

SPARE MULE NEWSLETTER



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August 2023 Spare Mule Newsletter

President's Report.....	5
2023 Missouri State Poets Society Annual State Meeting.....	6
Chapter Reports	9
On the Edge Reporting:	10
The Merry Bombadils	11
Kudos	12
Summer Contest 2023	14
President's Challenge	16
UNKNOWNNS – Marilyn Smith	17
Winter's Song -- Marie Asner	18
On the Way to Confessional – Todd Sukany.....	19
Losing -- Pat Durmon	20
Monthly Prompts	21
April Prompt	22
CLOUD SHAPES -- Marilyn K. Smith	23
Cloud Thoughts – Terrie Jacks.....	24
The Poetry Prompt --John J. Han	25
Messages in the Clouds – Janice Canerdy	26
Cloud Thoughts -- L.A. Lowrance.....	27
Cloud Thoughts – Todd Sukany	28
Cloud Thoughts -- L.A. Lowrance.....	29
His Clouds – Anna Wells	30
Spring Break – Prompt #2.....	31
Spring Break -- L.A. Lowrance.....	32
it's that time... spring break -- Terrie Jacks	33
Spring breaks through – Terrie Jacks	34
Spring Parade - Terrie Jacks	35
SPRING – Marilyn Smith	36
Spring Break – Todd Sukany	37
Spring Break--John J. Han	38

Elegy or Ode (to an animal or piece of furniture).....	39
Elegy poetry form -- Marilyn K. Smith	40
Casting a Ghostly Image – Terrie Jacks	41
Save Your Time --John J. Han	42
My Elegy – Todd Sukany.....	43
Collage -- Marie Asner.....	44
HIS CHAIR -- Marilyn K. Smith	45
Ode to a Here, and There Old Chair -- Terrie Jacks	46
Bird Beat Ode – Terrie Jacks	47
Ode to a Master Imitator: The Mockingbird -- Janice Canerdy.....	48
My Rocker – Todd Sukany	49
Ode to Phoebe - L.A. Lowrance.....	50
Hard to Write an Ode to Birds --John J. Han.....	51
May 2023 Prompt:	52
gone soon -- Georgie Herz.....	53
spring pop up – Terrie Jacks	54
(senryu)---Todd Sukany	55
REWARDS OF MOISTURE -- Idella Pearl Edwards.....	56
June 2023 Prompt:.....	57
senryu -- Wanda Sue Parrott.....	57
ROAD TRIPS -- Marilyn K. Smith.....	58
An Adventure -- Terrie Jacks.....	59
Bus Poetry -- Terrie Jacks.....	60
Marooned in a Monsoon -- –Todd Sukany	61
A VACATION TO REMEMBER --Idella Pearl Edwards.....	62
I’d Hobble—I mean, GO—Right Back! -- Janice Canerdy	63
July Prompt: "Ice Cream"	64
Gotta Have It -- Janice Canerdy	65
HOMEMADE ICE CREAM - Marilyn Smith	66
Massive Cover-up – Todd Sukany	67
ICE-CREAM ~ Idella Pearl Edwards	68

ice cream soup – Terrie Jacks.....	69
Cookies 'n Cream by Pat Durmon.....	70
Member Poems.....	71
Late August Days -- Janice Canerdy	72
September in the U S A -- Janice Canerdy	73
The Question -- Terrie Jacks	74
Confusion -- Harold Asner	75
Home From College -- Carol Louise Moon	76
Of Time and Tides – Frank Adams	77
Caged – Frank Adams.....	78
HUMBLE BEGINNINGS – Ray Kirk	79
I CANNOT HAIKU – Ray Kirk	80
BOX THEORY – Ray Kirk.....	81
The Speed of a Plane — John J. Han	82
Mom — John J. Han.....	83
The Power of the US Dollar — John J. Han.....	84



President's Report

Dear Poet Friends,

I have been busy this spring. I gave a workshop at Stoutland Library. In June I went to Nationals in Des Moines, IA.

I have visited Springfield Poets for two meetings.

Most recently, I read at Open Mic July 20 at a local café, Jude's. Another Lebanon poet, Marthaa Miller also read.

I am planning to do a reading at library in West Plains on August 11. Then August 12 I will present 2 workshops at West Plains, a morning for younger children and afternoon for older children.

Really excited to promote poetry in our state.

Whatever chapter you attend, let me know how you promote poetry.

See information about our annual state poetry meeting in Springfield, MO.

Regards,

Nancy

2023 Missouri State Poets Society Annual State Meeting
hosted by Springfield Poets and Friends

Meeting Place: Library Center 4653 S. Campbell Ave. Springfield, MO

Friday, September 29 at Library Center

5:30 p.m. Registration
6:00 p.m. Poet presentation (Benjamin Myers)
7:00 p.m. Poet book signing
7:15 p.m. Read Around
8:00 p.m. Room closed

Saturday, September 30 at Library Center

8:00 a.m. Registration continues
Board Meeting in (TBA) Room
Read Around in (TBA) Room
9: a.m. Comfort Break
9:15 a.m. Workshop
10:30 a.m. Comfort Break
10:45 a.m. Read Around
11:45 – 1:45 Lunch Break (see list for restaurants nearby)
1:45 p.m. Contest Winners and Business Meeting
2:00 p.m. Presentation (Olive L. Sullivan)
3:00 p.m. Break
3:15 p.m. Read Around (if interested)
4:15 p.m. Safe Travels Home

If you have a book of poetry you are finished with, please bring it for a door prize.

