young lady has wowed audiences from local talent shows and now the judges of this very well known competition.

Colorado You Got Talent begins recruiting competitors through the use of two minute long videos submitted by young singers who hope their voices will be noticed. Kira Arnold submitted her own video and was chosen with a select number to compete at Regionals. Kira sang at Regionals and was passed on to the state competition along with thirty others to compete for a front of the line audition for America's Got Talent. There are two categories of singers: youth and adult. Kira, being fifteen, is participating in the youth side of the competition.

On Sunday, October 6th, 2013, Kira Arnold sang the beautiful song Time To Say Goodbye by Andrea Bocelli at the State competition



Pictured above: Kira singing at the last high school talent show where she showed everyone that she can sing opera.

in Colorado Springs, Colorado at the Star Gazer's Theatre. Kira did a fantastic job, but was not selected as one of the top four. As unfortunate as this may sound, Kira has a talent that the judges know is worth fighting for. A video of Kira's wonderful talent is currently being submitted to America's Got Talent producers in hopes that they, too, will realize her talent.

Kira Arnold is hoping this competition will help her become rec-

ognized for her passion. Kira has been focused on a singing career since a child and has spent many hours memorizing and singing songs including What A Wonderful World, A Mio Babbino Caro, Con Te Partio, and Pie Jesu. With hard work and dedication, I have no doubt that Kira Arnold has what it takes to wow America. Watch for the Rye High School talent show, as well, to hear Kira's melodical voice show through. This will be sometime in December.

Go Thunderbolts Go Thunderbolts Go Thunderbolts Go Thunderbolts

*Spring Break to Texas*  
*By: Sarah Collins*

This year do you want to do something cool and unexpected during spring break that you can tell your kids about? Well on Friday March 21st anyone who would like to join can go to San Antonio Texas for six days and five nights returning Wednesday March 26th.

The cost is \$1350 per person but you can divide it into six payments of \$225 every month on the first. The money will cover costs for the direct flight on United Airlines, Transportation, the Embassy Suites hotel rooms, the Attractions, and \$30 for food a day. The Attractions that you'd be going to would include Six Flags, Sea World, Alamo, River walk & River Cruise, Fiesta Market, and Hop on and hop off Alamo Trolley throughout San Antonio and stopping at Museums and missions. They will leave at 5:30 am on March 21st and leave Denver at 8am and arrive at San Antonio at 11:05 am. If it sounds fun and you are interested or have any questions contact Mrs. Robles.

## The Teaching of Music; A Dying Art at Rye (With High Hopes of Survival)

**By: Wesley Chadwick**

The band at Rye High School used to be a large group of students who worked hard at performing for their school and practicing to improve themselves and their school. Rye High used to have a marching band that played at games and brought competition to other schools in state. Now, our school band has fallen apart and become a small group of talented students who still want to keep this school's love of music alive. Why is our passion for music lost?

Mr. Baird came to this school three years ago to start up something that was thought to have been long lost at Rye. His passion and skill with music drove him to work hard with students in these past three years. Starting with almost nothing, Mr. Baird has been able to start up fundraisers to receive money for instruments, fix ups, and new gear for the students. Instead of giving up and walking away, Mr. Baird has stayed true to his word and has worked hard and diligently at trying to improve this school's ability to produce young musicians.

Mr. Baird is a teacher of music, a pursuer of greatness, and a nurturer of musical seeds just waiting to be opened and given life. Rye High needs more teachers like Mr. Baird, who cherish that which is most important in the world.

***Just as a reminder, the Rye High School Band and Choir will be performing at Craver Middle School along with the Craver Band and Choir on October 30th starting at 6:00pm, come support music and our students.***

## Tinkering in Robotics

**By: Makenna Bradford**

The Robotics class, taught by Mr. Carter, is a class where students learn how to make machines that make life easier. They are responsible for thinking out and tinkering to create these impressive robots. As of late, they've been learning how to make gears work, gear ratios, and will be putting in the motors soon. They are currently working on a robot that can help someone survive in a lost situation to find food, water, and shelter. Some are being built to do things like get firewood or find water. So be sure to be on the lookout for the fantastic robot models.



