

**P**oetry  
Society

# SPARE MULE

*Newsletter of MSPS*

01 April 2019

Vol 22 No. 02

<http://www.mostatepoetry.com>



# Table of Contents



<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	2
<b>President’s Corner</b> .....	4
<b>Kudos</b> .....	7
MISSOURI STATE POETRY SOCIETY WINTER CONTEST 2019 WINNERS .....	9
<b>Chapter Updates</b> .....	11
<b>President’s Challenge - Villanelle</b> .....	13
Go Now and Play-- Janice Canerdy .....	14
Poetry Backlash—Terrie Jacks .....	15
What’s the Big Deal? – John J. Han.....	16
Linwood in ChristChurch --Todd Sukany .....	17
FIND SOMETHING USEFUL YOU CAN DO EACH DAY-- Pat Laster .....	18
VILLANELLE FOR A BAD DAY--Laurence W. Thomas.....	19
James’s Rose—Sarah Tarrant.....	20
<b>Other Poems</b> .....	21
HOW PETE BECAME POP-- by Wanda Sue Parrott .....	22
The Oak-- Frank Adams .....	23
Spring Has Arrived—Janice Canerdy .....	24
The Elephants’ Grand Parade – Terrie Jacks.....	25
RUFF AND GROWL--Carol Louise Moon.....	27
No Vilanella –Terrie Jacks .....	28
Heart Murmurs-- Marie Asner .....	29
Almost Spring-- Marie Asner .....	30
Vietnam Wall--Pat Durmon .....	31
Women Go to Lunch Together-- Pat Durmon.....	32
Endless Texting – John J. Han.....	33
Life’s Mysteries – John J. Han .....	34
EARLY CHURCH-- Pat Laster .....	35
Technology--Marie Asner.....	36
A Story from the Garden--Todd Sukany .....	37
I Know Where the Crawdads Sing-- Brenda Conley.....	38
TO GIVE THE LIE-- Laurence W. Thomas.....	39

# President's Corner



Dear Fellow Poets,

Poetry Month is once again upon us, and I type this column with watery eyes and itchy skin. I don't know whether it's allergies or middle-age that has made me so grumpy, but this year I wonder why we must have a certain month set aside for poems. Shouldn't every month be poetry month, every week be spent climbing the sestina mountain or floating the villanelle's wild river? I suppose it is somewhat appropriate that we spend April, the beginning of spring, honoring an art form that sees the world anew, that makes language new, that points to a new way of viewing the everyday. T.S. Eliot tells us that spring is "mud-luscious" and "puddle-wonderful" but also says that "April is the cruellest month. . .," so perhaps I've good reason for my sullen sniffles.

I realize I am preaching to the choir when I complain about one month set aside for poetry. As evidenced by the reactions to my President's Challenge, you write poetry year-round (or at least quarterly for the *Spare Mule* deadline). I was pleasantly surprised by all of you who took up the sestina slog and look forward to reading the villanelles in this issue. Though there are certainly more forms that require word repetition or a refrain element, I've decided to approach the challenge a bit differently this time and give you picture prompt instead of a form to follow.

For this prompt, I am giving you one of my vacation slides. I just returned from a week in Natchez, Mississippi, researching a Civil War novel I am in the midst of writing. Because I believe in writing across genres and believe that fiction writing/reading makes me a better poet and poetry a better storyteller, I am assigning you to write a poem somehow inspired by my picture of the camellia below. The plantation house in the background is Elgin, built in 1791. Its owner wrote a fascinating antebellum diary and helped John James Audubon discover a new bird species, but that is, as they say, another story (or perhaps another poem).



Feel free to reference the photo as little or as much as you wish in the poem. As always, I'm all for bending rules, circumventing expectations, and approaching topics in new ways. The only thing I ask is that you give your poem the title "**Camellia, Elgin Plantation**" so that we can clearly see the variety of poems we get from the same prompt.