Hotels near Library Center

LaQuinta Inn; 2535 S. Campbell Ave \$100 + tax
417-890-6060

Comfort Inn; 3776 S. Glenstone Ave. \$127 + tax
417-889-8188

**** * Must mention MSPS and reserve room by September 18 *****

Restaurants near Library Center

1. Freddy's Frozen Custard; 651 W. Camino Alto
2. Zaxby's; 540 W El Camino Alto

3. FD's Grillhouse; 245 E. Monastery
4. Bellacino's Pizza and Grinders; 4560 S. Campbell
5. Denny's; 4760 S. Campbell

SPEAKERS



Benjamin Myers was the 2015-2016 Poet Laureate of the State of Oklahoma and is the author of four books of poetry, of one book on poetics, and of numerous articles, essays, and reviews. He is a frequent speaker at conferences and literary festivals around the country. Myers is a professor of literature at Oklahoma Baptist University, where he directs the Great Books Honors Program.



Olive L. Sullivan is a poet and bookbinder in Pittsburg, Kansas. Her poems, essays, and short fiction have appeared in journals like *A Room of One's Own*, *The Little Balkans Review*, *The Odessa Review of Poetry*, and the *Midwest Quarterly*, as well as in anthologies like the award-winning "Begin Again: 150 Kansas Poems," edited by former Kansas Poet Laureate Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg. Olive's books include *Wandering Bone* (2017) and *Skiving Down the Bones* (2022), both from Meadowlark Press. She enjoys walks on the prairie with dogs, road trips, and traveling anywhere that requires a passport.

Chapter Reports



On the Edge Reporting:

We only missed one beat
Which wasn't sweet
We canceled one meet
When we could of greet
But that is how it was
Sorry Cuz'

Otherwise, our work we shared
Discussed mo. society's wares
Contest dates were aired
And other such cares
That's how we fared
Okay, Cuz'

We rocked and rolled
Didn't gather mold
We are bold
Plan to hold
An October open mic
That's the buzz, Cuz'

-- Terrie Jacks

The Merry Bombadils

The Merry Bombadils Chapter of MSPS continues to share sonnettes in a Round Robin for 2023, which entails sending sonnettes for comment and critique through the US Mail for each Bombadil to read and review. At the end of the year, Carol Louise Moon will have us send sonnettes for inclusion in a chapbook. This is our fourth year of creating a lovely chapbook.

Harold Asner is taking a Zoom class on writing short stories and is also writing poetry.

Marie Asner: From April 2023 until now, Marie Asner has presented a poetry reading to begin the music recital held every April by the Kansas City Music Club as a fundraiser for music scholarships. In 2023, the musicians were from the Park University International Conservatory of Music. Marie Asner has had poetry published this spring in Highland Park Poetry, Rockford Review, Distilled Poets, Vol. 6, and Herbs & Spices Anthology.

Pat Durmon announced *GOING HOME: A MEMOIR* by Pat Durmon with Lee Farrier. This is the story of Lee R. Farrier of Norfolk, Arkansas, which is available through Amazon or directly from Pat Durmon. <https://www.amazon.com/Going-Home-Memoir-Pat-Durmon/dp/B0BQ9NDZYG>

Teresa H. Klepac writes poems weekly and is sorting through them to begin the compilation of a chapbook. She is also writing a fantasy adventure novel. She recently became a member of Poets Roundtable of Arkansas, as well as The Columbia Writers Guild chapter of the Missouri Writers Guild. She is submitting poetry and flash fiction to publications and contests.

Pat Laster has written over 230 poetry and prose works during 2023. She's on her 25th year of writing weekly columns for The Southern Standard at Amity, which she began while living in Arkadelphia. Recently, she's been asked to take back the poetry column therein. She also publishes a monthly poem calendar, free to those who ask. Another current project is her memoir, "When I Had Another Name."

Carol Louise Moon is on vacation and taking a sabbatical from writing. She writes poems for our sonnettes chapbook.

Kudos

So sorry to hear of Tom's passing. I was the Spare Mule Editor that put together the tribute edition several years ago that honored his accomplishments. He had a very interesting career and life. I know he will be missed.

Teresa Klepac

Tom was a wonderful inspiration and encourager. I, along with Betty Gipson's daughter Linda, got MAs in English from MSU. The chair of the English Dept. there was so impressed with Tom's students that he came to SBU to visit with Tom. Without my knowing it way back then, he posted one of my poems and one of Betty Gipson's poems on the MSPS web site, which I discovered by accident. Thank you for bringing him to Bolivar and sharing his poetry with us. Guess you could say it was just "in the nick of time."

Eldonna DeWeese

We first met Tom years ago when I presented a workshop at the MSPS Convention in Bolivar. Had a great time and kept in touch with Tom through the years. What a loss.

The Asners

I know Mr. Padgett will be sorely missed.

Janice Canerdy

More Kudos

*Halcyon Days summer '23 online and in print, three poems

*Mississippi Poetry Society annual contest one, First Place; two, Second Place; and one HM

*NFSPS Annual Contest one HM

*Lighten Up Online June '23 one poem (an ode to my beloved manual can opener)

*Society of Classical Poets one poem online, since April 28, 2023

*Spirit Fire Review online one poem, July 2023

*Texas Poetry Magazine and Poetry World no. 6 (both publications of Wax Poetry and Art Publications) online since May 1, 2023, one poem

*The Hypertexts Magazine online, June 2023, three poems

Janice Canerdy

Todd Sukany was honored to present the poems of Dr. Tom Padgett at the Barnett-Padgett Literary Artist series 20 April 2023 on the campus of Southwest Baptist University.

Summer Contest 2023

Deadline:

* Postmarked 31 August 2023

Format:

* Submit two copies of each entry, category number and category name in upper left-hand corner of both copies, poet's name and address in upper right-hand corner of one copy. If you are a member, put "Missouri State Poetry Society" below your address. Put "Non-member" if you are not.