**Pictured above: Jenna Mansfield and Dakota Martinez work on their survival robot**

## Homecoming Aftermath

**By: Karli Newitt**

With all of the excitement and business of homecoming week behind us, the results are in. Each year, all of the Rye High School classes compete against each other in competition of heart, spirit, creativity, and strength and earn points for their efforts, failures, and successes.



**Pictured above: Homecoming candidates in Bruce Moore's car riding along in the parade, Anthony Goos, Sheldon Swartwood, Sean Daniels, Kaylee Rahl, Jessica Lauritzen, and Shayla Daniels**

During the spirit days, the students were challenged to wear pajamas and hats, camouflage and animal print, class colors, and school colors. Every day at lunch, the students participated in different L.T.A.'s - Lunch Time Activities. These activities consisted of tug-of-war, savage woman, an ultimate game of dodge ball, and lion tail. Along with spirit days and L.T.A.'s, the Rye High School student classes each prepare a float, which they present during the Homecoming Parade and the half-time show of the Homecoming game.

After all the different games,

activities, and challenges, the points were added up and finalized. In fourth place with 65 points, was the seniors. With 80 points and finishing in third place, the sophomores. Juniors came in second place with 87 points following the first place freshmen with 92 points.

Along with the different activities and things of homecoming week, we had our homecoming court as well. On the homecoming court for king were Sean Daniels, Anthony Goos, and Sheldon Swartwood. For queen, Shayla Daniels, Kaylee Rahl, and Jessica Lauritzen. During half time of the Homecoming football game, the winners were announced as King Sean Daniels and Queen Shayla Daniels.

Now that the excitement and business of homecoming week are in the past, Rye High School students are looking forward to new excitements and challenges next year.



**Pictured above: After being crowned, Queen Shayla Daniels and King Sean Daniels**

## Rachel's Challenge Begins This School Year With Enthusiasm

**By Elken Hecker**

Rachel's Challenge is formed by a group of Rye High School students and two elementary and middle school parents that are devoted enough to take time out of their school days in order to teach kids important values at a young age for their town's elementary school. The challenge began a few years ago when Rachel's brother brought her mission to our school, to teach students compassion. Last week's lesson covered the importance of being honest with the students of Rye Elementary, and they have to get their point across in under thirty minutes.

A group consists of two or three students that go up to Rye's elementary school once a month and teach them the importance of common virtues and how it affects them and the people around them. These students will do anything from role playing for them to get their attention, to having them play games involving their theme, which changes every time they visit monthly.

"I really enjoy teaching the little kids [at the Elementary School], they sit there and listen very well." Says Jesse Gookin, a current member of the Rachel's challenge team. If you are interested in helping you can go see Mrs. Jordan and she will point you in the right direction.

# Volleyball Season Coming to an End

Rye's volleyball team has been battling it out and is in the home stretch. They have played 13 league games and have won 9 of those. They are ranked 3rd in the Santa Fe League and will be playing next week to get into districts.

The girls played John Mall on October 1st and won in four matches. They went on to play and win again in four matches against Rocky Ford on October 5th. Then they played a tough game against Swink losing in five very close matches on October 8th. Most recently they won in an incredible three matches against Salida on October 12th.

The girls will play in the Pigtail games on Tuesday October 22nd.



Pictured above: Kaylee Rahl with a big tip during the Pink night, breast cancer awareness, game, all of the girls were decked out in Pink.

The girls will play at home because these Pigtail games are at the home sites of the top seed teams. The girls will be playing against 10th ranked Santa Fe League team, Rocky Ford at 6:00. The winners will advance to

the District tournament that will be played on Thursday at OJC and the losers complete their season.

Good luck to the girls, and congratulations on a well played season.

# Boys Varsity Soccer Reviewed

By: Ben Beck

2013 has proven to be a year of growth and success for the 18 young men that comprise the 'Bolts varsity soccer squad. No longer are they 0-11, they've managed to turn the tables on a few of their league opponents and even defeated a 4A team in a scrimmage match. The energy is there, although sometimes running a muck, but the heart is there and very focused on winning.

