

1st Place-Teen Category

By Tanner Leavitt

Emptiness

These cells used to be full,
But not site empty,
The halls full of stains,
From past prisoners pain.

The prison walls,
Built by inmates,
Begins to leak,
The stories of prisoners past.

This now empty shell,
Used to be full,
Of pain and stories,
But now remains dull.

Empty spirits,
Haunt the halls,
Of prisoners,
That never left

But now it all
Sits empty,
No stripes or pain,
Just visitors,
In their summer clothes.

1st Runner-up-Teen Category

By Lilian Bodley

What the Roses May Have Seen

The roses in the garden have their morning preen,
standing stately; beautiful on a lawn of green.
They stand and talk of captives hopes and fears,
watered long by men and womens blood and tears.
Thorns snapped away, blossoms blotched and torn,
seeing prisoners weep and sob and mourn.
With a swinging rope, the gallow holds a mans fate,
bloody ground and reddnin sky make the day come late.
Behind tall walls and towers that hold death and life,
like a piece of wonderful food, on a filthy plate,
these roses, beautifully silent, hold accounts of accused strife.

Honorable Mention-Teen Category

By Madelyn Grow

The Hard Way

The ground is cold;
Cemented walls point up to the sky;
Going on and on for the eternities;

Wet fingers brush away the regret;
That falls;
Like silent rain;

There's a stiff odor of rust and old paper;
That wafts through the corridors;
Relentless;
Like the steady drip from a leaking faucet;

To pass the wall of the past;
Is to bring down;
All that's been holding me up;

Sometimes you have to tear yourself down;
Before you can build yourself up again;
I've learned this...
The hard way.

Honorable Mention-Teen Category

By Olivia Tripp

Ghost

A man stands in front of a

Blank stone building.

The few windows are all

Barred.

A desolate wind

Howls

Across the land so

Dry and barren.

There is no one else.

The man himself is

Pale and silent.

He stands like a statue

Perfectly still.

His pajamas are

Striped

And his eyes simple stare,

Glazed and empty.

Without a word, he fades away.

Honorable Mention-Teen Category

By Audra Legg

The bars

The bars of prisons cell men and go mad you trap with no to go.
The darkness fills your heart and soul. How you hard bang on bars.
They never let you go. It feels like hell is opens right before your eyes
The dark pulls you in and there you can do then look for the light
Coming through the bars. The freedom outside mocking you saying
Come out and play you but can't. Minds Go mad inside the bars hope
Is brained inside you the bars you as you wait day and nights
Longing for the day when the bars with open and you'll see the sun again
But for all you see is the when. When the bar doors open and run away
But for now the bars hold you in making you pay for your sin mad grads
At your soul every day you know. So you wait for the bars to open
When it unbroken try your best not come again. Cause you remder when
Now you know just how it feels how to be trapped behind bars of steel.

Honorable Mention-Teen Category

By Nolan T. Ream

The Cat's Eye View

My name is Pete, it's as simple as that,
I live in prison, I am a cat.

I walk through the door,
Onto the dining hall floor.

I meet Harry Orchard, he slips me
an egg.
I really am spoiled, I don't have to beg

Old Harry is in for blowing up Frank Steunenberg
Quite a way past St. Petersburg.

I come and go, just as much as I please,
There is no one here that I can't appease.

This may be prison, but I don't have fleas.
But I have to leave prison to climb trees.

My name is Pete, I live in the Pen,
But I don't mind, the ISP is my kind of glen.