

SPARE MULE



Missouri State Poetry Society
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From the President

Dear Poets,

A big thanks to all of you who have submitted poems to my past President's Challenge! I enjoyed reading the pantoums published in the last newsletter and look forward to reading your ghazals soon. I was fascinated by both the variety of your pantoum topics—sows, squirrels, witches, Christmas, etc.-- and the way the form brings new meanings to the same set phrases. Although I am not a formalist by nature, I am a fan of any form that harnesses the elasticity of language and mines its multiple meanings.

Your new challenge is to write a rondeau, another form that employs repetition. McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" is a well-known example of the form, which includes both a refrain and a rhyme scheme. A rondeau's fifteen lines are

made up of a quintet (stanza with five lines), a quatrain (stanza with four lines), and a sestet (stanza with six lines). The refrain may be either a phrase or an entire line. The form uses the following rhyme scheme: Raabba aabR aabbaR, with R being the refrain. No meter or syllable count is required, though some sources suggest eight to ten syllables per line. In my rondeau below, the refrain is in bold, the "a" rhymes are italicized, and the "b" rhymes are underlined.

Ozark's Moon* by Carla Kirchner

The moon makes his many *faces*:
half-happiness, regret full, *disgraced*
sliver waning to shadow, gibbous grief.
(His great heart tears to pieces,
a poem falling to earth, whole *pages*

drifting and freezing, finding *places*
to rest—Tree Crook, Mountain Top, Soft *Embrace*
of Dark, Porchlight, Flock of Snow Geese.)

Sad Moon makes

himself into a pond and *skates*
on silver sickles, Moon on moon. Dark *replaces*
day. Moon writes himself smooth as grease,
content to make his daily peace
with Sun, who fractures night then fills the *spaces*

Moon makes.

*This poem originally appeared in the 2017 issue of *Cave Region Review*.

I look forward to reading your rondeaus! Along with trying this form, don't forget to submit poems to our [Summer Contest](#) and to plan to attend this year's MSPS Convention on September 14-15. Poet G.C. Waldrep will be the keynote speaker; the exact location will be determined soon.

Happy Writing,

Carla Kirchner
MSPS President

Chapter Reports

Lebanon Poets Society sponsored Seventh Grade poetry contest in Laclede County in April. It was our 13th year to hold the contest. Winners are invited to read their poems at the annual 19th Nightingale Reading held at the local library in coordination with the Lebanon-Laclede Library.

--Nancy LaChance

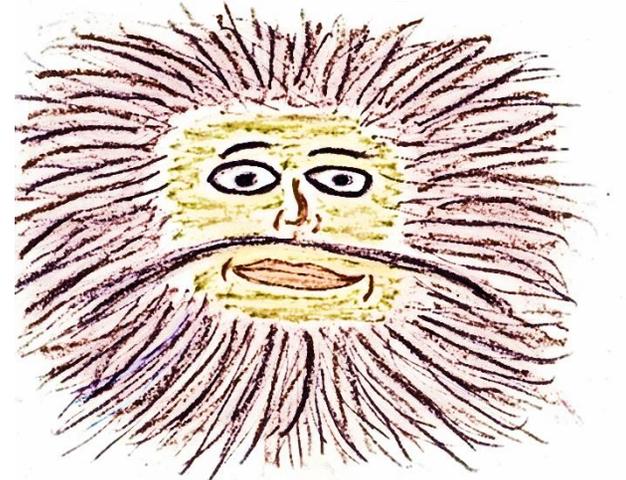
The **Crawford County Bombadils** have been going through some reorganization and at present it's all pretty fluid. Dawn Harmon asked to step back as President. Some of our members are currently considering sharing responsibilities. We are pretty sure we are going to rename the chapter *The Merry Bombadils*. We are taking a poll on that and checking to see who is actively interested in keeping this chapter of MSPS. As you might know, we are scattered about the country, those poets who were once members-at-large were gathered up to form the Crawford County Bombadils, and it is a virtual group that meets through email. We don't want to disband and will have something decided in a few days.