Inflicting the "mercy rule" on this squad just doesn't happen anymore. As a matter of fact the 'Bolts have won two of their four victories 8-1 and 8-0. The biggest challenge these players face is that they have to compete in a 3A division and not 1A or 2A AND they still manage to pull off victories. Unlike football, soccer does not run a series of pre-designed plays; it con-

sists of 80 minutes of constant running and instantaneous decisions that involve 20 moving targets. The only players not in 4th gear are the keepers, but when they get involved they have to be quick, strong and decisive.

We have a sophomore, Colin Harris, who exhibits all of those qualities and more. Jake Caughfield and Wes Chadwick are the team captains and have proven to be dedicated players and mentors to the other team members. Coach Beck considers their leadership to be a key ingredient to the success of this squad. Rounding out the seniors are Sheldon Swartwood, a fierce defender and basic maniac when it comes to defending his keeper. AJ Hall who can punch a ball at warp 3 into the back of an opponents net, can really generate spectator energy when running with

the ball.

This year's team is comprised of 4 seniors, 7 juniors, 3 sophomores and 4 freshmen. With this make-up the 'Bolts should field a very powerful squad in 2014, one that could propel them into the top of the league bracket. If you've been a bit reluctant to watch a soccer match in the past you might just find yourself yelling GO 'BOLTS next season.



Pictured above: Sheldon Swartwood throwing the ball in.

# Another Golf Season in the Books

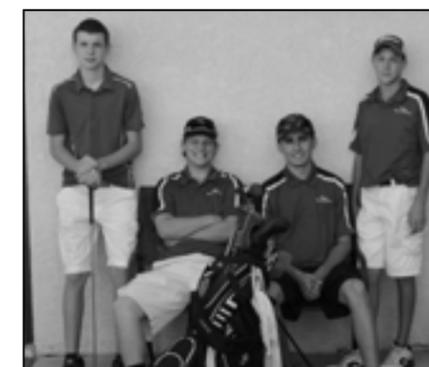
By: Chance Abert

Another season in the books for Rye High School's Golf team! The season ended a bit short when no participant made it to the State Meet. Freshmen, Tanner Houghton and Tomas Ramos were unfortunate when they didn't qualify for regionals. Seniors, AJ Vinci and Ryan Leal led the team to regionals where Nick Maroney and Kyle Shaffer played with their upper classmen.

Kyle Shaffer's highlight of the season was when he shot a 45 on

nine holes. AJ Vinci shot an 86 over 18 holes. Tanner's best was when he shot a 109. When Kyle was asked about what he thought about the team he answered, "We will be better next year." Tanner was asked the same question in which he responded, "Pretty good thinking our team is mostly comprised of freshmen." In their opinion, Ryan and AJ were their top players.

Rye Golf will still have a young team next year with three sophomores, a senior, and surely some new freshmen. If they can over-



Pictured above: The boys that made it to regionals, Nick Maroney, AJ Vinci, Ryan Leal, and Kyle Shaffer, after the tournament

come the loss of their best players, Kyle may be right, they might be a better team overall.

# Rye Thunderbolts Show Their Compassion

So far the football team has had a great season. They have won three of their five league games and have a good shot at taking 2nd place in the league. They played against Buena Vista on October 4th, it was a close game throughout, but in the end the boys lost 35-34. Custer County was played on October 12th and won 41-8.

When Rye played against Buena Vista, Rye heard about their huge tragedy, where the town lost four of its members in a rock climbing accident. The week that this fatal accident happened shocked their entire community and school. Their football team, which lost an excellent assistant coach, still had to push through and come to Rye to play a league game Friday October 4th. The Rye High School staff and students heard about the tragedy and pooled their thoughts together

to offer the students and staff from Buena Vista some sort of peace while coming to Rye. A week later one of the parents mailed a letter to the staff and students at Rye to thank them for their support and help through their hard time. This shows what a great community we live in. Below is the letter that was sent.

