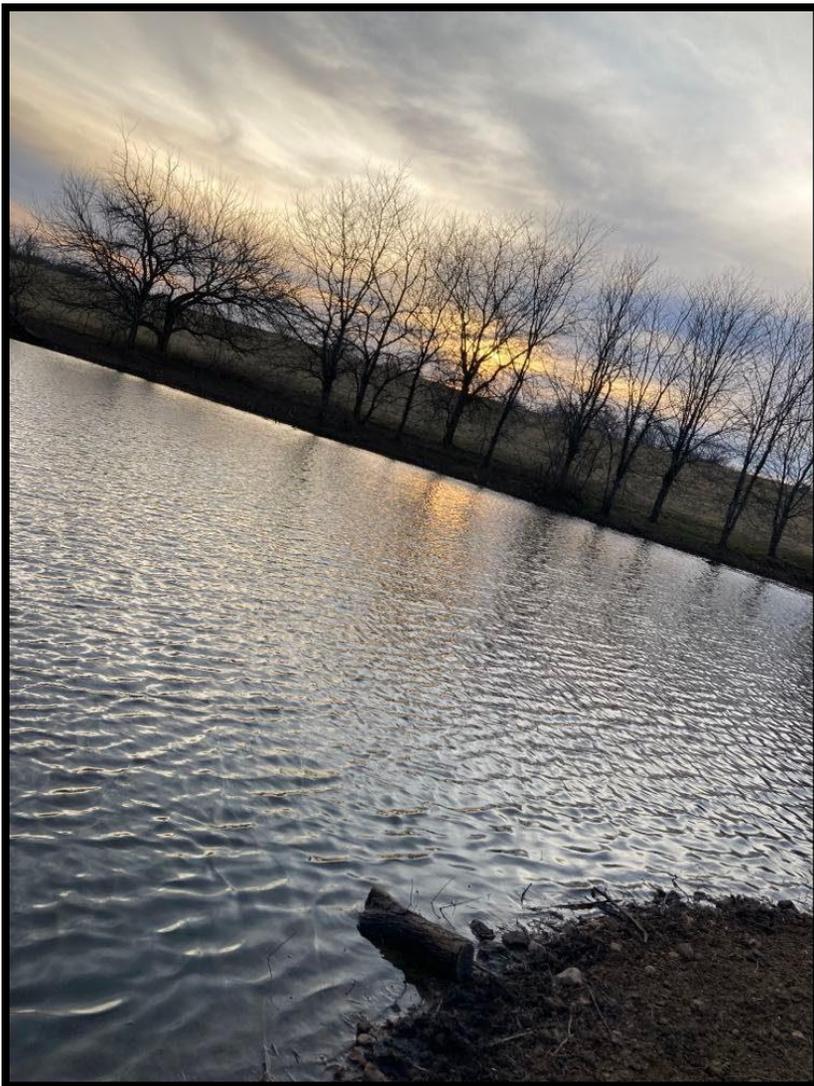


SPARE MULE NEWSLETTER



Newsletter of MSPS | Vol 25 No. 01 | 28 February 2022 |
www.mostatepoetry.com | Photographer and Guest Editor: Julia Munton
New MSPS Logo Designer: Rebecca Foltz



Local Chapters

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Bolivar, Missouri

THE MERRY BOMBADILS

Cuba, Missouri

KC METROPOLITAN VERSE

Kansas City, Missouri

LEBANON POETS' SOCIETY

Lebanon, Missouri

ON THE EDGE

De Soto, Missouri

For those who missed it, buckle up for a reveal of the new MSPS logo on the next page!

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

From the President's Desk:

Fellow poets,

It's February, also known as the month of love. Did you write a love poem?