Limits:

* Poems may be 40 or fewer lines. They may be unpublished or previously published if the poet retains the rights to the poem. Poets may enter each category as many times as they wish. No poems will be returned or published.

* We do not accept online submissions at this time.

* Please, poems that have won an MSPS contest in the past may not be resubmitted for contest consideration.

Categories:

1. Rhymed verse or blank verse (unrhymed iambic pentameter), any subject, serious or humorous
2. Free verse, any subject, serious or humorous
3. Humorous verse, any subject
4. Any form, seasonal subject, serious or humorous
5. MSPS members only: Poet's choice:

* \$25, \$15, \$10, and three honorable mentions in each category

Fees:

* Non-members pay \$2.00 per poem. Members pay \$1.00 per poem. Make money order or check payable to MSPS

* Mail poems and fees to

Anna Wells
10632 St. Andrew's Ct.

Festus, MO 63028
acrobwel@aol.com

* Include a SASE for a list of the winners, OR check the December 1st issue of the Spare Mule Online for a list of winners.

Membership:

*If you do not belong to one of our local chapters but wish to join Missouri State Poetry Society, pay the \$14 annual member-at-large fee and enter the contests by paying a member's reduced contest fees. See Members-at-Large.

President's Challenge

"Take a line from a poem you like; use it as an epigraph for a poem you write."

Whatifs

Last night, while I lay thinking here,
some Whatifs crawled inside my ear
and pranced and partied all night long
and sang their same old Whatif song.

by Shel Silverstein

UNKNOWNNS – Marilyn Smith

*Glosa Poetry form

It's strange now that I'm growing old,
I think about when I was bold,
when I would glide upon my roof,
with skates that hooked onto each hoof.

Now wasn't that a silly thing
just think the bruises that would bring,
if I fell off and hit my head,
for all I know, I'd end up dead;
oh my, those thoughts from yesteryear,
last night, while I lay thinking here.

And what about the trees I climbed,
and contemplated life sublime,
and then played tag from tree to tree,
as over roofs I squealed with glee.
I could have fallen, don't you know;
a broken neck was sure to show.
My friends would cry, my parents too,
without me there, what would they do,
and though I hold these thoughts so dear,
some Whatifs crawled inside my ear.

Now what about my driving skills,
on CC's roller coaster hills?
The way I drove that Ford so fast,
a wreck, I'm sure, was my forecast.
I topped those hills at ninety-five,
aren't you surprised I'm still alive,
'cause at the peaks, I'd go airborne,
the impact even honked the horn.
I may have had a drink too strong,
and pranced and partied all night long.

And what about the stolen stuff?
My brothers, they were pretty rough.
We only took some melons, see,
a ripe one here, or maybe three.
But stealing is, you know a sin,
so things like that I held within;
each thing I did remained unknown,
'cause my folks used a scolding tone,
and told us kids we'd turn out wrong,
and sang their same old Whatif song.

Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Winter Night"
So, peace and let the bob-cat cry.

Winter's Song -- Marie Asner

Stumbling on the old cracked sidewalk,
side-stepping broken words
and torn photographs,
she had stared at him, through him
past him and into moonlight
that was slowly rising,
pouring out hopes of many colors.
"Seek new truths," they had said
and it ended by having to
run past window fragments
by the corner of the house.
No more leather belt being taken
off the hook in the closet,
she was now free in the old log cabin
no one knew was hers.
Bobcats and wolves roamed freely,
and as the moon set,
sleep became a friend
whose company
had been previously denied.

On the Way to Confessional – Todd Sukany

“I have eaten/ the plums” – William Carlos Williams

While you were away,
shopping for my birthday,
(or just in celebration

of my being), I prowled
the kitchen. I bypassed
the bananas, fruit flies

on sorties. I ignored
the pasta cabinet,
ingredients parched

and crunchy. I left
last night’s meal
in hospice.

Losing -- Pat Durmon

*Risk? What, after all, have you got to lose?
With a time-honored form, you ought to lose.*

*from Gazal on What's to Lose or Not
---Eleanor Rand Wilner*

Nobody cares that you lost your place in line,
that you got up early to be on time to lose.

You are mourning the grandmother who died.
Her kind words are memories you try to not lose.

Now and then, you forget and win the game,
you forget your best friend, you forget to lose.

You look away, empty your mind, do not reply.
You move on, go to college, study to not lose.

In sincerity, you marry and give up your last name.
Expected, it does not seem like much to lose.

Monthly Prompts



President Nancy has been sending prompts to our email each month. Below are our responses. Please check your email for more prompting goodness!

April Prompt

Cloud Shapes Prompt #1

CLOUD SHAPES -- Marilyn K. Smith

When I was young, I laid outside,
and watched the clouds float by.
I saw great shapes while looking up,
and wished that I could fly.

My brothers thought, man she is daft,
for I saw everything.
I saw big cats, and fluffy sheep,
and bells that sure did ring.

One day I looked up in the sky,
and saw a great big boat.
I went sailing across the sea,
and to my friends did gloat.

When it was cold, I even laid,
outside all bundled up,
so I could see those shapes up high,
with cocoa in my cup.

Now that I'm old I do not lay,
on grass out in my yard,
although I love to see the clouds,
getting up is really hard.

Cloud Thoughts – Terrie Jacks

Pardon me, you have an empty cloud bubble
above your head, have you no thoughts to fill it?

Excuse me, your cloud bubble isn't
overly packed with thoughts either.

Pardon me, your cloud bubble
just launched an exposé in superlatives.

Excuse me, my cloud bubble is private.
The info in it is none of your business.

