

THE HERON'S NEST — VOLUME 20 (2018)



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FEATURED POEMS

learning to eat
around bruises
winter apples

Debbi Antebi
London, United Kingdom

*

the shape
of the wind's persistence
seaside pines

Michele L. Harvey
Hamilton, New York

*

dawn
the sea
crawls out of the mist

Robert Witmer
Tokyo, Japan

HERON'S NEST AWARD

learning to eat
around bruises
winter apples

Debbi Antebi
London, United Kingdom

A good haiku can shed light on part of the poet's world. The best haiku can also illuminate ours.

In the forty-plus years since graduating from college I've been able to attend my every-fifth-year reunion all but a couple of times. Many changes have taken place over this period including, of course (for a predominately male class), my classmates' cumulative loss of hair and gains in weight. But such metrics are not what have struck me most. Over the decades I've also noticed a less visible but far more profound transformation in how my classmates – and, in truth, I – behave and relate.

During earlier reunions much of the nonverbal "signaling" and actual discourse (couched as it was) revolved around markers of career advancement and material success. Promotions and perks, toney cars and new homes all insinuated themselves into the most casual of exchanges. But around twenty-five years out – just as many of my classmates and I approached the peak of our careers or professions – something shifted. Increasingly our discussions turned to personal relationships, shared interests, overt worries and even setbacks. A certain cockiness gave way to true collegiality and even, at moments, compassion. While I always had fun at reunion, the latest few have offered something deeper and more meaningful.

Did my classmates and I just mature? No doubt. But Debbi Antebi's haiku helps me recall some of the personal conversations I had with classmates the last few reunions. It seems that sooner or later, to one degree or another, life roughs us up. No one goes completely unbruised. We realize we're neither Masters of the Universe nor anything remotely close to that. But in the process we achieve something greater: we become more fully human. With added humility we reclaim our humanity.

Some apples are harder and thicker-skinned than others; they include the Fuji, Gala, Delicious, Granny Smith, Honeycrisp and Rome. These varieties and others can be preserved well beyond their fall picking ("apple" being an autumn kigo, or haiku season word) if stored at just the right temperature, light level and humidity. But in winter apples are "out of season" with even the hardiest being more vulnerable to the natural effects of time. Bruising and worse cannot be put off forever. Yet something curious also occurs. With the passage of time, picked apples generally become sweeter. Yes, we may need to eat around bruises more often, but what remains may be more rewarding.

Such knowledge is just one of the fruits of age and experience . . . and a gentle poetic nudge.

— Scott Mason
March 2018

POEMS

some rain, some sunshine
counting the days
we haven't spoken

Tyrone McDonald
Brooklyn, New York

*

in the compost
an old potato
flowers

Ingrid Baluchi
Kampala, Uganda

*

votive candle —
the shadow of the flame
turns with the wind

Antonio Mangiameli
Lentini, Italy

*

fine morning mist
she promises
to forget

J. Zimmerman
Santa Cruz, California

*

yellow tulips —
what if I don't want
to just be friends?

Susan Burch

Hagerstown, Maryland

*

Lautrec exhibit
the tour guide
flounces her skirt

George Dorsty
Yorktown, Virginia

*

on the other hand mood rings

Robert Epstein
El Cerrito, California

*

mating call
the koel tries
a different pitch

Quendryth Young
Alstonville, New South Wales
Australia

*

leftover moon whitening the surrender of camellias

Cherie Hunter Day
Menlo Park, California

*

tumbling
from the nest
a fish eye

Bill Cooper
Midlothian, Virginia

*

change of season
changing the way I hold
an umbrella

Basant Kumar Das
Bhubaneswar, Odisha State
India

*

mother's funeral birdsong no matter what

Bob Lucky
Saudi Arabia

*

ashes scattered
beyond the floating pollen
white gloves grip the oars

Darrell Lindsey
Nacogdoches, Texas

*

the way back
so much further
without her

Mark Alan Osterhaus
Lake Mills, Wisconsin

*

you always find
the grass in my hair
spring stars

Sandi Pray
Robbinsville, North Carolina

*

I used to kneel
to water it—
great oak

Ruth Holzer
Herndon, Virginia

*

Father's Day
a crayon heart
in my suitcase

Joe McKeon
Strongsville, Ohio

*

fireflies in the marsh
the stars also
wandering

Stuart Bartow
Salem, New York

*

vapour trails
the hang time of a frisbee
dog

Garry Eaton
Port Moody, British Columbia
Canada

*

at both ends
of the day
birdsong

Matthew Caretti
Mapanga, Malawi

*

rising sun...
a sphinx moth makes the most
of moonflowers

Julie Warther
Dover, Ohio

*

old pond
deep in my pocket
a wishing stone

Mark E. Brager
Columbia, Maryland

*

droughtlands
flies swarm over
the stallion's eye

Vanessa Proctor
Sydney, Australia

*

thunderhead
alligator eyes parting
the duckweed

Lynn Edge
Tivoli, Texas

*

noontime heat
fingerlings swim in and out
of a light shaft

Hannah Mahoney
Cambridge, Massachusetts

*

storm front...
the quiet that sits
high in trees

Michael McClintock
Clovis, California

*

buttongrass moor
the boulder becomes
a wombat

Leanne Mumford
Sydney, New South Wales
Australia

*

summer heat
a snake in the hen house
lumpy with eggs

Bryan Rickert
Belleville, Illinois

*

gust of sirocco
a kestrel abandons
its dive

Polona Oblak
Ljubljana, Slovenia

*

night fishing
a thousand eyes
under the floodlights

Mark Meyer

Mercer Island, Washington

*

summer twilight
the train inside
the river's bend

Karina M. Young
Salinas, California

*

campfire embers —
the bright and dark sides
of stories

Kwaku Feni Adow
Akosombo, Ghana

*

hand on my shoulder
he navigates me
through the milky way

Julie Warther
Dover, Ohio

*

on a clothesline
between stars
worn out jeans

Dietmar Tauchner
Puchberg, Austria

*

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the idle counterweights
of cranes

Lee Nash
Barbezieux-Saint-Hilaire, France

*

he loves me
but loves her more
phases of the moon

Marilyn Humbert
Sydney, New South Wales
Australia

*

chrysanthemums
my shadow
in the picture

Bill Kenney
Whitestone, New York

*

autumn lilies I knot things loosely

Francine Banwarth
Dubuque, Iowa

*

half asleep —
moonlight seeps
into my veins

Nicholas Klacsanzky
Edmonds, Washington

*

losing my way
the x-shaped tracks
of a roadrunner

Sondra J. Byrnes
Santa Fe, New Mexico

*

a sheep's skull
in the rusty wheelbarrow
abandoned goldfield

Vanessa Proctor
Sydney, Australia

*

counting tree rings
I tell my son
about his grandfather

Erik Linzbach
Prescott Valley, Arizona

*

driftwood...
she counts his dalliances
with both hands

Michele L. Harvey
Hamilton, New York

*

horses gathered
around the haystack
setting sun

Jennifer Sutherland
Viewbank, Victoria
Australia

*

flying termites —
the maid switches off the lamp

and lets moonbeams in

Barnabas I. Adeleke
Okuku, Osun State
Nigeria

*

autumn woods
is it only
the wind?