Spring is looming in a few weeks. I'm reminded of a church song that begins, "What a wondrous time is spring when all the flowers are blooming." How will you bloom this year? Maybe enter a poetry contest, produce a chapbook, or attend a poetry conference? The Lucidity Poetry Retreat will be March 28, 29, 30 in Eureka Springs, AR. (See flyer)

Hope that our annual meeting can be in person this year in Lebanon. Save the tentative date September 23 and 24.

Keep writing,

Nancy LaChance

Lucidity Ozark Poetry Retreat #29

March 28, 29, 30, 2022 Eureka Springs, Arkansas **MONDAY March 28th - Registration 3-5 pm – First Session 7:00 pm**

New Director, Nancy LaChance Poetry Leaders: Diane Glancy, Karen Craigo

Poetry Contests \$\$ Awards Banquet Critique Workshops Poetry Lectures

Open Mics Book Sales Table (only sales)

Breaks to explore beautiful Eureka Springs

~ Time for visiting with interesting poets from all over the United States

Deadline for contest poems and critique workshop poems March 10, 2022

Accomplished Poets, New Poets ~ All Welcome *Share your knowledge and learn from others*

A unique experience you will never forget

Best Western Inn of the Ozarks (479) 253-9768 * 1-800-552-378

ALL rooms are \$69 1 king or 2 queens, 2 people, {each
extra person \$5}

Mention Lucidity ~ Deadline for this rate is **March 1, 2022
Registration Fee: \$35**

BANQUET \$18 (exceptional food)

Nancy LaChance

14940 Hwy 64

Lebanon, MO 65536

417-532-5224

lachancenancy@outlook.com

Cash Prizes and number of prizes are awarded by Donations Only.

• E-mail (1) unpublished contest poem with your name on it. E-mail 3 critique poems (your name on each poem, top left). Email (1) Critic's Choice poem with name on it to lachancenancy@outlook.com That is FIVE (5) poems in all. Send registration form and all other monies to my Lebanon address.

**• *Deadline is MARCH 10, 2021 ~
Lucidity Retreat Registration Form ~ March 28,29,30 2022***

**Name _____ (*Make check payable
to NANCY LaCHANCE*)**

**Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____**

**Phone _____ cell _____ E-
mail _____**

Please list your name as you want it to appear on Name Tag (Please write so old eyes can read it)

Retreat Registration \$35 _____ Banquet \$18 _____ (or may be purchased at retreat sign in) Award winners must be in attendance at the Banquet.

Contest Award Prize Donations \$ _____ Thank you for your generosity.

MSPS CONTEST WINNERS



SUMMER CONTEST 2021

The winners of the MSPS Summer Contests are now available. Congratulations to all winning poets!

Here are the winners of Category 5 MSPS Members Only Poet's Choice:

- 1st place "The End: A Search for Meaning" Pat Laster Benton, AR
- 2nd place "Love in the Camps" Marie Asner Overland Park, KS
- 3rd place "On the Prairie: Five Cherita" Jon Han Manchester, MO
- 1st HM "Courtly Manners" Marie Asner Overland Park, KS
- 2nd HM "May's Café" Nick Sweet Shepherd, TX
- 3rd HM "Final Resting Place" Terrie Jacks Ballwin, MO

Here are the winners of Category 4 Summer Subject Any Form:

- 1st place "Summer Solstice" Terry Jude Miller Richmond, TX
- 2nd place "Weighting on Rain" Bill Lower Fair Play, MO
- 3rd place "Coming Into Case" Bill Lower Fair Play, MO
- 1st HM "Searching for a Star to Wish On" Pat Laster Benton, AR
- 2nd HM "K-9" Jerri Hargesty Brierfield, AL
- 3rd HM "Summer Haiku" Jon Han Manchester, MO

Here are the winners of Category 3 Humorous Verse:

- 1st place "G is for Gimmie" Terrie Jacks Ballwin, MO
- 2nd Place "Bumper Queen" Faye Adams Cherokee Village, AR
- 3rd Place "A Poet's Feet" Pat Laster Benton, AR
- 1st HM "Nervous Hands" Janice Canerdy Potts Camp, MS
- 2nd HM "Crossed Wires" Jerri Hardesty Brierfield, AL
- 3rd HM "Senior Citizens, a senryu sequence" John Han Manchester, MO