I beg your pardon, I ask a reprieve, thought you
might like to know your cloud bubble is growing dark.

Excuse me, my cloud bubble has a headache.
It is about to detonate. I suggest you seek cover.

Oh, Pardon me, Oh, Pardon me,
where do you suggest I should I hide?

Excuse me, my thoughts on that are...
Go Hide in Your Cloud Bubble.

The Poetry Prompt --John J. Han

She tells us to write about
"cloud thoughts," which sounds great.
It would be easy to concoct
fake lines that sound deep.
As I often do, I google the term
for a related image.
Hmm, no image.
Having no visuals to inspire me,
I wonder what "cloud thoughts" means.
Does it mean my thoughts on clouds or
the thoughts of clouds?
I have no thoughts on clouds.
Being inanimate, clouds
can't harbor thoughts, either.
This quagmire excuses me from
writing a poem today.
Tomorrow my muse may emerge
from behind the clouds with words
of a sage.

Messages in the Clouds – Janice Canerdy

Observer of the skies, I thrill to see
a puppy cloud stretch out to dragon length,
a shapeless mass become a well-formed heart,
or pastel puffs become an ice cream cone.
These sights call forth my best old memories
of playing with my dog and summer treats,
of how my teen heart fluttered when I wore
my first real boyfriend's class ring on my chain.

A local man I knew saw doves, the Cross*,
and messages from Jesus in the clouds.
A booklet holds his photos of these scenes.
Revisiting my copy gives me pause.
Why would two long-time Christians like us see
such widely-varied scenes among the clouds?

I'll bet this man prayed fervently to see
some lovely words and images from God,
who chose to send the answers in the sky.
"Ask and ye shall receive," the Bible says.
I'm praying, and believing, He will send
sweet messages, by some means, just for me
to bless my soul and move my heart to sing.

*The Cross upon which Christ was crucified.

Cloud Thoughts -- L.A. Lowrance

I remember those lessons from science class
When we learned to study an air mass
And the type of clouds that would form.

Cumulonimbus would bring a storm
With rain, lightning and thunder
And winds to tear asunder.

Cirrus clouds are way up high
Icy feathers in clear, blue sky
Just hanging out, not passing by.

Stratus clouds settle down
And bring a fog over town
Creeping by in ghostly gown.

Cumulus are ones on which to dream
Lying on your back near a cooling stream
Conjuring images of mounds of ice cream.

Watching clouds is pretty cool
I suggest you follow this rule
Learn something while you're in school.

Cloud Thoughts – Todd Sukany

Record or record?

The games linguists play--

Kiss or kiss?

Does one record a kiss

or kiss a record?

Cloud Thoughts -- L.A. Lowrance

Forecast:
Stormy days
and nights

cloudy,
chance of rain,
Definite fog.

Can't escape
the gray days.

Depression reigns/
Rains?

His Clouds – Anna Wells

These clouds now are not
the ones of his childhood,
not the puffs of cotton gliding
soundless across a summer sky.
These are not the tall columns
piling up with drama nor the dark shelves
threatening to rain down floods
with gusts or twists of destruction.
These clouds have begun to block
the sight of those sunny days.
they threaten, even now, to block
forever the sight of all those others.
Soon he will know on summer days
that clouds are passing overhead
only by the momentarily cooling
on his sun-warmed upturned face.

Spring Break – Prompt #2

Spring Break -- L.A. Lowrance

Never comes soon enough
Never lasts long enough

So many plans, so much to get done.
Should I labor outside, or just lay in the sun?

Should I plan a trip, or stay close to home?
Should I visit with friends, or spend time alone?

Should I get up early, or stay snuggled in bed?
Go for a run, or meander instead?

Decisions, decisions, no time to lose.
I'll have to make one. After a snooze.

it's that time... spring break -- Terrie Jacks

baseball game's gone to commercial
break in the action

giant mattress sale
bouncy springs

unpredictable brakes
spring-in for repairs

free-for-all on lawns
spring robins return

moments of blossoms
red buds break forth

clocks set ahead
spring adjustment

time to break out
the mower

senior moment
thinking I have a spring break

well... it's time to spring into action
no matter what break it is

Spring breaks through – Terrie Jacks

March 21st
 traditional
 first day of spring

March 20th
 Vernal Equinox
 first day of spring

In the late afternoon
when the sun
 slips across the equator

Either day
 be it warm – cold
 rain – snow

Spring breaks through

Spring Parade - Terrie Jacks



spring parade
the goslings steal
the show

SPRING – Marilyn Smith

(Rubaiyat)

The daffodils sprang up near overnight.
To see their pretty blooms is quite a sight.
But do you realize they will die back.
Then we will mow them off, you know that's right.

The forsythia is so beautiful.
Its yellow blooms are yes, so plentiful.
Then the green leaves take their place everywhere.
To ignore them would be almost sinful.

All at once, the limbs on the trees bud out.
I guess that is what Spring is all about.
The cold days of winter begin to warm.
Oh, what a pleasant time is this; no doubt.

Spring Break – Todd Sukany

Three weeks into mowing the lawn,
I fold my winter running garb and
stack it in the bottom dresser drawer.

As secure as election results in November,
these masks to cover bare flesh will gather
a summer's worth of dust. I've lived long

enough to know April/
May never see snow.

Spring Break--John J. Han
(a kyoka)

back from
spring break
shrinking savings
and an expanding
waistline

Elegy or Ode (to an animal or piece of furniture)

Elegy poetry form -- Marilyn K. Smith

Stage 4, was it a shock to either of us?
Certainly not, somehow, we already knew.
There were so many things we had to discuss.
I was terrified, how could I start anew?
Through thick and thin, and every kind of weather,
here by my side is where you're supposed to be.
I never dreamed we wouldn't be together.
I am so sad, I wish these feelings would flee.

