



THE PHOENIX OF PHILLIPS

Literary works and photography from the Phillips neighborhood

Volume Two • January 2016

Free in Phillips, \$1 suggested donation



Photo credit: Youth Photographers from the Semilla Center for Healing and the Arts at St. Paul's Lutheran Church



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Volume Two

January 2016

The Phoenix of Phillips
(El Fenix de Phillips)
612-724-3862
2742 15th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55407

EDITOR:

Patrick Cabello Hansel

STUDENT EDITORS:

Belem Gomez Vega, Marcela Perez,
Talia Cabello Hansel

Printed by Page 1 Printers

Layout by Soleil Graphics

To submit work for next issue,
Contact: Editor at above address
Or e-mail: stpaulscreate@gmail.com

The Phoenix of Phillips is a project
Of the Semilla Center
for Healing and the Arts
Of St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Facebook: Semilla Project
www.stpaulschurchmpls.org

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The Phillips area is comprised of four
neighborhoods: Ventura Village, Phillips West,
Midtown Phillips and East Phillips.
The boundaries of the Phillips community are
Interstate 94 to the north, Hiawatha Avenue to
the east, Lake Street to the south,
and Interstate 35W to the west.

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CONTRIBUTORS

ED EMERSON, VIRGINIA MCCONNELL, FRAN NELSON, ED CONWAY, PAM JOHNSON AND PATRICIA ANITA YOUNG are all residents of Ebenezer buildings, and participants in their Life Long Learning Program.

BARB MARTINSON has been writing over a year to have her work considered. This is her first appearance in *The Phoenix of Phillips*.

LUISA CABELLO HANSEL is co-pastor of St. Paul's, and Artistic Director of the Semilla Center for Healing and the Arts. She writes of the beauty and the struggle of her native Chile. This is her second appearance in *The Phoenix of Phillips*.

PATRICK CABELLO HANSEL has published poetry, short stories and essays in over 30 journals and anthologies. His novella "Searching" was serialized in 33 issues of *The Alley*. You can see his work at http://www.mnartists.org/Patrick_Cabello_Hansel. He blogs about his passion for justice and beauty at www.spiritwound.blogspot.com.

ELIZABETH HENDERSON is a resident of St. Paul's Home, a senior apartment building in Phillips.

TAMMY KEITH is a resident of St. Paul's Home, a senior apartment building in Phillips. This is her second appearance in *The Phoenix of Phillips*.

DONNA NESTE is a long-term resident of Phillips and recently retired as coordinator of community ministries at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church.

JOHN RICHARD works as the Employment Manager at Waite House (Pillsbury United Communities) in the Phillips Community. When not at work, John is an avid reader, amateur poet and urban gardener. This is his second appearance in *The Phoenix of Phillips*.

SANDY SPIELER'S work includes tiny puppet shows, community collaborative performances, main stage theater productions, and public art installations. Her works about Water are an on-going passion, and she loves this Phillips community, working or living here since 1973, and in 2014 was awarded the (surprise) Distinguished Artist of the Year Award from the McKnight Foundation.

PAT WILLIS VINCENT is an artist and poet, and a resident of St. Paul's Home, a senior apartment building in Phillips.

In the interest of safety, no identifying information is provided for our youth writers. They're all great!

Photographs in this issue were taken by youth photographers in the summer master class: Ave, Belem, Joey, José, Marian, Marcela, Talia.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the 2nd edition of *The Phoenix of Phillips!* In this issue, we celebrate the theme of "My Beautiful Community"—a theme which is both a description of our neighborhood, and a hope. Too often, Phillips is portrayed in the media as a place of crime and decay. In these pages you can see the generous spirit and beauty of the people who live here and the land we inhabit, growing like a Semilla, a seed of hope.

The writers featured here are not unaware of the challenges facing our community, but have chosen to be beacons of light. From young children to elders, they are voices that shine.

NOTA DEL EDITOR

¡Bienvenidos a la 2a. edición de El Fénix de Phillips! En esta edición celebramos el tema "Mi Hermosa Comunidad" – un tema que es a la vez descripción y esperanza para nuestro vecindario. A menudo se asume que Phillips es un lugar de crimen y decadencia. En estas páginas encontrarán testimonios del espíritu generoso y la belleza de nuestra comunidad, la cual continúa creciendo como una Semilla, una semilla de esperanza.

Los escritores representados aquí estamos plenamente conscientes de los desafíos que enfrenta Phillips, sin embargo hemos escogido ser un faro de luz. Desde niños hasta ancianos, estas voces brillan.

THE PHOENIX OF PHILLIPS VOL. 3

The Next Issue of *The Phoenix of Phillips* will be published in June, 2016. The theme is "This Is My Story." Writers of any level who live or work in Phillips are invited to submit their work no later than April 15, 2016 to stpaulscreate@gmail.com.



A LOVE LETTER

Dear Beautiful Community—

Do you know how much I love you?
I met you by chance, “placed” right smack here in Phillips as I arrived to this big city so many years ago. Now if my work takes me far away, I miss you with a deep ache.

Your charm remains slyly hidden, never described in tourist books. Rather, yours is a beauty emanating from the pure honesty of the joys and brutality of daily life that is etched into your skin.