Tom Drescher
Rossland, British Columbia
Canada

*

the gentle give
of the pine needle path
autumn solitude

Robert Gilliland
Austin, Texas

*

long liturgy
a boy squeezes
his box of raisins

Steve Tabb
Boise, Idaho

*

out a train window
the clickety-clack
of a little town

Alan S. Bridges
Littleton, Massachusetts

*

a greeting card
from the one who got away...
wind-blown leaves

Marion Alice Poirier
Boston, Massachusetts

*

deep in autumn
the swan alone

Rick Tarquinio
Woodruff, New Jersey

*

twilight
the crow picks a tree
with lots of sky

Robert Gilliland
Austin, Texas

*

freeze
the constellations settle
into their angles

Burnell Lippy
Danville, Vermont

*

first day of winter
the snap of a cue ball
on the break

Brad Bennett
Arlington, Massachusetts

*

powdered sugar snow
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of the recipe

Jennifer Hambrick
Columbus, Ohio

*

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filling the carton
with her clothes

Dan Curtis
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada

*

winter moon
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knows me by

Carolyn Hall
San Francisco, California

*

silent
as a mouse
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John Hawkhead
Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire
United Kingdom

*

her prognosis
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striking logs

Chen-ou Liu

Ajax, Ontario, Canada

*

all in all twilight in snowfall

Elmedin Kadric

Helsingborg, Sweden

*

first light

through first leaves

chickadee

Ann K. Schwader

Westminster, Colorado

*

heart monitors

in the neo-natal ward

early plum blossoms

Deborah P Kolodji

Temple City, California

*

the drawstring missing

from my hoodie...

blustery day

Connie Donleycott

Bremerton, Washington

*

windy afternoon

all eyes

on the bagpiper's kilt

Christopher Herold

Port Townsend, Washington

*

pollen mask...
removing it
to sneeze

Christopher Patchel
Chicago, Illinois

*

names I call these weeds not their given names

Jeff Ingram
Fort Washington, Pennsylvania

*

spring wind —
she stands
on the pedals

Laurie D. Morrissey
Hopkinton, New Hampshire

*

tiger lily
knowing this
cannot be love

Jennifer Sutherland
Viewbank, Victoria
Australia

*

spring peepers —
the ferris wheel lights
across the river

Stephen Kusch
Oakland, California

*

clear sky...
the life of coins
in the wishing well

Duro Jaiye
Hirakata, Japan

*

blossoming
while I was sleeping...
night jasmine

Kizie Basu
New Delhi, India

*

warm day
some of the tree's shadow
from a songbird

paul m.
Bristol, Rhode Island

*

pitcher plant
a nod to the weight
of water

Tom Painting
Atlanta, Georgia

*

tin cones
fringe a dancer's kilt
summer rain

Victor Ortiz
San Pedro, California

*

one spark
then a whole meadow
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Jeff Hoagland
Hopewell, New Jersey

*

still water
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the thrum of a bigger one

Hannah Mahoney
Cambridge, Massachusetts

*

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Simon Hanson
Tamborine, Queensland
Australia

*

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bottom

Chad Lee Robinson
Pierre, South Dakota

*

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Joe McKeon

Strongsville, Ohio

*

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Gavin Austin
Sydney, Australia

*

campfire light
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along the river

Glenn G. Coats
Carolina Shores, North Carolina

*

porch light
piercing velvet dark
tree frog's trill

Ruth Yarrow
Ithaca, New York

*

war memorial
cicadas deliver
the sermon

Cynthia Rowe
Sydney, Australia

*

before we count
one one-thousand
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Nancy Shires
Greenville, North Carolina

*

fire season
not even the brightest
stars

Christopher Herold
Port Townsend, Washington

*

all ears —
headlights startle
a yard full of rabbits

Marian Olson
Santa Fe, New Mexico

*

rounds of hay
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with moonlight

Rick Tarquinio
Woodruff, New Jersey

*

cicada stuck
in the pine tree's resin —
still it sings

Don McLeod
Sherman Oaks, California

*

aging in place
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where the sun stays longest

Peter Newton
Winchendon, Massachusetts

*

first day of school
pinecone clusters
in the top branches

Mary Stevens
Hurley, New York

*

mist after rain...
yew berries
along the church path

Paul Chambers
Newport, Wales

*

colored leaves —
we arrange ourselves
from oldest to youngest

pjm
San Jose, California

*

nothing else —
my mom's picture inside
my dad's war diary

Michael McClintock
Clovis, California

*

first frost —
a rust colored feather

in the bluebird box

Michael Stinson
Omaha, Nebraska

*

shorter days
angling my book
to catch what's left

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
Birmingham, United Kingdom

*

bedtime story
my grandson scolds me
when I skip a page

Wonja Brucker
Duanesburg, New York

*

the timeline of my life punctuated by pets

Alan S. Bridges
Littleton, Massachusetts

*

old stump
again meets
the first snow

Slobodan Pupovac
Zagreb, Croatia

*

winter solstice
the staircase
to the cellar

Alice Frampton
Seabeck, Washington

*

holiday's end
thump of towels
in the dryer

Kathryn Stevens
Cary, North Carolina

*

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Melissa Watkins Starr
Portsmouth, Virginia

*

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Charlie Shiotani
Watsonville, California

*

a white cat
curled up in the window
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David He
Zhunglang, Gansu Province
China

*

candlelit evening —

cold beans
straight from the tin

Helen Buckingham
Wells, Somerset, United Kingdom

*

starless night
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David Jacobs
London, England

*

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of trampled snow

Lew Watts
Santa Fe, New Mexico

*

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Michele Root-Bernstein
East Lansing, Michigan

*

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Bill Cooper
Midlothian, Virginia

*

prehistoric peoples
saw many Gods to worship...
winter stars

Kirsty Karkow
Waldoboro, Maine

*

blue snow
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to the moon

Tollef Anderssen
Trondheim, Norway

*

ice storm
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HK Chung
East Lansing, Michigan

*

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or three

PMF Johnson
Minneapolis, Minnesota

*

in and out
of the confessional
winter light

Chen-ou Liu
Ajax, Ontario
Canada

*

windswept cemetery
a child burrows
into her mother's skirt

Louisa Howerow
London, Ontario
Canada

*

late winter
the last jar of applesauce
with cinnamon

Alice Frampton
Seabeck, Washington

*

cusp of spring
a dusting of snow
on the roebuck's rump

Marilyn Fleming
Pewaukee, Wisconsin

*

pale sun
a handful of pigeons
crowns the birch

odd g aksnes
Toensberg, Norway

*

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Lenard D. Moore

Raleigh, North Carolina

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FEATURED POEMS

tornado siren
the wind lifts a sneaker print
from home plate

Chad Lee Robinson
Pierre, South Dakota

*

oars up
dad asks what I know
about girls

Joe McKeon
Strongsville, Ohio

*

snow starting to stick
the carriage horse
clears its nostrils

Chad Lee Robinson
Pierre, South Dakota

HERON'S NEST AWARD

tornado siren
the wind lifts a sneaker print
from home plate

Chad Lee Robinson
Pierre, South Dakota

Something that I would call a 'photogenic short story' might be a category that Robinson has created through his haiku. Though nothing dramatic has actually taken place, it excites a reader. A person like me, who has never heard a tornado siren, can immediately see that home plate in a dusty field. I wonder who left a sneaker print. Was it his son? Did he play baseball at the same place when he was young? Did a tornado come close to "home"? As an editor, I frequently tell poets 'the most important element of haiku is SHOW, not TELL.' This haiku is a classic example of that principle.

There was an internment camp at Fort Lincoln, South Dakota, during World War II. I don't know if playing baseball was allowed at the camp. But I visualize young Japanese American men trying to act 'normal' by throwing and hitting a ball. They might have discussed volunteering to fight in Europe. Some might have suggested the possibility of being sent to the islands where Japanese soldiers refused to come out of caves. Unlike their parents who were born in kamikaze land, their only home was – let's say – a small rural town dotted with strawberry fields in California. Their first names were John or Michael, not Ichiro or Shohei. They might have grown up sipping miso soup that their mothers made for breakfast, but they could have preferred the pancakes they ate with their schoolmates after an overnight. When they received a notice to pack their belongings in one suitcase, did they expect they would end up in a place surrounded by barbed wire? It was just a siren, a warning – not a real tornado that uprooted them from home. Wasn't it?

A great haiku, like this one by Robinson, may bring a reader to a deeper, sometimes painful place in her consciousness.