All my best

--Teresa Klepac

On the Edge

We came
We met
We chattered
We shared
Now who told me
they did that torrid thing?



Gasp!
Oh, my.
Then we talked of poetry
For that's our thing

With a special shout out to Anna Wells for doing the work on the MSPS Conference. Thank you, Thank You, THANK YOU!

--Terrie Jacks

Author Unknown

Author Unknown has been holed up all summer creating new forms of self-fulfilling prophecy. Each member hopes to release her or his gifts to the world beginning in August. Once the semester starts in earnest, we will be hemming our way to the write-length presentations.

--Todd Sukany



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**Don't forget the SUMMER CONTEST ([more](#))**

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KUDOS

A poem by Susie Reeves (Poets and Friends) was published this summer in TIME OF SINGING.

Troy Reeves (Poets and Friends) has had poems accepted and pending publication in ANGLICAN THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, DAPPLED THINGS (a Catholic literary journal), and CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY (publication of the California State Poetry Society)

Kudos to Nancy LaChance for receiving Honorable Mention in National Federation of State Poetry Societies for Contest 15 sponsored by Arizona State Poetry Society. LaChance also was published in *Cantos* and *Fireflies' Light: A Chapbook of Short Poems*, both publications through Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis for July publications; 3 haiku published in *Illinois State Poetry Society Anthology*, and has a poem, *Looking at Coffee*, in High Park Poetry's Publication, *Coffee, Tea and Other Beverages*.

Vicki Behl received 1st Honorable Mention in the NFSPS Land of Enchantment Award for her poem titled "Hair."

John J. Han is the translator of *My Wife Is Smiling and Other Poems by Oh Se Ju* (Allahabad, India: Cyberwit, 2018 (ISBN: 978-81-937691-6-4. 102 pages.) The book is a collection of 65 contemporary Korean poems translated into English.

Ghazal Challenge



The April 2018 issue of [Spare Mule](#) posted a challenge from MSPS President Carla Kirchner to construct a ghazal. Below are the results.

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### **GHAZAL ON A CLOUDED DAY**

Let's refuse to play the game for a change  
and not repeat the unacceptable blame for once.

There are no rules worth heeding all the time  
but why not pay attention to your fame for once?

Don't bother with the results of playing the odds  
and concentrate on what's the same for once.

### **I Jest Ain't Got No GHAZAL**

I jest ain't got no GHAZAL  
and ne'er think that I'll write un,

but this I knows--now that I's old—  
I druther kiss than fight un!

For I hear GHAZALS got sharp horns  
that pierce old poets' hearts,

Better to wander among the possibilities  
of sex and try to please your dame for once.

We went into the unknown to seek the truth  
and didn't accept whatever came for once.

The mirror shows us only what we want us to see  
but we should always peek behind the frame for once.

Never depend on idle gossip to depend upon.  
Find answers in something much less lame for once.

The challenge is there for us to meet  
with no doubting Thomas to bring us shame for once.

--Laurence W. Thomas

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## PROMPTS

I scavenge every source for writing prompts,  
the daily news provides exciting prompts.

I list descriptive surnames, aged folks  
to use in stories: plot-writing prompts.

First names, unusual, go down in ink,  
along with asterisks spotlighting prompts.

New places, cemeteries I include;  
who knows when I might need foresighting prompts?

I never know about the '30s dates--  
they might enmesh to scene-igniting prompts.

and force the wind within our souls  
to decompress as farts.

o, thank the president for me  
for challenging my mind

to figure how a GHAZAL goes.  
The rules I jest cain't find!

--Wanda Sue Parrott,  
Monterey, CA  
Honorary Life Member MSPS  
Poets & Friends Chapter

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## Morning Sukany Was Hit by an Angel

"Fervent as new tussock moths" -- Paul Zimmer

And Zimmer's angels brought prophetic fame,  
as tussock moths, in his poetic fame.

