



THE MOUTH
NOVEMBER 30, 2018

THIS IS THE POETRY ISSUE

BUT FIRST THERE IS PROSE

ENJOY



A Green New Deal for the United States?

From Rufus Seward

On the afternoon of Tuesday, November 20th, climate activists took to the side of the road in Deerfield, MA -- next to Magic Wings butterfly museum -- to wish Representative Jim McGovern a happy birthday, and to ask him if he would support a Select Committee tasked with drafting a Green New Deal. The activists intercepted McGovern during the



Monte Belmonte (right) asks Massachusetts Representative Jim McGovern (left) to share his thoughts on *The Green New Deal*

last leg of Monte Belmonte's titular march. "Happy birthday to you," they sang. "Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday dear Jim, and green jobs for us too!" McGovern showed his support for a green deal, and went on to talk about the importance of measures like these. But what measures are we talking about exactly? What is the Green New Deal? Representative-elect for New York Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has put out a proposal for the existence of a select group of representatives, who would be tasked with setting climate goals for the United States.





The goals in question include, according to the Sunrise Project:

- (1) 100% of national power generation from renewable sources**
- (2) Building a national, energy-efficient, “smart” grid**
- (3) Upgrading every residential and industrial building for state-of-the-art energy efficiency, comfort and safety**
- (4) Decarbonizing the manufacturing, agricultural and other industries**
- (5) Decarbonizing, repairing and improving transportation and other infrastructure**
- (6) Funding massive investment in the drawdown and capture of greenhouse gases**
- (7) Making “green” technology, industry, expertise, products and services a major export of the United States, with the aim of becoming the undisputed international leader in helping other countries transition to completely carbon neutral economies and bringing about a global Green New Deal**





Fifteen representatives have stated their support already. Were the Committee to exist, they would have until the beginning of 2020 to draft a Green New Deal, and until March of that year to create legislation.



Judging by the conviction of those pushing for this proposal, it seems that many have faith in using the political system to achieve climate change goals. This is not easy, given the recent United Nations report stating a 12-year window to affect climate reform, as well as other numerous warnings from scientists. However, defeat is not the prevailing mood among the people of the Pioneer Valley, and real action is happening! The **grit** of the people shows that all is not lost.





November Crew Council Updates

From Gina Magin

Division 1: Following the annual Halloween dance in October, the crew council of Division 1 would like to appreciate how well this event had gone. They'd like to thank the teacher chaperones that helped out with the dance and gave their time, and the students that helped plan it. There was much Halloween spirit, and it was very enjoyable!

Division 2: The concerns mentioned in the division two crew council centered around the messy hallways up on the second floor of the high school. Their idea for the solution is to start a new Cleaning Club, which you can sign up for in the winter club session!

Division 3: The juniors and seniors noticed that previously, the bins that hold our compost, trash, and recycling were not being used properly! Now, they would like to shed some light on the new and improved bins in the lunch room, with fresh new paint. Coming soon are informational signs that help guide us in properly sorting our lunch items!

General Crew Council Notes: All divisions would like to appreciate our new lunch server, Mr. Smith! They thank him for making sure everyone gets fed and doing it with a smile on his face!

Crew Council meetings are placed on the school's calendar (available on the Four Rivers website). Please gather Questions, Kudos, and Concerns to your crew's council representatives before the meetings, and they will be discussed in your division's crew council meeting!





GENDER BENDER BALL

\$3 tickets
available at
office starting
TODAY!

*All high schoolers
encouraged to come!*

Friday, December 14th
7 - 9:30 PM

**Feel free to
dress up ;-)**

\$5 tickets
at the door

**ALL PROCEEDS
WILL GO TOWARDS
DONATIONS**





STUDENT POETRY

The inner workings of my brain

Sometimes my brain goes 1,000 miles a minute.
Due dates, work schedules, frisbee games,
all circling around like a tornado,
demolishing every sense of control that I thought I had.

If only there was a switch that could turn it off.
Calm the tornado,
clear my mind,
silence the hundreds of reminders.

I mean, there are times when it's quiet.
You know when you dive underwater
and suddenly the world is tranquil.
Just you and your brain.

I wish I had more moments like that.
But, ever since I have grown up and dealt with the chaos of high
school,
my brain resembles a natural disaster
far more often than a serene lake.