Casting a Ghostly Image – Terrie Jacks



Casting a Ghostly Image

The dark was intense that night
when out for a stroll he did stride
striding along the road he strolled
no moonlight guided his way
unseen he rambled the road

The dark was intense that night
when out for a stroll he did stride
unseen he rambled the road
no moonlight guided his way
that night he didn't survive
this tale I have been told

The dark was intense that night
when out for a stroll he did stride
the night he didn't survive
now tales of a ghostly image
observed strolling along the road
when dark is intense at night
do thrive

verse: Terrie Jacks
photo: John J. Han

Save Your Time --John J. Han
(Etheree)

No
need to
mourn someone
who has passed on
like a summer night
Strife has ceased for him now
The day of death is better
than the day of birth, a sad song
for a loved one makes the living weep,
but those who have departed don't get it

My Elegy – Todd Sukany

Every year your passing, your death,
sharpens itself in my mirror. You peek.
You pop. You poke your head out of

the grave, out of the depths where you
were dumped decades ago. You crave
recognition . . . still. You interrupt conver-

sation to draw attention. At mealtime,
your demands, o self, are dropped faster
than temperature in a cubicle. Every day

you're pushing for resurrection--every
hour, old man, ol' crusting wineskin, o living
memory, ol' zombie shadow.

Collage -- Marie Asner

She always waited for us at night
by a small lamp in the front window.
Summer, and the lace curtains moved lightly
in a cool breeze, while she worked
on her collages, one for each of us.
Sitting in her Queen Anne chair
by the front window, she was
the security check for the neighborhood.
When it was time for my collage, I was surprised
at what she had gathered for her niece.
A piece of lace from my baptismal gown,
a tiny lock of hair, blue velvet from
my sixth birthday dress, a recital program
from my 9th grade debut at school
and flower petals from my wedding bouquet.
At the left-hand corner was a photo
of our first flower garden together,
now sprinkled with dried petals.
I remember the patience she had for everyone
and everything. No one went out the door
without a handkerchief and no project was
declared finished unless it had her approval.
Walking into her house after the funeral,
I was alone. No security check, only the collage,
which I will keep safe in my home
by the Queen Anne chair.

Ode (to an animal or piece of furniture)

HIS CHAIR -- Marilyn K. Smith

His chair in there should be thrown out,
for it has seen its day.
He sat in it and watched TV,
and napped, what can I say.

He stayed up late, much like an owl,
and sometimes snoozed right there,
then came to bed at half-passed-two,
'til ten without a care.

When it was time to go to bed,
while news showed on the tube,
I kissed his head and said goodnight,
twas nice, it was not crude.

Now that he's gone, I should get rid,
of his chair—old and worn,
and where he sat, worn to the springs,
with edges even torn.

Please understand, he's sitting there,
he's here with me—for this I know,
I can imagine he's right there,
watching his favorite show.

Ode to a Here, and There Old Chair -- Terrie Jacks

An old chair
my chair
so glad
you're here

Large lumps
big bumps
bit dusty
my chair

Doesn't rock
doesn't roll
pulsates
slow-mo

You're looks
long gone
don't care
my chair

Keep on
being there
my comfy
old chair

Stay here old chair
stay there old chair
my here, and there
old chair – old chair

Bird Beat Ode – Terrie Jacks

Bird Beat Ode



*flicker on the feeder
hanging upside down
giving the suet cake
a pound, pound, pound*

Terrie Jacks

Ode to a Master Imitator: The Mockingbird -- Janice Canerdy

A woman on her daily walk was serenaded by
a cardinal, a blue jay, and a Carolina wren—
or so she thought. Imagine how surprised she would have been
to learn that it was one bird--YOU-- perched on a limb up high.

You're really talented. You imitate a car alarm,
a barking dog, or a piano. Year-round, day or night,
you and your friends sing many songs, to listeners' delight~~
but you attack if you think man or creature means you harm.

The mockingbird is really popular and versatile.
It is the designated symbol in five Southern states.*
Those living in these areas know in the forest waits
a concert by performers that are sure to make them smile.

*Arkansas, Florida, Texas, Tennessee, and Mississippi

My Rocker – Todd Sukany

Originally a tree sliced into planks--
no thicker than today's haul of junk
mail -- then glued to thicken
to the depth of crème brûlée.

Someone cut a jig
so the super-heated lumber
could retain the shape
of curlicues and arms.

Like an outline of Talladega,
a back and seat frame
grasp the "dowel treatment"
then stain. As art, it sits
before the fireplace,
on a rug, while I am off . . .

Ode to Phoebe - L.A. Lowrance

She moved in while I was gone.
Built her nest on narrow ledge
above the window to my room.
Industrious worker
using moss and mud
as her construction supplies.
The nest was completed
in less than a week.

Then she settled herself
into that soft cup
and prepared for motherhood.
For a time, she was wary
of my coming and going.
She would startle from the nest,
fly to a nearby branch,
perch, with tail bobbing.

Her charcoal feathers
do not demand attention,
but her self proclamation
of "Phoebe, Phoebe, Phoebe"
makes her easy to identify.

Sitting time demands
patience and determination.
Wind ruffles her feathers.
Heat rises under the eaves.
Her steadfastness is necessary.
The miracle depends on her.

