

Photography & Verse

A Special Edition of Kepler Eccentric



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Cover image: *The Raven* by Doyle Rockwell

Magazine design and layout: Carissa Hale
Kepler Eccentric logo design: Josiah Nance

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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



As we all approach that bitter-sweet time at the end of the academic year where our emotions are torn between the joy of being free for the summer and the sadness of closing another meaningful chapter of our lives, I am reminded once again that education is so much more than the accumulation of facts. Education is the development of the whole person towards wisdom and virtue, and summer break is just as much part of our education as the beginning of the fall semester.

With summer break comes, potentially, new routines, new experiences, and some new literary adventures. All of these play a significant role in our ongoing education as human beings, even if they are more unassuming and natural instead of formal and contrived like the education of a classroom. Nevertheless, one of the most glorious aspects of summer break is the opportunity to read at a Whim.

In his charming little book, *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*, Alan Jacobs makes a distinction between reading at a “whim” and reading at a “Whim.” He explains, “in its lower-case version, whim is thoughtless, directionless preference that almost invariably leads to boredom or frustration or both. But Whim is something very different: it can guide us because it is based in self-knowledge—it can become for us a gracious . . . pedagogue of the mind.”

Jacobs is advocating for the restful, Whimsical approach to reading good books because you enjoy it for its own sake. And, it is a book you enjoy because it is both delightful and it inevitably scratches the itch of your curiosity. In the lower case version of whim, the reader chooses a book that just seems interesting because it’s what everyone else is reading or what the reader expects will impress his friends or mentors. In the upper case version of Whim, one reads for the sheer pleasure of reading the best of what has been written when the opportunity and desire to do so meet.

In the spirit of Whim, I would like to offer Kepler students and families the following books as potential Whimsical summer reads in no particular order:

- *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien
- *The Education of a Wandering Man* by Louis L’Amor
- *The Short Stories of Flannery O’Connor*
- *The Name of the Rose* by Umberto Eco
- *The Abolition of Man* by C. S. Lewis
- *The Ransom Trilogy (Space Trilogy)* by C. S. Lewis
- *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction* by Alan Jacobs
- *The Secret Library* by Oliver Tearle
- *On Reading Well* by Karen Swallow Prior
- *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius

Of course the reading list is only a series of suggested works I believe you would both enjoy and benefit from. Something from the list may even remind you of another book you’ve been wanting to read but didn’t feel you could justify at the time given all the other requirements on your plate. That’s the book you should start with. May you have an enchanting summer break filled with Whimsical reading.

By God’s Grace and for his Glory.

Scott Postma
President, Kepler Education

NOTE FROM THE ACADEMIC ADVISOR



Dear students, here comes speeding late and at last our summertime, and surely none too soon. A chance to indulge a book for pleasure, not class, or if mom allows, to sleep till way past noon.

Our globe has spun a year, and so have we. The conversations explored, meandered, strayed, as teachers and fellow disciples sought to see what wisdom might reveal to us that day. Geometry class was only two dimensions, then suddenly got so cosmological; in Latin class, the mother of invention necessitated parlance theological. I hope you've seen this year in all your reading an integrated many form a whole. The reason that we have these online meetings is the importance of community for the soul.

This summer, when you're off on your adventures, make sure to take some time to smell the roses. Take up cooking or country dancing, become a fencer, learn to draw your pet in various and sundry poses. Let summer be a time of recreation and rest as you grow to be mature, since waste of time undoes your aspirations. Rather want refreshment to make your growing sure.

Our Savior Lord is good and kind to give restoring and renewing all the time. I pray this summer as you find new ways to live that he bless your days with consonance and rhyme.

Our globe has spun a year, and so have we; our summertime has come and it's nearly June. Your teachers and fellow disciples will want to see you all again in Fall, not a moment too soon.

Cordially and in Christ,

Jeffre Swait

Chief Academic Advisor, Kepler Education

NOTE FROM THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Hello Kepler Family!