— Fay Aoyagi
June 2018

POEMS

canoe through the mist of memory clear blue

kjmunro

Whitehorse, Yukon Territory

Canada

*

river sand

paw prints catch

the morning rain

Gavin Austin

Sydney, Australia

*

the jingle

of the dog's tags

wild currant in bloom

Annette Makino

Arcata, California

*

old burial mound

here lies

a red plastic spade

Kurt Øystein Slåtten

Egersund, Norway

*

the prayer

I don't recall

mourning doves

Mark Alan Osterhaus

Lake Mills, Wisconsin

*

father's day
the one who won't
stay buried

Roberta Beary
County Mayo
Ireland

*

dusk the call goes directly to voicemail

Cherie Hunter Day
Menlo Park, California

*

the urge to yawn
in this fly-infested loo...
long day

Barnabas I. Adeleke
Okuku, Osun State
Nigeria

*

battleground museum
cavalry uniforms
smaller than imagined

Barbara Tate
Winchester, Tennessee

*

heat lightning
rabbits dart
in all directions

Jennifer Sutherland
Victoria, Australia

*

waking up early...
I listen to the forest
waking up

K. Ramesh
Chennai, India

*

beachcombing
she finds a pebble
worth keeping

John Hawkhead
Bradford on Avon
United Kingdom

*

hindu temple —
the stone mason's hands
fashion a princess

Gregory Piko
Yass, Australia

*

each mindful crease
 of the origami crane
August morning

Michael Dudley
Minto, Ontario
Canada

*

skinny dip
the taste of salt
on her earlobe

William Scott Galasso
Edmonds, Washington

*

washing machine
our unmentionables
mingle

Yvette Nicole Kolodji
Temple City, California

*

dog days
squeaks from the sprinkler
become squeals

Adelaide B. Shaw
Millbrook, New York

*

a piercing cry
Noh Theater actors
become their masks

Carmen Sterba
University Place, Washington

*

weak battery...
the sound of the surf
in my hearing aid

Elinor Pihl Huggett
Lakeville, Indiana

*

mild breeze —
the scent of summer
neatly stacked in hay bales

Anna Jaworski
Berlin, Germany

*

ocean of stars
the ancient humpback
going home

Ron C. Moss
Leslie Vale, Tasmania
Australia

*

home town
my struggle to be
who I was

Rachel Sutcliffe
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
United Kingdom

*

Labor Day
the indolence
of flags

Michele L. Harvey
Hamilton, New York

*

second wind
a sustained ovation
of aspens

Christopher Patchel
Chicago, Illinois

*

for our gazing
the moon
full enough

Julie Warther
Dover, Ohio

*

what still might happen windfall apples

Ann K. Schwader
Westminster, Colorado

*

old family recipe
hoping our hands
are the same size

Johana West
Pittsburg, California

*

preparing a feast —
grandma's breasts
sweat

Yoshiho Satake
Tokyo, Japan

*

winding road
the home she never
talks about

Chen-ou Liu
Ajax, Ontario
Canada

*

moonset
something scampers
off the roof

Michele Root-Bernstein
East Lansing, Michigan

*

wind in the grass
all the world
turned hawk

Karina M. Young
Salinas, California

*

daily walk...
the strangers I know
by their dog's name

Tom Clausen
Ithaca, New York

*

day moon
the child notices
her first freckle

Maureen Sexton
Perth, Western Australia
Australia

*

no common name
for this autumn hoverfly...
colours in the wind

John Barlow
Ormskirk, England

*

sweater burs
in larger clumps
autumn deepens

Burnell Lippy
Danville, Vermont

*

evolution
of a lie told well
potato peel pie

Nika
Calgary, Alberta
Canada

*

late autumn
a part of the darkness
swoops down

Agnes Eva Savich
Austin, Texas

*

finger puppets...
my daughter asks me
what's a soul

Roland Packer
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada

*

clearcut
a disk of snow
on every stump

Christopher Herold
Port Townsend, Washington

*

Christmas Eve —
he comes out
as an atheist

Nicholas M. Sola
New Orleans, Louisiana

*

new year's eve
the mildewed box
of noisemakers

George Dorsty
Yorktown, Virginia

*

after all is said and done winter

Francine Banwarth
Dubuque, Iowa

*

sun on snow —
dark tree shadows
from middle-earth

Hilary Tann
Schuylerville, New York

*

winter wind
before her answer
the breath she takes

Jennifer Roman

Millstone, New Jersey

*

slow mallard steps
in the frozen harbor
a clanging halyard

Bill Cooper
Midlothian, Virginia

*

winter stillness
the dog gets up
to go lie down

John Hawk
Columbus, Ohio

*

ginger tea
the glow of embers
in the wood stove

Susan B. Auld
Arlington Heights, Illinois

*

snow thumping
from the trees
Valentine's Day

Alice Frampton
Seabeck, Washington

*

our eyes
touch and linger
hawk on a wire

Sandi Pray
Saint Johns, Florida

*

winter road
long coats
walking

Tom Drescher
Rossland, British Columbia
Canada

*

winter into spring
peeling the paper off
a muffin

Brad Bennett
Arlington, Massachusetts

*

snowmelt
fluttering tail
of a bronze horse

Nikolay Grankin
Krasnodar, Russia

*

seventy springs
the time it takes
to know the river

Glenn G. Coats
Carolina Shores, North Carolina

*

long rains...
the mound that is father's grave

leveling with mum's

Ugwu Erochukwu Shedrach
Enugu, Nigeria

*

spring predawn—
the janitor sweeps
the night away

Gowtham Ganni
Hyderabad, India

*

she mixes red, yellow, blue
to make mud
spring rain

Beverly Acuff Momoi
Mountain View, California

*

untidy busker
his guitar
in perfect pitch

Kala Ramesh
Pune, India

*

quiet rain—
knowing each other's
rain habits

Edward J. Rielly
Westbrook, Maine

*

leaving divorce court...

