

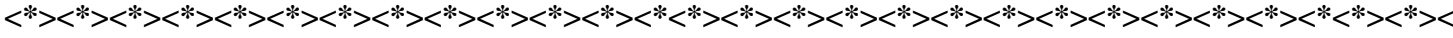


# SPARE MULE



Missouri State Poetry Society Newsletter  
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*Strophes*, the national newsletter is available online at  
<http://www.nfsps.com/> Click Strophes online.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Happy New Year one and all. I hope each of you had a safe and happy holiday season. Our new year is upon us and I am honored by the privilege to be your President in 2013.

I hope to see our society thrive and grow as we all come together to make it one to be proud of.

I want to welcome our new Chapter, The River Bend Gang, in Kansas City to our society! It is such a joy to see new chapters join us and new members in our ranks. I hope everyone feels the same sense of pride in our society as I do. In order to be a member of our great society though, you have to pay your dues. So let me offer this reminder that we need everyone to double check your checkbooks to see if your dues are paid. For those of you who are not affiliated with a local chapter, you are welcome to continue as a member-at-large. Should you have any questions about how much should be paid or where your check should go, you can find this information on our website or feel free to contact me and I will be happy to direct you.

Also, for those of you who have paid your dues, but just have questions or ideas that you would like to share, you too should feel free to email me and share your thoughts or ask your questions. You can always find contact information on our website at <http://www.nfsps.com/mo/>.

Please don't forget the poetry contest deadlines are quickly approaching. I would like to thank everyone who works so diligently on our contests to make them such a success each year. The contest information can all be found on our website. Speaking of contests, fifty-five school administrators in Missouri recently received an email from me with the details of our youth poetry contest. I had some help from Dale Ernst in comprising the message (thank you, Dale) and have received several positive responses. It seems our wonderful opportunity for Missouri youth is not widely known. I hope each of you will help to promote this within your own communities. You can print the contest details from our website and post them at your local grocery stores or share them on your Facebook or other media outlets.

Again, I want to say welcome to our new members and welcome back to all the rest. I hope you have a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Dawn Harmon

We have a new local chapter:

**The River Bend Gang** of Kansas City with 6 members, and they have already paid their 2013 dues.



## KUDOS

Kudos for Lee Ann Russell

### 1. SENIOR POETS LAUREATE

Awarded 2012 Golden Pen Award "In recognition of an outstanding living poet who is an active, vital member of the senior community of American poets."

Bio and poem "Last Call" published in *Golden Words* edited by Wanda Sue Parrott and Barbara Callahan Quin.

### 2. POETRY SOCIETY OF TEXAS

2nd place in Julie Hargrave Lucas Memorial Award for "Address Unknown," and HM in Alice Lee Reeb Award for "Graveside"

### 3. LEBANON Poets' Society

1st place, Rhymed Poetry, for "Memoirs"

HM, Free Verse, for "Hankies"

## CHAPTER REPORTS

### **Kansas City Metropolitan Verse Chapter Report December 2012**

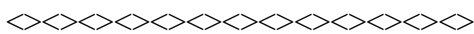
Kansas City Metropolitan Verse is now accepting submissions for the 2013 Anthology. KC Metro Verse members should mail their works to Brenda Conley, chapter President.

Members are actively attending the Midwest Poets Series at the Mabee Theatre in Sedgwick Hall. Brenda reported on the reading from Tracy Smith and shared some of her work. Kay Klinkenborg attended the Writer's Conference at Ghost Ranch in Arizona.

Members are contributing for the Spare Mule. Please send your work to Deanna DeLong to be forwarded to the editor.