*Dear Staff, Students and Parents,*  
*We are football parents from Buena Vista. The display of compassion from your school, football team and fans was almost overwhelming when we traveled to Rye for the game on Friday, October 4th. The red ribbons that you gave to our fans, the moment of silence prior to the game, the banner on our side of the field, the hospitality table, and especially the hugs and salute from your players at the end of a very hard fought football game, were all*

*demonstrations of your concern and support for the BV team, school and town during our time of loss. We thank you for that tremendous tribute. You are truly a "class act". We will always remember that. Thank you!*

*Sincerely, Dana and Becky Johnson (BV football parents)*



Pictured above: Adam Burnett fighting off a block against Buena Vista, while AJ Vinci, Brett Ryder, and Zac Reidhead defend against the pass.

# Cross Country Looks to Keep Rolling

By: **Chance Abert**

Recently, the Rye Cross Country team has finished a few more races. Actually, to be exact they have finished six races since the last article. The team has raced in the Joe Vigil Open, Florence Husky Invitational, Pueblo Central Invitation, Salida Cross Country Invitational, Canon City Cross Country Invitational, and La Junta Cross Country Invitational. Faris Blackhurst finished

in first in three of those races with Sam Ambler and Nick Maroney split the other wins. For the girls, Racheal Maroney was the lead runner for the team in each race.

Cross-country regionals are coming up this week with the team looking great. The team is looking to make an impact at state, hopefully this year.



Pictured above: Sam Ambler running hard

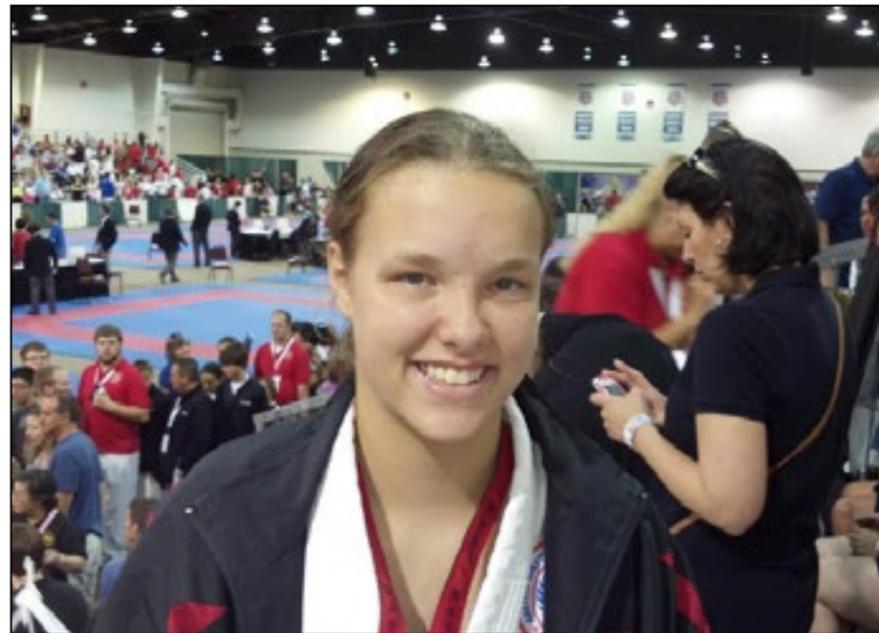
# Getting to Black Belt: My Journey

By: **Stacy Bair**

It all started when I was eleven. From day one, I absolutely loved it. Karate was all I did. For the last four years, it took up all of my free time. In that first class, I can remember how I'd been so young. Now, I have grown up. Karate really has shaped me into someone who is ready to take on life. I have grown up...

I have learned about confidence. My good friend and instructor, Sensei Mike Franco, has taught me confidence, so that in a situation that I'd have to defend myself, I could. But he has also taught me confidence in every other thing I do. I am more confident in school and in life. I used to be so nervous while giving speeches, but now, through karate, I have learned how to be confident with my words. I feel that I am so much more confident than I was four years ago.

I have learned self-discipline. In karate, you have to have self-discipline to be able to buckle down



Pictured above: Stacy at her awards ceremony while earning her black belt.

and to get to the next rank. You have to have even more discipline to get from red to black, the final hurdle. You have to come in even more; you can't get by with just two hours of training each week. I went for four hours a week the last three months of training. You have

to have the devotion to practice every thing over and over. It is hard to go over the same thing every day, all day, but you have to. I owe everything to Sensei Mike, and my parents, for getting me to black belt. I couldn't have done it with out them.