We close out the school year with a third issue of *The Eccentric*. But not just that! Classes may be ending but the excitement is not over yet. May 20-22 is Kepler's first in-person event in Moscow, Idaho! I cannot tell you how excited I am to be there and meet many of you for the first time. While there are many advantages to online community, the difficulty of distance cannot be ignored and the opportunity to meet your friends, teachers, and students face-to-face is not one that should be passed up lightly.

The second thing you can look forward to is our first Yearbook! Featuring photos of Kepler families all around the country and the world, it will be available in an online format or for purchase as a physical copy. If you have not submitted your photos yet, please check your emails for a link or reach out to Student Council at studentcouncil@kepler.education to do so! Many thanks to Alyssa Simon and the entire yearbook committee who worked hard to make this happen!

At the end of the year I have to thank *everyone* who was part of Kepler in any way this year; teachers, students, staff, and parents. I absolutely loved every chance I had to work with you as Student President this year and I hope I will see you again in the years to come. Last but not least, thank you to those of you who submitted to this magazine. It wouldn't be possible without all your work and talents.

Sincerely,

Margaret Johnston,

President of Student Council

EURYDICE THE BRIDE

by Hailey Hasic

Alas! Alas! The price I pay,
Thus murdered on my wedding day!
The snake of old, the worm, the eel,
Hast sunk his fangs into my heel.
Now with my bridegroom far away,
I cry alas and lackaday!

He would have crowned my heart and hand,
And led me to a promised land,
Yet now I waste with grief and fears,
My lonely shade awash in tears.
I still await the holy band:
My Savior from the Promised Land.

Why comes He not? The night draws near,
And still all death and woes I hear.
Despair draws nigh. This shadowed tomb
Shall be my dark eternal room.
There is no Savior come for me,
From woes and dark despair to free.

But can it be? The myth, the lie,
Has been prov'd true to my own eye!
My Groom, my Lord, my Savior bright
Descended to the darkest night,
My woes and cares and guilt to free,
And save me from mortality.

I grasp His hand; the firm, warm grip!
I struggle to the light, but slip!
Yet His strong arm uplifts me still,
And I am conquered by His will.
Bless, bless my Lord! Who holds me tight,
And carries me up to the Light.

The darkness breaks. I see the sun!
My dim un-life has been undone!
My Groom, my Lord has heard my prayer!
A breeze soft drifts and stirs my hair.
Now past the dark and desert place,
My bridegroom turns: I see His face.

This special issue of the *Eccentric*, which highlights the photography and poetry of Kepler's students, is a reflection of the joyful and fruitful activity of two outstanding clubs. You guessed it, Photography Club and Poetry Club! The members of those clubs are to be congratulated for all their passion and discipline, and for the artistic results of their efforts. Outstanding in that group are Juliana Hardy and Grace Harris, winners of Photo Club's inaugural photo contest.

Grace Harris won *Telling a Story*, with her tragicomic *Melting Snowman*. Juliana Hardy won the *Macro Category*, big pictures of little things, with her untitled piece. That same piece also won best overall. Both students have my congratulations and appreciation. Thank you for sharing your excellent eyes with us!

Kudos to everyone at Photo Club who organized this contest. As good things do, it led to an explosion of good things; many of the photos featured in this issue were taken after the contest. It has been a pleasure to see the fertile minds and eyes of these students give so much fruit.