Happy Poetry Month to all!  
Carla Kirchner

# Kudos



Pat Laster won second place in the Poets Roundtable of Arkansas March monthly contest, which was free verse. Judge was Cathy Moran, Little Rock. After the death of Don Crowson, program chair for the Saline County branch of PRA, Pat was appointed by the branch president to fill out his term.

~~~~~

John J. Han is the author of *Autumn Butterfly: Haiku, Senryu, and Other Poems* (Cyberwit, forthcoming May 2019; ISBN 978-93-88125-98-7). In addition to editing *Cantos: A Literary and Arts Journal*, a regional magazine, he edits three literary chapbooks at Missouri Baptist University: *Fireflies' Light: A Chapbook of Short Poems*, *The Right Words: A Chapbook of Nonfiction*, and *Flash: A Chapbook of Micro-Fiction*. *Cantos* is published in both print and online versions ([www.mobap.edu/cantos](http://www.mobap.edu/cantos)). John's office creates chapbooks as hard copies for university leaders, but contributors receive PDF files via e-mail. For any inquiries, please contact him at [john.han@mobap.edu](mailto:john.han@mobap.edu).

~~~~~

Dale Ernst an Honorary Lifetime Member of MSPS, will have a number of his poems published in "Wilderness", a Korean publication. These poems will be published in Korea, in both English and Korean.

~~~~~

From Sarah Tarrant:

**Photographer's note:** "As we move from 2018 to 2019, we are leaving behind old memories and moving on to new places. These photos are of an old farm in Bolivar, MO. It is complete with a barn, main house, and slaves' quarters. This farm used to be a place to live and thrive, but now it is a tattered memory—a place one used to live but now can't. Those that lived there have moved on."

~~~~~

## MISSOURI STATE POETRY SOCIETY WINTER CONTEST 2019 WINNERS

### CATEGORY 1. RHYMED OR BLANK VERSE

- |        |                                      |   |
|--------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1.     | <i>Barbara, Marian and the Elder</i> | Nick Sweet, Shepherd, TX MSPS Member        |
| 2.     | <i>Victory Dance, 1945</i>           | Nick Sweet, Shepherd, TX MSPS Member        |
| 3.     | <i>Center Mass</i>                   | Stephen Leitch, West Jordan, UT             |
| 1st HM | <i>Brambleberry Days</i>             | Becky Alexander, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada |
| 2nd HM | <i>Moore, Oklahoma 2013</i>          | Nick Sweet, Shepherd, TX MSPS Member        |
| 3rd HM | <i>Playing the Palace</i>            | Harold Asner, Overland Park, KS             |

### CATEGORY 2. FREE VERSE

- |        |                                     |  |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1.     | <i>Casualties</i>                   | Steven Leitch, West Jordan, UT         |
| 2.     | <i>house by the highway</i>         | Carter Norman, St. Paul, MN            |
| 3.     | <i>Mistaken Identity</i>            | Victor Klimoski, Saint Paul, MN        |
| 1st HM | <i>Coming to a Kitchen near You</i> | Terrie Jacks, Ballwin, MO MSPS Member  |
| 2nd HM | <i>SHEETS INTO SWANS</i>            | Eileen Malone, Broadmoor Vlg., CA      |
| 3rd HM | <i>TOO LATE TO CHILD BACK</i>       | Claire Scott, Oakland, CA, MSPS Member |

### CATEGORY 3. HUMOROUS

- |        |                                 |  |
|--------|---------------------------------|--|
| 1.     | <i>Excitement on the Ice</i>    | Nancy LaChance, Lebanon, MO, MSPS Member |
| 2.     | <i>A Fish Story</i>             | Tanya R. Whitney, Sorrento, LA           |
| 3.     | <i>Agatha's Other Detective</i> | Barbara Blanks, Garland, TX, MSPS Member |
| 1st HM | <i>Easier to Control Others</i> | John J. Han, Manchester, MO, MSPS Member |
| 2nd HM | <i>Newt, Watch Out</i>          | Nancy LaChance, Lebanon, MO, MSPS Member |
| 3rd HM | <i>Barnyard Opera</i>           | Gail Denham, Sunriver, OR, MSPS Member   |