a blossom
beneath her shoe

Marion Alice Poirier
Boston, Massachusetts

*

Easter migraine —
the hollow chocolate bunny
inside me

Susan Burch
Hagerstown, Maryland

*

swallows
so many ways
to come home

Karina M. Young
Salinas, California

*

morning dew
her smile
follows me home

Jeff Hoagland
Hopewell, New Jersey

*

full of rain
a lotus bud cracks open
spilling sunlight

Kath Abela Wilson
Pasadena, California

*

jasmine
a grandmother
in every floret

Lee Nash
Barbezieux-Saint-Hilaire
France

*

my new mule
settles into a trot
the spring day

Michael McClintock
Clovis, California

*

one by one
into their stalls
horseflies

Lew Watts
Santa Fe, New Mexico

*

salt laced clay —
the delicacy
of an eland's hoof

Lysa Collins
White Rock, British Columbia
Canada

*

secret wedding —
a bee in a tulip
in a bouquet

Indra Neil Mekala

Rajamahendravaram, India

*

close the window
slowly –
summer's soft air

Linda McCarthy Schick
Brooklyn, New York

*

almost dawn
reed warbler's song
in her dreams

Rose van Son
Perth, Western Australia

*

breaking light
I translate my thoughts
from birdsong

Claire Everett
Northallerton, North Yorkshire
England

*

patio brunch
chickadee doo dah
chickadee day

Marilyn Appl Walker
Madison, Georgia

*

sultry day
a fly resting
on the swat

Quendryth Young
Alstonville, New South Wales
Australia

*

dry creek
between rocks the flow
of fire ants

Lucky Triana
Malang, East Java
Indonesia

*

heat dome
a tiny lizard
riffles the dune

Jeffrey Ferrara
Worcester, Massachusetts

*

box canyon
the late-day heat
in my bones

Tom Painting
Atlanta, Georgia

*

we walk a silent path
towards the coolness
of bluebells

Ann Rawson
Glasgow, Scotland
United Kingdom

*

blue wildflowers
the map that won't
refold

Lee Nash
Barbezieux-Saint-Hilaire
France

*

moonshot—
a sandcastle falls
to the morning tide

Kate Alsbury
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*

virgin forest
huge firs lift
the dawn

Ruth Yarrow
Ithaca, New York

*

bulrushes
we lean into the songs
of blackbirds

Debbie Strange
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada

*

damp woods
the old dog's nose taps
behind my knee

Laura Young

Monticello, Florida

*

no talk of 'Nam
always a hitch in his
shadow

Cyndi Lloyd
Riverton, Utah

*

full moon...
she stirs a shadow
in her coffee cup

David He
Zhuanglang, Gansu
China

*

hummingbird wings
waiting for the world
to pause

Stephen Amor
Fremont, Ohio

*

after the winds
trees
and other litter

Carole Slesnick
Bellingham, Washington

*

the song
of a windy bottle...
I empty my mind

Nicholas Klacsanzky
Kyiv, Ukraine

*

falling leaves
a bird enters the house
in the cat's mouth

Christopher Herold
Port Townsend, Washington

*

raking leaves
the little girl next door
hands me a red one

Brett Peruzzi
Framingham, Massachusetts

*

a branch
dangles from the cedar...
my friend's last days

Connie Donleycott
Bremerton, Washington

*

at the meadow's edge
the turn
of the doe's ear

Hannah Mahoney
Cambridge, Massachusetts

*

stubbled fields
gunshots fill the sky

with geese

Rick Tarquinio
Woodruff, New Jersey

*

the dog's arthritis
catches up to mine
our shorter walks

Marsh Muirhead
Bemidji, Minnesota

*

muddling spices
with mortar and pestle—
the sound of rain

Susan Constable
Parksville, British Columbia
Canada

*

filling a billy
from the cowshed vat
buttermilk sky

Jenny Fraser
Mt Maunganui, Bay of Plenty
New Zealand

*

train whistle—
the color of dusk
before it snows

Barbara Kaufmann
Massapequa Park, New York

*

snow angel
the sound
of your whisper

Mary Kendall
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

*

first snow
everyone else forgets
how to drive

Carolyn Coit Dancy
Pittsford, New York

*

back to normalcy
the Christmas tree
put out

Tyrone McDonald
Brooklyn, New York

*

mouse tracks
to the edge of the river
morning stars

Rick Tarquinio
Woodruff, New Jersey

*

tree branches empty
a lone bird
changes everything

Roberta Beach Jacobson
Indianola, Iowa

*

lighting a candle
with a candle
another night of snow

Ben Moeller-Gaa
St. Louis, Missouri

*

squaring up
already square quilt blocks
second day of snow

Mary Stevens
Hurley, New York

*

choir practice —
winter sunlight touches
the unstained window

Lenard D. Moore
Raleigh, North Carolina

*

childhood home
the darkness of the floor
where the bed was

Alan S. Bridges
Littleton, Massachusetts

*

midnight shift
the lingering scent
of feral cats

Louisa Howerow
London, Ontario
Canada

*

late snow
a sun pattern
through bike spokes

Peter Newton
Winchendon, Massachusetts

*

river mist —
the stillness
of cygnets

Martha Magenta
Bristol, England
United Kingdom

*

sunrise —
who said I couldn't
walk on clouds

Yu Chang
Schenectady, New York

*

first day of spring
the squeaking of
new shoes

Dan Curtis
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada

*

narrow road...
I give way
to the wind

Kumarendra Mallick
Hyderabad, India

*

stone lantern
a gust of pear blossoms
slowly settles

Deborah P Kolodji
Temple City, California

*

ancient willow
all I know
of the wind

Robert Witmer
Tokyo, Japan

*

a monkey
picking lice off its child
evening downpour

Aparna Pathak
Gurgaon, Haryana
India

*

chewing the cud
highland cattle
melt into mist

Joanna Ashwell
Barnard Castle
United Kingdom

*

unfurling oak leaves

a burst of birdsong brings out
the binoculars

Carolyn Hall
San Francisco, California

*

glass tumbler
sunlight haloes
each willow catkin

Katrina Shepherd
Scotland, United Kingdom

*

she gives me some
to take the sickness away
soap bubbles

J. Zimmerman
Santa Cruz, California

*

getting to the root
of our differences —
dandelions

Julie Bloss Kelsey
Germantown, Maryland

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FEATURED POEMS

spring wind
a young sheepdog
skedaddles the lambs

Claire Everett
Northallerton, North Yorkshire
United Kingdom

*

his life ends
snow softens any sounds
the stars make

Gary Hotham
Scaggsville, Maryland

*

planetarium
my world
sits on my lap

James Schlett
Rotterdam, New York

HERON'S NEST AWARD

it is
what it is
mole hill

Alice Frampton
Seabeck, Washington

What probably jumps out of this poem for most readers is the word "skedaddles." I know that, if it has ever been used in an English-language haiku, I certainly haven't seen it. When a word stands out from a haiku to that degree the poet has created a crisis / opportunity. Something must be done about it (in the area of craft) in order to ensure that the haiku does not become hopelessly unbalanced and go off like a rapidly deflating balloon. Or a senryu.

That potential for a struggle between balance and imbalance and the strong forces engaged in it seem to me to be what this poem is all about. The first impression here is youth, youth, youth! Spring is the young season. We are told that the sheepdog is a young one, possibly learning the trade, somewhat overeager and less than graceful about it. Or at least not yet entirely serious, but still play-learning. And then we have those scattering lambs, for whom a relationship to man and dog is new, mysterious and intermittently terrifying! The surging energy of beginnings and new life is prominent in every line of the poem.

But is there something ancient, too, in that spring wind? Does it signify new birth or is it reincarnation? How long have people and their dogs been herding sheep? Could this image be one from today and from thousands of years ago in the same moment?

We come back to that word. Does it have a sort of "old time" quality? One source says, of its origins, "American Civil War military slang, of unknown origin, perhaps connected to earlier use in northern England dialect with a meaning 'to spill.'" I note that the author lives in northern England. And by a fantastic coincidence, I happened to have been traveling through North Yorkshire recently, on my way to Edinburgh. I say fantastic because this trip to the UK was the first travel outside of North America that I've ever undertaken. What that experience added to this poem, for me, was an image of rolling green hillsides. The perfect setting for this display of elemental energies.

Has the poet found the right sort of light humor for a haiku? Each reader is entitled to a judgement on that point. Our group of editors are united in thinking that she has.