You are so enormous, I cannot always grasp who you are. You are a vulnerable raw tangle that snakes around softening the sharp edges, like an animal seeking the warmth of another, seeking nourishment, rising and twisting in unexpected ways. Your branches and blades of grass expose your endlessly generative will to live. Your eyes speak a truth beyond time.

Our story together is rich! As I walk, moments of our life together come tumbling forth. Words spoken at this place.
An embrace here.
There, the motorcycle accident.
That day the kale first broke ground from this corner lot. The colors of the peonies in front of this house; they call me back, again and again.
Here, I wept with the poem tacked onto this tree.
Here, the raccoon surprised me one evening night.
From this place I gathered the branches for my first Christmas tree.
A woman sat on that corner each Tuesday for a whole year.
Here, right here, you found your balance on the stilts, wearing a smile rivaling the sun itself.
And this is the house where polka music sang so insistently; I just had to meet you.

Ours is an unfinished ever-unfolding story.

I am always grateful for our relationship and thrive with your immense energy, yet sometimes I crave a solace so deep you may wonder why I do not answer the door when you knock. Please understand this does not diminish my love or attention for you. You are not always healthy, nor am I. Sometimes you frighten me.
Your eyes cry out some deep pain I cannot fully understand.
I long to hold you until this throbbing pain melts into an easier breath.
Please, let me hold you.
And please, hold me.
When I die, I want to die in your arms

You, my Beautiful Community, my BELOVED Community
BEing LOVED by me,
BEing LOVE to me
Thank you!

Sandy Spieler

MARIGOLDS

Marigolds marching along the front walk, surviving the first frost, like an orange and burgundy sunset.
Father – do you remember cutting them out of their plastic containers, digging the ground for their new home?
The people down the street have gigantic marigolds, a foot tall at least.
I think of you as I walk by.
They are survivors of this season too.

Pat Willis Vincent

SENSUUM DEFECTUI

By the time he was twelve his parents stopped bothering to check his homework against his neatly-kept assignment book. He was used to patiently warming the little league bench, watching better players run up scores that might get him to bat in the final innings. The Tridentate Latin felt smooth and sweet on his tongue when he knelt at the foot of the altar.

But none of this prepped him for the strange soft churn he felt in his gut that late Sunday afternoon when, walking to assist at Benediction, he saw Joey Gallant smoking with the big guys by Bovardi's dumpster. None of this helped him understand why that evening, for the first time, he forgot to ring the sanctuary bells when Fr. De Roche raised the monstrance.

John Richard

MEMORIES

Dancing – Oh how he held me!
So soft – so firm –
He whirled me around and around the dance floor –
Everything was a blur...
The music went faster –
He guided me in and out and around other dancers
People watched us –

Oh how beautiful was our dancing!

Barb Marlinson

SUMMER CRIME WAVE

Call the mismatched asphalt patch
at the dead-end of Stoddard Terrace
Canada - cross the line and you're safe.
But why be a robber
if the cops can't chase you?

And the mossy strip
between old man Cadillo's shed
and the Boudreau's vine covered fence
call it jail.
You can escape from either end,
but only holding the hand of a free robber.

For kids from factory families
four-thirty suppers opened to
long summer evenings
a hilly city neighborhood
built before strict zoning codes
provided plenty of lairs for young criminals
to lay in giggling ambush.

The cops prowled
wary of well aimed barrages
of tiny green windfall apples
as the robbers moved on.
We were thieves with honor
anything larger was off limits
and sticky burrs would end the game.

Who had been robbed?
Why were the police on this rampage?
Not important, really
The game was a novel with a familiar title
and a plot of blank pages
left to the reader's imagination.

Sides were determined by tossing pennies
who wanted to be a cop, after all?
And forget about the dogs
they worked for the police
no matter whose family fed them.

Street lights slowly brightened
to a ceasefire as we headed home.
“Who won?” someone's dad would call from a porch,
crumbling an empty beer can.

Foolish grown-up question.

After all, on a long summer evening
who cares if crime pays?

John Richard

APRIL NEWS

A very local sign of spring —
Carol bends over to tend to an iris,
one hand steady on her cane, one hand flinging

aside Creeping Charlie. I'm telling you, this
is the last year I'm doing this! She's
standing now, denouncing the avarice

of landlords, mocking the block association's follies,
sharing the low-down
on new neighbors. Her knees

audibly creek as she stoops down
to her flower bed. Those lilacs could have stood a wetter fall.
Under her orthopedic step, brown

leaves crumble back to the soil. All
seems in place this morning: the sun
warming the city landscape, a small

bit of the ordinary, hard won
from years of watchful care. Nothing is amiss
here, except the crabgrass spreading to overrun

the pansies. That stuff is my nemesis ...
I'm telling you, this is the last year I'm doing this!

