

# Spare Mule



Missouri State Poetry Society  
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## REPORT from Our President

Fellow Poets,

It seems even when we are least expecting it, and in the oddest places, we are reminded of our poetic nature. Yesterday after an eye doctor appointment, I was very tired and because of the long drive home, I went by my nephew's house to stay the night. He lives in an upscale suburban neighborhood, but he had decorated a downstairs bedroom in a very rustic style—quite pleasant. Anyway, on a book shelf that he had created out of barn wood was a copy of *Walden* by Thoreau. As I paged through it, remembering reading it many years ago—what a treat, and especially since this year he would have been two hundred years old on his birthday, (July 12<sup>th</sup> ). Below are a couple quotes by Henry David Thoreau:

*"I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by conscious endeavor."*

*"Be not simply good; be good for something."*

*"Wealth is the ability to fully experience life."*

Nice words for a weary poet to end his day with, and having already sent all my reminders out a week or so ago, I will close.

## REPORTS from Chapters

### On the Edge's reports:

It's been several months since the last report. All are doing well.

In the last report, the Lucidity Poetry Retreat was mentioned. Billy Adams won the Critic's Choice Poetry Contest. Two Honorable Mentions in the retreats poetry contest were awarded to On the Edge members, Terrie Jacks and Billy Adams.

Also mentioned last time was Faye Adams entering the NFSPS contest. She won two Honorable Mentions. Faye was informed that there had been 8000 entries and Honorable Mentions are nothing to sneeze at.

John Han and Terrie Jacks had several senyru published in an online journal titled *Failed Haiku* in the July issue.

John Han has sent *Cantos* to the printers. He's just finished working on a book titled *And Yet and Yet* and is now busy translating Chinese poems of King Yeonsan. The Hortstmans are engaged in their metal art and in their writing. Terrie Jacks is collecting story poems to using this fall while doing Oasis Tutoring. Juanita Witte is busy writing and taking care of a family member. Christopher Chubb writes about life in prose and poetry. So, we are all busy, busy, busy.

Any mistakes in this article is because it's early, the sun isn't up and it's time for my coffee. Take care and keep on writing. –Terrie Jacks

### Second Tuesday's report

Our Second Tuesday chapter has been fairly inactive this spring and summer. Ennui has seemed to set in, or maybe it is just to many things going on that compete for our members time and attention.

We have been meeting for years on campus at SBU, with Tom Padgett previously, and Mark Tappmeyer recently, being able to provide us access to a meeting room. Since Mark has retired from SBU, we no longer have easy access to a campus meeting room. We are searching for an appropriate meeting place to continue.

So, if anyone reading this is interested in attending one of our meetings, best to email me ahead of time to find the meeting space.

Anyone is invited to attend, and surprisingly the time is the *second Tuesday* of every month, at 7:00 p.m. in Bolivar, somewhere.

Email me at [bill.lower@gmail.com](mailto:bill.lower@gmail.com)

**The Write Place** chapter of MSPS, located in the Kansas City metro area is no longer functioning. Jan Kroll, who organized it and was the contact person has decided to pack it in and reduce her load of outside activities. This chapter consisted of primarily elderly, retired persons and Jan was the only one willing to keep up the record keeping part for MSPS. So, unless someone in that area steps up and resuscitates the chapter, it is no longer a part of MSPS.

### KUDOS from Members

**Ted Badger** is completing 31 years of publishing *Lucidity Poetry Journal*, which now has readers in 19 foreign countries."

**Lauren Alexander's** poem "Time" will be in the next edition of *Joey and the Black Boots* when that is published.

**John W. Crawford** (Charter member, Missouri Poetry Convention) *KUDOS*: One third, one h.m., and one tie for h.m. at Poets Roundtable of Arkansas Spring Celebration One h.m. at Arkansas Writers' Conference; one h.m. at Mississippi Poetry Society Convention.

**Karen Kay Bailey's**, *Where Once A Willow*, member-at-large, won the Oklahoma Writers' Federation Inc. Book of Poetry Award for 2017

### POEMS from Members



**autumn fantasy  
blonde or red head**

--Terrie Jacks

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### **Instructions for Summer**

Turn  
the air  
on high. Wear  
shorts. Lose the shoes.  
Watch the weather news  
while praying for showers.  
Wilt like the plants and flowers.  
Mow that grass and chug that water.  
It's just July. It will get hotter.  
When you're too weary to walk, just totter!

### **A Pair of Two**

Moss green and two shades of pink  
past which two white bunnies wandered

clutching silver purses, one on each  
open arm, strolling hand-in-hand,

whistling two lovely tunes  
on the second day of May.

On breezy spring days my twin and I  
would crouch near the garden gate.

I loved Short Bunny with sequined purple vest;  
she adored Tall One with periwinkle shawl.

## **Mosquitoes**

I think that I shall always see  
mosquitoes coming after me.

