

# Vital Signs

## 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Students: There is Hope Yet

By: Denny Porto

The birds are chirping, the sun is shining, and the rare patch of grass not swallowed by a construction project is growing green. However, to the first and second year students these may only be noticed through the floor-to-ceiling windows from within MERF, or while frantically biking to school in the morning. This is an especially challenging time for the second year students, as Step 1 is looming in the not-distant future. For those of you toiling away in MERF or (gasp) Hardin, I want to both encourage you to continue the hard work, and to reassure you that your clinical years grow nearer every day. Hours spent in front of your notes can seem endless at times and there are a few specific things I recommend to reconnect with reality.

First, spend some time shadowing a faculty member who you like. The great majority of the faculty at the University of Iowa love students and love to teach—that is why they chose to be at an academic medical center. Setting up a day to spend shadowing is as easy as sending an email or talking with them after one of their lectures. Spending a day in

patient care will remind you of why you want to be a physician. Further, you will interact with happy and adept physicians—the desired endpoint of your medical education as well.

Second, try to spend some time away from the medical school on a consistent basis. A simple approach is going for a relaxed run a few times a week. The goal is to see people who are not caught up in the day to day challenge of memorization and examinations. You will be one of them soon.

*Also in This Issue:*

*Becky Morrow*

*Cody Connor*

*Timothy Bahr*

*Kristen Gerjevic*



Spring at the Old Capitol



Dey House, Iowa Writers' Workshop

# To Pocket Time

By: Cody Connor

From faraway solitary its entirety is realized, like an abandoned orb of sapphire, enshrouded in tattered wisps that swirl and clasp about its surface as pallid fingers grasp a luscious fruit. It hangs suspended in a massless black, hurtling through nothingness yet outwardly unaffected by this ongoing journey. The moment is pure and silent, for within the void of space the sound can find no means of sounding, no particles to push through in waves, no existence where the Earth itself subsists. It is the Earth, of course, that is the sphere that looms before the eye of this moment—so insignificant, so mundane, so tranquil from afar: a masterful illusion. Its face is halved by dark and light. The sun's yellow blanket is creeping into the night, delivering day in charitable ascension: matter of moments that bead in other places on the necklace of time. From this distance, man is but an ant that watches the grandiosity that is mankind, yet down below man watches nature unfold as the ant watches man: powerless yet enthralled. It is the point of view that defines reality—this piece of life that consists of so much in so little time—and to desert this current position and relocate closer yet, a new reality comes to light which means nothing to nearly everyone, but everything to one.

Here the sun is but a bulb, a shimmering blemish on the azure face of the spreading sky. Remnants of the commonplace clouds linger as cirrus strings that ripple and fade, almost transparent as they slash subtly the perfection of an untainted canvas. The air is light and chilled, clear and empty save for a gaudy pack of gulls that hovers confidently amongst the blue. It is them alone, nearly ten strong, affording an afternoon pleasure flight, consuming the time of their unscheduled day.

A troubled young man stands amidst a sea of concrete, his right hand to his brow as he sheds his worries and admires the aerial acrobatics of the free-spirited gulls. Envy creeps upon him and shows itself in the boy's gaping mouth and hushed exhalation, now dissipating as fog before his rapt eyes. The birds are unknowing entertainers, swirling in gentle circles, cutting the heavens in effortless fashion as their formation shifts and their feathers glint in the sunlight. Each individual component of the flock leans and flaps and glides in near accord: not faultless accord. Slight delay between the followers and the leaders brings subsequent flashes about each bird but pulsates in gleaming waves amongst the group as a whole.

At this point in time, the boy stands smiling and wishing and the birds float still in the sky, suspended as if by translucent ice that will soon thaw with the next moment and grant freedom again for their swooping and swirling and mesmerizing dance. At this point in time, the boy is free as they are, unconcerned and far-flung from the world which he seeks refuge from. The drugs, the fear, the pain, the shouts, the slaps, the disrespect: he feels them not. The bleakness, the treachery, the hatred, the disappointment, the deafening silence of no one and nothing: he deals them not. This peace will last but seconds more, but in his life, the impact of it shall reverberate across his time, and the sensation of its unstressed showing will replay in times of dark emotion. Living, for him, will never be free, but in this moment, harsh truths are forgotten, and sparks of hope may illumine the dark. This will be his torch until his fated day.

# McCowen Adopts Two Families

By: Becky Morrow

One thing that has continually surprised me over the past two years at Carver is the extremely charitable spirits of the students and faculty. During the semester, it's easy to let schoolwork grab hold of your life; everything outside of MERF can become out of focus soon after the first weekly test knocks at your door. On top of school stress, financial burdens also become a haunting shadow. However, that doesn't stop CCOM from continually giving back to Iowa City and its families. Rachelle Naridze and I were very excited to kick off McCowen's Mr. Iowa Medicine talent show this year in order to raise money for a local family in need through the Crisis Center's Adopt-A-Family program. We had six courageous Carver men step up to vie for the coveted Mr. Iowa title. For the next two weeks, students and faculty could vote by placing cash or coins in their favorite contestant's folder. During this fundraiser, there were several other groups raising money for other causes, but this didn't deter Carver from putting its best foot forward. Together, we raised a remarkable \$596.92, and Mr. Tyler Bertroche, was awarded the much sought after Mr. Iowa crown. I think we have a responsibility as the Carver community to give back to those around us, and the response to this fundraiser showed that many of you feel the same way. With the funds raised, we were able to sponsor and shop for two families from the community. Both families were very appreciative to get basic items such as boots, gloves, jeans, and even a Christmas tree with which to decorate their household. This program relieved holiday stress and brought joy to both homes. Thank you for your generous spirits this holiday season.