Those angels entered the drafting room, blessing him,  
a dusting of dander in Zimmer's alphabetic fame.

But at the ridge of grass on the Highland Trail  
my angel showed a more generic fame;

like a puffed-up owlet, I'll call Pat. Pat was on a mission  
somewhere as I was running toward athletic fame.

I now know that Somewhere can be Anywhere  
if one is from Overthere, and of angelic fame.

I am a nubile in fowl gender, heavenly or no,

One chapter's based entirely on surnames.  
Dear Abby's guilty, too: inciting prompts!

Headlines and captions, quotes, none are exempt.  
(No one's been sued for copywriting prompts.)

So many journals holding so much gold--  
with writing time, I mine inviting prompts.

And thus, this Star Magnolia tells it all:  
Success results from expediting prompts.

--Pat Laster, Bombadil

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### **Gaps**

*\Ghaz"al\, Ghazel \Ghaz"el\, n. [Ar. Ghazal.]: An Arabic word that means "talking to women"; a kind of Oriental lyric poetry*

When talking to a woman one should remain open  
to fears and ghosts, beating hearts laid open.

In lightning storms, charged atoms seek the distant earth.  
Opposites attract; the electric sky rips open.

The female brain is a cauliflower or perhaps a cabbage,  
leaves and stems reach toward the light, cells open.

A woman on the screen sells hope and carrot peelers.  
Three easy installments. All phone lines open.

Our bodies contain water, carbon, and desire  
both arms always reaching, both hands always open.

Dickinson builds roadways of need and paper.  
Every corner leads to Truth, each lane forever open.

so for this poem, Pat represents no genetic fame.

The AAA beam fixed on my head was no match for Pat's  
whose eyes drew me forward with magnetic fame.

So Pat bounced off my right leg before the new day broke,  
flew away to the goal, offering Sukany no apologetic fame.

--Todd Sukany, Author Unknown

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### **Why Love?**

I have written this letter of regret, My Love,  
for it seems you have tried to buy my love.

If passion in love is colored red—then I,  
with my own blood shall dye love.

When asked why I don't have more  
romance in my life I reply, "Why love?"

To obtain a sense of imbalance and  
consternation, I suggest you try love.

When truth seems so ample between us  
and so simple to speak, then why lie, Love?

All day long you preoccupy yourself

While you sleep I trace your knees, your chin, your elbows,  
sharp angles, fleshy armor, your thick frame never opened.

--Carla Kirchner

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ignoring my advances while I cry LOVE!

The poet signs this letter of regret  
in exasperation--with a sigh. Love.

Carol Louise Moon  
Crawford Co. Bombadils

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## Poems from Members

### I Painted a Picture

I painted a picture on the air.  
It was wonderous, beyond compare.

I saw it first in my own mind.  
It was unique, one of a kind.

The objects shimmered, glistened and glowed.  
The colors blended, ebbed and flowed.

It floated and shifted with the breeze.  
It was of mountains, lakes and trees.

It came unbidden from memories  
Of trips next door and overseas.

I didn't plan to paint it today  
But it appeared anyway.

### A NOCTURNAL VISITOR

Teller of tales, bringer of news,  
you honor the house —  
your stories allay hunger in famine.  
Listen, the cricket sings his dusk into darkness.  
The evening swells  
with marvels from your travels  
to this haven —  
not your journey's end.

Dim light glows amber across the room  
like wine in its tall glass.  
Silence, an invocation  
before you speak.  
I hear the wind  
gentling the garden to its rest.  
You talk of old books  
new in revelation

It didn't last long. It's gone now.  
I hope I can do it again somehow.

--Bob Martin  
2645 E. Linwood  
Spgfld, Mo 65804  
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417 887 7988

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## **Speak**

There are those  
who will tell you  
to shut-up -  
that you have nothing to say.  
There are those  
who will not listen -  
who will take your power,  
turn you away, lock you up  
and silence you.  
Therefore you must speak-up.  
Scream your words  
from the streets.

to lighten my path.  
The faint whir of wings  
as a night bird swoops.