These pests against my skin do press,  
then bite and make a fast egress.

I lift my eyes to God all day  
and plead with Him, "Take them away!"

Strong sprays in summer I must wear  
most places except eyes and hair.

Upon my skin itch cream I rub.  
I have to buy it by the tub.

I try to make them leave me be,  
but only God can make them flee.

patterned after Joyce Kilmer's "Trees"

--Janice Canerdy

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## **Mountain Spring**

Late snow lay still like lace over the purple,  
mist hung Ozark mountains.  
A young carpet of green turf  
began at the base and rose sparingly.  
Spring bloom of thick-clustering primrose  
covered the hazy slopes,  
and the fresh, clean air of high footage scenery  
eased its way toward lower grassland  
on a mission of conversion.

*Let us join them.* Falling in line behind  
we dance into sparkling sunbeam.

--Carol Louise Moon  
Prev. Published *UPDRAFTS*, 2007

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## **Friends**

The most interesting friends are the newest friends,  
But the oldest friends are the truest friends.

--Wanda Sue Parrott

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## **Ida In Three Parts**

She bears the fruit of tears  
from the past that left  
a niche deep in her mind---  
yet listens each day  
to those who live with things  
they consider important.  
With a glass of tea,  
she helps them see a dream,  
plan their days and with  
a smile and a hug they go  
through her door,

## **What a Thing of Beauty -- An Olympic Sight**

There is nothing, really nothing, more beautiful  
than the firm, slithe body of a man whose strong biceps  
and taut stomach shine  
as he stands at the pool waiting, ready to show his skill  
in water.

There he is, leaning slightly toward the shimmering  
blue,  
stretching his leg muscles just right, fine tuning his  
entire self  
with his mantra  
as he dives gracefully like a gorgeous swan, ready for  
the race.

What beauty, what grace, what art,  
as he moves his strong arms left and right, left and right  
in right time,  
and like a mannered swan, glides to the other side for  
the prize.

Oh, Keats, you were right!  
What a thing of beauty! What a joy forever!  
You must have seen him in your mind's eye, and like  
me, felt a little envy.

--John W. Crawford

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## **LAST NIGHT**

I felt the breath of death  
gently flow cross my face.  
"Not yet!" I cried to her.  
"There are things I must do!"  
She smiled . . . then said to me,  
"You are all just alike."

--Ted Badger (A Sextet) 6x6

while Ida sits quietly  
and remembers hiding  
behind a door  
that had been forgotten...  
and she lived.

## **On The Boat**

After sunset, when everyone  
in her area was asleep,  
Ida would climb metal stairs  
to the outside deck  
and breathe clean sea air  
while watching clouds herd stars  
overhead. On the horizon  
foam-capped waves, each one  
sending her further from the past  
like the end of a song  
when the final note hums deep  
and long, so that it becomes  
part of you and years later  
you can still feel it  
in your breast, like the sea  
echoing...freedom...freedom...  
because where shadows end  
there is life.

## **The New Land**

The new land is a diversity of color  
with travelers going here or there,  
in a oneness of unity and strength...

then, she had a home  
and her own garden---a private place,  
a lazy garden she called it,  
with nothing to do but just live...

flowers woven in pink and white rows  
and her willow tree bent in the wind  
to greet her each morning.

She made her own village here,  
with short paths to visit the clusters of greens  
that gently moved with each soft touch  
and knew no fear  
because the heart---their heart---was full.

--Marie Asner Crawford County Bombadils

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### **A Young One Cries**

Saturday morning. Over the fence, a  
boy cries, "Daddy!" His dad asks, "What's wrong?"  
A lawn mower noise drowns out their  
talk. On YouTube, the Foghorn  
String Band sadly sings: *A  
young one cries and old  
one dies...* At least  
there's no news  
of a  
death.

### **What I Saw in My Dream**

Early Monday morning I have a dream  
in which I see:

my boss staring at me in the hallway  
my colleague who doesn't answer e-mails  
my high-rise hotel room  
a panel discussion for which I am not ready  
a plastic bridge that has a pattern of rainbow fish  
cherry blossoms in Kyoto  
my childhood farmhouse dimly lit  
my mom who gives me a ripe persimmon  
my daughters giggling as babies  
soda fountain spewing their contents on the floor

### **A Sequence for August**

Dewdrops  
on the airplane  
plant this early August  
morning. Heat alert abates for  
today.

Even  
as crape myrtle  
blooms, a few sassafras  
leaves burn bright orange as if to  
compete.

Berries  
on only two  
sprigs of French Mulberry  
begin their seasonal turn: green to  
purple.

Winter  
is what we long  
for during the hottest  
days of July and August. Soon,  
it's here.

-- Pat Laster, Bombadils

.....

then shutting themselves down  
a thick fog shrouding a mountain  
snow, snow, snow falling  
on withered grass  
my boss staring at me in the hallway

Here ends the dream.  
I wake up, staring at the ceiling.

