



SPARE MULE

Missouri State Poetry Society Newsletter

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<http://www.nfspa.com/> Click Strophes online.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is with my face turned toward Spring that I turn the page on my calendar. Our board members will want to mark their calendars for our Spring Board Meeting which will be held at First Baptist Church in Rolla, Missouri. In times past we have started our meeting at 10:30 a.m. and concluded it at a local restaurant some time later. In keeping with that tradition we will meet at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 10, 2014, where we will discuss the fall convention and naming of the next president.

Each season brings changes to the world around us and the biggest change we will see with this Spare Mule is the announcement of a new web master for our society.

Most of you know that Tom Padgett's head belongs on the Mount Rushmore of MSPS—in that spot on the mount's far left that tourists see first as they look up from the highway. Simply put, without Tom, the state society would not exist. Not only did he father it, but he taught it to crawl and walk. Then, like a good parent, he ushered it into the wider world and showed it how to live up to its adult responsibilities. Others have come along to play key roles in making the society what it is today, but Tom was the prime mover, the godfather, and, in addition, for years he fulfilled the role of community organizer, lending vision and direction to the local clubs and the state board.

You may know that Tom deserves the state society's salute, but you may not know about his background. Raised in Mountain View, Missouri, Tom holds two master's degrees and a Ph.D. in English from Mizzou, where he specialized in American literature and wrote his dissertation on American short-story writer Flannery O'Connor. At Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, he inspired generations of students in a long collegiate teaching career that began in 1963 before he retired in 1992. He lives in Bolivar with his wife, Shirley.

Besides founding the state society, Tom has served at various times as its president, secretary, and web master, and he has edited the e-zine Thirty-Seven Cents, which has provided poetry instruction and a forum for the work of many of the society's poets. What's more, if you haven't noticed, in his poetry, Tom has provided society members with models of wonderful art, both accessible and insightful. His poems have appeared in many literary journals, and his most recent collection is *The Way We Live*.

Recently Tom stepped down as the society's web master, a position now held by Todd Sukany, an instructor of English at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar and a member of MSPS's local chapter Author Unknown. While I imagine you would like to join me in welcoming Todd Sukany to this new position, let us first raise our

hands and hearts with great thanks in salute to Dr. Padgett for all his love and nurture of our great family of poets. It is an honor to be a member of his family.

Dawn Harmon, MSPS President

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KUDOS:

LEE ANN RUSSELL

From Poets Roundtable of Arkansas Monthly Contest:
Honorable Mention for "Choices"

From Missouri State Poetry Society Winter Contest

Poet's Choice - MSPS Members Only
3rd place for "House Sitting"



POEMS:

ACCOUNT BOOK

--Sallie McCormick Adams

I read slowly now by sentence
paragraph and page,
The ledger of each wakeful hour
deed columns of each day,
I find no error in the figures;
kindness tallies not cost,
I sum up the account of giving
finding nothing worthy's
ever lost'.
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MY GREEN CALENDAR

--Bill Lower

The old had some really,
I mean really
impressive glossy photos
set above the weekly rows--
arid southwestern landscapes
a rolling vineyard laden with grapes
a borealis display in a starry night sky
a dollop of ice cream on a slice of cherry pie
a snow frosted, blue-eyed Alaskan husky
an angler a weighing a prize muskie
an exterior dimly lit Irish pub
a mama tiger and her albino cub
a finish line just ahead of a streaking Indy car
a Fiji islander showing a warrior's scar
a bespangled acrobat snatching her flying trapeze
a wounded lion teased by a troop of monkeys--
They say in twenty-eight years it would repeat;
but since retiring, I have a solution much more neat.
I will just keep my dozen displays
and adjust my own now irrelevant days.
Time and dates have become much more ductile,
so this year I pledge again to recycle.
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SUMMER TREASURE

--Sallie McCormick Adams

In this melon scented country
These brilliant hills
Are riddled
With silver star waves,
The bluish maples gleam and glide
Through a channel of golden moonlight.
The flickering trout fish
Sleepily carpet a silver moon-stone stream
And listen
As the frail nightingale
Brings
A leaf-light melody
To a flute of the wind.
Walking through these evening hills
That summer with beauty I find
they are a gift for memory to pocket forever.