### CATEGORY 4. WINTER SUBJECT

- |        |                                     |  |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1.     | <i>Back to Work After Christmas</i> | John J. Han, Manchester, MO, MSPS Member       |
| 2.     | <i>FIRST SNOW</i>                   | Laurence W. Thomas, Ypsilanti, MI, MSPS Member |
| 3.     | <i>Winter, John J. Han</i>          | Manchester, MO, MSPS Member                    |
| 1st HM | <i>Frozen Animation</i>             | Barbara Blanks, Garland, TX, MSPS Member       |
| 2nd HM | <i>Snowflakes</i>                   | Sara Gipson, Scott, AR                         |
| 3rd HM | <i>The Wind</i>                     | Terry Jude Miller, Richmond, TX                |

### CATEGORY 5. POET'S CHOICE, MEMBERS ONLY

- |        |                                       |   |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1.     | <i>THE ONE LESS TRAVELED BY</i>       | John Crawford, Hot Springs, AR, MSPS Member |
| 2.     | <i>Flight from the Floating World</i> | John J. Han, Manchester MO, MSPS Member     |
| 3.     | <i>Decent/Descent</i>                 | Nick Sweet, Shepherd, TX MSPS Member        |
| 1st HM | <i>DUTIFUL DAUGHTER</i>               | Claire Scott, Oakland, CA, MSPS Member      |
| 2nd HM | <i>The Onion War,</i>                 | Nancy LaChance, Lebanon, MO, MSPS Member    |
| 3rd HM | <i>I Remember. . .</i>                | Von S. Bourland, Happy, TX, MSPS Member     |

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS!

Thank you to everyone who entered, and please enter our future contests. Remember our Summer Contest . Entry info can be found at:  
<http://mostatepoetry.com/summer.html>

# Chapter Updates



From the computer of the **On The Edge** Reporter:

Time to report again on the poets' of On the Edge. A small group of prolific writers who tend to pen poems or verses with 'outstanding in the field' lines. Sometimes so dazzling, the library at Barnhart needs no lighting. Yes, we sparkle so. However, the last few months the library had to shell out the money for their electric bill for the weather kept us from our effervescent meetings.

Finally, in March we gathered and read. We had had months to write and only two hours to present and evaluate our verbiage. Don Horstman gave us the giggles with his limericks. His drawings added to the mirth. I foresee in the future another chapbook of limericks. Anna Wells brought a piece that was quite good but difficult to read, the writing was in very, very small font. Magnetifying glasses were needed. There was a claim of computer chicaneries. Computers are like that sometime. Carol Horstman presented us with a mystery to solve. Where is J. B. Fletcher, Perry Mason, or Dr. Sloan when you need them? Terrie Jacks shared a children's story in verse, sort of, with drawings. It included jokes; providing more guffaws and chortles. Juanita Wittu verse was excellent. She is making remarkable strides with her poetry. her comment, "Feed back, please." Christopher Chubb spoke of his verse, but a printer snag prevented his sharing. More pesky technology chicanery. John Han had some work-related activities, and therefore could not be present to share what he is working on at the present time. Drat, work meetings. We chattered of many things, sporadically of poetry contests and retreats, shared our work, giggled creatively, then broke for lunch where we gobbled and gabbed some more.

~~~~~

**Author Unknown** is preparing for the Casebolt Project upcoming on 09 April 2019. This year, students from the College of Music, Arts, and Letters will respond to "Village Suite," a student musical score. There are six movements. Imagine the possibilities. You can join us to experience this event April 9, 7:30 PM in the Casebolt Recital Hall.

The next newsletter (August) should be recognition/KUDO time. We will be submitting six of our works to the world to JUDGE. Hopefully, many of our poems will return with "Love it!" "Perfect fit for the *New Yorker!*" or "Have you more like these?"

We are, for sure, waiting breathlessly for our rejection letters from March's Rattle ekphrastic competition.