# Bullying at Rye: Shakespeare Theory

By: **Wesley Chadwick**

Is bullying present at a school like Rye? Is it amongst our students and staff who walk these halls every day? Can bullying be prevented at any school and can it avoided?

On Thursday, the 3rd of October, we had a group of actors come into our school and act out a play that showed some signs of bullying and harassment. It was hard to follow due to the Shakespeare language used in the play, but in the end, got the message through to the students and staff listening.

After the play, there were many thoughts and comments about it,

some of which consisted of harsh statements towards some of the actors. Now is this bullying? Rye shouldn't be known for its ability to make people feel bad, now if these actors were trying to make us aware of bullying, and yet we still make fun of them and bully the actors themselves, are we learning anything? If we now know what bullying is, we now need to have the wisdom to do something about it. If those who don't bully do nothing, are they any better than the bullies? Tough questions, yes, but we need to think about these things if anything is to change at Rye High.



Pictured above: Students watching the play that was performed at Rye to teach a lesson about revenge and bullying.

# Science Day at Rye Mountain Park Successful

By: **Samantha Ridings**



Pictured above: Lily Sanders helping students with their leaf zentangle drawings.

Every year, Rye Elementary hosts a Science Day field trip at the Rye Park. While kindergartners through third graders rode up on the bus, the fourth and fifth grade students had the opportunity to walk up to the park and meet the rest of the school there.

Upon arrival, the children were separated by class and spent the day

walking from station to station participating in exciting activities that incorporated science and nature. This year, the science day theme was "animals". The children were given the chance to enjoy learning to appreciate nature and animals by participating in several fun activities and learning experiences. The Nature Center had a speaker at the park that helped the students understand more about the different birds like the falcon, owl, and hawks. The DOW was there as well and spoke about reptiles and had a bear presentation. While Kata Schmidt covered information about composting and looking through magnifying glasses at rocks and bugs. The astronomy club was there with telescopes. Sue Hardesty from the Pueblo Zoo came to explain the different challenges that they give to their animals. Kathy Dodge and her high school science students attended and spoke about the different parts of the water dragonfly. Finally, Mrs. Anglin and her art students came and gave the students a fun rock paint-



Pictured above: Samantha Ridings and Cajun Deuwiger helping the elementary school students paint their rocks.

ing and zentangle project.

The children had a lot of fun this year and are looking forward for this fun way to learn and grow for the rest of their elementary careers. High school students are also given the opportunity to help out the younger kids and have fun volunteering and participating in this fun event. Keep your ear open for next year's Science Day!

# A Moment Captured in Time

By: Kyah Graber

Mrs. Anglin's Photography class took a field trip to the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, to take pictures of the animals as one of their assignments on animal portraits. Although there were many outstanding pictures taken by both her classes, some pictures that stood out were taken by Sarah Lesser.

On September 25th, the class went to the zoo in hopes to capture some amazing and breath taking pictures of the animals that reside there. Sarah did just that, taking over 100 pictures and succeeding in many of them. Sarah is experienced in taking these kinds of pictures before, and commented, "I still had fun even though it was my second time taking these pictures, and even

though I'm older I still like the zoo." One of her best pictures that she had taken has gotten several comments on flicker. Sarah says "this one has to be my favorites because it really emphasizes the monkey and the colors around him, and the monkey was really cute." I asked Sarah if it was hard taking the pictures of the animals, she said, "since they are far away and there are fences it is hard because you have to get the right focus and make sure the distance is good."

Sarah also had some tips she offered to the next class that goes to the zoo, saying "take a lot of pictures because usually only twenty come out great and sometimes not even that many. Also as a personal advice, go see the elephants,

just because they are cool." Sarah uploaded many of her pictures on the photography website flickr.com, and Mrs. Anglin encourages you to check them and the others out at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/rhsphotography/>. The pictures will also be featured out in the hallways by the girls locker room and also the bulletin board by Mrs. Dodges



Pictured above: Sarah captures this cute little creature chowing down on some lettuce.

# Art Class Turns Students into Jaw Dropping Artists

By: Kyah Graber

At Rye high we have many extra art courses that are very popular among the many students that go to the school. One student who stands out is Sam Ridings, whose amazing drawings have captured the attention of many.