— John Stevenson
September 2018

POEMS

summer's end
the last peach jar's
vacuum click

Barbara Snow
Eugene, Oregon

*

empty barn my father's echo

Matthew Markworth
Mason, Ohio

*

once a farmer
always a farmer
harvest moon

Elmedin Kadric
Helsingborg, Sweden

*

dragonfly
resting on my paddle
we will drift a while

Erin J. Jones
Rogers, Arkansas

*

he'd've done
the same for me
autumn equinox

Alan S. Bridges
Littleton, Massachusetts

*

calm sea —
motionless masts
in the moonlight

Tomislav Maretić
Zagreb, Croatia

*

garlic harvested
the hammock encloses
my curve

Ruth Yarrow
Ithaca, New York

*

moss covered rock
I touch the warmth left
by a cormorant

Sanjuktaa Asopa
Karnataka, India

*

autumn mist
we taste our way through
the orchard

Marion Clarke
Warrenpoint, Northern Ireland

*

twilight colors
through the trees
the impossibility of peach

Hilary Tann
Schuylerville, New York

*

her hand-woven shawl
lightly draped...
river mist

Jenny Fraser
Mt Maunganui, Bay of Plenty
New Zealand

*

evening musicale
the pianist opens
for the moon

Michele Root-Bernstein
East Lansing, Michigan

*

darkened village
the bat's calls bouncing off
the Milky Way

Loris John Fazio
Via Gaetano Sanfilippo
Italy

*

through all the streets
through all the smells
same moon

Kasturi Jadhav
Mumbai, Maharashtra
India

*

lost dog
I leave my voice
in every street

Madhuri Pillai
Melbourne, Australia

*

first coyote's
dark ululation
then there are ten

Janet Ruth
Corrales, New Mexico

*

family nostalgia
she bites a loose thread
in the narrative

Sondra J. Byrnes
Santa Fe, New Mexico

*

be a woman first...
grandmother whispers
her last words

Kala Ramesh
Pune, India

*

ancient bowl
the fire's breath held
in the wood ash glaze

Michael Sheffield
Santa Rosa, California

*

smallpox
a stone arrowhead
darkened by the rain

Garry Eaton
Port Moody, British Columbia
Canada

*

snow likely
the auctioneer begins
with an old sleigh

LeRoy Gorman
Napanee, Ontario
Canada

*

the best-laid plans of mice in our attic

Paul David Mena
Cochituate, Massachusetts

*

bonsai winter
I shovel around the pine
with a teaspoon

Kath Abela Wilson,
Pasadena, California

*

her first home —
she praises
the faucets

Hilary Tann
Schuylerville, New York

*

theatre night-
holding each other

in the last row

Bongani Masilela
Johannesburg, South Africa

*

anniversary
the gas log's
steady flame

Ben Moeller-Gaa
St. Louis, Missouri

*

six months alone...
moorhen prints
frozen in mud

Polona Oblak
Ljubljana, Slovenia

*

your fingerprints
on the window pane
the steam of one mug

Nicole Tilde
Shady Dale, Georgia

*

more bad news
the comfort
of canned soup

Roberta Beary
County Mayo, Ireland

*

buds on bare branches

breaking the back of the winter
that took you away

Mary Frederick Ahearn
Pottstown, Pennsylvania

*

broken fence
sunlight enters
on a fawn

Susan Mallernee
Dover, Ohio

*

rainbow
the robin sings in
green

Nancy Rapp
Saint Louis, Missouri

*

the foal and i
on nodding terms
early daffodils

Bill Cooper
Naples, Florida

*

morning wind...
the branch on which
the swallow had sung

Duro Jaiye
Hirakata, Japan

*

childhood church
dipping my finger
in the empty font

frances angela
London, England

*

evolution—
my son draws a dinosaur
for a girl

Julie Bloss Kelsey
Germantown, Maryland

*

soft-boiled egg
my daughter asks
how stones are born

Radostina Dragostinova
Sofia, Bulgaria

*

old temple—
a trained raven
with its "hiya"

Brent Partridge
Orinda, California

*

post-op recovering my narrative

Aron Rothstein
Toledo, Oregon

*

dot dot dot dash tadpoles

Dian Duchin Reed
Soquel, California

*

hitchhiking...
the Doppler effect
of a car horn

Indra Neil Mekala
Rajamahendravaram, India

*

summer breeze
the sound of someone
beating a futon

Bob Lucky
Jubail, Saudi Arabia

*

tree-fern gully
the sound of water
in a greener light

Lorin Ford
Melbourne, Victoria
Australia

*

kookaburra —
our differences
dissipate

Jenny Fraser
Mt Maunganui, Bay of Plenty
New Zealand

*

sunlit afternoon
finding the whistle
in a blade of grass

Jacquie Pearce
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada

*

temple bell...
petal by petal
the pond blooms

Dan Curtis
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada

*

which one
of heaven's doors...
woodpecker

Roland Packer
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada

*

as if he were
carving the sky...
glide of a hawk

Rebecca Drouilhet
Picayune, Mississippi

*

the shape
of the trout stream
wild phlox

Jim Krotzman
Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

*

closing time
still a crowd of pigeons
at the chip shop door

Rachel Sutcliffe
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
United Kingdom

*

light
on the salt marsh
first egret

Ann Rawson
Glasgow, Scotland
United Kingdom

*

wind in the sail
the sea
with no zip code

Francine Banwarth
Dubuque, Iowa

*

with paint and brush
I go up / down the ladder
house sparrow's nest

William M. Ramsey
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

*

my house now...

purple clover colonizes
the backyard

Christine Taylor
Plainfield, New Jersey

*

graduation
dandelion seeds
floating on the breeze

Jennifer Hambrick
Columbus, Ohio

*

the things she learns
the things I learn
puppy sitting

Polona Oblak
Ljubljana, Slovenia

*

back to back
on the treehouse floor
blood brothers

Joe McKeon
Strongsville, Ohio

*

dugout bench
neatsfoot oil perfumes
a new glove

Joe McKeon
Strongsville, Ohio

*

summer afternoon
the right fielder
just standing there

Robert Witmer
Tokyo, Japan

*

garden snail
the distance
between galaxies

Martha Magenta
Bristol, England
United Kingdom

*

swimsuit dangling
on a leafy branch...
distant thunder

Sarah Paul
London, England

*

first skinny-dip
the intimate kiss
of a leech

Lew Watts
Chicago, Illinois

*

mourning dove solo —
i caress my belly
and the scar

robyn brooks
Beltsville, Maryland

*

on my shadow
a butterfly
opens its wings

Rajandeep Garg
Sangrur, Punjab
India

*

honeysuckle hour
the humid air crawls
into dreams

Jeanne Cook
South Bend, Indiana

*

which way is she going?
a gecko licks
its eyes

Sondra J. Byrnes
Santa Fe, New Mexico

*

midsummer
conversation drifts
over the fence

Beverly Acuff Momoi
Mountain View, California

*

drying upstream...
the fading voice
of river rocks

Adjei Agyei-Baah

Kumasi, Ghana

*

summer heat
mud daubers motionless
under the bridge

Alexander B. Joy
Bedford, New Hampshire

*

summer moon
we exchange
childhoods

Kurt Øystein Slåtten
Egersund, Norway

*

fireflies
I hear myself repeat
myself

*

Bill Kenney
Whitestone, New York

lingering summer
the weather vane lion
stands still

*

Leanne Mumford
Sydney, New South Wales
Australia

*

day at the beach...
a Dixie Cup of wet sand
for the castle

Elinor Pihl Huggett
Lakeville, Indiana

*

as if sunlight
had all the answers...
a bouquet of daisies

Angela Terry
Lake Forest Park, Washington

*

evening play...
a coiled millipede slides
from kid to kid

Anthony Itopa Obaro
Ihima, Kogi State
Nigeria

*

deeper down
a road with no signs...
tasseling corn

Michele L. Harvey
Hamilton, New York

*

drought – a farmer digs deeper than his grave

Ibrahim Nureni
Gbagada, Lagos
Nigeria

*

smoky twilight
among the ruins

toy soldiers

Chen-ou Liu
Ajax, Ontario
Canada

*

plant-sitting
whether to water
the cactus

Alexander B. Joy
Bedford, New Hampshire

*

under the Cuban sun
the tropical colors
of Buicks and Chevys

Alan S. Bridges
Littleton, Massachusetts

*

breakfast
without her
I pack the leftovers

Mark Alan Osterhaus
Lake Mills, Wisconsin

*

tuning in
to the forest rain...
Sunday morning

Victor Ortiz
Bellingham, Washington

*

wheat where an ocean was waves in the wind

Rick Tarquinio
Woodruff, New Jersey

*

berry stains
washing my face
with the Mississippi

Michael McClintock
Clovis, California

*

carnival
the pink noise
of candy floss

Debbie Strange
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada

*

crow caw
i tell my sins
to the forest gods

Bill Deegan
Mahwah, New Jersey

*

cemetery hill
out of network —
I read epitaphs

Lavana Kray
Iasi, Romania

*

sundown
the fisherman
dumps his cooler

Greg Schwartz
Sykesville, Maryland

*

into the van
a final box of odds and ends...
wisteria scent

Robert Gilliland
Austin, Texas

*

darkness...
a moth carries
its own light

Jacob Salzer
Vancouver, Washington

*

quiet night...
a water strider rests
on a star

Dave Read
Calgary, Alberta
Canada

*

more substantial
than the flexing cobweb
its shadow

Ruth Yarrow
Ithaca, New York

*

Alpine holiday
recalled in one shake
of a snow globe

Mark Gilfillan
London, England

*

moonlit shallows
a stranded octopus
enters the afterlife

Ron C. Moss
Leslie Vale, Tasmania
Australia

*

mackerel sky
the curlew becomes one
with the mudflat

Alison Woolpert
Santa Cruz, California

*

shorter days
the ping
in plum jam lids

Mary Weiler
Austin, Texas

*

autumn colors
begin to arrive
classroom coat hooks

Barbara Snow

Eugene, Oregon

*

autumn wind —
what to do
with my druthers

Francine Banwarth
Dubuque, Iowa

*

in the wake
of the newlyweds' car
autumn leaves

Tanya McDonald
Woodinville, Washington

*

crow scolding squirrel scolding crow

Cherie Hunter Day
Menlo Park, California

*

falling leaves —
a clear view
of the wind-farm

Ann Rawson
Glasgow, Scotland
United Kingdom

*

deleting
my pregnancy app
autumn rain

Lucy Whitehead

Southend-on-Sea, Essex
United Kingdom

*

snow in the forecast
she asks me when I started
turning gray

Paul David Mena
Cochituate, Massachusetts

*

whence?
what?
navel lint

Christopher Patchel
Chicago, Illinois

*

cancer center —
walking uphill
against the wind

Adelaide B. Shaw
Millbrook, New York

*

cabin fever...
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in the cocoon