No moon rises  
over the walls of trees  
to lighten your departure.  
One lone dove watches others  
fly to perches.

I think of your uplifting words  
as I withdraw to sleep  
stretching out,  
my only light --  
the glow from my neighbor's porch  
a shadow pattern on my wall.  
Frogs call across their dark domain  
to sing me to my rest.

--Laurence Thomas

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## **Culture of Tolerance**

Dawn of enlightenment in mid-evil Spain,  
age of tolerance, when fair rulers reign.

Muslims, Jews and Christians living in a shared space  
enjoyed intellectual achievements in a common place.  
Arts flourished, science advanced and literature grew  
in a shining moment for all, not for the few.

Spanish citizens showed respect, giving hope to all  
that future generations would pick up the ball,  
live in peace and tolerance and reject the gore  
of the squalor and morass of present-day war.

tell anyone who will listen  
Do not be silent -  
silence is death.

-- Frank Adams  
Member at Large

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## **SUMMER**

Pack up the `wagon, we're leaving this town  
with our kids for two weeks at Nebo's campground.

A giant Impala packed close as sardines  
with two youngish children and two more pre-teens,

six sleeping bags, cots, and a blue-striped tent—  
its raising is always a stressful event.

"Let's find the swimming pool," begs older youth,  
and, finding the bottom too fast, breaks a tooth.

Tennis preoccupies father and sons,  
while daughters, with mother, bounce, swing, slide and run.

The day Dad turns forty, mortality looms,  
he gazes toward sunset through coneflower blooms.

At night when the katydids kickstart their tune,  
we see near the table bright eyes of a `coon.

One night when it's raining, the tent starts to lean,  
we move cots to center away from the screen.

Bacon and coffee, charcoal and woodsmoke—  
aromas spread over each camp like a cloak.

Hiking and reading, card games, volleyball,

Muslims, Jews and Christians embraced a common God  
from different perspectives, and no one found it odd,  
to share the same patriarchs and same Holy Books,  
and trade with each other in their stalls and nooks.

All the people learned to read, enjoy the arts, and share  
each other's food and customs at every country fair,  
proving it was possible to co-exist, and more,  
to enjoy mutual benefits, they'd never had before.

The Arabs changed the culture, making all aware  
of the world they conquered, then chose to share  
with their brothers who worshiped the one God of all,  
all claiming to be offspring of the Garden of Eden fall.

Transition from despotism to peace came about  
when the Arabs arrived and the Spanish did rout.  
offering education to helpless people locked  
behind the wall of illiteracy, civilization blocked.

More inclined to protect Christians and Jews than do battle,  
treasuring them as brothers, not treating them as cattle,  
the groups intermarried, changed religions as well,  
and stopped accusing each other of who's going to hell.

Arabic became the language of commerce and wealth,  
of social interaction, entertainment and health.  
Arabs translated the literature of Greece and Rome  
clearly into Arabic, then gave it a fine new home,

in great libraries, Arabs built in backwards Spain,  
and housed scientific research, not done in vain,  
in all areas of science, modern literature, too,  
written in Arabic for the many, not the few.

Hundreds of thousands of volumes filled  
extensive libraries the Moor rulers willed,  
with a vision for a history that would live and last  
and give future generations a glimpse of the past.

away from computer, TV, and the mall.

Two weeks every summer till children are grown  
make memoried pictures to relive alone.

--Pat Laster, Bombadil  
published in LUCIDITY, Summer 2002

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### **First Light, So Sweet**

Some people love to gaze upon  
the setting sun but sleep until  
it's high each day. They never thrill  
to unique freshness of the dawn,  
the sunrise, a resplendent sight,  
accompanied by shades of red  
and orange. There's much to be said  
for sweet communion with first light.  
When from my porch I view the dawn,  
the tone is set for my new day.  
The sun sends twilight on its way.  
While sipping coffee, I may yawn--  
but not from boredom—as I see  
the day emerging tint by tint.

