

Spare Mule



Missouri State Poetry Society
Vol. 20, No. 3
www.mostatepoetry.com
01 August 2017

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 12th). 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

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

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

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

Friends

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

--Wanda Sue Parrott

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

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

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

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

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

(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

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

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

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)

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



--Terrie Jacks

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) _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

ADDRESS _____

Email address: _____

Phone: _____

Reservations may be made by email- editor@upstarespress.com Please include all information above.

Mail to:

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

Missouri State Poetry Society
Vol. 20, No. 3
www.mostatepoetry.com
01 August 2017
Todd Sukany – Acting Editor