John Richard

AROUND THE BONFIRE

Marcela stirs the flames, then stirs
the air with her fire stick,
sending sparks up to the darkness,
Belem shouts “I hate rabbits!”
but the smoke still stings her eyes,
Talia begins to sing, by herself,
in a quiet corner of the yard,
Pastor Luisa brings hot chocolate
out from the house, and Natasha
the marshmallows and chips,
and as the fire softens and glows,
and as our faces flicker,
and as cars and dogs pass by
unannounced, all the night
creatures, big and small,
living and dead, the baby
rabbits, the wrens, the last
mosquitoes of the year, and
the long-lost ancestors
from their graves join
our own winding spirits
and watch from the shadows.
Watch. Wait. Wonder.

Patrick Cabello Hansel

CHILE ES UN PAÍS CON FALDAS

¿Quién dijo que Chile es un país con pantalones?
¡No, mi amigo! ¡Chile es un país con faldas! De punta a rabo sus faldas maternales se deslizan desde la cima de las montañas más altas, cubriendo con decoro sus contornos exuberantes.

Who says that Chile is a country with pants? No, my friend, Chile is a country with skirts. Long skirts that come out the highest mountains, to cover with decor the exuberance of its contort.

Chile es un país de faldas largas que remojan sus bordes en las costas indómitas de Arica y Valparaíso, Concepción y Chiloé. Faldas entumecidas de la Patagonia y Magallanes. Faldas que se aprisionan entre los recovecos caprichosos del sur hecho pedazos y que lloran la muerte de sus hijos, tomados de entre sus brazos por la fuerza por las olas embravecidas. Faldas blancas de nieve endurecida, teñida de la sangre de su miseria y su bravura. Sangre oscurecida por las vidas truncadas en la larga noche de la desesperanza.

Chile, tierra de faldas que se levantan galopantes al ritmo de la cueca y pícaras muestran la pantorrilla. Chile, tierra de faldas de los telares ancestrales que tejen con los colores opacos de los días nublados. Chile de faldas jubilosas, que abrigan a sus cantores y poetas y se adhieren las mujeres flacas de donde cuelgan los niños que buscan refugio ante el pavor de la tierra convulsionada.

Chile es un país de faldas desgarradas con violencia de los que se apellidan rapiña. Por aquellos que han saqueado su vientre de la riqueza y del pan de los desamparados.

¿Quién dijo que Chile es un país con pantalones?
Chile es un país de faldas con nombres llamados
Javiera, Violeta y Michelle.

Luisa Cabello Hansel



MS. DONNA LOOKS FOR A CAR

When I retired I said to myself, "Ms. Donna, as soon as the next big thing goes wrong with your big gas-guzzling Ford Taurus Station Wagon it's going to Public Television." They had been asking for it for years. "Donate your car to a good cause."

I had been hauling kids and supplies in the "Mother Ship" for years, but I wasn't going to need it in this new stage of my life. Just like clock-work, my radiator sprung a leak two weeks after my retirement party. I was on the highway, on my way home from visiting my mother-in-law who lives ninety miles south of me. I was about twenty miles from home when it happened. When the tow-truck came, I gave the driver my home address.

During the following few days I was on the internet, perusing Car Soup, and Craig's List. My sister Catherine, who lives with me and is not yet retired, generously offered up her Saturday to drive me around and share her knowledge. She's far more mechanical and can spot a problem with just a test drive.

I found a number of promising used cars. One was a Mitsubishi with just a little over a hundred thousand miles for \$2,500. And, since it is against my religion to purchase a car for more than three thousand dollars, it appeared to be the perfect deal for me. It was being offered off the used car lot of a Cadillac dealership in a western suburb. I called and found out that they still had it. So, Catherine and I made the trip. When we got there, we saw that they were crazy busy. It was one of the first nice days of spring, after a long and brutal winter. I had recently read that car dealers that winter were really hurting, because no one wanted to come out in twenty below zero weather to look for a car. However, it seemed as though all the car dealerships were making up for their losses on that one Saturday. We were asked if we could wait because it was going to be a while before any of the sales persons could take us for a test drive. We were then directed to the waiting area. "There's coffee around the corner," we were told.

Coffee indeed. Around the corner was a lounge, the likes of no other I had ever seen. This inner-city, junker-buyer girl was used to waiting rooms with greasy floors, worn out furniture and a pot of coffee that's been sitting on the hot plate all day. The waiting area of this swank place was larger than our living room and dining room combined. It was furnished with comfortable leather arm chairs and couches with high-end magazines on the coffee tables. Lining one wall was a number of computer stations offering Wi Fi. But the kicker was the coffee! Instead of the bitter offerings of the bottom-feeder car dealerships

I was use to, they had an automated espresso machine in which you could choose, a single, double or triple latté, cappuccino, espresso, or just plain coffee.

Catherine and I were enjoying our coffee and perusing the 'zines catching up on million dollar mansion real state, lake shore property and cabins in the five hundred thousand dollar and up range, the kind of jewelry you don't find in a pawn shop, the best hotels in Europe for your summer trip planning, and the latest procedures in cosmetic surgery, when after forty-five minutes a young lady came looking for us. "There's someone ready to take you on that test drive," she said. The sales person led us to the Mitsubishi, put the key in the ignition and turned on the engine, out of which emitted the loud sound of a sick muffler. He offered me the driver's seat, while Catherine took the passenger side and he hopped in the back. I headed for the near-by highway and away we went. "It's sort of loud," Catherine shouted.