THREE CALENDAR PAGES

---- Tom Padgett

MARCH

March is a young man home from winter's wars.

He boasts about the battles that he fought,
of victories when all seemed dark,
of hope that brought him through.
He proudly shows his scars from wounds.
He barrels around the house and shakes the panes
to make his presence felt. He questions ways
that old men hold and postulates new truths.
He sheds his uniform for painter's togs
and greens the entire neighborhood.

APRIL

April, an actor, plays the part of clown
in spotted suit of green and brown.
His hair is wild with wind-teased strands;
his shoes are clumps, here and there.
His fooling can't disguise his talent
as magician, for his hat cast down
bursts forth with daffodils and violets.
His cloak swirled in the air
turns clouded skies to blue
and then with much ado reverses them.
He stands sopping wet to take his bow.

AUGUST

The blowzy strumpet August rouses late
and sips her coffee, reads her paper,
hums a listless tune replete with negligence.
She knows her carpet is beyond repair,
the furniture has faded from the sun,
her necessary chores remain undone.
She doesn't care. Why should she?
Someone else perhaps will come along
today with energy to fix things up.
She shoos a fly from off her cup,
turns a page, and drawls, "Not me."
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CALENDAR DÉJÀ VU

---Ken Roller

Of all the calendars that come my way,
throughout the closing months of an old year,
there's one I'm sure to save from this array
of timely, colorful artistic cheer.

I study and admire those photographs
that capture stunning views from mountain crests.
Another shows twelve views of babies' laughs;
the next depicts a dozen birds and nests.

And so I browse the stack I've kept, and pause
to give a doleful sigh for those who lose,
hopes doused I'd donate to their worthy cause,

for from the start I knew the one I'd choose.

This year it was a funeral chapel's gift,
a place the featured artist doubtless shunned.
But maybe his wry humor gives a lift
to those who've emptied their emotional fund.

Perhaps you've guessed the calendar I see
when looking what's ahead and what has been...
nostalgic daily slice of joy for me,
the Norman Rockwell drawings once again!

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FIRST FROST

----Sallie McCormick Adams

A lace of frost
on my window
so exquisite
it could be the
WHISPER on the wind
written in a
delicate sign language
trying to peer
into my two eyes
to hold me to a
love song
frozen:

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HIGH HORSE

----Mark Tappmeyer

I wonder why you say I should
get off my high horse
when surely you can see
it is the little sorrel

I keep in the pen near the barn,
the mare only twelve hands at the shoulders
I bought from you,
though you must not remember now

after selling all your horses,
among them Old Grim with the off-setting bite
and the Shetland fonder of kicking
than accepting apples.