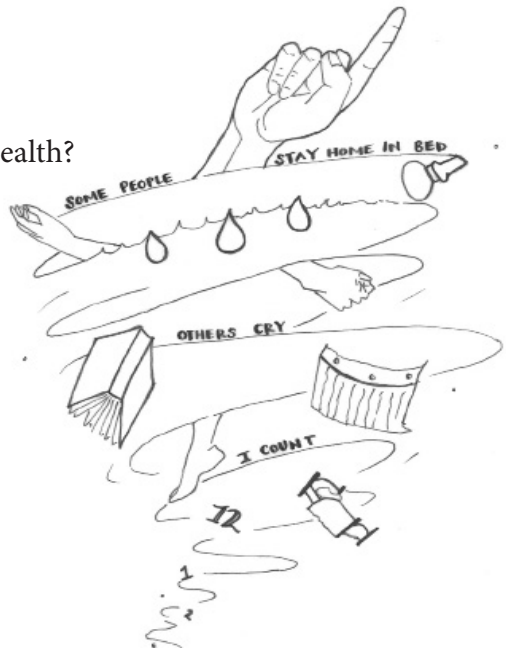
Anxiety shows itself in many ways.
Some people stay home in bed,
others cry,
I count.

12 taps on the right leg, 12 taps on the left leg.
Be sure to touch the door handle with each hand in the same spot,
and if you stub your left pinky toe,
my God do not forget to stub your right one too.

My therapist calls these “OCD like tendencies”
I call it finding a way to feel
like I have even an ounce of control,
as I am drowning in the very lake I once considered a calm home.

See, on top of all the deadlines and assignments,
teenagers are still expected to relieve anxiety.
But, how can it be possible for us to finish three essays
study for the SAT’s,
get to work,
spend time with my family,
play a sport,
hang out with friends,
and still have solid mental health?

-JAIDA BUCHANAN



the universe is spinning

slowly

into stars .

like tea

with milk

and

sugar





November

Did I lose myself and if so, who was it that was lost? I can't act like I knew me before. I was just wandering in a peaceful bliss. Knowing who I was wasn't an immediate need because I was happy. Am I happy now? Or do I just fake it to put myself at ease? It's scary to not have a drive. What am I propelling myself towards? My eyes have gone dark in the darker darkness. Of course, I haven't forgotten the beauty which is all around me. I'm not that lost. I remind myself to be grateful for everything which surrounds me. For the creation which carries me forward. The sunrise is enough to be grateful for, but the sunrise disappears when my eyes close and the sadness returns. I want to chase it away but instead, I cry myself to sleep. And as November comes it brings the cold bite of winter and I wish I could just rest an extra second, at least until the warm days of spring return.

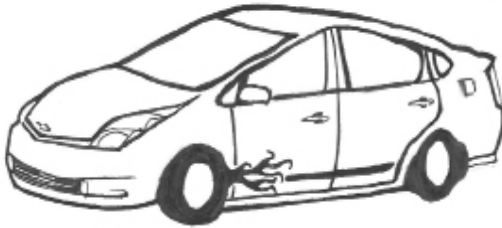
- SAGE KAISER



Sophie's car

My Prius is not great.
And her name is Petunia.
Plus, also, there's flames.

-SOPHIE JACOBSON-CARROLL



PETUNIA

I want a boyfriend

I want a boyfriend
Or just a friend
10 numbers please write down
I'll turn your smile into a frown

-ANONYMOUS



the

worries

remember

the

warrior





Fossil Feuds

On an unusually warm day in February, my confused tulips slide up through the soft soil. Next week, they're stifled by drifts of sooty snow. I want to watch them leaf and bloom. I want to watch it all. The red-bellied woodpecker flitting from my birdfeeder to our Norway maple, the fields transforming from crispy gold to swathes of lush green, and my dog leaping with graceful legs over fallen trees on our wanders through the woods.

Our love affair with fossil fuels is hot and passionate. We are the abuser and our planet will bear the scars for millennia.

With their degrees from Harvard and Yale, those men in office know they've created havoc for our generation. They've stuffed the bribes of lobbyists deep into their ironed breast pockets with greedy little hands.

Now I don't want to be another angry poet, but sometimes I just want to march into those silky offices and THROTTLE the necks of those men. Gently.

Pacific Islanders watch lapping waves consume their arable land and President Mamau wonders how his people will eat and drink next month.

Donald lounges in his golf cart while sprinklers satisfy the incessant thirst of golf course turf. "Hmm, will I have KFC or Mar-o-Lago dining tonight?"

Does Donald listen to the ballads of songbirds outside the oval office or admire the cherry blossoms unfurling on the Mall? If he loved our world beyond, plush resort lawns, fried food, simpering fans and himself, then maybe he'd want to savor it, SAVE it, like me.

-MAGSY LOMBARD



Greed



Kills

A Rambling reflection from within the concussed mind

Mum tells me I move too fast.