Here are the winners in Category 2 Free Verse:

- 1st place "Anglophilia for Renee Lorraine" Jeffery Orem, UT
- 2nd place "All the Beginnings I Remember" Catherine Moran Little Rock, AR
- 3rd place "Sanctuary" Dr. Emory D. Jones Iuka, AL
- 1st HM "The Last Word" Pat Laster Benton, AR
- 2nd HM "Bourbon Street Blues" Faye Adams, Cherokee Village, AR
- 3rd HM "Sliver of Time" Stephen Schwei, Houston, TX

Here are the winners of Category 1 Rhymed or Blank Verse:

- 1st place: "Walking Past the City Streets" Catherine Moran, Little Rock AR
- 2nd place: "My Father's Woodpile" Nick Sweet, Shepherd, TX
- 3rd place: "Places in 5" Nick Sweet Shepherd, TX
- 1st HM "A 2 Cent Did He?" Terrie Jacks Ballwin, MO
- 2nd HM "Blood is Thick" John Crawford Arkadelphia, AR
- 3rd HM "Good God" Dr. Emory D. Jones Iuka, AL

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Hello MSPS Poets,

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself as your new Editor for the Spare Mule newsletter. My name is Julia Munton, and I am a senior at Southwest Baptist University. I, myself, am a poet, and have a few published works, two of which you can find in the December 2019 and the June 2021 issues of the Missouri Baptist University magazine, *Fireflies' Light* and two more through the 2021 *Grist* anthology.

I am also the President and co-founder of the Creative Writing Club at SBU, in which any kind of creative writing is welcomed, workshopped, and discussed in a constructive and positive manner. We take great joy in helping each other improve our craft, and while I am Editor of the Spare Mule Newsletter, I wish to extend the same courtesies to you.

We will publish another newsletter in April, and I would love to be able to publish poetry that comes to me for consideration. We will also have a Social Media Blitz during National Poetry Month, so be on the lookout for posts on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook over the month of April.

There are many exciting things going on in the world of poetry, and I am so glad to be a part of it, as well as a part of the Missouri State Poetry Society which has impacted my life in many ways over the last few years.

I will be graduating this May, so this will be my first and last semester working with you. I am looking forward to a wonderful experience, and I wish you all the best in your poetry endeavors!

Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

Julia Munton

Chapter Updates

The Merry Bombadils MSPS Chapter Updates

Members include Harold Asner, Marie Asner, Pat Durmon, Dawn Stiller Harmon, Teresa Klepac, Pat Laster, and Carol Louise Moon, Freeda Baker Nichols, Frieda Risvold. The Merry Bombadils meet through email.

2021 saw poetry challenges for The Merry Bombadils in the form of a special Quilled Quintain project. Pat Laster provided the definitions and instructions for writing various 5-line poetry forms including quintets, limericks, cinquains, tanka, pentastich and tripod. Marie Asner added a fun form called Phraseology. After critiquing each other's poems through the mail, round-robin style, a little anthology was put together at the end of the year featuring our work, with each member receiving at least 5 or more copies. a sampling of each poet's poetry was featured on an online poetry website called Medusa's Kitchen, dated Thurs., Jan. 13, 2022. Besides Pat and Marie, poetry was contributed by Harold Asner, Carol Louise Moon and Teresa Klepac. The Merry Bombadils are off and running with pen in hand already this year with another project, sure to produce another small anthology (32 pgs) and another Medusa's Kitchen featured post at years end.

Our poets are also featured in *Grist 2021*.

In 2021, our poets published in a variety of publications, entered contests, judged contests, and read their poetry at on-line meetings.