a cube of sugar,
and of course the high horse that you rode
in parades
when you thought all eyes were following you.
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APRIL IN EUREKA SPRINGS

~~~Pat Laster, Benton AR

A nyone from anywhere who's  
P articipated in a Writers'  
R etreat even once will  
I mmediately remember the  
L uxurious landscapes,

I mmense gingerbread houses,  
N arrow streets holding shops

T hat tempt us into buying,  
H ealthy (or not) eateries—all  
E nlivening the main reason for

O ur being in the O-  
Z-A-R-K-S in the first place:  
A chance to improve our art,  
R aise our level of skill, and  
K nuckle down to revise,  
S o that next year, we'll be better.

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## NUMBERS ON PAPER

----Paul D Rauch

Numbers on paper fading away  
As days go by and I turn gray.  
Time is fleeting, so they say,  
And who am I to tell them nay?

The hourglass keeps dripping sand"  
According to some ordained plan  
As wrinkles grow on face and hands  
And legs become too weak to stand.

The calendar's a monstrous thing  
That eats the life of everything.  
You never know what's happening  
Until you feel the old age sting

In joints and places that you have  
Where now you need relieving salve.  
Downhill faster it all goes  
Until it's bursting through your toes.

The end is coming soon in sight  
As I race this headlong flight  
But there's a glimmer shining bright:  
I see, I see the heavenly light.

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## Multi-color Floorboards

--- Terrie Jacks

My crayon box bangs over  
Over on the floor  
The floor becomes a kaleidoscope  
A kaleidoscope of crayons  
red  
blue  
green  
yellow  
orange  
violet  
jade  
bronze  
pink  
magenta  
purple  
tan  
black  
and white

create multi-colored floorboards.

## Acorn Rain

Standing under  
an oak tree  
in autumn  
is OUCH!  
hazardous.

## Forecast Snow

A forecast of snow  
Requires a visit to the store  
Milk is gone  
Bread nevermore  
Eggs are slim  
Shelves are bare  
Forecasters sound the alarm  
No food anywhere

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## Switching Channels

(a Fibonacci)

John J. Han (On the Edge)

My  
team  
suffers another  
blowout loss. Disgusted,  
I turn the channel to  
a better show—*Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*.  
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## **ONWARD MARCH**

----Jeff Allenbrand

January again and  
with it a new year  
replacing the old  
not quite finished.

I'm reminded of  
other Januarys,  
other years,  
similar and yet  
different.

Older yes but  
not sure if all

that wiser,  
who can tell,  
oh well.

New calendars  
with recycled  
pictures on  
recycled paper.

Perhaps my  
Life is recycled too.

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## **GRIST ANNOUNCEMENT**

It is that time of year again when I am sending out the call to all poets for your contribution to our next anthology. I am accepting submissions until May 30, 2014. Please send your contribution to me at the following address:

DAWN HARMON  
Editor-GRIST  
351 Oak Road  
Cuba, MO 65453 or via email at:  
[inafielddofdaisies@hotmail.com](mailto:inafielddofdaisies@hotmail.com)

All submissions must include the following information:

Poet's Name, City/State, Chapter Affiliation, and Lifetime Membership (if applicable).

All poems are limited to 36 lines with 60 characters per line including spaces.

You may purchase your copy of GRIST 2014 by mailing checks made payable to MSPS to the address above. Copies are \$8.75 each if pre-ordered. Any copy ordered after the MAY 30, 2014 DEADLINE will be \$10.00 each.



**to Tom Padgett and Judy Young  
for your many years of service to MSPS.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Kansas City Metropolitan Verse will celebrate the publication of their 8<sup>th</sup> volume of poetry on April 8, 2014, with a reception from 6:30 to 7pm, reading and books signing 7pm to 8pm, at New Song Church, Kansas City MO. RSVP and request directions to: [BrendaConley12@aol.com](mailto:BrendaConley12@aol.com). We would love to see you.

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### **MSPS Youth Poetry Contest Division**

Even with all the snow and school cancellations, there were 47 High School entries and 406 Middle School entries in the youth divisions of the MSPS Poetry Contest. "Amour Sonnet" by an 8th grader from Kirkwood and "Monster" by a 10th grader from Iberia received top honors and the top ten poems in each division were sent as MO candidates in the NFSPS Manningham Trust Youth Poetry Competition.