Gleefully and gladly,

Joffre Swait

Chief Academic Advisor

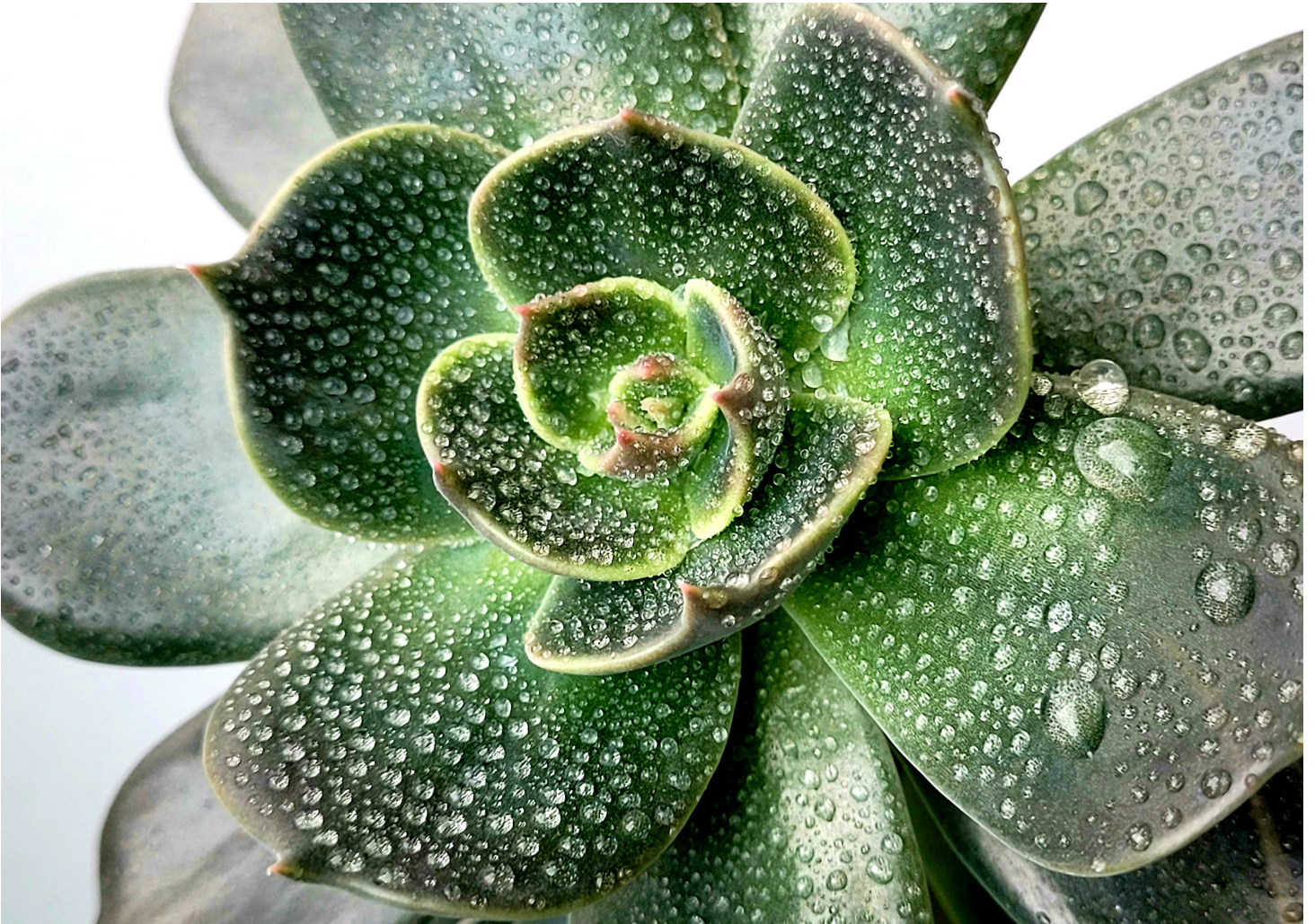
Melting Snowman

by Grace Harris



Untitled Photo

by Juliana Hardy



THOUGHTS ON BREVITY AND ETERNITY

by Hailey Hasic

A teardrop is swallowed by the sea;
Overcome, it sinks beneath the waves.
So I, a drop among thousands fall,
And dash my head against the rock,
But rising, I fall back again.
What is man, that you should
 make much of him?
Human beings that you should care for them?
For the whole of my life is comprised in a dot
On the vast timeline that is eternity.
I shall not live forever:
Even now I feel within me
 the hunger pains of growth,
Gnawing, snatching, seeking
 to climb their way into me,
Until they turn into the hunger pains of age,
When I shall not grow, but shrink;
Shrink to a carcass unknown to me.
This is not who I once was;
This is not my reflection,
 my body, my face, nor my hair.
Whose place have I taken? Poor soul.
She must be missing her body.
I shall not live forever: I know this.
I will die one day,
And a few forlorn people
 will be the more sorrowful
To see my shrunken frame;
Dwell upon my broken face,
Comparing it with the pictures
 on the slideshow in the lobby,
And commenting on the weather.
And then, it will be done.
I will be gone, and each new day will come
Marching, like a man late to work,

Briefcase and tie flying.
I will not wake one morning.
Will the world know a difference?
Likely not.
I will not live forever.
Or else, so I thought.
This half-truth, built into our minds from birth,
Who could guess how false it is?
How untrue the sentiment?
How atheistic the thought.
For I will live forever, and ever, and on.
A saint awash in glory, bathed in light.
My broken face will be whole,
And my lopsided heart redeemed.
Who says I shall not live forever?
And my days are numbered and few?
This whole jaded life's a vacation,
Or else we are "just visiting,"
Like the prison tile in the game.
Thank God we won't be there forever:
Where the bars grow tighter each day,
 and the light drains from the sky;
Where people glance down at dull faces,
And comment on the weather.
Thank God we will reign with the angels!
Who dares speak the frivolous thought,