KUDOS



John Crawford has had several honors to his name in recent months. He won 2nd place, an Honorable Mention from Indiana State Poetry Society's annual contest, 1st Place, an Honorable Mention from Arizona State Poetry Society's annual contest, 1st Place, an Honorable Mention from Poets Roundtable of Arkansas' annual contest, is now among 4 people to be nominated as next Arkansas Poet Laureate. He will also be inducted into the Arkansas Writer's Conference Hall of Fame in June.

John J. Han's "Gestures" (a haibun published in *Valley Voices: A Literary Review*, Spring 2021, p. 6) was nominated for the Pushcart Prize. His recent poems have appeared in *Modern Haiku*, *World Haiku Review*, *Failed Haiku*, *Geppo*, and *Wilderness*, and his essay "Spring Challenge Kigo: Spring Breeze (or Spring Wind), *harukaze*" appears in the February 2022 issue of *Geppo: The Haiku Study-Work Journal of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society* (San Jose, CA). Finally, Olga Ponomareva's review of Han's memoir, *Whispers from the Rice Fields: Recollections of a Life in Korea* (Cyberwit, 2021), was published in the Fall 2021 issue of *Valley Voices*.

Harold Asner is proficient with the limerick form, and he writes, "Sometimes I get a grin or a pat on the head from Marie for my poetry. I have not yet won the Nobel Prize for Poetry, but as for real accolades, it is always nice to have the advice and support from The Merry Bombadils." He has written 16 poems since the last issue of the Spare Mule Newsletter, and he is working on number 17 and 18. In January and February, five of his poems were posted on the Medusa's Kitchen blog. "My thanks to Carol for introducing us to that outlet." Harold has two limericks in *Quilled Quintains*. He has submitted two longer poems to the Spare Mule Newsletter in response to Julia Munton's recent request.

Marie Asner's many accomplishments between May 2021 and February 2022 include 5 poems in *Quilled Quintains*, "SRO" poem in Charlotte Digregorio's Blogspot. In Medusa's Kitchen Blogspot: I. "Now Learn From Your Mistakes," II. "By Invitation Only," "Olympia" and "Honeybunch," and III. "Divine Humor," "Good Old Days," "Love In The Wind" and "Pride." Marie received Second Place in Members Only Category of MSPS Summer 2021 Contest for "Love In The Camps." "Comfort Zone" was published in Calliope Winter 2021-22. She read poems on Zoom International Poetry Reading on February 6, 2022 and will be reading on the Zoom International Conference on February 22, 2022. Her poem "Beauty Salon" was published in Rockford Review 2022, and "Love In The Camps" and "haiku" published in Grist 2021. Marie's poem "1863" was selected for display at the Addison Art Gallery Exhibition, Illinois beginning February 16, 2022, and running through April 2022.

Pat Laster's 3rd poetry chapbook, *Balancing in Winter's Wind*, is available free upon request (FB or email). It is 6 x 9, 25 pages, 40 poems, 29 different poetry patterns. She placed first in the June Arizona haiku contest. Pat won several awards in both the MSPS Summer contest and PRA's National Poetry Day fall celebration. She belongs to a central Arkansas writers' group, LDJ&P, and as of February 15, she has written 60 pieces this year, both poetry and prose. She is a contributing member of the Merry Bombadils and enjoys the round-robin poetry projects.

Teresa H. Klepac has published poetry and prose in a variety of publications including poems “Rocker Heirloom” in Tigershark (<https://tigersharkpublishing.wordpress.com/>), “Letters from Baka” *Penumbra* online (<http://www.penumbraonline.org/>), and participated in the Quilled Quintain Project, and was published in Medusa’s Kitchen Blogspot. Her flash fiction/short stories include *American Ramble*, in *Pure Slush*, *Vagrant Magic* in *Blood and Bourbon*, *Reflection on Stone* in *BlueHouse Literary Journal #5*, and *Snowbound Missouri Winter* in *Of Rust and Glass*. She read “Rocker Heirloom” at the on-line launch of *Penumbra Online* on December 4, 2021. She read *Snowbound Missouri Winter* at the online launch January 29, 2022, for edition #7 *Of Rust and Glass*. She also served as judge for the Mary Harper Sowell Award of the Poets’ Roundtable of Arkansas in spring 2021.

PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE



Excerpt from Spare Mule's February 11, 2020 Edition

Another way to continue with poetry is through this issue's President's Challenge. Last time, I asked you to imitate E.E. Cummings's unique way with words and form. This time, I ask you to write a poem in the vein of Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. A high point in my day is watching and listening to the "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" Big Read, a multi-media art and reading project that offers readers a piece of Coleridge's poem daily at www.ancientmarinerbigread.com. If Coleridge's albatross ("Water, water everywhere, / Nor any drop to drink") or his opium-induced *Kubla Khan* is not your style, perhaps you'd like his 1817 sonnet, "Fancy in Nubibus." I hope that you will look further into Coleridge's work, which might lead you to Wordsworth or Blake or Poe. There are no rules to this challenge—you decide what to take (or leave) from your reading.

– Carla

Epigraph — Todd Sukany

“A poet lies” -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge “Epitaph”

Exchanging *two* letters for *one* might be death
or life. Two graphemes transform a breath

from the grave into a foundation, setting square
the entire structure. Linguists share the minimal pair

and hope that their “they’re” there will advance and confirm
the skills of elocution. O, jump with me dear bookworm,

be thee Christian or no, jump onto a cloud or river flow
and float away from this present present with all its woe.

Paddle out to the center, face up, drink the sweet nectar
missed by the bees, those round fellows in striped outerwear.

Death comes faster than clover
to those who roll over.

About the Poet

Todd Sukany, a Pushcart nominee, lives in Pleasant Hope, Missouri, with his wife of over 38 years. His work recently appears in *The Christian Century* and *Tanka Origins*. A native of Michigan, Sukany stays busy running, playing music, and caring for four rescue dogs, a kitten, and one old-lady cat.

King Solomon — Harold Asner

In Israel King Solomon
Lived a life of royalty
Rulers came from foreign lands
Offered gifts with outstretched hands
Pledging peace and loyalty
He established routes of trade
Grand alliances were made
His palace with its pillared rooms
Was rich in style and tone
With tapestries from far off looms
An inner court of fine-cut stone

Solomon's understanding heart
A gift from God on high
The king agreed to never start
From God's commandments to depart
Nor His statutes to defy
Over time he saw God's wrath
By straying from the righteous path
When did he realize
He was a sinner in God's eyes
Voices in the desert air
Softly warned, Beware! Beware!
Although he'd seen the Temple built
His once-wise heart was full of guilt
He had taken many wives
They turned his heart from God away
Worshipped idols all their lives
Now he kept idols made of clay
Further into chaos sliding
Now his kingdom was dividing
The Lord called Solomon's many foes
To rule Israel's northern regions
The adversaries whom God chose
Came with their assembled legions
In Judah only his kingdom stayed

Solomon's debt to God was paid

In a dream one summer's eve
I saw myself as Solomon
Bathsheba seeking my birthright
The prophet Nathan joined her fight
David's throne now had I won
Next came a dream within my dream
I asked the gift of understanding
Nothing more was I demanding
The Lord told me He'd grant my plea
"Obey my laws," He'd said his twice
Also wealth He'd give to me
Dominion over land and sea
My people all would honor me
To disobey I'd pay a price
Of a sudden I awoke
Both my dreams a wisp of smoke
Gone were thoughts of Paradise

Flapping — Terrie Jacks

In morning light, I did converse
upon my breath, I read such verse.
Can't say I much did agree
being it was a sort of misery.
But here I write or click along
a verse by chance won't turn to song.
These eight lines are not a bridge
nor ode to that old poet, S. T. Col-er-idge.