"Well, I've been doing this for years, now, and I can tell you that that's just a small hole in the muffler that can be fixed real cheaply," said the sales person. Catherine and I rolled our eyes at each other, knowing that it could also be the whole exhaust system in need of replacing and that doesn't come cheap. As we turned onto the highway and faced the sun, both Catherine and I reached for the sun visors to discover, there were none.

"No visors?" we asked. "Why aren't there any visors?" "Because, this is a sixteen year old car," stated the salesperson, like it's an automatic given that sixteen year old cars don't have visors. "You aren't going to do any better in this price range." "I have a seventeen year old car and my sister has an eighteen year old car and we both have visors in our cars," I said. Once again we were doing the eye-roll thing.

Then Catherine leaned over to me and said, "Do you think you could get along without a glove compartment?" as she pointed out that this too had been ripped out, and we both pointed that out to the salesperson. Once again he stated that we were not going to find anything better in that price range and once again we were rolling our eyes, knowing that these two ghetto girls have been buying and driving junkers all our adult lives and knew damn well we could do better. I then turned into a parking lot off the highway to give Catherine a shot at driving. She noticed some things that I hadn't. She said that when she put on the brakes it pulled a little. "That's an indication that you may need a brake job soon," she told me. She also pointed out that it shook a lot.

"Let's go back to the dealership," I said. As we were pulling in, the salesperson repeated his mantra about not being able to find anything better in our price range. We just smiled, but before we left, Catherine asked if they had anything else in that price range. "Just a few SUVs," he said. Just what I needed, another big gas guzzler. We told him we were going to look some more, and got the hell out of there. If a car is that beat up on the inside, you can only imagine how the previous owner must have driven it and abused the engine,

the brakes and everything else that keeps a car running.

That evening, we were on our way to a friend's house to play cards with "the girls." As we were driving down Lake Street I had mentioned that I saw some pretty good cars for a reasonable price at a dealership close by. Catherine suggested we stop. We spotted a Honda. "How much is this one?" Catherine asked. The person in the lot said that it was his car, but he would sell it to me for twenty five hundred. I made a little noise and crinkled up my face.

"Ok then, two thousand," he immediately said and added that he would fix the rust around the wheels.

"Let's take it for a test drive," I said to Catherine. We called our friend and told her we were going to be a little late. I let Catherine drive because, like I said, she can discern trouble. "Wow" said Catherine as soon as we hit the road, "this feels like my Acura. It's zippy with a nice tight engine. I'd buy this car." We arranged for a purchase. On Monday, I returned with cash in hand and drove away with my Honda; (visors, glove compartment and all) for five hundred dollars less than the car we were told we couldn't do any better in that price range.

Donna Neste

WALKING—LAKESIDE—COOL BREEZES

Young girls in tight jogging shorts – tight bodies – running past me.
Young men – muscular – running
Couples engaged in deep conversations
Groups of young women walking, talking
I hear bits of conversations as they walk past me.
The warm air feels good on my skin as I walk past the water.
The leaves rustle –
My thighs tighten as I walk – my shoulders straighten and my stride lengthens
I continue walking – a dog catches my eye and the owner slows her step as I reach down to pet her dog.
They continue in their direction, I in mine.
What a beautiful day.

Barb Martinson

SUNSET

Suddenly the sunset is different.
It seems the leaves on the tree in front of my window have disappeared in a week.
There is more drama here – dark lines, sprawling limbs with the sun unimpeded by green, brilliant as it sinks into blue.
Perhaps people will pause, think twice about fighting.
Breathe and start again.

Pat Willis Vincent

I CAN MAKE IT RAIN

I can make lighting.
I can make thunderstorms
I can make tornadoes.
I can make water pure
I can make disease disappear.
I can make Utopia.

Harmony

When I'm by myself
I think of all things unnecessary.
It's storming inside my head with these thoughts of you.
You were my sunshine, my happiness.
But, everything has changed
You used to be the first I wanted to see,
Now you're the last and I don't
want to remember anymore.
I was lost without you,
Then I opened my eyes and realized
I am now found.
And everything was just
A dream...

Lauren

I can make it rain.
I can make it glow.
I can make it spin.
Girl, I'm bouta blow.

If you ain't on my level,
Girl you got to go
Cause I only got food stamps
For the corner store.

Yes, I am a boss
You already know
My birthday's in December.
Yes, I love snow.

Taliyah

I can make it drip.
I can make it drop.
I can make you feel like a broke bum.
I am not the one to mess with.
My birthday's in July, when summer
Occurs. I love rain, but I don't love snow.

Jada

I can make it rain
Pizza and good food.
I can make it rain ruin.
I can make it rain
Hail the size of minivans.
I can make it rain acid
And stuff.