Maybe that's why I'm sitting in English with a throbbing temple

Wearing earplugs and sunglasses.

Yah...I know I'm cool.

My hypothesis?

While I have been graced with fine motor skills

Displayed in my obsession with creating stuff with my hands

My spatial awareness is greatly lacking.

OR, maybe the metal fuel tank hit me.

Not likely.

This isn't the first time my inability to coordinate my limbs has
landed me

With more than a couple of scratches.

Shall I set the scene?

Polished terracotta tiles. Soft slippery socks. Hands full of salted
almond chocolate.

Cute boy Liam on the couch.

With utmost grace, our heroine saunters across center stage to-
wards the kitchen.

Woosh! Socks slide out from under.

CLUNK

Ow...my wrist. Drat.

Unphased she rises to her feet like a feeble thread of smoke drifting
from a candle.

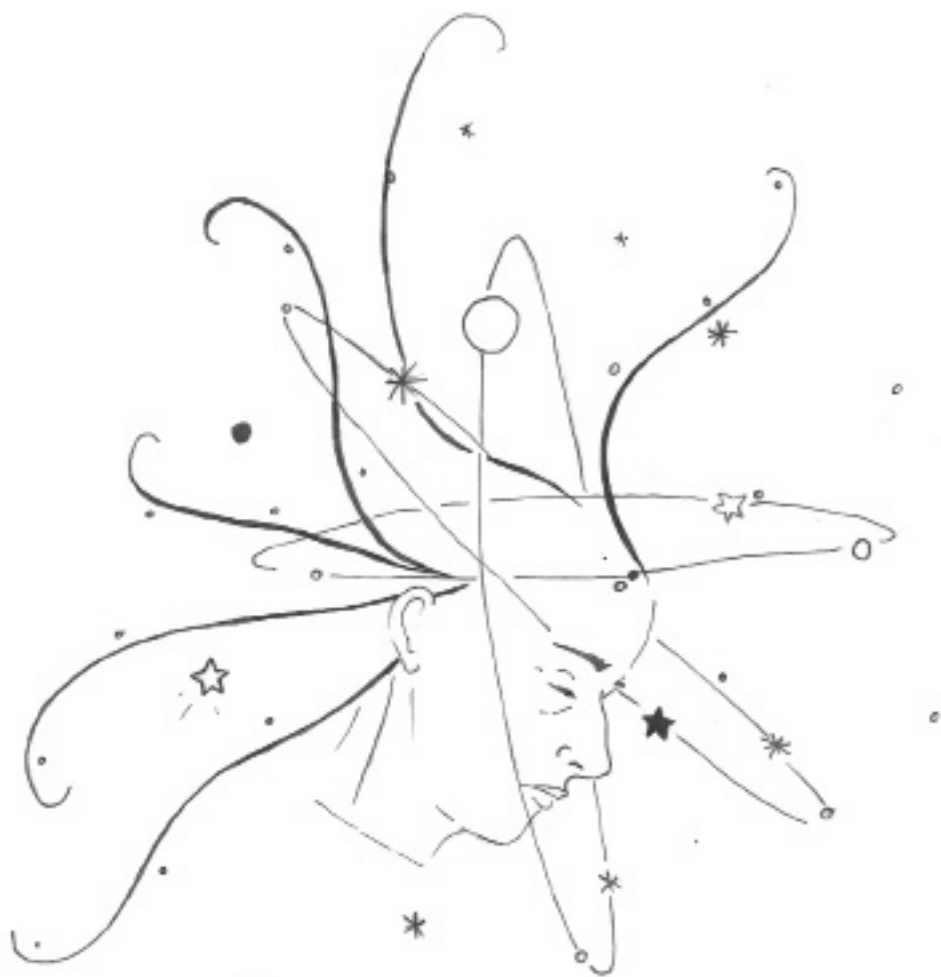
"Ooh I feel woozy..."

Takes a few steps. THUD. She's out, folks.

Like I'm actually unconscious, writhing on the floor, and my mum
has to call paramedics.