The group continues to read and write at each meeting. Naomi Shihab Nye and Ted Kooser are favorites. An interesting prompt was used at the November meeting; *a letter was found in a book from a used book store.*

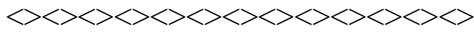
One poem from this prompt was, *Brown Shoes at a Formal Wedding.*



### **Crawford County Bombadils:**

The Crawford County Bombadils is happy to announce the addition of several new members. There are now eleven of us who are actively involved this year. We still enjoy the monthly writing prompts sent out by our president and the chance to share what we have each written. The more "local" members of our chapter are looking forward to an opportunity to join the Steelville Arts Council this spring in hosting a Poet's Speak event in Steelville, Missouri. I hope to have more information on that in our next Spare Mule as well as a recap of the accomplishments our members have achieved in 2012. Until then, I want to wish you a happy New Year.

~Loree Stiller-Harmon



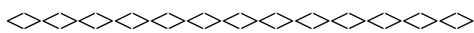
### **Poets and Friends Chapter Report**

We were very disappointed to have to announce that our annual Poetry Contest had to be cancelled due to lack of entries. The needed income from the contest entries was far exceeded by the price of the awards which our bank account could not cover. Entry money received was returned.

Poets and Friends conducted its elections and chose Marsha J. (MJ) Becco as president for the coming year.

Our Christmas Party was held on Dec. 17 where we had a joyous time reading our poems relating to Christmas.

Don DePriest



### **Second Tuesday Chapter Report**

Second Tuesday continues to meet monthly with programs assigned by different members each month. For example, in December we wrote short humorous poems, many members choosing to write limericks. Here are three limericks that were written to qualify for the assignment.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRESIDENT’S ADDENDUM:

I wanted to let you all know that I have appointed Dale Ernst as our Publicity Officer.

Dawn

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Members and non-members,

I would like to remind everyone of the society's ongoing contests. I think it would be a wonderful way to start the New Year for us poets, so I would like to encourage everyone to enter. Our winter contest is still open for entries, with a deadline of February 15, but please don't wait until the last minute. I find just looking over poems to send in sometimes inspires me to write something new, or causes me—after a new read of an old poem—to change some things, making it a better poem that might be worthy of sending in. That happened a couple years back for me, with the end result—a winner, and more importantly a better poem. So start the New Year right, by getting those writing juices flowing with poetic endeavors. Please be aware of how much your entering these contests helps with the ongoing viability of the Missouri State Poetry Society and your help is always appreciated,

Also think about entering the National Federation of State Poetry Society's poetry contests. The link to all the information about their contests can be found at our website—the rules for our winter contest are posted there as well. By the way, folks will need to get their dues in for the coming year soon, because we have to send in a membership list to the National Federation, or we can't enter some their contests. So if chapters haven't sent in their dues, please do so. Of course that goes for Members-at-Large also, and by the way, we really appreciate all of you out there.

Happy “New Year,” and all the best throughout the coming year,  
Dale Ernst Publicity Director

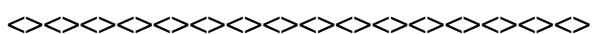
FEES DUE:

It is time to pay dues again for membership in Missouri State Poetry Society (\$4) and National Society of Poetry Societies (\$3). These fees are due January 1 each year for everyone except an Honorary Member [whose \$7 is paid by the MSPS treasurer from state funds]. Treasurers of local chapters send the fees of \$7 to the state treasurer whose address is Bill Lower, 21010 S. Hwy 245, Fair Play, MO 65649.

Members of local chapters pay their \$7 per member to the treasurer of the local chapter. Other local chapter fees, if any, are set by the local chapter. They are paid directly to the treasurer of the local chapter and are used by the local chapter for local expenditures. As mentioned above, the treasurer of the local chapter will then send the \$7 to the state treasurer, who keeps \$4 for state expenditures, and sends \$3 to the national treasurer for national expenditures. The members of the national organization are listed on the state’s alphabetical list of members eligible for the 50 national contest [which have a March 15 deadline]. The alphabetical list is submitted by the state secretary or state treasurer or state webmaster to the national contest director.

Members at Large pay \$13 per year due January 1. These fees are mailed directly to the state treasurer Bill Lower at the above address, or to the state’s webmaster Tom Padgett, 523 N. Park Place, Bolivar, MO 65613 to be added to the state’s alphabetical list.

