

## 2018 MCC Creative Writing Contest – Results with Judge’s Comments

About Our Judge: Dr. Joel R. Brouwer, our contest judge, is retired from teaching English and Communication for 47 years, the last 21 on the faculty at Montcalm Community College. During that time, he taught creative writing and mentored numerous aspiring authors. He also coordinated the statewide LAND Creative Writing Contest for many years.

Judge’s note: I was genuinely impressed with the overall quality of entries in all three categories. In fiction and poetry, where there were multiple entries, it was not easy to settle on two winners. All the entries had their strengths and their charms; another judge might well have chosen differently. I congratulate all who entered, and encourage you all to keep developing your creative abilities.

### Essay

1<sup>st</sup> Place: “Enbridge Line 5: the Environmental, Ethical and Economic Effects”

This essay clearly explains three perspectives on the continued operation of the fuel transport pipeline beneath the Straits of Mackinac. The essay doesn’t take a position; rather, it examines the reasons behind the arguments of environmentalists, Native Americans and advocates of economic prosperity. While the essay recounts these arguments accurately and in detail, it focuses on the potential for harm if the pipeline fails. It could be improved by also examining how likely it is that the pipeline will fail. Despite this shortcoming, the essay is well-researched, substantiating its assertions with evidence from reliable sources. It provides a clear overview of the issues involved.

monologue, re-creating for the reader the immediacy of panic and the uselessness of rational advice. Oddly, the least effective line in the poem is the most analytical and rational: "I think I have anxiety." Rather than declaring the obvious, the poem should trust the reader to understand. The line breaks the mood so effectively created by description of physical and mental symptoms. The poem would be more immediate if its final line was "Worry is who I really am."

### Fiction

1<sup>st</sup> Place: "Some Things are Better Left Untouched"

This story puts readers