-- John J. Han On the Edge

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### **Last Words**

"You'll see to it  
I get out of this hospital.  
Right?"

I got you out.

Did you know  
you would die there?

--Frank Adams Member at Large

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### **Shrink**

It filled up quickly this week.  
I peek down the hall to the wall clock.  
Ten minutes: enough time if I hussle.  
The trash can rustles as a scoop it

### **Exceptional**

All things known as exceptional  
are merely borrowed from the mundane,  
and must eventually be returned  
to the mundane.  
Laborers, birds, farmhands, the ewe and the doe  
gain power at dawn, with great discernment,  
affirming the master's hands  
with a sure, recurring praise  
of the sunrise, an emblem of the mundane,  
exceptional in its beauty....

--J. Thomas Wheeler

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### **(untitled)**

eyes glow from red face  
copper and green feathers flash  
golden tail lifts high—  
regal bird struts from bluestem  
behold, comes the prairie prince

--Karen Kay Knauss Bailey Member-at-Large

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### **ARC OF THE OZARKS**

Pop up showers  
late spring afternoon.

Pop open sunshine



up from beside the chair  
where my patients sit. I hit  
up the coffee maker on my way and  
start it dribbling drops of temporary moxie.

The kleenexes try to overflow the can  
as, tortuously slow, I glide down the stairs.  
In my mind, I hear the clock tick. Six minutes  
before another face arrives for me to unravel.  
Outside, the wind whisks a few tissues to  
the ground. I chase them around and stuff  
each crumpled wad back in with the rest.

As I screech open the dumpster door  
and pour in the tissues, I wish I could  
tip over my mind and dump out some  
of the tear-soaked stories I've gathered.  
Cassey, Ben, Grayson, Marie. And so many more.  
A wet wad or so for every face. I offer  
a chance for them to sponge up their tears,  
but the fragile tissues are never enough,  
never enough, never...  
Enough.

I stuff the memories back down in my mind  
with the rest. I could fill a trash can myself, but  
I have only three minutes left. Coffee will cleanse  
me instead. I trot up the stairs, pour a mug. One  
swallow, two swallows, three, four,  
then I open the door.

--Sarah Fortna Author Unknown

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### **My Classroom in Needmore, Indiana**

All hallways now resemble that one  
leading to a room with high windows

after brief downpour.

Driving due west,  
hissing and splashing  
wet pavement flings  
a fine mist behind.

Sun strikes my eyes  
just before losing the horizon.

Lo! Rear-view mirror  
shows my follower.

Right on my bumper,  
a tailgating, full circle,  
portable rainbow.

--Bill Lower Second Tuesday

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### **Interlude**

For those like me who seek sweet solitude,  
the countryside is balm to wounded soul –  
as minstrel leaves conjoin in harmony

and high ceilings, rows of desks  
fastened one to another.

Each wooden desktop  
displayed a hole, a black well,

adding dark mystery  
for seventh grade girls.

Students struggled with grammar,  
hairdos, jokes, pierced ears, hormones.

But not so in basketball.  
No awkwardness, no missteps.

They had what it took on the court:  
legs, opportunity, fluency.

The key to grammar—  
seeing a teacher cheer them onward.

When I'm in a long hallway,  
I sometimes can hear their rolling laughter,

and lightning words. If a door opens,  
I'm going in.

--Pat Durmon

\*\*\*\*\*

while birds and locusts descant counterpoint.

A mountain crest where distant sights unfurl,  
or reddish, ruffled skirts on canyon walls  
brings peace, contentment to a weary heart –  
embraces vistas others fail to see.

A life aside from population's press  
appeals to senses weighted down with stress.

--Von S. Bourland

Published: *Higher Ground* (Chapbook, 2005)

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### **An August Invocation**

Dear Lord, it's hot, I know it's true  
my face to a fan's all I do

Might rock a while; offer up this prayer  
for clouds to rise, jam-pack the air

Might kneel at my bed, hands lifted high  
mumble, *How 'bout some rainfall out that sky?*

Dear Lord, precipitate this plea (awash with selfless balance)  
*Any forecast to increase my poetical talents?*

--Todd Sukany Author Unknown

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--Terrie Jacks

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**REMINDER: State Convention**

Click link for more information --> [MSPS State Conference](#) Reservation Return Coupon

Number Attending Conference # \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch Reservation (on site though you may pay at the door)

\$7.00 X \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

[Pay by Check \_\_\_\_\_ (Enclosed) or At Registration \_\_\_\_x\_\_\_\_]

Number of ½ tables needed for display of Books, etc. (No Charge) \_\_\_\_\_

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Reservations may be made by email- [editor@upstarespress.com](mailto:editor@upstarespress.com) Please include all information above.

Mail to:

Todd Sukany  
c/o Southwest Baptist University  
1600 University Ave  
Bolivar, MO 65613

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Todd Sukany – Acting Editor