Sam has taken the drawing class many times but never gets bored of it. She is always coming up with new pictures and amazing ones at that. One of the very first questions that came to my mind when I saw her drawings was what are her inspirations? When I asked her that she shrugged and smiled, "I draw things that I like." I asked her what her most recent favorite one she drew was and she picked out a skull in an Indian head dress with amazing detail and color features.

She also said, "I just draw what I am into that day, and I love skulls." Although she has always been very talented at drawing Sam commented, "I take the class for fun because I like to draw, but it has helped me." I also asked her if she ever thought about doing a permanent career in drawing or art and she said, "I haven't put much thought into it, but that would defiantly be something



Pictured above: Part of a drawing that Sam has completed

interesting to do."

One of the best in her class, Sam also helps other students come up with ideas and help students draw some amazing things. A lot of the students in the class have improved with the help of Mrs. Anglin and the older students. Every year Mrs. Anglin enters some of her class drawings into art shows, weather at school or the in Pueblo, many of them get recognized. Many art students hope to be entered into the show and be recognized for their masterpieces. I give a special shout out to all the students who happen to make it into the art show. If you are ever in Mrs. Anglin's class check out some of the art she hangs on the walls. I promise it will not disappoint.

# Writing Corner - Show off Your Skills

Mr. Pagnotta, Rye High Schools new junior and senior English teacher, has selected, and will be all year, a few writing samples. He received several essays and has been very impressed with the writing at Rye High School and the following essays were very well written and were above and beyond in the content and writing skills.

*"Courage"*  
By: *Sauvage Lee*

It was never courage. The fear I felt was very real. Let me call it strength; or maybe, I should tell you that it was hope that got me here. It was sickening as I grew old enough to judge my own past. Thoughts clouded my brain, "This shouldn't have happened. Why did no one help me? Why was this put onto me?"

You hoped we wouldn't have to pick through our tragedies, I'm afraid I must. Alcoholism and death have plagued my fathers. My mother, though I love her so, is a topic that doesn't allow me to stop the tears when explaining our relationship. My past is tragic for I look back and see sorrow, guilt, shame, confusion, and rage coming from my eleven year old self. No one warned me how hard my life was to become.

I grew up as a dreamer. I realized very fast that often times the only beautiful thing you will be able to cling to in life is the view; and a good view can teach you a lot. After years of staring at the skies, my soul has become a bird in itself. And while my body is down here trying to make it through, my heart is in

the clouds looking for a better view. And from here comes my hope.

Hope is defined as a desire for some good, accompanied with at least a slight expectation of obtaining it, or a belief that it is obtainable. Happiness is absent in many lives. For those who grew up thinking happiness is a constant lingering emotion, consider your life blessed. You wouldn't think happiness to be a longing, but my heart craves a psychological addiction to my idea of pleasure. The pleasures of driving along the California Coast while the ocean waves crash and fight against the shoreline. Maybe the oceans rage can expose mine as I dream a highway to take me as far from here as I can get.

It didn't take courage each time I packed my bags and started walking. I took a deep hunger for something better. It took faith in myself; believing that I can do anything. It took hope as well as an emotional drive so furious and incredible that not a single soul nor obstacle could prevent the passion in my heart from growing big enough to make me soar. Do you know what courage is? Courage is getting up in the morning and heading to school knowing that no one is going to tell you that they are proud of you when you get home. Courage is giving up current pleasures to work hard knowing that you are your only way to get where you need to be. Courage is having the capabilities to withstand all of life's challenges not only alone, but with faith that you need not be rescued because you are the hero of your own story. Courage is turning a

tragedy into a miracle.

*"Opportunities"*  
By: *Jessica Lauritzen*

Opportunities. Opportunities are like a quick ball racing uncontrollably toward home plate hoping to slide in under the hitter's radar for the strike. You may not realize they are coming until it is too late, or worse you know they are coming but you make the wrong move. In life we are given opportunities like these. They are given so that we ourselves can make a move on a ball before it glides in across your home plate. What becomes of that opportunity is up to you and only you. You are the key to life; henceforth, you choose what doors open and close, you choose what is going to happen next, and you choose the attitude toward it. However, not all situations are easy to make the best of. The tough, exhausting, strenuous situations can take a great amount of strength, determination and occasionally courage.