# Student Gov't Update

By: Kristen Gerjevic

**S**tudent Government has been hard at work these past couple months with Crista Gala, Wine and Cheese and the 110th Aesculapian Frolics. Crista Gala had a great turnout with 250 attendees and Wine and Cheese raised \$1,497 for Dance Marathon. Winners for this year's Frolics were the M4's for both skit and band. The M1 class took second place in both. The Student Body welcomes Wanakee Carr as the new President-Elect and the members of next year's Exec Council. Students wishing to get more involved in student government should watch for upcoming emails outlining how to nominate one's self for elections. Positions on a variety of committees are available. Questions should be directed to Amy Domeyer-Klenske (Amy-domeyer-klenske@uiowa.edu) or Shady Henien (Shady-henien@uiowa.edu).

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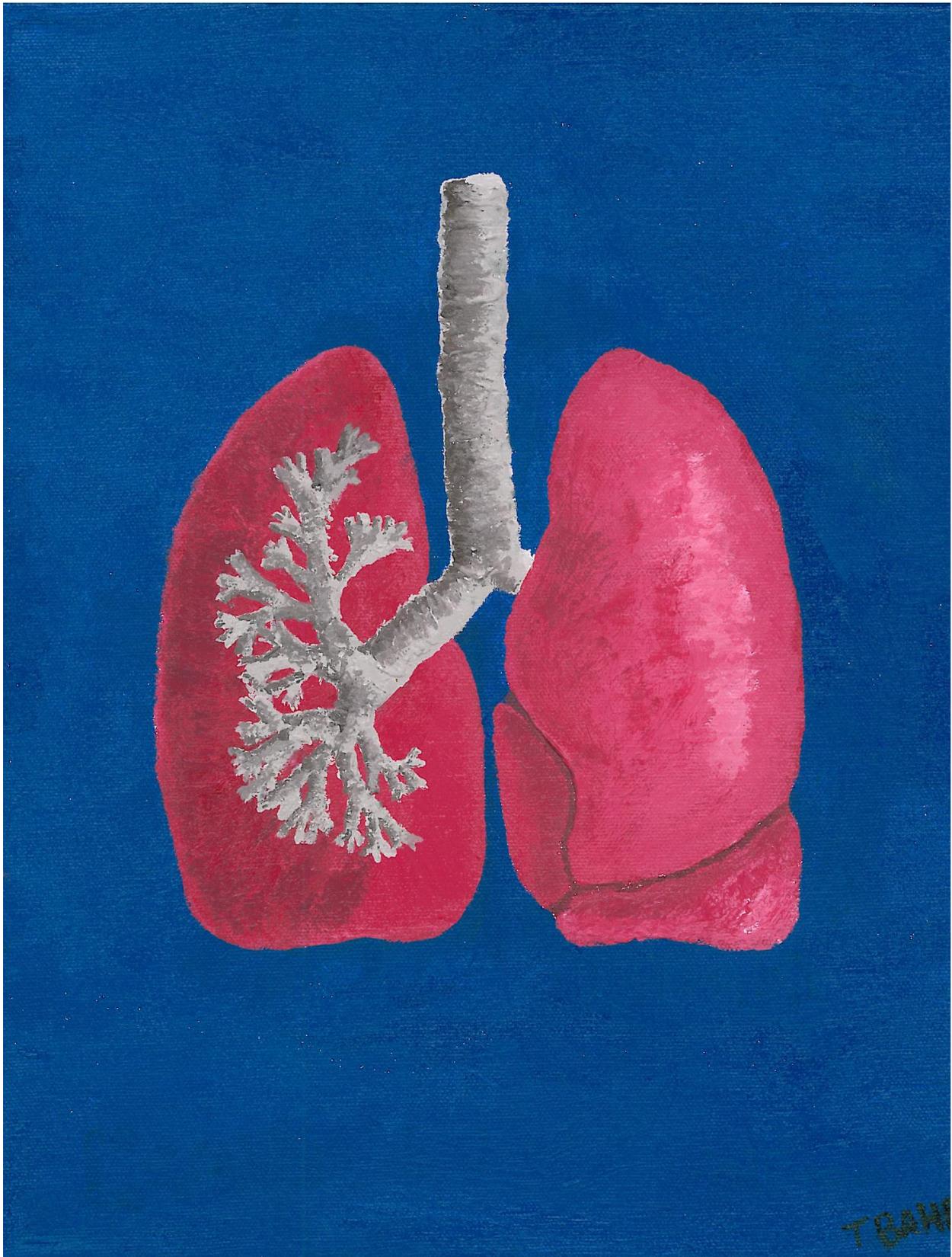
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“Breath of Life”  
Timothy Bahr