~~~~~

# President's Challenge - Villanelle



## **Go Now and Play-- Janice Canerdy**

Go out now, children, while you can and play.  
The time to romp and frolic will not last.  
Drink Kool-Aid under shade trees while you may.

Sing simple songs of childhood; dance and sway.  
Tomorrow might be glum and overcast.  
Go out now, children, while you can and play.

Time's flies. Take to the yard without delay.  
Turn off the TV. Won't Mom look aghast?  
Drink Kool-Aid under shade trees while you may.

Turn on the sprinkler. Welcome its cold spray.  
Play hide-and-seek, and have yourselves a blast!  
Go out now, children, while you can and play.

"Tomorrow—chance of rain," forecasters say.  
It's nine o'clock. The morning's going fast.  
Drink Kool-Aid under shade trees while you may.

Your parents watch and smile on such a day,  
recalling joyous summer months long past.  
Go out now, children, while you can and play.  
Drink Kool-Aid under shade trees while you may.

published in the *Mississippi Poetry Society Contest Journal*, 2018

## Poetry Backlash—Terrie Jacks

My poem on paper clenched and crumbled  
is tossed and consumed by the waiting dog,  
who eats it with, smack, a snarly grumble.

His stomach retorts a noisy mumble,  
seems it doesn't revel in trite dialogue,  
My poem on paper clenched and crumbled

Appears its abdomen turned and tumbled,  
vaulting everywhere like a hoppy frog,  
for it ate with, smack, a snarly grumble

that was spoken with a brassy rumble,  
as if it had just chomped a chili dog,  
instead of a paper clenched and crumbled.

Left the dog feeling sincerely humble,  
for he had eaten like a Yorkshire hog,  
who eats things with, smack, a snarly grumble.

As for the paper with words that bumbled,  
that fell into the stomach of the dog,  
My poem on paper clenched and crumbled  
has been wolfed with, smack, a snarly grumble.

## **What's the Big Deal? – John J. Han**

"Woman spends \$30,000 on surgery to look like Meghan Markle."

—*The New York Post, February 27, 2019*

One more royal gossip in the paper:  
The duchess is pregnant yet one more time.  
Millions of women expect babies, sir.

Have you seen duchesses use sandpaper?  
Do they know how to remove gunk and grime?  
One more royal gossip in the paper.

Dukes William and Harry in the paper.  
Do they know how to remove yucky slime?  
Millions of women expect babies, sir.

Nobles don't know the life of a draper.  
They don't toil outdoors during the daytime.  
One more royal gossip in the paper.

Most babies don't appear in a paper.  
Noble babies appear many a time.  
Millions of women expect babies, sir.

Do nobles know how to use a wrapper?  
Do nobles know how to make a wind chime?  
One more royal gossip in the paper.  
Millions of women expect babies, sir.

--On the Edge

## **Linwood in ChristChurch --Todd Sukany**

Another man exercises his right  
to rack clip after clip; he's dressed in black.  
You can't miss the news tonight.

With a weapon of mass destruction--divine light--  
another group gathers to pray, not attack.  
Another man exercises his right . . .

says "Hello, brother," to a muzzle flashing bright.  
Recoil, recoil. Lock and load. Load and lock.  
You can't miss the news tonight.

A sacred place becomes doubly so in our sight.  
Deep in the soil, holes appear at the shovel's whack;  
another man exercises his right

to bury bodies of bulbs just out of sight  
as a promise of prime-time futures. Jack,  
you can't miss the news tonight.

According to the *Almanac*  
this year's bumper crop should bear many delight;  
another man exercises his right.  
You can't miss the news tonight.

## **FIND SOMETHING USEFUL YOU CAN DO EACH DAY-- Pat Laster**

Find something useful you can do each day  
that isn't subject to the world's review;  
that alters life around you in some way.

Your friends may need an advocate and pray  
for you to light their way and help them through;  
find something useful you can do each day.