Aidan

THE GROSSEST THING IN THE WORLD

Bugs creep me out
Killing, Stilling, Raping, Robberies, Bombs
Getting cussed out

Steven

Blood bleeding from your eyes

Jada

People getting raped, Kids getting raped
And have problems in life

Anthony

Heart broken (cheated on)
Having fights with family and friends
Death

Andrea

Money is 95% of the world's problems

Devon

The grossest thing in the world
Would have to be
When you have to wash the dishes
And there is wet food you have to wash off

Brian B

Picking your nose and eating it
Playing with your spit
Parents killed
Fighting with your best friends

Halima

Surgery • Rape • Brains

Brian A

I walked in.
My jaw dropped
My grandma ...
My grandpa ...
They were nude ...
In my bed!

Lauren

Kids drowning in the ocean
Kids trying to get out of their country
They fail yet they made it further
They're in heaven now

Asleigh

Chicken and waffles
Chips because
They taste like fish
And chips with fox

Donovan

What hurts me is when the government kills innocent kids
looking for one small group and all they say is sorry we didn't
mean to What else I am mad about is the cops killing black
males for no reason and making excuses like he looked big
and they don't even get jail time the judge is always letting
them off but I don't blame them the government and the
system is set to do that to Black Lives.

Soressa

The grossest thing ever is when people eat weird things like
bugs

Aidan

I think the grossest thing in the world is that there is poverty
and sickness and war in the world and people choose to
ignore it and would rather worry about what shirt they want
to wear or which fast food restaurant they're going to eat
at today How people are getting raped and killed and are
blamed for being victims.

Luke

Editor's Note:

*I Can Make it Rain and The Grossest Thing in the World
are poems written during a creative writing residency
in Ms. Rebecca Oberg's freshman English class.
The visiting writer was our editor, Patrick Cabello Hansel.
In addition to writing their own poems, the students studied
poets as diverse as Langston Hughes, William Blake,
Martin Espada, Warsan Shire, Lucille Clifton, Bob Dylan
and the Last Poets Society.*



YOUTH ON VIOLENCE

Young people ages 11-16 in the summer intensive of the Young Leaders Program at St. Paul's were asked to write about violence, in an honest a way as possible. Here are excerpts from their work.

Life is important. We all deserve to be great.

One way that violence affects me is the way I react. There was a shooting outside of my house. My cousin lived with us then and he would call the cops, and as soon as you heard the cops, it all stopped...I saw a fight at school and it was between two girls. It was lunch time and I was just talking to my friends, and suddenly they just started fighting right in front of my table.

One day I heard guns firing, so I could sleep until 2:05 am. I was scared and sometimes I still can't sleep now. One cop came to our house and he said that dangerous people used to live there, so then he checked the whole house and asked if he could see the owner. Which made me never trust grownups again.

Violence has effected on me. I punched a boy when I was mad. I get anger issues and so I try to control my madness so I will not beat up people.

Violence has killed some people close to my family. I was introduced to violence through my birth family and foster family.

I hear gun shots every night around my house. Some days, I am outside when the gun shots happen. One day I was walking down Chicago, and there were people across the street fighting, and one dude pulled out a gun and shot the other dude.

Some violence effects me because stuff that I used to do I can't do anymore.

Violence affects your personality or your attitude, your actions and your feelings. Violence can lead you to do things that you wish you wouldn't have done. Some little kids (see violence) and do the same because they think that violence is cool.

Violence affects me because I feel like it kinda stresses me out. It makes me feel that it is going to keep on happening. One thing that really effects me is when I have to talk to the police. I have an issue with that, because I don't like talking about my personal life and I don't like talking about my family to the police. I don't like it because the police took one of my uncles away for nothing.

Violence affects me because some people have come into my house and robbed our money, and my dad has to work harder.

Violence affects me in a couple of ways. I see it and I feel a deep pain for this messed up world. Then I see people not try to stop it and I almost cry.

Violence scares me and it makes me want to do it.

People are shooting each other, and they need to make the world a better place by making beats instead. Some days it feels like I walked 1,000 miles and never turned back, but I still pray for the people I hate.

Violence, pollution, discrimination, racism, drugs, prostitution, sex trafficking, animals going extinct, people on their phones, driving, bad situations, drunken people. How to deal with it? Start by making donations to people in need.

WATER—EL AGUA

Children ages 6-10 wrote about water in Semilla Center's 2015 Creation Camp. Here is a group mash-up of their work. Thanks to Desirae, Vianey, Emiliano, Milka, Esmeralda, Anna, John, Kimberly

I am the water.
I will save the deserts.

I am important
Because people like it when I snow.

I will help people.
I will clean dishes.
I will be fun.

Yo soy el agua.
Voy a limpiar la mesa,
Lavar los trastes,
Lavar la ropa.
Agua bendita, agua bonita.

Yo soy el agua.
Yo voy a ayudar a todo el mundo.
¡Qué hermosa agua!

Yo soy Agua.
Una casa para los peces.

Water
Sparkling, falling, blue
I am the water
I will quench your thirst
Delicious water

Raining
Gushing
Colorful
I am the water
I will be drunk



I WILL PLANT

I want to plant
a new beginning,
a better environment,
less violence,
less pollution
diverse, incredible, lovely
imperfect imperfections

Talia Hansel

I will plant peace and love
Trees and flowers growing.
Rabbits, bees and butterflies.
Children playing and having fun.
Families interacting, having fun.
Peace and love
all around the neighborhood.