Literacy and learning, poetry and the arts  
were not for the few, but people in all parts  
of Spain, where the rulers were avid poetry lovers,  
binding the decorated volumes with leather covers.

Rulers wrote poetry and housed it in places  
where people could share in its gentle graces.  
Thanks to the Arabs faraway , long ago,  
the seeds they planted then, started to grow.

Majestic Arabic poetry is extant today,  
gifts to the world not lost on the way.  
Cultures of tolerance no longer exist.  
None are innocent; wars persist.

If long-ago tolerance made civilization grow,  
why engage in present-day hatred that brings only woe?

-- Llewellyn Brawner

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### **As It Rustles Through ....**

I don't want to get bigger  
But aerodynamic  
Owe less and own only  
what I can carry on my own  
Have no fakebook friends  
Or be linked in to you

I want to see the world  
As it is  
And behold you in person  
Feel your voice and hear your presence  
Step on real earth  
And slay fake dragons

Soon there is no remaining hint  
of last night in the day or me.

--Janice Canerdy,  
member at-large from Potts Camp, MS.

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### **Wake Up Calls**

*Whoo* hoots the owl  
*Jubalee, Jubalee, Jubalee-dooo*  
calls a bird  
*Whoo*, was the reply  
*Jubalee, Jubalee, Jubalee-dooo*  
was the return  
*Whoo*,  
*Jubalee, Jubalee, Jubalee-dooo*  
*Whoo*,  
*Jubalee, Jubalee, Jubalee-dooo*

Then nothing  
the *Whoo* went to sleep  
and *Jubalee, Jubalee, Jubalee-dooo*  
winged away

The woods went mute  
no sounds were there  
they were abandoned  
who would finish  
waking the day

then concealed in obscurity  
*Jeeber, Jeeber, Jeeber-jeep*  
*Jeeber, Jeeber, Jeeber-jeep*  
came to the rescues

Above all, to listen to the still small voice of God as it  
rustles the leaves

### **I AM A BOT**

I say whatever you need to hear  
Your tireless companion  
Your make deceive lover  
Purveyor of Russian ruse & ripe gossip  
You like me because I seduce you  
With your mirror image  
And because we think alike

### **Insomnia**

thoughts travel through me  
at the speed of light  
penetrating my brain like buck shot  
thru a tin can  
the pellets rattle around lose inside  
if I stir  
but have torn ragged holes  
in the thin wall of consciousness  
and even when I am still  
the illuminations from outside of night  
dance on opposite walls  
like the shadows of Plato's cave

I lay there awake  
afraid of sleep  
which is one sixtieth death  
and dreams lie  
but are one sixtieth prophecy

and I am too tired to do the math

--Mike Perkins

--Terrie Jacks

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### **Springtime Japanese Garden**

(Double Fibonacci)

A  
blue  
sky is  
mirrored in  
the pond, where tiny  
ripples shake the reflection. Pink  
and white, lotus flowers float on  
the water's surface.  
Cherry trees  
erupt  
in  
pink.

### **An Autumn Evening**

(Cento)

Autumn—the sea and the fields, one green.  
Any greenness is deeper than anyone knows.  
The yellow pears hang in the lake.  
Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!  
Calligraphy of geese against the sky—the moon seals it.  
Evening cicada—a last nearby song to autumn.  
Cowbells sound in the dusk from winter pastures.  
Sleep seems a goodly thing in autumn.

1. Basho's haiku
2. Richard Wilbur, "The Beautiful Changes"
3. David Lehman, "Autumn Evening"
4. John Keats, "To Autumn"
5. Buson's haiku

6. Issa's haiku
7. W. S. Merwin, "Autumn Evening"
8. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Autumn Song"

--John J. Han, On the Edge

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