OTHER POEMS



Woman

Diversity of color
like mosaic reflections of cathedral glass.
Flowers along the roadside
signing the way for travelers
to wherever travelers go.
Glow of candle on a pine mantle,
white of lily on cloistered hillside,
diversity of color,
oneness giving unity
sisterhood giving strength

Marie Asner
The Merry Bombadils MSPS

Poet

When all is quiet in the house
there comes a time for her
to take pen in hand,
put away worry-webs of the day,
place them on dustpan of paper
and sweep the page with words.
Withdrawing deeper and deeper
until room and light dim,
she floats downward---
past ground level of impatience
past permafrost of indifference
past time-consuming and irritating
until close to bedrock,
a cave appears with one lit candle
reserved for those
who seek single words---

silently
until
dawn
she
writes
poetry.

Marie Asner
The Merry Bombadils MSPS

Healer

11:59 p.m.

Moon rising above horizon,
and in here, a three-legged, one-eyed cat
watches a man prepare for surgery.

On the table lies an owl, one wing askew.

Man reaches for scalpel...remembering
 mallards aiming south in iridescent V
 wings slipping past moon's face
 boy and rifle
 bloodied feathers
 fall like soiled snow

Man turns to the owl, begins to blaze a trail.

Cat blinks, he has seen it before.

12:01 a.m.

Office closed, but the door to life is open.

Marie Asner

The Merry Bombadils Chapter, MSPS

About the Poet

Marie Asner has balanced the careers of film critic, free-lance writer and church musician for most of her life. Marie received a grant from the Kansas Arts Commission to do a poetry chapbook on "Amelia Earhart." She received the Gold Key to the City of Shawnee, Kansas for 20 years as a film critic and newspaper writer. Marie's mother was a church musician and Marie began playing for church services at age 14. Marie was on live National Public Radio-Kansas City for 25 years as a film critic panelist, and one of the guests was the late Charlton Heston. Marie relaxes by writing poetry and invites the reader to join her on a journey of words. Marie Asner is a member of the Merry Bombadils.

There's Always Someone

In life
there's always someone
waiting to correct you-
to fool you - to tell you lies
as if they are the truth.
There's always someone
who will use you -
for their own benefit -
who will imprison you
waste your time and talent-
gnaw at your soul - then
cast you away
when they no longer need you -
can no longer use you.
Best beware of devils
dressed as angels -
of gentle voices
with their Sirens songs -
as there's always someone
waiting in the shadows
waiting for the moment
to invite you in -
best beware
best beware.

About the Poet

Frank Adams is a Member at Large in MSPS.

From the Button Box

I've plucked out
3 matching pink plastic buttons:
deemed to be triplets
born to a fortunate mother

1 brass button with insignia:
deemed to be a war medal
cast aside by a wounded vet

6 white shirt buttons carded
neatly to a small card:
deemed to represent 6 CEOs
meeting roundtable style
to deliberate the limited range
of democracy

I close the button box lid and
saunter to the kitchen to make
a tuna sandwich. Tomorrow,
I will search the box where,
somehow I expect to find,
at least two yellow fish-shaped
buttons that had escaped the
fisherman's net.

Carol Louise Moon
The Merry Bombadils Chapter, MSPS

About the Poet

Carol Louise Moon is a Simulated Client Actor and an award-winning poet from Northern California. She has been published in three state poetry anthologies and many local poetry journals and has served as a contest judge. She is a regular contributor to Medusa's Kitchen blog spot of her poetry and photography. She is a proud member of Merry Bombadils.