Saying man was created to be temporary?
My life may be just a blot on a paper,
A drop in the ocean,
Yet by some wild grace,
 unknown to my bent heart,
I am redeemed!
I shall soar!
By fathomless grace, I, even I,
 shall be a small part of Eternity.

SPRING

by Adalie Everitt

The long winter has finally gone and the birds
Who had left the cold land now begin to return.
Once forgotten, the sun shyly peeks his head out
And gray clouds pass away to reveal a blue sky.

Many flowers grow shoots and reach out for the warmth
That the sun gives to them, now awake from his rest.
Small birds gather, they sing, and all day they rejoice
For the coming of spring, for the coming of life.

The dark winter is conquered and light has returned,
The old land now awakens to color and joy
For the sparrows and robins build nests in the trees,
And the earth celebrates the arrival of life.

The Old and the New

by Miles Crawford



Spring

by Miles Crawford



Blue Pines, White Snow

by Sarah Greeb



Cherry Spring

by Ruth Lawton



ALL THE SENSE OF NONSENSE

by Doyle Rockwell

When a string of words strikes your ear
As having no sense at all,
Instead of being too critical
And declaring those words completely zingled,
The product of a mind gone gollywonckers,
Take a look at the whole perspective.
When shall we stop picking at the narrow, narrow details?
We see some fantasy and nonsense poems
As worthless wormwood, the writer's poison,
And we overlook its rhyme and reason
Because we think it is out of season—
Not for our time,
Not for our books,
Not for our shelves,
Not for our minds.
And so, we miss reality's deeper sense.
Being used to the world we know, we fence
Ourselves inside it, forgetting the world beyond.
Our world is really a living picture of something else,
Just as nonsense is an image of the sensible.
The words may sound different, but the logic stands fast.
Eternal laws still govern them and they win out at last.
Nonsense has a greater sense far greater than we know.
It laughs at those who beam with pride,
Jeers at stuffy hypocrites, makes them see another side
Of the eternal standing out from the temporary,
The side that sounds like gobbledygook,
While making way for eternity.