Hard to Write an Ode to Birds --John J. Han

(a haibun)

Sure, they look attractive. The feathers of Northern cardinals are as bright as their songs. Herons' plumage looks beautiful, and their flight is graceful. Eagles' eyes look royal. All these birds look pretty until they attack their competitors or enemies. At mealtime, adult cardinals peck at goldfinches. Herons capture their prey, swallowing them alive. So do eagles, who trample cobras, eating them one piece of live flesh at a time.

rumors of war
a robin pins an intruder
to the ground

May 2023 Prompt:

gone soon -- Georgie Herz

I take a morning walk each day
observing nature along the way

weather is right for lovely blooms
enjoy they will disappear soon

spring pop up – Terrie Jacks

birds on a wire chirp

raindrops drop

wait for it

POP – POP – POP

blossoms sprout

(senyru)---Todd Sukany

Spring deluge
daffodils snub that traitor
groundhog blinks

REWARDS OF MOISTURE -- Idella Pearl Edwards

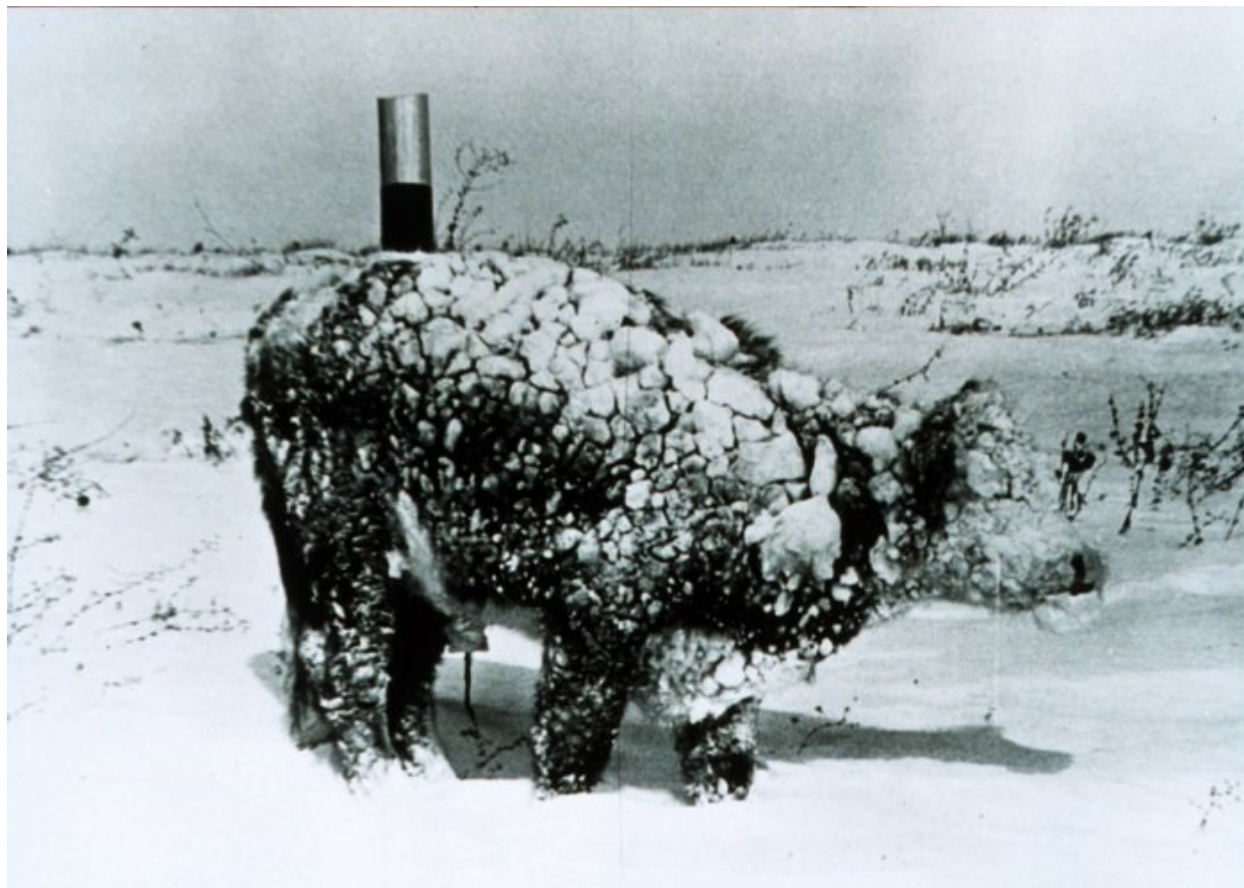
There seems to be a great deal of moisture
In the fourth month of the year.
It falls from the sky in great abundance,
But there is nothing to fear.

That moisture will always be put to good use,
For thirsty buds want to bloom.
And without sustaining water,
They are sadly destined for doom.

So after a month of drenching rain,
Comes a festive delight for our eyes.
Such color and fragrance as the buds open up!
What a captivating sweet surprise!

June 2023 Prompt:

“Write a parody about vacations or write about a vacation.”



senryu -- Wanda Sue Parrott

june a cow in snow
blame it on the aliens
or a UFO

ROAD TRIPS -- Marilyn K. Smith

It seems as though such happy times
occurred on your day out.
You're on the road, a little trip,
such fun, there is no doubt.

You plan ahead, all things are set,
the route, the clothes, the kids.
You have the map to show the way,
You shouldn't hit the skids.

Another thing, a place to stay,
reserved ahead of time,
so you arrive in time for bed,
but first, wash off the grime.

That's not the way it worked for me,
I flew by my shirttail,
I never planned, I forged ahead,
poor planning without fail.

Remember that one time we went
to Hannibal, up north,
to see the town where Mark Twain lived,
all the sights, and so forth.

We stopped at a motel nearby,
so we could stay the night,
few rooms, they were nearly sold out.
guess what, one room, you're right.

Another time, in Arkansas,
we stopped at a motel,
to get a room, all peace and quiet,
not so, as I will tell.