You'll make the earth a better place to stay  
if you engage yourself in derring-do  
that alters life around you in some way.

A smile, a thank-you note, a gay bouquet,  
some thoughtful deed to make a life less blue;  
find something useful you can do each day.

You need a useful task to lift dismay,  
a project you can throw your heart into  
that alters life around you in some way.

It may be taking time to read or play,  
or dreaming of the things you've yet to do.  
Find something useful you can do each day  
that alters life around you in some way.

--Merry Bombadils

## **VILLANELLE FOR A BAD DAY--Laurence W. Thomas**

The pain that lingers needs to be addressed.  
When you prick your finger so it bleeds,  
make it go away by being kissed.

The illness of a friend leaves you distressed.  
A cheery note or present best succeeds  
to dull the pain that needs to be addressed.

Fight hunger or the inability to rest  
by balancing the body's urgent needs.  
Make them go away by being kissed.

An argument puts friendship to the test  
and compromise, surrender always leads  
to pain that someday needs to be addressed

when both of you give in and thus are blessed  
without unhappiness that conflict breeds  
when you make it go away by being kissed.

A bad day brightens into joy when you insist  
on minimizing trivia that often leads  
to pain that lingers and needs to be addressed;  
make it go away by being kissed.

## **James's Rose—Sarah Tarrant**

On my desk, I find her rose,  
Skewed slightly to the right of perpendicularity.  
Her note says she loves me the most.

I didn't tell her, and nobody knows,  
About the reason for my choice of singularity.  
On my desk, I find her rose.

Even if I attempted prose,  
There's no chance of my providing clarity.  
Her note says she loves me the most.

Her love is like a statue of Madame Tussaud's—  
Preserved in perfect vulgarity.  
On my desk, I find her rose.

I sit at my desk to compose  
A letter addressed to her about my singular solidarity.  
Her note says she loves me the most.

All sense my pen forgoes,  
And my heart fills with disparity.  
On my desk, I find her rose.  
Her note says she loves me the most.

# Other Poems



## HOW PETE BECAME POP-- by Wanda Sue Parrott

When  
Peter Piper  
picked his peck  
of pickled pepper plants,  
he pricked his picking thumb,  
producing pairs of rants: Poo Pow,  
Pee Doo, Doo Wop, Ah Dee, Bee  
Bop, A-Dippee Doo. He shook his hand. A  
marching band matched tempo to this cue. Pete hopped.  
Drums stopped. Pete yelled. Horns swelled, and then Pete saw  
that he was now bandleader on parade. His throbbing  
stopped, but Pete hip-hopped the band around the  
square, extending his charade. And that is  
how his twist of fate gave  
Pete what he now has:  
the moniker he falsely  
earned: Pete, Pop  
of Pricktown  
Jazz.

\*(The Story Stanza is a 100-word poem in 19 lines. It was inspired by Etheree Armstrong Taylor whose Etheree form was a 10-line poem in which each line consisted of a syllable matching the line, for a total of 50 syllables. I reversed it and the formula produces a 100-word poem or scene from a short story... in fact, I won some flash fiction contests with the format.)

## **The Oak-- Frank Adams**

In our twelve years together we worked and planned for a future/ we did not discuss death/ did not plan for its arriving unannounced. Now, I scatter your ashes beneath this great gargoye of a tree/ its trunk scarred and torn/ its branches as alive as Medusa's hair. Here, in her shade you'd sit after mowing the lawn/ drink a beer/ look over the valley below. Here we part/ you to the land of the dead. Me - to the land of the living. I don't know if this is the place you would have chosen to be - though it now feels right. No doubt/ I will be along soon enough.

Member at Large

## **Spring Has Arrived—Janice Canerdy**

It's here—sweet long-awaited spring.  
New blooms smell lovely; skies are blue.  
The trilling birds are on the wing.  
Earth has awakened; life is new.

New blooms smell lovely; skies are blue.  
Kids dash outside to have a fling.  
Earth has awakened; life is new.  
This time exudes a unique zing.