MSPS Board members are encouraged to help treasurers of local members collect the money from members and get it sent to the state treasurer.



## GRIST:

As editor of our GRIST Anthology, I want to remind everyone how quickly time passes when we aren't looking. Though the call for submissions will not officially go out until the first of March, now is the time to start pulling out those old writings you'd like to revisit or sit down with a fresh sheet of paper and see what magic you can create for this year's publication. All inquiries relating to GRIST should be directed to Dawn Harmon. Contact information can be found on our web page at <http://www.nfsps.com/mo/>. If you do not have email, please, please, please contact me and let me know how I can reach you when it is time to send out GRIST reminders. I do not want anyone to miss their opportunity to be featured in our anthology because I did not have proper contact information. Also, I would ask that chapter presidents help to make certain throughout the year that their members are receiving the GRIST contact and submission information. It is such a pleasure to serve as your editor and I am looking forward to working with each of you as we make this anthology the best one yet!  
Happy Writing!

**Dawn Harmon**

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### POEMS:

#### **Blue Eyes Gaze**

He allowed hot water into the mug  
as quickly, he poured it back out.  
Bristles stirred over the cake of soap sitting on the  
bottom.  
Foam filled the mug  
Clean scent of shaving cream filled the room.

With haste he spread white bubbles over his face  
careful not to coat above his gaunt cheeks  
spreading the mix down his neck  
stopping at his protruding collar bone.

A flick of his forefinger drew a line in the cream  
defining each sideburn. A pinch of the nose  
removed any lather gathered in his nostrils.  
He worked fast not allowing the shaving cream to  
cool.

He always paused for a moment  
while the lather softened his prickly beard.  
Piercing blue eyes gazed into the medicine cabinet  
mirror.

His years had been hard ones: coal mines, the  
Depression  
the never-ending toil of raising nine children  
the always present sorrow of burying three.

Standing on the stool beside the sink  
a child caught up in the process of shaving,  
I watched as he stretched his face from side to side  
watched as his free hand lifted his nose  
watched as he cocked his chin upward.

Methodically sliding the double edged razor across  
his face

I watched as he removed the foamy mask and  
revealed my proud father.

By Brenda Conley KC Met

#### **Haiku**

fawn nestles in grass  
poults curl up beside the friend  
a sanctuary

twin fawns leap clover  
as mother appeared at creek  
dusk, time to come home

Kay Klinkenborg, KC MET

#### **Haiku**

autumn brings  
cold apple cider  
summer's reward

searched with diligence  
for my eyeglasses to see  
found them on my head

Deanna DeLong, KC Met

#### **Promise**

The New Year enters like a child in First Grade:  
recess lines weave with laughter,  
mittens braided through coat sleeves  
connect like tin-can phones,  
hats snug with stripes, flopping  
multi-colored balls on top.  
The year begins with a yarn, and,  
if luck holds, ends with a yawn.

--Todd Sukany 12 Dec 2012

### **..back porch**

..November's  
here again  
with it's crisp  
cool nights  
day-light hours  
growing shorter  
with time  
and again i'm  
watching a gray  
winter shadow  
stretch  
long and wide  
along the  
north edge  
of the  
back  
porch..

Bernita Pettit, KC Met

### **To Those Who Live by the River**

Where it flows and converges  
where the life begins  
grows the river bend.  
Caught in brambles  
fermenting on banks  
we find our souls.  
Our blood joins the river  
running in every vein.  
Our voices blend to sing  
the sound of those  
who stood with open arms  
as power rolled their way.  
The farmers, river rats, preachers,  
Sellers of merchandise and souls.  
We sing all their praises  
because we are  
The River Bend Gang  
that follows the river  
wherever it goes.  
Sharon S. Gibson, River Bend Gang

### **And then I saw it was January**

(a Laurette sequence)

I looked around  
some days beyond  
December, found the year  
had fled. Instead  
the Janus month,  
cold January's here!

Oh, snow and ice  
and bitter cold.