When my grandfather died in 1995 my Grandmother was given an opportunity. She had the chance to look at the positive things in her life or to completely give up and be struck out. My Grandmother made a choice, the choice to become a strong independent woman. Of course she had a long mournful period of her life as she grieved for her lost husband however, she learned to deal with the facts and carry on with life. She stood up to the plate with all the strength she had left and faced the pitcher with whatever he had to throw at her. She could

*continued on page 10*

*continued from page 9*

have withered away and become scarce to the world, but instead she choose to make a strong stand and focus on all the positive things in her life, like a hitter with two strikes and only one more chance to knock it out of the park. Guess what she did? She smacked that ball so hard you could hear it from miles away. Now it is not always easy to do this but it can be done and she continues to do it to this day. She sits up tall in the stands ever so quietly cheering on all of her grandchildren in her head. She never once misses out on the next thing. She smiles so big her eyes get small, she laughs till she cannot breathe, and she comforts you with her soft words. She is my wonderful grandma.

The lesson to be learned here is that it is not about looking back on your past and seeing everything that has happened but it is about looking at what you have now and making the best of it. You choose how great things are. What your opportunities become is up to you. "Don't let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game (Sam Montgomery)." What move are you going to make next?

### *Confined* *Kayla Mohnney*

This prison that holds me captive bears no walls. There are no guards constantly reminding me that I may not leave. No- instead it's merely my own skin that keeps me confined, and my memory the cold guard that taunts me with freedom. With every deep breath I take in, I am brought back to those wretched days. And with each exhale, the fading sun leaks through my lips,

caressing me with its light for one brief second. Then, all too suddenly, all is dark once more. The prison inside my skin is dark, lonely, and cold. And I can find no means of escape...

### *The Blind Man* *By: Luis Ortiz*

"Courage is the discovery that you may not win, and trying when you know you can lose" (Tom Krause).

You haven't seen courage, met courage, or had any type of courage until you have seen it face to face like I have. Introducing the toughest, roughest, and most incredible dude of them all, my father, Luis Ortiz, Sr. Born February 15th, 1975, my father was already born into a tough situation.

Stewart Avery, my uncle, passed away before he was even a one-year old child, and my dad had to live with my grandma, who was grief-stricken; however at an early age, my grandma knew there was a lot in store. Though he had diabetes growing up as a child and my grandfather wasn't around much because of Vietnam, he was a star both inside and outside of the classroom. He was nothing but a swift, but thrashing wind on the gridiron and diamond, and was a straight-A student. An All-State football and baseball player, he graduated from Granada High in 1993, winning one baseball state championship, and one basketball championship. HE moved on to bigger and better things: a preferred walk-on football player to Kansas State University. Never playing a down before getting hurt, he left Kansas State to work on the railroad, and started our

family with my mother, Tina. Life was great for the three of us for a while. My sister was born in 1998, the same year my dad was nearly crippled working on the railroad. He tried lifting up a really heavy train track and blew out discs at the very bottom of his back.

Being disabled really killed him at first, but when he realized my talents on the baseball diamond, he started a traveling team in which he coached me for several years. We made the decision to move from McClave the summer right before my freshman year. After my freshman year, my dad's diabetes began to eat at his vision, and each day, it just got worse until finally, he couldn't see at all. My dad is courageous because no matter how many times the doctor tells him he may never see again, he fights to be the best supporting dad he can. Most people after finding out they were blinded forever would give up and live life in depression; however, my father was born a fighter. Just because he's partially blind (he has little vision in his left eye), and will never see from his right eye, he lives the normal life of a father.

Even though he isn't like most dads, he pushes me to excel in the classroom and on the baseball diamond, and he is the biggest reason why Division 1 universities, such as Rice and Wichita State, have taken interest in my skills. Yes, he is basically blind, but he never gives up. He does the laundry, makes his own food when my mom isn't home, and most of all, he is there for me every step of the way as I make my journey through the rest of what is called life. Think you can top the courage of a man like my father now? I don't think so!