Julie Warther
Dover, Ohio

*

alone with a cat
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alone with a cat

Michael McClintock
Clovis, California

*

snowdrops
the sunset song
of a winter wren

Ellen Compton
Washington, District of Columbia

*

a collie's bark...
last of the winter clouds
driven north

Chad Lee Robinson
Pierre, South Dakota

*

chickadee's call
our comfort together
without talking

Matthew Moffett
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

*

some color
in the bird's undertail
a late spring

paul m.
Bristol, Rhode Island

*

leaving
not an option

wild daffodils

Susan B. Auld
Arlington Heights, Illinois

*

dogwood shore
my cousin the marine
who went first

Dan Schwerin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*

the pond's surface
trembling at the touch
of a kingfisher's feather

Keith Polette
El Paso, Texas

*

sure enough
that's my signature —
red quince blossoms

Carolyn Hall
San Francisco, California

*

thinking of you
\$500 for a rolling
stop

Yu Chang
Schenectady, New York

*

exterminating

an ant colony
under the welcome stone

Lori Becherer
Millstadt, Illinois

*

this spring
I listen longer
mourning doves

Ann K. Schwader
Westminster, Colorado

*

infield
single
dandelion

Jeff Hoagland
Hopewell, New Jersey

*

warm afternoon
a bouncy castle rises
over the back fence

Stephen Colgan
Oakland, California

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Gilliland, Robert

Gorman, LeRoy

Hall, Carolyn

Hambrick, Jennifer

Harvey, Michele L.

Hoagland, Jeff

Hotham, Gary

Huggett, Elinor Pihl

Jadhav, Kasturi

Jaiye, Duro

Jones, Erin J.

Joy, Alexander B.

Kadric, Elmedin

Kelsey, Julie Bloss

Kenney, Bill

Kray, Lavana

Krotzman, Jim

Liu, Chen-ou

Lucky, Bob

m., paul

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Mallernee, Susan

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Oblak, Polona

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Partridge, Brent

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Robinson, Chad Lee

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Ruth, Janet

Salzer, Jacob

Schlett, James

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Schwartz, Greg

Schwerin, Dan

Shaw, Adelaide B.

Sheffield, Michael

Slåtten, Kurt Øystein

Snow, Barbara

Strange, Debbie

Sutcliffe, Rachel

Tann, Hilary

Tarquinio, Rick

Taylor, Christine

Terry, Angela

Tilde, Nicole

Warther, Julie

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Witmer, Robert

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FEATURED POEMS

lakeside cottage
cracks beginning to show
in the game board

Glenn G. Coats
Carolina Shores, North Carolina

*

last day of school
chalk dust clings
to the sunshine

Tia Haynes
Lakewood, Ohio

*

summer visit
mother fits into
a smaller hug

Sushma A. Singh
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
India

HERON'S NEST AWARD

lakeside cottage
cracks beginning to show
in the game board

Glenn G. Coats
Carolina Shores, North Carolina

Although I neither own nor have ever stayed in a lakeside cottage, I have no problem entering this haiku. For me, "lakeside cottage" is a dated hotel on a barrier island just off the coast of Georgia where my family has vacationed for the past twelve years. We are creatures of habit, staying at the same place, in the same room. We know where to get the best shrimp and the largest ice cream cones. We have a favorite miniature golf course and take our family picture by the same "welcome" sign. At least once during our stay, we will eat pizza that is almost as tasty as the box it comes in. Why? Because there is only one pizza place on the island and because it's tradition. Newer, classier hotels have popped up over the years, but we always go back to this place where we shed the worries of work and school and focus on being together as a family. It's a time for long walks, listening to the water, watching birds and yes, playing games on rainy days. Glenn Coat's first line takes me, and probably other readers too, to just this sort of place.

The second line causes my heart to sink a little. "Cracks beginning to show" reminds me this hotel isn't what it used to be. There is a possibility it may be purchased by an international chain and bulldozed in order to build a more profitable hotel on this prime oceanfront property. We know the decor is outdated. There's no lazy river around the pool. What little grass there is struggles to maintain any shade of green in the intense Georgia heat and sandy ground. But when we arrive from Ohio each year, it looks perfect to us and in a small way we feel like we're home even if for only a week each year.

A bit of relief is offered in the third line when we realize the cracks are only in the game board. But that relief is short-lived when we think of the many games that have been played on that board; the conversations held, the snacks consumed, the banter thrown back and forth. After all, this isn't just any game board. It's the game board. It's the well-loved and often-used that generally show the most wear, like a favorite teddy bear with one eye and a patch where his leg used to be. Likely the box this board came in is falling apart or held together by layers of tape. At some point, one of the game pieces may have been lost and replaced with a button or shell or stone. If anyone were to offer to replace this board with a new one, it's likely everyone would refuse. This one holds memories in its brokenness. The cracks in this game board offer an excellent example of wabi-sabi; beauty that is imperfect, impermanent and incomplete. Beauty that comes with age, patina or wear. In the Japanese art of kintsugi, broken pottery is repaired with a lacquer mixed with powdered gold so the breakage and repair become part of the history of the object. There's no attempt to disguise the damage but rather to illuminate the repair and to ensure that the object's service does not end at the time of its damage. The cracks in this board may be taped or glued or simply left cracked. But we know this board will continue to be used and treasured as it has been in the past.

My children are older now. In the coming year we will celebrate a high school graduation, two college graduations and a wedding. There will be moves and changes. The annual trip will require more coordination around jobs and schedules. New family members will join us and others may not be able to come at all. Cracks. Glenn Coat's poem effectively registers this passage of time with strong links to the past. While certain aspects of this trip together will never be the same again, Glenn reminds me there is still beauty to be found in the cracks.