Fredi Ponce

I will plant acceptance for those who are different, those who don't seem to be "right" to society, for anyone who has insecurities, because they'll soon disappear into maturity, trust me, there will be a time when numbers will no longer define you. The numbers on a price tag, or on the back tag of your pants. You'll be happy. Soon.

Belem Gomez

I will plant a new
World in the world.

Dominic Arroyo-Contantino

Yo quiero sembrar un Nuevo mundo.
Porque quiero que haya más armonía,
más amistad, que no maltraten
a los animales, más esperanzas,
más plantas, que las gentes
sean más ordenadas, que las personas
sean más buenas personas,
y que haya libertad.

Dayana Languren

I WILL BE THE FIRE

I will be the fire that burns
in the chests of hard workers,
that burns in the fireplaces
and keeps peoples warm,
that burns in the eyes of Olympic athletes
that try hard but might not win,
that burns in the passion
in the love of a family.

I will burn gently in the love
that a mom has for her child,
that burns and rages I the anger
that is controlled in an argument,
hat burns and longs for a brighter
day when there will be
no more wars and no more hate.

Joey Leehey

I will be the fire
that sets the football field on fire
when I run for a touchdown,
that also stops bullying.
I will be the fire that sets
the violence on fire
to keep it from happening.
I will be the fire
that rescues people
when they need help.
I will be the fire
that burns down
the race car track
as I am racing.
I will be the fire
that helps the homeless.

Andre Herron

I will be the fire when you burn my picture but also I
will be the fire your days are dark. You will hate me
because I'm red but not dead. I will be the fire when
you decide to be in your darkness, and also when you
burned the cards I sent. Fire might be your fear, and
you cannot prevent to be burned. But no one can
decide their life when they are born. I will be the fire
that keeps getting higher and brighter, while you will
be getting jealous of my pride.

Marian Garcia



I will be the fire that sets
Good leaders in this world,
The people who change
How we see things, making
Life wonderful, and giving
People what they need.
I will be the fire, the one
Who people look forward to,
That one person who is happiest
When seeing people who care for each other.

José Becerra

I will be the fighter,
the one who stands out
the one who takes action first,
the one who flies out
I will be the fighter
I will be the one who introduces
the new and the old
I will be the fighter
for my rights,
and for the rights of others
I will be the fighter forever
and for the rest of my life.

Desiree Schiff

I am somebody that will stand
up for those who can't.
I will be their hope
that will keep them going.
I am somebody who thrives
to make a change.
I am a feminist, and I'll fight
for those girls in America
who are catcalled, for those girls
in the Middle East that are sold
to be brides. I have a voice,
and my voice will overcome
those filled with hate,
those who have yet
to realize they are wrong.
I am somebody that reaches
for the stars, and thrives
to be someone who will be known.
I am Belem Lizeth Gomez Vega.
I am somebody.

Belem Gomez Vega

The thing that I most hate is when people stare at me or
other people like we are nothing because we're from
a different part of the world or because we have less
money than them but the thing that we have more than
them is heart and at least we know how to take care of
ourselves and do our own choice not like rich people who
judge people just because of the country they came from
because that only that I have to say to them is to make
sure you're perfect before you judge me or others.

Edwin Vergara

ADOPTIONS

Like Moses in the bulrushes, my dad was found in a
basket. But unlike Moses' basket, Dad's was in the
Great Northern railroad station in St. Paul, and the
year was 1902. He was brought to Anker Hospital. A
nurse there knew that my grandma had twice been
unable to carry a baby to full term, so she told her,
"There is a handsome baby boy in the hospital who
needs a mother. Do you want him?" Grandma was
overjoyed. She went down to the hospital, and Dr.
Anker gave her my Dad. No paperwork. Life was
simpler back then. She brought Dad home like a
puppy from the pound and named him "Edward."

Grandma and Grandpa Emerson lived on Magnolia
Ave. They doted on little Eddie. He went to Johnson
High School and got good grades. But after college,
when he applied to the University of Minnesota
medical school, he was asked for his birth certificate.
There wasn't one. That was when Dad discovered
to his horror that he was a foundling. It had never
occurred to Grandma and Grandpa to adopt him.

So Dad was driven to make a name for himself. He
started his practice in an office on Arcade St. near
E. 7th, joined the staff of Mounds Park Hospital,
and later went to Hungary to study with a world-
famous surgeon. He married a concert pianist from
Minneapolis – a graduate of Northrop, Macphail,
and Juillard. Their wedding photo appeared on the
society page of the Minneapolis Tribune in 1933. I
was born a year later. In 1937, my baby sister was
in Mother's arms as we climbed past an octopus
furnace up the stairs of our new house in the Crocus
Hill neighborhood.

Then WWII started, and two teenagers, Oneta and
Esther, moved in with us to help Mother. They went to
Monroe High School. The girls liked to listen to Your Hit
Parade while they did the dishes. I had never heard
popular music before, and I didn't like it. (But later,
I liked the way Lawrence Tibbet sang "Deep in the
Heart of Texas.")

Then the War ended. The girls graduated from
Monroe and moved on.

