

## *First Place*

**Category: Writing – Non-Fiction**

**Age Division: 16-21**

### Handbag or Hanoverian?

Leah Escalante

As my mom and I were walking through the aisles of the grocery store last fall, I noticed a girl carrying a Chanel purse. The classic intertwining C's played with the light, and the design burst with panache. However, the true sign of quality came in the meticulous quilting of the leather body. I pointed it out and said, "Those are really popular at school; so many girls have them." My mom turned to me with a perturbed voice and said, "Don't even think about being jealous. You have a hairy, four-legged Chanel purse at the barn. Leah, which would you rather have: a handbag or a Hanoverian?" I snorted my response; as we both knew I would much rather have a horse, even though I did admire the design and craftsmanship of Chanel.

The next day I was grooming my Hanoverian gelding, Wrocket, in his stall while Dena, another boarder, groomed her mare in the aisle. Wrocket has been blessed with a sweet eye and disposition, but occasionally a spark of mischievousness arises. Dena and I were laughing because I had just told her how my mom responded when I pointed out the latest trend at school. While we were talking, Wrocket took a drink of water and lifted his head over the side of his stall into the aisle just above Dena. As she bent down to put boots on her mare, Wrocket opened his mouth, as if he were chewing on water, and sent water, accompanied with bits of hay, streaming down her back. Dena shrieked, and through fits of laughter I proudly stated, "Only the fanciest handbags double as fountains."