— Julie Warther
December 2018

POEMS

snow flurry
each teasel
with a nightcap

Ingrid Baluchi
Ohrid, Macedonia

*

shortest day
the bird feeders
filled twice

Jeffrey Hanson
Coralville, Iowa

*

silence descends
with snow...
but a winter wren

Ruth Yarrow
Ithaca, New York

*

my aging father
building a birdhouse...
his sandpaper voice

Robert Witmer
Tokyo, Japan

*

potter's wheel
the shape of his hands
becomes a memory

Mark Gilbert

Nottingham, United Kingdom

*

winter night
extending my word
on scrabble

Debbi Antebi

London, United Kingdom

*

thick Christmas fog –
the midnight houses
wrapped in amber

pjm

San Jose, California

*

frosted grass
I warm my hands
on the horse's breath

Martha Magenta

Bristol, England

United Kingdom

*

end of the month
a line of white breaths
outside the blood bank

Joshua Gage

Cleveland, Ohio

*

after my plane crash
every color
every breath

Gary Evans
Stanwood, Washington

*

deep winter
the baby's bottle
of moonlight

Agnes Eva Savich
Austin, Texas

*

starlight
the implausible distance
contained in farewell

Kevin Valentine
Mesquite, Texas

*

memorial gathering —
the wood fire's smoke
sticks with us

Connie Donleycott
Bremerton, Washington

*

bagging his clothes
the worn-out places
of the favorites

Adelaide Shaw
Millbrook, New York

*

snowman
down to his

last piece of coal

Helen Buckingham
Wells, Somerset
United Kingdom

*

winter sky...
so many stars still
waiting to be named

Angela Terry
Lake Forest Park, Washington

*

chapel roof
three pigeons overcome
the gradient

David Jacobs
London, England

*

mountain runoff
a trickling stream cuts
through the logging trail

Tom Sacramona
Plainville, Massachusetts

*

last patch of snow
the story
he's still telling

Valorie Broadhurst Woerdehoff
Dubuque, Iowa

*

bird calls
adding their meaning
to our life

Gary Hotham
Scaggsville, Maryland

*

frog pose
the first few patters
of morning rain

Kelly Sauvage Angel
Madison, Wisconsin

*

beneath the ski lift
butterfly season
begins

Laurie D. Morrissey
Hopkinton, New Hampshire

*

stepping stones
rising in the pond
curve of a carapace

Marilyn Fleming
Pewaukee, Wisconsin

*

teaching my son
how to drive
objects appearing closer

John O'Connor
Chicago, Illinois

*

same nose
pointing in the same direction
father and son

Christine Eales
Cheam, Surrey
United Kingdom

*

headlights, tail lights
weave around the mountain...
a firefly night

Lorin Ford
Melbourne, Victoria
Australia

*

so many thoughts
that come and go
not catching fish

Sam Bateman
Everett, Washington

*

shifting cumulus
we make plans
to make plans

Aaron Barry
Port Moody, British Columbia
Canada

*

giant sequoias
the time it takes
to believe my eyes

Sam Bateman
Everett, Washington

*

a bee's behind all I see in the foxglove

Susan Constable
Parksville, British Columbia
Canada

*

a male spider
touches her web
the dance begins

Sheila Sondik
Bellingham, Washington

*

sultry afternoon
undulating through cattails
a watersnake's wake

Robert Gilliland
Austin, Texas

*

circus—
the tiger walks its shadow
outside the cage

Jann Wright
Henderson, Nevada

*

ceiling fan
a rock band sticker
takes a joy ride

Deborah P Kolodji
Temple City, California

*

two blue crabs
fuss in a bucket
the heat

Marilyn Appl Walker
Madison, Georgia

*

cave mouth
I echo
the silence

John O'Connor
Chicago, Illinois

*

how would
i tell him
mimosa

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi
Hyderabad, India

*

hydrangea —
the dead sound of
the answered phone

pjm
San Jose, California

*

dreamsicle
a handful of change
melts in the sun

Susan Beth Furst
Woodbridge, Virginia

*

birthday cake
the runt of the litter
licks my face

Joe McKeon
Strongsville, Ohio

*

summer nap
aspen shadows quiver
on the window shade

Michael Kantor
Missoula, Montana

*

Sicilian villages
I dream
in terracotta

Alexis Rotella
Arnold, Maryland

*

gathering
wool
cottonwood
seeds

Christopher Patchel
Chicago, Illinois

*

summing up

my adolescence
loosestrife

Peter Newton
Winchendon, Massachusetts

*

assuming
all else fails
artichokes

Robert Epstein
El Cerrito, California

*

family reunion
green apples
in an old hat

Nikolay Grankin
Krasnodar, Russia

*

warm afternoon
the slow accumulation
of cherry pits

Adelaide Shaw
Millbrook, New York

*

mid-august
a bit of dusk
on the oak leaves

Connor McDonald
Salem, Oregon

*

farmers' market
the muddy aisle
to the melons

Nancy Shires
Greenville, North Carolina

*

end of summer
a newborn tightly wrapped
to its mother

Anna Jaworski
Berlin, Germany

*

curve of the wood
on the small of my back
his old school chair

Mimi Ahern
San Jose, California

*

first day of school
a circle of flattened grass
where the pool was

Matthew Moffett
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

*

one step closer to the heron flies away

John Hawk
Columbus, Ohio

*

left to fall

the barn folding down
into sumac

Jeffrey Ferrara
Worcester, Massachusetts

*

making the best
of a rainy weekend
wild mushrooms

Ross Plovnick
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

*

autumnal equinox
the chill
as she turns away

Tom Drescher
Rossland, British Columbia
Canada

*

the depth
of what i yearn for
autumn shadows

Tyrone McDonald
Brooklyn, New York

*

taking a breather
along the trail
the scent of sage

Dian Duchin Reed
Soquel, California

*

a slight adjustment
to the rear-view mirror
autumn dusk

Mike Stinson
Omaha, Nebraska

*

bell shimmer
the bright peals
of moonlight

J. Zimmerman
Santa Cruz, California

*

autumn wind we sift and winnow

Francine Banwarth
Dubuque, Iowa

*

one owl
now two...
moon through the pines

Ben Moeller-Gaa
St. Louis, Missouri

*

falling leaves...
we exchange
the gesture to call

Aparna Pathak
Gurugram, India

*

someone fixes

a stuck horn —
autumn evening

Michael McClintock
Clovis, California

*

for its vines
an old shed
still stands

Brad Bennett
Arlington, Massachusetts

*

railroad ties
the distance
between bones

Jeff Hoagland
Hopewell, New Jersey

*

day moon
the bark of the blue ash
horse-rubbed white

Matthew Markworth
Mason, Ohio

*

each autumn morning
the night
a little closer

Marita Gargiulo
Hamden, Connecticut

*

city sunset
darkness rising
brick by brick

Quendryth Young
Alstonville, New South Wales
Australia

*

something triggers
the security lights...
late night chill

Cherie Hunter Day
Menlo Park, California

*

gathering dark
a broken antler
in the leaf litter

Paul Chambers
Newport, Wales

*

winter chill
I press harder
on the rolling pin

Sushma A. Singh
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
India

*

pings of sleet
adding a fourth button
to her gingerbread man

Bill Cooper

Naples, Florida

*

winter night
tapioca pearls glint
in a chipped bowl

Padma Thampatty
Wexford, Pennsylvania

*

a long winter —
just the noise of my spoon
in the soup

Antonieta Losito
Mottola, Italy

*

deep winter
waking to the smell
of yesterday's stew

Barb Behrendt
Cambridge, Minnesota

*

snowed in the round silence of tumbleweeds

Debbie Strange
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada

*

morning stillness
the empty bird table
buried under snow

Rachel Sutcliffe

Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
United Kingdom

*

February rain leaves I never raked

Matthew Cariello
Columbus, Ohio

*

perennials
in the garden
she left behind

Bill Kenney
Whitestone, New York

*

belt of venus —
wild strawberries
in her basket

robyn brooks
Beltsville, Maryland

*

bluebell wood
the fairytale
already told

Hilary Tann
Schuylerville, New York

*

housewarming...
a swarm of honey bees
in the crawl space

Barnabas I. Adeleke

Okuku, Osun State
Nigeria

*

some in sunlight
some in shadow
family plot

Stephen Kusch
Oakland, California

*

church picnic
an ant brings another
to the melon

Dan Schwerin
Greendale, Wisconsin

*

meadowsweet
notes of a blackbird
after rain

Paul Chambers
Newport, Wales

*

our love
all night
the whippoorwill

Mark Osterhaus
Punta Gorda, Florida

*

summer solstice
happy hour
outlasts the wine

Marsh Muirhead
Bemidji, Minnesota

*

four months
since his suicide
first firefly

Kathleen O'Toole
Tacoma Park, Maryland

*

straight to voicemail summer rain

Mark E. Brager
Columbia, Maryland

*

I hike
my shadow
into the mountain's shadow

Marsh Muirhead
Bemidji, Minnesota

*

sea cliff
the best viewpoint
tagged by gulls

Kristen Lindquist
Camden, Maine

*

sunset
two surfers paddle out
to meet it

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik
San Francisco, California

*

cloud drifts
the open mouth
of a water snake

Bryan Rickert
Belleville, Illinois

*

fumbled kiss...
a bee finagles pollen
from a hollyhock

Claire Everett
Northallerton, North Yorkshire
England

*

step by step
I pick my way home
early blackberries

Jacquie Pearce
Vancouver, Canada

*

wildfire sunset
our clasped hands
tighter

Ann K. Schwader
Westminster, Colorado

*

shifting gears
I release my clutch

on summer

Michele Root-Bernstein
East Lansing, Michigan

*

vacation's end
sunlight catches the ring
in a bull's nostrils

Polona Oblak
Ljubljana, Slovenia

*

roadside wildflowers —
I whisper their names aloud
before autumn takes them

Mary Frederick Ahearn
Pottstown, Pennsylvania

*

hint of autumn
the lost look
in the dog's eyes

Karina M. Young
Salinas, California

*

September
deeper midnights
for the moths

Burnell Lippy
Danville, Vermont

*

bonfire sparks...