Sixty years later, I had retired from a career playing the
cello in South America and was living in Minneapolis
when Mom called: "Eddie, Oneta is celebrating her
50th wedding anniversary."

"What?! Take me to the party too!" Oneta's house was
crammed full of offspring and well-wishers. She made a
speech: "Years ago, Esther and I were sitting on a bench
in St. Paul. It was getting dark and starting to snow. We
didn't know what to do. We had run away from the
farm without making plans and we were scared.

Almost in answer to our prayers, a car pulled up to
the curb and a distinguished-looking gentleman
asked if we needed help. He introduced himself:
'I'm Dr. Emerson.'

"Esther and I burst into tears and told him our story.
"Dr. Emerson said, 'Don't worry, girls. You can have
supper, and we will decide what to do.' We stayed
for four years!"

Oneta went on to say how grateful she was to my
mother for teaching her how to dress, how to behave
like a lady, how to set the table, and take care of a
home – everything. Dr. Emerson had rescued them,
and Mrs. Emerson had given them an education in
living which led to all this (waving her hand around
the room).

I had never heard this story before! I just learned
something new about Dad:
He had "adopted" two helpless foundlings.

Ed Emerson, 2523 Portland, Tower Apts; creative writing class

HERE I AM

I am Art in progress of creating my being.
I embrace all that I am to create all that I need.
I am conflict's resolution of my New Year's revolution.
I hydrate the universe with my tears of joy.
I am empow!-hered by the extra-ordinary
elder stories I tell.
I am the spirit of pizzazz-mic words aching to be
discovered.
My 90 proof cacao eyes rest determinedly on the prize.
I secrete the resiliency of acres of healing, emerald,
aloe Vera trees.
My semi-precious ruby arteries and my opulent rose
diamond mind radiate my soul of goals through my
faith of a grain of a mustard seed.
My POW!-her hug will scintillate your spirit until you
never forget me. I can put a smile on your soul
with my eargasmic verbs that will crave you to
beg me for more, more!
I am the two books each week that I read.
I am the peace loving dreams
of the Jr. Rev. Doctor Martin Luther King.
I am the audacity of my abundant ancestry.
I am the l'mpossible dream.
I was reborn B.C. before can't was invented.
He, she, they, we, you and me are free to be.
We exude democracy.
I am the effervescence of America's dream.

Patricia Anita Young, 2700 Park, Park Apts.

PEBBLE

Someone said, "A pebble is the last piece of a mountain."
Imagine, centuries from now,
When the last piece of Everest
Is a pebble on the shore
of Bengal Bay
And the last living human trips on it,
That will be the first day of peace
In the history of this world.

**Ed Conway, 2545 Portland,
Ebenezer Care Center, poetry class**

TOGETHER IN PEACE

Pushed to the side,
shoved to the back.
Looking backwards, eyes kept low.
Bounty hunters can't read papers
Always smile, always be slow.

Where to die, to finally rest forever?
Not here, not there,
no colored allowed
Even a freedman dies a slave
Worthy not a decent grave.

But a good man, Martin Layman,
a decent man.
Defies the rule and opens the gate.
All men who die are free to rest.
In a Minneapolis grave,
a noble fate.

Rest in Peace,
Martin Layman
**Poet's name withheld, Tower Apts.
creative writing class**

Author's Note: Layman founded the privately owned Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery in 1853. It was associated with the abolitionists' movement and was never segregated, a practice unheard of at that time.

KEEP THE CREATIVE FLAME BURNING!

Consider helping support our next issue financially
Donations may be made out to: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 2742 15th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407
www.givemn.org/organization/St-Pauls-Evangelical-Lutheran-Church-Of-Minneapolis-Minnesota



JELL-O AND FRUIT COCKTAIL

Let me tell you of one aspect
of a Minnesota funeral.

If your friend or relative is Catholic,
the service will be in the forenoon.
Following, you will be fed a meal.
Probably scalloped potatoes
and ham or another meat dish, a
dinner roll, cake and Jell-O with
fruit cocktail.

If your friend or relative is
Protestant, it will be an afternoon,
1:30 or 2:00 service. Following the
service will be a light lunch. Open
face ham sandwiches, cake and
of course Jell-O with fruit cocktail.

You will go to the church dining
room, abuzz with voices and the
smell of coffee in the air.

As you pass the service window to
get a plate, you will see bowls of
Jell-O, red Jell-O with fruit cocktail,
orange Jell-O with fruit cocktail,
and even at times green Jell-O
with fruit cocktail. As you get to
your table, you will find big plates
of cake, chocolate cake, carrot
cake, angel food cake and, as
at my mother-in-law's funeral,
blueberry cake. I'm sorry to say my
children mistook its unusual color
and decided it was moldy.

Now if you are a member of the
immediate family you have been
greeted and consoled until you
just want to go home. So much
attention and stress have made
your brain feel like, well, like Jell-O
and fruit cocktail.