A motorcycle convention,
took place in the next town,
and near all the rooms were sold out,
you cannot believe the sound.

Disaster yet another time,
when we were tired and sore.
The room they gave us down the way,
next to an outside door.

A group of kids, in rooms nearby,
they banged that door all night,
plus, loudly walked, and had such fun,
'til almost broad daylight.

Yes, ma'am, I guess I should have planned,
each detail from the start,
instead of hoping for the best.
I guess I'm not too smart.

An Adventure -- Terrie Jacks

I'm going on a Mystery Trip.

A Mystery Trip?

A Mystery Trip?

Where are you going?

I don't know.

What are you going to see?

I haven't got a clue.

What kind of trip is that?

A Mystery Trip.

Bus Poetry -- Terrie Jacks

As the wheels go round,
round and round,
they pound the ground
with a bump, bump, bump,
along we thump,
on the roads we clump.
Clump - thump - bump,
Clump - thump - bump,
Clump - thump - bump,
as the wheels go around.

Marooned in a Monsoon -- --Todd Sukany

In the den, you trade a mask
for an eye patch, striped over-

shirt, stick for sword, swashbuckler's
accent to "arr," and ride the couch

stealthily into the horizon,
chasing strangers to pillage

before they walk the plank,
run-a-rig into a rainbow.

A VACATION TO REMEMBER --Idella Pearl Edwards

My parents told me we were going on vacation,
Oh what exciting news!
But they didn't tell me their choice of location,
So I wondered where they would choose.

When they told me of all their final plans
It made me wish again
That we would stay home and forget the vacation
To the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

I didn't want to camp in the woods with the bears.
In my mind, I had a hunch
That a large black bear would come for a visit,
And I would be his lunch.

But my parents were firm in their decision.
It wasn't my choice to make.
It seemed as though they really didn't care
That my very life was at stake.

So we set up our tent in the deep, dark woods,
Miles from civilization.
And they were enjoying the tranquil setting,
Much to my frustration.

But it wasn't long until I began to relax,
And enjoy the beauty and charm
Of this peaceful, captivating place and I knew
My parents would keep me from harm.

I'd Hobble—I mean, GO—Right Back! -- Janice Canerdy

Vacation prep, stage 1, began
a week before departure time
with steroid shots. When traveling,
avoiding chronic pain is prime!

My needs took me to seven stores;
I had a lengthy "must take" list.
While packing right before the trip,
I realized some things, I'd missed.

I dashed down to the dollar store
and found those things. Back at the car,
I turned my ankle. Then I prayed
the pain would not my good times mar.

Then it was time! We headed out,
cars full of friends and family.
The stops were frequent. It is NOT
my fault that I have OAB.*

Gulf Shores was just as beautiful
and entertaining as before.
Despite the fun, a few events
were trying. This, I can't ignore.

Down at the beach, some rowdy kids
whose parents were not watching them
decided they would bury me
deep in the sand~~just on a whim!

"My ankle's hurting!" I cried out.
In answer to my urgent pleas,
they backed away. Back at my room,
I slathered it in Biofreeze.

The souvenir shops, restaurants,
and theme parks all were excellent.
While hobbling to each one, I thought
our pile of money was well spent!

*OAB, overactive bladder

July Prompt: "Ice Cream"

Gotta Have It -- Janice Canerdy

When she's sure her tired hubby's asleep,
Susie sneaks from the bedroom to keep
a much-loved rendezvous.
Rocky Road she will woo.
Her addiction to ice cream runs deep.

Neapolitan's next on her list.
Bad ice cream, to her, does not exist!
French vanilla, she craves;
for black walnut, she raves.
From her habit, she will not desist.

Then one day Susie heard hubby scream.
She suspected he'd had a bad dream
or had somehow been maimed,
but he loudly exclaimed,
"Look! Somebody stole ALL our ice cream!"

HOMEMADE ICE CREAM - Marilyn Smith

It was my job when I was small,
to sit atop our freezer.
They put a rug up on the ice,
what rhyme to use ... geezer.

We couldn't wait for our first bite,
of that good creamy treat,
the paddle for our brother Joe,
each taste was oh, so, sweet.

Yes, every year on July Fourth,
Mom mixed up the ice cream.
The ice we bought over at the store,
the prospect made us beam.

My husband sure did like ice cream,
as did our two offspring,
and neighbors too. They loved it so.
The sweetness they did cling.

Then our old freezer bit the dust,
said no to a brand new one.
We thought when hungry we'd just buy ...
but it was not as fun.

The time has passed for me to make
a batch of that sweet treat.
I now just go to Andy's Store,
it makes my life complete.

Massive Cover-up – Todd Sukany

Shortly, the milky, virgin mounds
will endure the wrath of the road

grader. Chopped nuts. Piled high
then running down. They split

into the ditch that is a gilded ceramic
circle. Molten fudge, shiny, slithers

in curls like a blanket—a failed
attempt to satiate the violation.

Actually, no redemption will transpire
by the splattering of whipped cream.

ICE-CREAM ~ Idella Pearl Edwards

Is ice cream for breakfast, lunch and dinner
And even a snack or two?
Can anyone ever have enough?
It depends on your point of view.

Ice cream's an essential part of life
That we should never have to do without.
We must please our taste buds and enjoy ourselves.
That's what it's all about.