And so began the downward spiral, a reinforcing feedback loop
of incoordination and headaches

- A WHISTFUL HEADACHEY TEENAGER



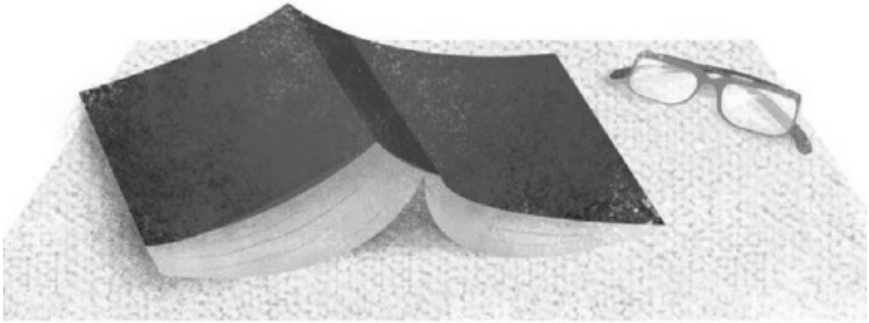


the

pathway

falls

when



we

didn't

take

steps

NEXT ISSUE:

NATURE

START WRITING!



The Mouth of the Mouth Vol. 2

From Andrew Patari

I've been asked often why I eat school lunch. Though I did get school lunch when I was a student, I think the roots of my lunch practices really developed when I was in the Peace Corps in Guatemala. I spent two years in a Mayan village in the southern Peten rainforest. Before I could begin my work in the schools there I needed to adapt to their culture. The Peace Corps buzzword was "integration." One of my most successful strategies for integrating myself into the community revolved around food. Neighbors regularly invited me to eat with them and I made a point of accepting every invitation. There were days that I ate multiple lunches as a way to dig deeper into the local culture.

I left Peace Corps with a renewed belief in the power of food, especially shared food, as a way to connect with the people around me. To me, this is just as true for school lunch as it is for when I make a family recipe for a friend. Plenty of students get the school lunch, and by opting to have the same meal they receive I am doing something that is really important for a teacher: getting a reminder of what the student experience is like, even if it is in a small way.



These lunches serve as a cotidian connection to the people I spend my professional life working with. The benefits go beyond mere nutrition to a point of bringing me closer to my students. The more I think about it, the more I start to ask myself, why not eat school lunch? I'd like to propose a new movement among teachers to join in eating hot lunch, even just once a week. If the quality of the lunch is the main deterrent, perhaps our voices could help engender further





reform to the school lunch program as a way to improve the options available to everyone. So here's the pitch, fellow educators: try getting hot lunch once a week. If we agree to do this on Thursday we could call it "Hot Lunch Jueves" (that's Spanish for almuerzo Thursday) Food and culture are intertwined just about everywhere you look. Adding to our already strong school culture by eating french toast sticks and smiley fries sounds like a win-win situation to me.

Let's look at some notable meals from the last month:

11/8 - Homemade Shepherd's Pie

I've noticed that dinner rolls and garlic knots always accompany top-tier school lunches. Whether sitting aside the trusty pasta Wednesday main dish, or accompanying popcorn chicken and mashed potatoes, this gluteny sidekicks sure keep tasty company. Today's dish was no exception. The shepherd's pie was well seasoned (a welcome rarity in our low-sodium lunch program) and was filling enough to keep me from wanting a snack a few blocks later. I suggest a dash of hot sauce to help liven up the starchiness of the mashed potatoes.

11/13 - Chicken and Cheese Quesadilla

This looked a lot like the kind of lunch Chef Sam has been providing, and if you read my last column you know that's high praise from me. The flatbread, the zesty sauce, and a side dish (black bean salsa) with both flavor and an inviting color palette all resembled the Chef's work. I take it as a good sign that Sam's ideas are working their way into our regularly scheduled lunches and hope to see this trend continue.





11/15 - Thanksgiving Dinner

Whenever this lunch is being served, I run down the steps by my room approximately three times faster than I would during an actual fire alarm. Yet this year's edition of the classic feast left me feeling a little disappointed. The main problem was that cranberry sauce wasn't actually served, despite being on the menu. I hadn't realized how central the taste and appearance of cranberry sauce is to the concept of Thanksgiving for me.

That's it for now, see you in the lunch line!





Rufus' Ruminations

Ask Rufus, a Man With Simply Too Much Advice

How do I separate myself from toxic friends?

If your friends are causing you harm, then I would recommend cutting off **all communication** and **physical contact** immediately. This is because people can be hurtful, but especially if they are perceived to be your allies. Them being in close proximity only gives more time for them to strike. So don't give **black mambas** or **poisonous fish** your trust, as they are highly toxic, and make up a large percentage of Four Rivers' student body. Your friend Jeff might have a sweet pool, but less sweet are the toxins he's waiting to pump into your body. Similarly, if your friends are made of **arsenic** or **mercury**, stay away. Your bestie Melinda is probably just 10 mg of dimethylmercury in a trench coat, so be careful.

How do I repair my image in a small community when I've been profiled as a player?