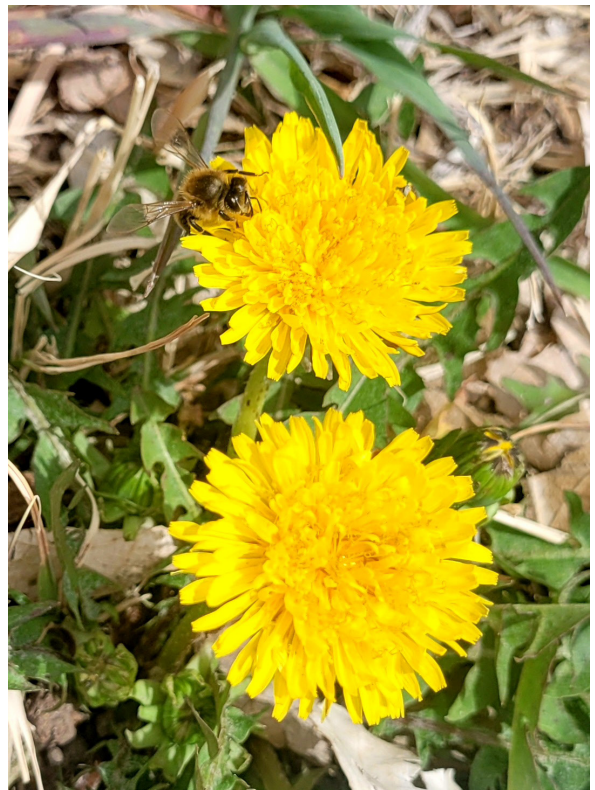
UNTITLED POEM

by Anna Meegan

the hemlock and the devil's ivy
engaged in a waltz of back and forth wind-whipped midsummer madness
remind me to breathe the universe now and then
they spoke to me when i was young and still now they do but
in a way that is less familiar and more or less
impervious
imperfectness has always been a bane of mine
even when i did not see it
the inability to make perfect and to be perfect
the broken that pervades the cracks in this rent ground, this rent earth
stalks us ceaselessly
the fact that nothing is ever flawless haunts us
we can't stand the fact, creatures of perfection we are, that nothing is ever whole
especially not ourselves
that no matter how high we climb we all
still
fall

Two Untitled Photos

by Juliana Hardy



Expressive Portrait

by Jocelyn McLeran



Growing

by Juliana Hardy



New Life

by Miles Crawford



THE KING'S RUNNER

by Jillian Hoge

In the dust of the track he did kneel with his foes,
He was tense with a smile and heart beats to his toes,
With hair blonde as queen's gold and all strength for his home.
"For Scotland," thinks Eric, "For my King who will roam!"

The gun, crack! they all lurch with one goal for the gold,
Alone out comes Eric, he is flying and bold.
His hair streaming, the sweat still is gleaming,
His arms widely spread with his head quite far thrown.

He is almost there, ribbon in sight, how he runs.
He's done! leaves about his head wrap, he has won.
Though the laurels his glory, one above still awaits,
His hope rests in his Lord, whom he elevates.

Swans in Seward

by Doyle Rockwell



Map in Latin

by Ian Izard



Sisters

by Jocelyn McLeran



Mona Lisa

by Jocelyn McLeran



THE GREY HAVENS

by Clara Shoemaker

Through dark and leaves, hear laugh and lilt
Of elven singing, stars and steel,
In the half-lit hollows of the happy fair,
Grand and glorious, sorrows heal.

Trees, fair towers, turn and gaze
Upon the light that languid lies
Upon the grass, a golden glow
Fortelling tears and terrors die,
Healing harm of flesh and heart;
For now, the flowers, free of fear,
Arise from rifts of war and wrath.

Doriath undone, Gondolin destroyed,
Now new cities towards stars and sun
Rise in ribbons of ruschita and quartz.
Round it waters whisper, waveless,
Ulmo's promise of peace and pardon.

Silver circlets surround their brows,
Their feet fall soft on sand and soil,
The elven lords and ladies laugh,
And rest at ease till Arda ends.