### **MSPS Youth Works Director**

After sixteen years as the MSPS Youth Works Director, Judy Young is resigning this position. If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please contact the MSPS Board of Directors. Responsibilities are to handle the Youth Division of the MSPS Winter Poetry Contest and submit MO entries to the NFSPS Manningham Trust Youth Poetry Competition. This includes sending email notification about the MSPS poetry contest to MO Middle and High School teachers and principals, judging the poems and sending the top ten entries to the Manningham competition, emailing winners lists to the participating schools, sending prizes (supplied by MSPS) to the winners, and, if there are MO winners in the Manningham, sending those prizes (supplied by the Manningham) to the appropriate schools. Judy is willing to work with whomever takes this position, giving the new director the email addresses she has, prototypes of the notification letters she sends and prize certificates she has produced, etc. Whoever takes on this position will need a computer with access to internet and a printer. Also, please be aware that the time frame from the MSPS submission deadline of Feb 15 and when you have to have the poems judged and winners submitted to the Manningham (received by March 1) is very short. If you have questions about the position, feel free to contact Judy directly at [judyyoungbooks@gmail.com](mailto:judyyoungbooks@gmail.com).

## **CHAPTER REPORTS:**

### **The River Bend Gang Kansas City, Mo Chapter Report Oct. 2013-March, 2014**

The River Bend Gang continues to meet monthly at Panera's in Westport to critique their poetry and share creative ideas.

Anne Wickliffe, Sharon Gibson and Kelly Hams-Pearson made the annual pilgrimage to the Nimrod Conference in Tulsa this past fall. Once again they found it a productive conference.

In January, the entire group made a joint presentation at the Writer's Place New Year's Day reading. Kelly Hams-Pearson began giving poetry workshops to young people this past year.

She and Susan Ikaza gave a "round robin" poetry workshop for teens and their parents at Hilltop Residential Center in January. Kelly has also received a fellowship with the Voices of Our Nation (VONA ) program at the University of California in Berkeley. She will attend a program there in June. The group has scheduled poetry programs for independent living retirement centers in April as part of the celebration of National Poetry Month. We will share poetry and use prompts and the round robin method to encourage the residents' creativity.

### **Crawford County Bomdadils**

The Crawford County Bombadils (Bombadil coming from the Tolkien character who spoke in rhyme or song) correspond by e-mail with a monthly writing assignment by Leader Dawn Harmon. The group is over a year old

and in the past have had such writing assignments as a Early Learning Experience, Superstition, Gratitude and the current one of finding a poem from centuries past and writing a response to it. Members are from the states of Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, California, Ohio and Washington. With the extreme weather situations of this past winter, it was interesting to find out what was going on in other states while you are snowed in. From the enthusiasm of the group, whose feathered quills are actually keyboards, it was conducive to writing poetry.

Signed: Volunteer Reporter, Marie Asner

# SPRINGFIELD'S POETS AND FRIENDS CELEBRATES NATIONAL POETRY MONTH

**With**

Poetry in the Park, April 27, 2014, From 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM

## **At Grant Beach Park Pavilion**

## Come celebrate Spring and Poetry

## Open to all

## POTLUCK AND POETRY

**Bring Food for your party to share POTLUCK STYLE**

**Bring your poetry for open mike Poetry Read-a-Rounds**

**Play grounds for children///Restrooms///Parking///Sheltered seating///Water fountains///easy access**

**Contact, MJBecco@hotmail.com or at 417-818-5056**

**GRANT BEACH PARK IS 2 BLOCKS SOUTH OF Division Street on Grant Ave.**

## **LEBANON POETS' SOCIETY**

Lebanon Poets' Society welcomed three new members at the March meeting. Plans were finalized for the annual 7th graders' poetry contest, with the winners announced at the annual Nightingale Reading. The poetry reading will be held April 10 at the Lebanon library, celebrating National Poetry Month.

## **CONTESTS:**

Missouri State Poetry Society. Summer contest. Deadline: Postmark September 1, 2014. 2 copies of each entry, category number and category names in upper left corner of both copies, poet's name and address in upper right corner of one copy. If member, put "Missouri State Poetry Society" below your address, otherwise put "Non-members." 40 or fewer lines. May be previously published it poet retains the right to the poem; may enter each category as many times as poet wishes. Categories: 1) rhymed verse or blank verse, 2) free verse, 3) humorous verse, 4) any form, summer subject, 5) poet's choice, members only, any forms, any subject). Members pay \$1 per entry in categories 1-5 and \$2 per entry in category 5. Nonmembers pay \$2 per entry in category 1-5.

Payable to MSPS. SASE or email address on a 3X5 index card for list of winners. Send to Nancy LaChance, 14940 Hwy 64, Lebanon, MO 65536