**Virginia McConnell, 2523 Portland,
Tower Apts., creative writing class**

TREATMENT CENTER WALTZ

I'm locked up in this coop
It's time to go to group
And when I'm outta here
I'll never drink a beer

Alcohol and cocaine too
Good-bye to both of you
To both I bid adieu
And when I'm outta here
I'll never dri-hink a beer
With you

The counselors they cuss
They sure do counsel us
So when we're outta here
We'll never drink a beer

Alcohol and cocaine too
Good-bye to both of you
To both I bid adieu
And when I'm outta here
I'll never dri-hink a beer
With you

**Ed Emerson, 2523 Portland, Park
Apts., creative writing class**

HAPPY APOLOGY

I am delighted to inform you
That your "I'm sorry"
has been kindly
refused.
Furthermore, it has been
recycled
and returned to you unused.
Instead,
I will thank you for your kindness,
please re-use it on a sorry day,
For an authentic, "I'm sorry" is
a truly transparent gift
And it's too precious
and few to waste.

Patricia Anita Young

TWO OLD SHOES

The first light of the day was
peeking through the blinds. I heard
a noise at the side of my bed as one
shoe stepped on the toe of the other
shoe. "Where do you suppose we'll
be doing today?" said one. "I'm
worn out, so I hope we're not going
far" said the other. The conversation
continued. "We've walked a lot of
miles, and I'm ready to quit" said the
right; to which the left replied, "Yeah,
my tongue is wearing out, and I see
your heels are losing their skin"

I rolled over so that I could hear
the remainder of the conversation.
Bless their soles,
They were planning to tie themselves
together so that I would have to
spend the day untying them. I didn't
blame them - they had served me
well for at least 40 years and were
the first pair to have to carry around
those leather inserts that got so hot
in summer. As I lay there ever so still,
I pondered how I might life easier for
these two old faithful's. Francie was
coming to take me to lunch. Perhaps
we could make a stop that would
ease the misery of my "friendly-two-
shoes." And where could we go? To
Shuler's, of course.

Right shoe and left shoe no
longer have to appear in public day

after day. The just carry me around
home or sit quietly under the bed,
heel to heel, toe to toe,
happily twisting their
Ties and dreaming of their past.
**Fran Nelson, 2523 Portland, Tower
Apts., creative writing class**

HOME VERBUM

The Word spoke five continents
into rising from primordial mire;
beckoned from the soil
roots, leaves
blossoms, twigs;
called from the land
furry paws
hungry jaws;
from the air
beaks and feathers
feelers and powered wings;
from the water
leviathans
diatoms;
sang, stars, planets, moons,
whole galaxies
onto eternal paths in the sky;
breathed nerves and blood
into a garden of dust.

The Word became flesh
and dwelt among us.
**Pam Johnson, Loren on Park, 2625
Park Ave., poetry class**



SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Midtown Phillips Neighborhood
Assn. Inc, www.midtownphillips.org,
Pat Samples, Life-Long Learning
Coordinator at Ebenezer Homes;
Rebecca Oberg, Peter Giebink,
Candida Gonzalez, Roosevelt High
School; Young Leaders Staff at St.
Paul's; Colleen Enwesi, Liz Nelson,
Oliver West; Photography Teachers:
Jorge Amerigo, Sally Fifield; Artistic
Director: Luisa Cabello Hansel

The Phoenix of Phillips is a publication
of the Semilla Center for Healing
and the Arts at St. Paul's Lutheran
Church. For the past nine years,
Semilla has taught mosaics, mural
arts, photography, puppetry and
creative writing to over 2000 people
and installed murals and artistic place
holders throughout Phillips. Semilla
means "seed" in Spanish, and it is our
passion to plant seeds of hope, justice
and beauty in our community. We do
so, conscious of the challenges facing
us, but more conscious of the great
hope we have.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the
Phillips Avenue of the Arts, Wednesday
Night Free Open Studio, and
workshops in photography, creative
writing, mosaics and murals:

IGLESIA LUTERANA SAN PABLO
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2742 15th Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55407
612-724-3862
stpaulscreate@gmail.com
www.stpaulschurchmpls.org

This activity is made possible by the
voters of Minnesota through a grant
from the Metropolitan Regional Arts
Council, thanks to a legislative ap-
propriation from the arts and cultural
heritage fund. Additional funding
provided by Edina Community and
Faith Lutheran Churches, and through
a partnership with Midtown Phillips
Neighborhood Association, Inc.





WORD/IMAGE/POWER DURING APRIL 2016

The Semilla Center celebrates National Poetry Month with a series of events connecting literary and visual arts. A month of activities: poetry in the parks, poetry in the streets, poetry on buildings; art on garbage cans, art on trees, lectures, shows, culminating in a

HUGE OPEN MIC ON APRIL 29, 2016

Writers, Painters, Sculptors, Photographers, Filmmakers—contact us if you wish to be a part of this project!



POLLINATE PHILLIPS MAY 21, 2016

Be a part of the pollination of our neighborhood. We will plant pollinator attracting plants in boulevards and backyards, and install art around the community. Be a Pollinator!



TASTE OF PHILLIPS ARTS FESTIVAL OCTOBER 22, 2016

A celebration of local arts and artists. Gallery show, open mic, workshops, films, photography exhibition, hands-on activities for children and adults.



FOR MORE INFORMATION: Call 612-724-3862 or email: stpaulscreate@gmail.com