Three Untitled Photos

by Christiana Shire



THE EAGLE

by Adalie Everitt

The noble eagle sits atop the cliffs,
His sharp eyes scan the sunny azure sky.
He proudly shrieks a fierce and wild call,
Like a stately king.

He leaps off of his massive rocky throne
And plummets swiftly towards the far-off ground,
And then he soars on strong, tawny wings
Like a mighty king.

He scouts the ground for tempting, feeble prey.
He dives, and with his beak and deadly claws,
Cruelly slays his meal without a pause,
Like a tyrant king.

STARS

by Adalie Everitt

The stars shine brightly in the sky,
Alluring and mysterious.
They dance and twinkle all night long
In the peaceful heavens.

Across the galaxies they stretch,
They flicker in the moonlight.
Royally they sit, above all:
Polaris, Pollux, Vega.

From its place a lone star falls
And streams off into nothingness.
But still the stars continue shining,
Alluring and mysterious.

A Rose of Red and Yellow

by Grace Harris



UNTITLED POEM

by Hailey Hasic

Apple tree, apple tree,
Why weep you thus so mournfully?
Your handkerchief of pretty lace
Is pressed all round your lovely face,
And nothing do you do or say,
But softly, softly, weep away.

Can it be that tyrant Time
Hast stol'n your lover in his prime?
Your dear beloved, for whose sake
You softly weep, forever wait,
And find no rest by night or day,
But softly softly weep away?

Or else, has winter left you blind?
Whose bitter frosts restrict and bind,
And though you feel the sunshine bright,
You're sentenced to eternal night.
Not knowing whether night or day,
You softly softly weep away.

But hear! O tree, the lovely trill:
A bird lights on your windowsill!
Enticing you your cares to free,
And cease to weep so mournfully
As if to tell you this one thing:
Weep not, O tree, for it is Spring.

Marigold

by Emery Black



THE CITY OF GOLD

by Doyle Rockwell

When Heaven is described to children or to men,
The painted picture always abuses the same
Colors, the same images, the same tree of life.
The story is never questioned by any;
But grown and ungrown alike
Stammer the same phrases and preach
The same promises of Heaven, how
There will be an eternal city made of transparent gold,
And a river will run its course through the middle.
The gates, they say, are made of jasper,
Sapphires, rubies, topaz, and pearl.
The city will float above the earth
Mansions rising above the atmosphere.
Did God create cities? Did He call them “very good”?
Did the Lord of Hosts make paradise a cityscape?
Or is Heaven the mansion of one’s dreams, twice magnified in glory?
Could the crystal gems be traded for crystal lakes,
Rubies for a vibrant sunset, and emeralds,
Well, might they be given for green earth?
If a mountain could be a man’s castle
And his own two feet could be his transport,
This, instead of angel wings,
Would Jehovah frown on such a Heaven
And keep a man from the paradise he longs for?

Over the
rolling hills
I look,
And see
through
icy tears
his grave
The coffin nor grave can keep him, Nor plunge him into
Sheol. One Love saved him and bought him whole.
And there beyond this earthly fold, Rejoices my

Grandpa
in heav-
enly fold.
We are
parted
until my
time when
taken up
to heav-
en's hold
Because
of one who
for me
did pave
the way
to the
Father
and con-
quered
the grave.
Comforts
these are
from His
holy Book,
That I sha-
ll never be
forsook.

GRANDPA'S GRAVE

by Jillian Hoge

Over the rolling hills I look,
And see through icy tears, his grave.
The coffin nor grave can keep him,
Nor plunge him into Sheol.
One Love saved him and bought him whole.
And there beyond this earthly fold,
Rejoices my Grandpa in heav'nly fold.

We are parted until my time,
When taken up to heaven's hold.
Because of one who for me did pave,
The way to the Father and conquered the grave.
Comforts these are from His holy Book,
That I shall never be forsook.