Big Muddy—Harold Asner

In our country's western part
Many centuries ago
America saw the start
Of a river's steady flow

In the Rocky Mountain chain
It began with melting snow
Followed by the early rain
That fell on fields below

In Montana, a stream began to form
It slowly wandered east
As the days began to warm
The spring rains soon increased

The river we now call Missouri
Kept building on the plain
It sped on in a hurry
Spurred by another's drain

Its waters approached Wyoming
Our young river was not alone
It was raging, rushing, foaming
As it joined the Yellowstone

The river now flows through Dakota
North and South in order
Varying map-wise no iota
As it forms a two-state border

Iowa lies to the east

Nebraska to the west
Its banks home to man and beast
Where majestic eagles nest

Southerly sweeping past
Rich farmlands mostly flat
With waters swelling fast
While it meets the flood-prone Platte

Farmers rightly blame it
For many a springtime flood
Dams have failed to tame it
The flow turns their soil to mud

In winter, ice will build up
Through days both cold and raw
With chunks the river has filled up
Blocking off the Kaw

Eastward through the Show-me State
It navigates shoals and bends
With the Mississippi it has a date
That's where Big Muddy ends

Smitten with the Hills — John J. Han, On the Edge

As a “flatlander,” I discovered the beauty of the Ozarks nearly ten years ago while driving in northern Arkansas and southern Missouri. The radio was playing Dolly Parton’s twangy song about lost love, and the hills along the winding road were covered with glittery fall leaves. Later, I discovered the same beauty while reading Harold Bell Wright’s novel *The Shepherd of the Hills* (1907), in which the author praises the region’s forest-clad hills and valleys. The Ozark Plateau has become my newest passion, and I deem myself as a suburbanite who is a hillbilly—a ridge runner—at heart.

riding a bike
in my native village
autumn dream

It's That Time Again—Terrie Jacks

Routine exam,
set the date,

arrive 10:30,
register and wait.

A mammogram
a yearly fate,

breast to be smashed
between two plates.

Results are back,
Let's celebrate!

Where Does the Ozarks Begin? —John J. Han, On the Edge

Maps of the Ozarks tend to exclude St. Louis County, Missouri. As a long-time resident of the County, however, I think that Lone Elk Park and Castlewood State Park—located within the County, only a few miles away from my neighborhood—should be considered part of the Ozarks. The former has hills and hollers, and the latter has hills, bluffs, and the Meramec River. My county doesn't have "mountain people" but seem to have plenty of wannabe mountaineers who love to hunt and fish. So, my theory is that the northeastern territory of the Ozarks begins in the southwestern corner of St. Louis County.

troubled world
signing up for
mandolin lessons

Spring Check—Terrie Jacks

Gazing out the window,
due to cordon sanitaire,
an investigation from within,
I spy a view of spring.

Lovely flowers
a moment of ahh!
Spring renewal flourishes,
with a tender touch,
a cheery blush.

Next day, another check
the deer ate them all.

Little Seoul in the Ozarks—John J. Han, On the Edge

Unlike what the Netflix *Ozark* makes us believe, the Ozarks region is home to many non-white residents, including African Americans, Hmong people, and Jews. Unbeknownst to most Missourians, Robertsville in Franklin County—part of the northeast Ozarks—is home to 105-acre Peace Village, a ministry of the National Association of Inter-Cultural Family Mission. The Village opened in 2008 for the Korean War brides who had fallen on hard times—the spouses who needed support and healing. Those who visit the place are struck by a predominantly Korean atmosphere: cheerful conversations in Korean, an English sermon translated into Korean, sumptuous Korean cuisine, cosmos flowers common in Korea, and more than anything, the faces that look Korean. Here, the residents and visitors mingle with each other regardless of their differences in social background and educational level. What binds them is the fact that they all came from Korea.

my fox terrier
the few English words
he knows

Once After Several Miles — Todd Sukany

Two on the trail lessen the hazards.
If one falls, at least the other can run
for help. 5:30 a.m. in September
requires a headlamp and keen eyes.

A look to the left may illuminate a pair
of doe eyes. Off to the right, Sissy
of the orange-tabby family. Toby barks
off the rocky path, but he still protects

his turf. I happened to look ahead
just as Jeff's shoe grazed
Arnie Armadillo's spiky skull,
that shiny, armor pillow.