Kids dash outside to have a fling.  
The joys of spring seem overdue.  
This time exudes a unique zing.  
Who could resist the springtime view?

The joys of spring seem overdue  
for those who love what warm days bring.  
Who could resist the springtime view  
when not just birds but people sing?

For those who love what warm days bring,  
the trilling birds are on the wing  
when not just birds but people sing.  
It's here—sweet long-awaited spring.

--member at large

## **The Elephants' Grand Parade – Terrie Jacks**

The elephant parade  
walks this way  
doing the elephant  
two-step.

It is four to a row  
out for a stroll,  
trunks waving in the air,  
keeping beat, I swear,  
as the elephants  
do the two-step.

The line is nine,  
superb and sublime,  
as all thirty-six elephants  
do the two-step.

The ground vibrates,  
the beat pulsates,  
and all in sway  
their trunks do wave:  
with a one and a two  
and a one and a two  
and a one and a two,  
elephants do the two-step.

Then one of them goofs –  
he does a two-two,  
instead of one-two,  
and to offset his mistake,  
he does a one-one  
and a couple of two-twos,  
but his trunk miss sways  
going the opposite way,  
causing a swerve in the group.

Watch out!  
There coming this way!  
There's going to be –  
CRASH!

All thirty-six elephants  
are mangled.  
Their feet, all twisted and tangled.

Yet, still going every which way  
their trunks do sway,

T'is still a grand  
and awesome parade.

## **RUFF AND GROWL--Carol Louise Moon**

I am ruff and I am growl. I am  
footprints on her towel. I'll tear  
a bathroom-basket cloth. I'll  
drag off socks to chew and hide  
from mistress of the house.

A sudden green is seen between  
my pads from romps on grassy  
ground. Birds I love to chase  
around. Their songs are twang  
in summertime. In sun, in rain,  
it's all the same.

No bites she finds from canine  
teeth on Persian carpets fine, nor  
fluffy, lacy pillows that we share.  
She be with me. We share  
affinity.

-- Merry Bombadils

## **No Vilanella –Terrie Jacks**

Sorry, I gotta tell ya  
there ain't a vilanella,  
because Pricilla, the gorilla,  
received a pet chinchilla  
from a gorilla  
whose name is Attila,  
who lives in a Manila  
on top a hilla  
in a great, big villa.

It was this giftie  
that caused Pricilla,  
the gorilla,  
to go to Manila  
and up the hilla  
to the gigantic villa  
to thank Attila, the gorilla,  
for her pet chinchilla.

So, Attila, of course,  
being a gentleman gorilla,  
offered Pricilla,  
the beautiful gorilla,  
an effervescent drinkie,  
and they all sat around  
sipping sparkling vanilla,  
Pricilla, Attila  
and the pet chinchilla  
named Clyde.

And that is the reason  
for no vilanella.  
Sorry.

## **Heart Murmurs-- Marie Asner**

My friend is an architect and always said  
that any structure has to have two entrances,  
even the heart, into which love flows  
in and out, sometimes accompanied by salt tears.

My heart attack was like an angry octopus  
with hungry tentacles grasping my chest  
and not letting go. You rise up and down  
with the pain, a cutting-edge performance  
which you never want again

In the background, words...phrases...  
tossed about by doctors and nurses  
but caught by my ears, though eyes  
were closed, I could hear about their daily lives  
between medical talk and diagnosis.

Now, my heart is mending its own room  
in a quiet place with metal parts.  
I have decided to ride life as on a comet  
through the sky or a rodeo rider  
who braves an angry bull  
for 5 seconds of glory  
before colliding with the horizon.

--The Merry Bombadils

## **Almost Spring-- Marie Asner**

Our kayaks float like feathers into the icy current.  
See the wind move through sullen branches  
as we pass the hanging bass wood  
that wants to touch us with frost  
still clinging to bark. The North Country  
whispers of change to come,  
but, it is not the day to begin  
planning in green, instead in cold white,  
We button our water gear  
and glide into the river mist  
with stars still on the horizon  
waiting for dawn's cue so they can  
disappear and winter chill will reign  
for one more day.