The trick here is to wear a **huge stone wheel** around your neck. That way when someone says "I bet they get frisky quite often," all of their friends will **ridicule them** and say "no, their neck would snap if they tried to do anything of that nature with such a large slab of rock surrounding it." The person who said this will then be ostracized from their friend group, and likely from the school entirely. Tough luck; at least the **reasonable people** realize how incapable you are of such things. Plus, bearing this (literal) burden on your shoulders will make you incapable of other things, too! You will no longer be able to play sports, and depending on the size of the wheel, **wear shirts properly**. However, this will only serve to give you **an air of individualism**. Soon, the whole school will be wearing large stone wheels around their necks. **All sports will be abandoned**, and people will instead fashion a second wheel to





their feet, and roll each other down hills and roads. This will eliminate all need for cars and usher in a **new green age**.

How might one enjoy high school a little more?

As Carl Jung once said, “variety is the spice of life.” So spice things up! Give yourself a **different name**. Consider having **different parents**. Hell, go to a different school. And while you’re at it, drop out! But simultaneously maintain a 5.0 GPA. It’s actions like these that will keep life interesting. When it comes time to go to college, become a professor and **teach yourself the class**. And then enroll as a student, and give yourself a hard time. To others, it will look like you are talking to yourself, or that you are hearing voices. And this is perfect, as one of the most integral experiences in a person’s life is **being profiled as absolutely wacko** and becoming **institutionalized**. And by this point, you’re only 22! Once you get out, consider **going to high school again** just to really make the most of it. You’ll want to put yourself up for adoption, and then once you find your guardians, make up a new backstory to wow your peers. Or just use the one you already have! Disgraced, institutionalized, twenty-something professors with an impeccable, nonexistent education tend to do the best anyway.

My best friend is asexual. How do I talk to her about relationships when they outright disgust her?

I do not believe you have considered the reality here: it is **your relationships** which bother her. I mean, heck, she’s probably not even asexual. She likely says this, so she does not have to hear about the **raccoon man** in the **trench coat** whom you dated last week. What was he? A raccoon? A man? Where did you think that would lead? He only wanted you for your trash! Anyway, the only solution is to date the blandest, most milquetoast of partners. You know little Bobby Brighteyes you sit next to in chemistry? It might look like nothing is happening in his mind, and that’s because **nothing is happening in his mind**. But at least he’ll take you out to dinner,





even if he tries to **pay using the complimentary breadsticks**. (This will be resolved once you jostle his wallet from his utility vest.) Once your friend sees this, surely her take on relationships will change. Who doesn't like a simpleton who provides free food?

What artists, musical or otherwise, should I be familiar with by adulthood?

I suggest Can, Grace Jones, and **Pavement**.

What if you're doing it all wrong?

Your life would be fairly boring if you were doing it all right, wouldn't it? In fact, studies have shown that the amount you are doing "wrong" in your life directly correlates to how interesting your life is. Therefore, you had **ought to start doing everything wrong!** What's 2 + 2? Fleventy-seven. What color is the sky? Chartreuse. Where is Jupiter? It's a town in Florida where my great-grandfather lived in his old age. (Actually, that one's true) You should fail a science test, and then retake it, only to **make up more questions**, which you also get wrong. The next time someone asks you for directions, give them detailed directions to get to **Wichita, Kansas**. They will be bewildered by this, and so will you, as you have **never been to, or thought about Wichita, Kansas** before. But that's the power of being wrong.

What if I'm attracted to giraffes?

If this were any other endangered mammal, I would tell you to keep on keepin' on. However, unless you are also a giraffe, you will be **incompatible**. This is why I suggest instead finding a network of people who practice speed dating on stilts. This will simulate the feeling of having an incredibly long neck, while also giving you the **common decency not to engage in bestiality**. Now that I come to think of it, match.com has an excellent section for those who would





prefer to wear stilts. Now the problem is getting to your date!
(Except of course that you can remove the stilts. Never forget that part.)

A friend of mine is transferring to a college almost 5,000 miles away. I just realized I have a crush on them, but I don't think they reciprocate my feelings. Should I tell them, or would that only bring pain?

Your only real recourse in this situation is to **move 6,000 miles away** from your friend first. This will make them jealous, and cause them to move **7,000 miles** away instead to get back at you. Therefore your only option will be to move **8,000 miles**, and so on. Eventually, you will both end up in the same place you started. The two of you will have no money after your attrition-fueled travel war, and will, therefore, be **forced to stay**. At this point, you will realize how much time and energy you spent towards the other, and finally uncover what was there all along: love.

Rufus Seward, P.H.D. apologizes to any and all whose questions were not selected for this issue of The Mouth. He is very busy.