Everyone has their favorite ice-cream,
But let's get down to the facts.
Although there are myriads and myriads of flavors,
The best is Chocolate Moose Tracks.

ice cream soup – Terrie Jacks

“summer chowder”

a sweet course
serve cold
comfort food
for heat relief

starts frozen
softens in a bowl
random lumps
triggers head freeze

all kinds of flavors
all delish
ice cream soup
a summertime treat

Cookies 'n Cream by Pat Durmon

It's a comfort food for grown-ups.
Children ask for it like it's a love-hug.
Eyes scan the freezer in the store before

Contemplating creative slow-eating.
Resorting to childish charms,
Easy memories, and no evil forethoughts,
Ask how to set the heart free—every time
My hand will twirl the cookies 'n cream.

Member Poems



Late August Days -- Janice Canerdy

Late August days, I start to feel
faint hints of coming fall.
The climbing sun steals their appeal.
We're still in summer's thrall.

I must not be remiss.
Each season brings its kiss
from Nature's store of bliss.

Pre-fall, I praise,
late August days.

September in the U S A -- Janice Canerdy

September sashays in with cooler air,
new school year, shorter days, an early frost,
fall sports, cookouts on Labor Day, street fairs,
trips to the beach before the chance is lost.
From summer into autumn, we have crossed.

On the eleventh, time is set aside
for ceremonies honoring the throng
who died when wickedness personified
attacked, but our great land has proven strong—
enduring theme of movies, books, and songs.

The Question -- Terrie Jacks

In my thesaurus on page 286
starts with the word neatness
synonyms: tidiness and cleanliness
and page 287 ends with neurotic
synonyms: troubled and disturbed

So I ask myself – neatness
is alphabetically before neurotic
does tidiness led to being
troubled and disturbed.?

Confusion -- Harold Asner
(sonnette)

I wheel my chair to face the view outside.
The nurse brings me some tattered magazines.
I read the one with vivid travel scenes.
One photo makes my sore eyes open wide.
Why can't I think? A nurse comes by to peek.
I point and say, "I've once been here." She leans.
"Yes, that's the page you stared at late last week."

Home From College -- Carol Louise Moon
(Pantoum)

He's home from college now
all smooth and ruddy.
"No time for dating, Son,
the harvest is near."

All smooth and ruddy
apples must get to market.
The harvest is near;
the price is incomparable.

Apples must get to market
shining in the searing sun,
the price is incomparable.
Dad set the lines and rows

shining in the searing sun.
Mom, in her way, agreed.
Dad set the lines and rows;
the loss for him is unbearable.

Mom, in her way, agreed,
"No time for dating, Son."
The loss for him is unbearable.
He's home from college now.

Of Time and Tides – Frank Adams

Time rushes forward
toward a sea
I have not seen.
Its channel is deep
the current strong -
boulders and debris
stand in the path -
but time will not be stopped
crushing dams and levees
in its path -
and all I can do
is ride along.
There is no swimming
against the current -
no going back upstream.
Time and tides rush onward
toward a dark endless sea -
and there in time -
will deposit me.

Caged – Frank Adams

I roam about within myself
unable to find a way out -
here clouds gather
and storms toss me about -
leaving me to hang-on
to cry and shout -
to wonder why and what
does this all mean.
And, like a caged bird
I find it hard to sing.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS – Ray Kirk

I do not know from whence I came.
Someplace dark and faint of mind
like a foggy mist, mixed in with rain.

Strangers laugh and claim to be insane.
as an unknown future bides its time.
I do not know from whence I came.

Pleasure mingles with fevered pain.
Uncensored break from coerced rhyme.
Like a foggy mist, mixed in with rain.

An overcooked soup of loss and gain
almost stranded me upon one long line.
I do not know from whence I came.

I cannot accept nor incite blame.
While uncertain the burden is mine.
like a foggy mist, mixed in with rain.

I recognize there is a beast I must tame.
My inner voice tells me I will be fine.
I do not know from whence I came.
Like a foggy mist, mixed in with rain.

I CANNOT HAIKU – Ray Kirk

minnows swim
against current
fail to catch answers

BOX THEORY – Ray Kirk

I have debated the content of my box
Thoughts surrounding it
either leave or become diluted
by other entities that squawk
their release demands incessantly.

There is a stigma about this box
It is not known as a think tank
but resolution is often found within.
I cannot force the box open
as that would be unmitigated disaster.

Common sense tends to reside
in a hole dug deep within the package.
The guide and hitching post are
wrapped together in a nearby cubicle.

A reverent corner is reserved for
nonsense and ridiculous
a safe place for them to
gravitate and be recognized as genius.

The employees of the box
would like to thank me for my time.
Interest has sparked their
desire to continue their service to
humanity and its offspring.

Before we conclude the glam tour
are there any questions about the levity
crammed within my box? I had hoped
it would have been unpacked by now
but it seems to be a squatter. It's latest
demand is a theorem all to itself before
it will descend from high ground.

The Speed of a Plane — John J. Han

(A haibun)

The flight tracker on this plane over the Pacific Ocean shows how fast the jumbo jet flies. It takes approximately four seconds to fly one mile. At this speed, it would take 36 seconds to drive from my home to my workplace which is located nine miles away.

bottleneck
this time caused by
a flock of geese

Mom — John J. Han

(A haibun)

Mom is not an expressive person. Seeing me after years of separation, she doesn't say much. Instead, she often smiles or chuckles when she sees me, which signals that she is happy that I am back home. At mealtime, she insists that I eat much although I am not hungry.

so small
my mother sleeping
curled up

The Power of the US Dollar — John J. Han
(A haibun)

Even in this age of international de-dollarization, the US dollar holds sway in Israel. Many shops accept the dollar, along with the new Israeli shekel, as a currency for business transactions. I didn't have to use shekels during my ten-day stay in Israel in 2023. Indeed, I didn't acquire shekels at the airport and returned to the United States even without seeing the Israeli currency.

Jerusalem hills
selling a bottle of water
for one dollar



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