--The Merry Bombadils

## **Vietnam Wall--Pat Durmon**

It's Good Friday  
and the whitest hour of day.  
We look on the marble walls,  
straight and tall, holding names  
of men and women  
who once stood at attention.

A voiceless crowd  
touches names on the wall.

Like us, many drove miles and miles  
to grope something here,  
to touch a name and grope.

No side-stepping the sadness.

Someone calls names from a platform.  
A whimper in the distance.

## **Women Go to Lunch Together-- Pat Durmon**

to catch instant delight; to stare at plates  
overflowing with giggles; to hoot,  
snort, blow feelings; to feel joy  
in every toe; to chuckle imaginings;  
to ask questions about stunted potatoes,  
to tell the year she first felt like  
a woman, to share what she believed  
about death; to lift up one another;  
to discover how much dew a soul  
can hold.

## **Endless Texting – John J. Han**

(senryu)

before class  
professor sends  
text messages

during class  
students check  
text messages

after class  
professor receives  
text messages

dining hall  
students send  
text messages

library  
professor reads  
text messages

bedtime  
professor and students check  
text messages

--On the Edge

## **Life's Mysteries – John J. Han**

(cherita)

Why are there tsunamis in one country,

while another country has droughts?

Why do good people die young,

whereas bad people live long?

Why is Aaron Black white,

whereas Jon White is black?

--On the Edge

## **EARLY CHURCH-- Pat Laster**

The park becomes my church this Sabbath day;  
no cloistered walls to keep the sun at bay.  
Three robins practice trills to vocalize  
while gurgling brook accompanies with grace.  
The grackles try their best to harmonize  
and peckerwoods show skill with figured bass.  
No cloistered walls to keep the sun at bay,  
the park becomes my church this Sabbath day.

--Merry Bombadils

## **Technology--Marie Asner**

Engineered in red and blue,  
iPhone goes from hand to purse to hip.  
Ever aware of that ring tone set by you.  
In fact, your missed call was a blip.  
Oft iPhone fails; I bought a folding flip.

--The Merry Bombadils  
Written in the E-I-E-I-O Format

## **A Story from the Garden--Todd Sukany**

I don't believe Adam flagged October  
He felt no change in seasons until  
long after the fruit flies finished  
a windfall's diamond center

# **I Know Where the Crawdads Sing-- Brenda Conley**

*For Delia Owens*

I know where the crawdads sing!  
How to get to  
Where they are

Amble down the limestone stairs  
Or run down the hill  
like a child

to the meadow  
where the statue sits  
guarding the west bottoms

the rail yard  
the stockyard, livestock in pens  
land of the brachiopods and crinoids stems.

Once an ancient ocean  
Now turned to stone  
Skirt along the bluff

Quiet your inner fear.  
See the trickle of a spring appear  
From the rock shelf overhang

Collecting in an everlasting pool?  
Alive in frigid water  
In the blinding heat of summer

Look,  
Listen,  
You too are sure to hear them

-- Honorary Lifetime Member

## **TO GIVE THE LIE-- Laurence W. Thomas**

"It's time," she said, her face reflecting pain,  
her patience at an end. She knew what lay  
ahead, that after all this torture, she  
could claim her native nothingness again.  
Her family lavished love and money so  
the treatment during prolonged illness was  
exhaustive medicine and care. "The cause  
is being researched," they were told, but she  
could answer only with, "For me, it's time."  
And so she asked the doctors for a way  
to end a life no longer lived, to free  
her weary body from this tiresome game.  
"We must not interfere with life," they said,  
"A doctor's job is never playing God."

# SPARE MULE

*Newsletter of MSPS*

01 April 2019

Vol 22 No. 02

<http://www.mostatepoetry.com>

Photographer: Sarah Tarrant

Editor: Todd Sukany

**S**oetry  
Society