The north wind howls apace.  
The schools are closed,  
some churches, too,  
but, oh! Bright winter's face!

The old cat sleeps  
beside the fire,  
his paw above an eye.  
Before too long,  
'Mom Nature will  
blow January by.

Pat Laster, Bombadil

### **WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE?**

Those who deny earth is warming  
Had best stay out of farming  
For what was once green  
Can no longer be seen--  
To revel in ignorance is not charming.

**Carl Huser Second Tuesday**

### **VERSAILLES**

There once was a man from Versailles  
(about this I would not lie!).  
He rode on the rails  
To the town of Versailles  
In Missouri and wondered, "Why?"

Dan Adkinson Second Tuesday

### **An Advent Night**

Stately little tree in the icy window,  
Unadorned except for tiny lights,  
Makes my time here tranquil  
For prayer and reflection on this cold night.  
Ornaments absent, branches innocent and bare  
Reminds me of simplicity's quiet power.  
I sit in the tree's soft and humble glow  
With no notice of passing hours.  
No ribbons galore or popcorn strings distracting,  
No tinkle of bells, no tinsel shine.  
I'm grateful for each serene moment here,  
Just with thoughts of the Night Divine.

Claudia Mundell

Crawford County Bombadils

### **TOO MUCH LEMON PIE**

An African man, a Ubangi,  
so loved lemon pie with meringue, he  
fell stuffed on the floor  
out of reach from the door,  
where he cries evermore, "Who rang me?"

Tom Padgett, Second Tuesday

**CONTESTS:**

**Missouri State Poetry Society Winter Contest 2013**

**Deadline:**

- Postmarked February 15, 2013

**Format:**

Submit two copies of each poem entered. On both copies put the category number and name in the upper left-hand corner. On one copy in the right-hand corner put your name, your address, and either “Member MSPS” or “Non-Member”

**Limits:**

- Poems may be 40 or fewer lines. They may be unpublished, or previously published if the poet retains the rights to the poem. Poets may enter each category as many times as they wish. No poems will be returned.

**Categories:**

1. **Rhymed Verse** or **Blank Verse** (unrhymed iambic pentameter), any subject, serious or humorous
2. **Free Verse**, any subject, serious or humorous.
3. **Humorous Verse**, any subject.
4. **Winter Subject**, any form, serious or humorous.
5. **MEMBERS ONLY: Poet's Choice**: any form (including open-field, shaped, or concrete poetry), any subject, serious or humorous.
6. serious or humorous.

**Prizes:**

- \$25, \$15, \$10, and three honorable mentions in each category.

**Fees for Categories 1-4:**

· Non-members pay \$2.00 per poem. Members pay \$1.00 per poem.

**Fees for Category 5 (Members Only):** \$2.00 per poem.

Make money order or check payable to MSPS. Mail poems and fees to:

Bill Lower  
 21010 S. Hwy 245  
 Fair Play, MO 65649

Include a 3x5 index card with your email address for a list of the winners by email or an SASE if you do not have email.

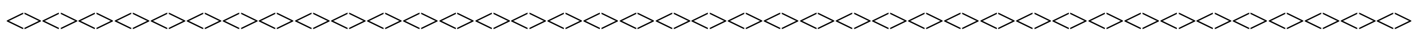
**Membership:**

If you do not belong to one of our local chapters, but wish to join Missouri State Poetry Society, include the \$13 annual Member-at-Large fee and pay the reduced contest fees for a member..

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**NEWS RELEASE Search is on for Senior Poets Laureate**

Entries are now being received for the 21<sup>st</sup> annual Senior Poets Laureate Poetry Competition (state and nationallaureate awards) for American poets age 50 and older. Deadline 6/31/13. For Rules, send #10 SASE to SPL 2013, P. O. Box 1821, Monterey, CA 93942-1821 or download from [www.amykitchenerfdn.org](http://www.amykitchenerfdn.org)



<p><b>Nothing beautifies a snowy winter scene like the knowing that you have a snug warm hearth to share with loved ones.</b></p>
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