we spend the night not wanting
the night to end

Chad Lee Robinson
Pierre, South Dakota

*

stop, drop and roll
autumn begins
with an acorn

Alan S. Bridges
Littleton, Massachusetts

*

church bells
the birds are leaving
the people coming

Slobodan Pupovac
Zagreb, Croatia

*

hurricane winds —
the flapping
of a newsman's slicker

Barry George
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*

turbulence
my imagination
a flight risk

Tom Painting
Atlanta, Georgia

*

anniversary
removing the moss
off a carved heart

Indra Neil Mekala
Rajamahendravaram, India

*

apple tree
between the branches
I am six again

Beverly Acuff Momoi
Mountain View, California

*

Cornwall coast
the ebb-and-flow
of sunset clouds

Jay Friedenberg
New York, New York

*

weathered path—
red clay bricks
return to earth

Hilary Tann
Schuylerville, New York

*

waning moon
the faded cigar ad
on an old brick wall

Christopher Herold
Port Townsend, Washington

*

fall rain
the culvert trickles out
a feral cat

Barb Behrendt
Cambridge, Minnesota

*

rainy season
on the balcony ledge
a pigeon blinks

Tim Murphy
Madrid, Spain

*

Indian summer
hoverflies make full use
of a sunbeam

Cherie Hunter Day
Menlo Park, California

*

hollowed-out moon
another sentence begins with
"She was . . . "

Carolyn Hall
San Francisco, California

*

church fresco
two skeletons tell a pilgrim
a likely story

Dave Russo
Cary, North Carolina

*

a dogwalker
led everywhichway
autumn wind

Claire Everett
Northallerton, North Yorkshire
England

*

squirrel's tail..
all the hurry up
of autumn

Michele L. Harvey
Hamilton, New York

*

early frost
one sock loose
about her ankle

Frank Hooven
Morrisville, Pennsylvania

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PEGGY WILLIS LYLES HAIKU AWARDS FOR 2018

JUDGE'S COMMENTS — GARY HOTHAM

Over 1800 haiku were submitted. I did read all the haiku entered since I wanted to get an understanding of the whole state of the contest entries. I didn't read them all at once but like how I read any collection of poetry — in bits and pieces, fits and starts, back and forth.

I am not going to comment on each haiku I chose. No special pleading from my heart — you probably won't agree with me anyway. I'll let you deal with the haiku with your own bare hands. You don't need the leather gloves of my prose. My fear is that my comments will be a disservice to the author — confusing the reader with thoughts and interpretations contrary to the writer's intent. Ask my wife. But right up front I'm going to list some thoughts as to what I was looking for in the entries. And things I don't desire to see as I read through them. Then you can read the haiku I selected and enjoy them in their own space. I don't want to cut in on your dance with the haiku. Or weave my own clothes for the haiku.

- I'm always looking for fresh images. What parts of this world or subject matter I haven't seen used or talked about before in a haiku. Perhaps the fresh and new is more difficult to find after all the haiku that have been published and for all the haiku I have read but for some of us finite beings there is always the prospect of something new under the sun. Some bright and shiny object to catch one's attention.
- I'm looking for haiku that have a new way of saying or observing or thinking about the world. In most cases the haiku will be using images that have been used many times by others and even me — falling snow, falling rain, falling hair...

But will it be as James Tipton said, rather well many years ago, a haiku
"discovering new energy through words put together with precision and emotion."

- I am looking for words that put me in the haiku – the moment or the state of being. Words that create something I can experience. Sharpen my understanding. Deepen my awareness. Pinch my mind awake. So do the words work. Is this the best way to arrange the words for the moment the writer is trying to bring the reader into. Do the words have the power. Word power is important for any poem but especially for the haiku since there are so few in the poem. That is a very challenging and exciting part of creating a haiku – using a few words to explore the wonders of earth and perhaps beyond to the far reaches of our universe.
- I am not looking for haiku in which the writer tells me explicitly how to think or feel. The writer needs to be subtle. Probably more subtle than subtle. If you must be obvious hide it! Yes, the poet has a point of view in the haiku, a reason for writing it and wanting to share it but sometimes too much is shared. More than I need to know. Keep it in your diary.
- Obvious dislike. No clickbait headlines. No political opinions, please. I can wallow in those by turning to FOX or CNN, Facebook or Twitter, or for some of us geezers, the opinion pages of newspapers or magazines.
- Watch out for the facts of life! –for science, geography, sports, math, history... If you are going to use a fact then at least check it out in Wikipedia. As a long-time student of history I don't like historical inaccuracies in a haiku or any other creative form. They are a strong distraction. For example, a cherry blossom haiku where George Washington is lying about cutting down the cherry tree. Don't be a

Parson Weems of haiku!

- Please! No virtue signaling, or in the good old days, self-righteous indignation. There are enough soapboxes especially with the Internet (blog me silly) and pulpits (secular or religious) for that kind of activity. Bob Spiess warned me about that years ago when responding back to one my submissions to *Modern Haiku*. Yes, Bob speaks from the grave. Anyway, I really don't need to know from the haiku what a good person you are—I'm going to assume it.

Now I'm sure there are things I am looking for in a haiku that I am not fully conscious or aware of—or would even be able to begin to clearly express so that others could understand. But that might be the thing that makes a haiku resonate for any of us. This or that haiku fills a need we had never noticed before. And because it happened once we continue to read and re-read and write haiku.

Now for my top three and some almost top three. May one of them resonate as well with you.

WINNING POEMS

1ST PLACE

vernal equinox
the bend of an elbow
out a car window

Alan S. Bridges
Littleton, Massachusetts

2ND PLACE

her Persian carpet
before mourners
disrupt the pattern

Mary Weiler
Austin, Texas

3RD PLACE
equinox
a scent of light
on snow

Hélène Duc
Bichancourt, France

HONORABLE MENTIONS
you don't know
until it's past
last frost

Brad Bennett
Arlington, Massachusetts

*

on the horizon
just enough cloud
to hold some sunset

Tom Clausen
Ithaca, New York

*

late autumn sun
every single object
tied to its shadow

Steve Dolphy
Eastleigh, Hampshire
United Kingdom

*

the steam

that never left the kettle
water again

Steve Dolphy
Eastleigh, Hampshire
United Kingdom

*

shadows casting darkness through an open door

Rick Jackofsky
Rocky Point, New York

*

shallow brook —
first snow settles on a stone
above the water

Tomislav Maretić
Zagreb, Croatia

*

flight path of the geese
soon forgotten by all
but the geese

kjmunro
Whitehorse, Yukon Territory
Canada

*

for company
the snow crunch underfoot
winter solstice

Tim Murphy
Madrid, Spain

*

losing hold
of where home is
gift shop seahorses

Peter Newton
Winchendon, Massachusetts

*

spring
digging up
the memory of earth

Olivier Schopfer
Geneva, Switzerland

READERS CHOICE AWARDS FOR POEMS FROM 2017

OVERVIEW

Eighty-four readers of *The Heron's Nest* have provided us with their selections of the best poems we published during 2017. We published 491 poems in Volume 19. Of these, 347 received at least one reader nomination. Ten points were awarded for a first-place nomination, nine for second, and so on.

Here are the top poems and poets as identified for these Readers' Choice Awards:

FAVORITE HAIKU OF 2017

GRAND PRIZE HAIKU OF THE YEAR

(10 nominations, totaling 72 points)

sweltering night
a hole in the backyard
bleeds scorpions

— Anthony Itopa Obaro (June issue)

FIRST RUNNERS-UP (TIE)

(8 nominations, totaling 66 points)

after the poem of rain the prose of mushrooms

— David Boyer (March issue)

(11 nominations, totaling 66 points)

winter milking
my cheek fits the warm curve
of cow

— Ruth Yarrow (September issue)

THIRD RUNNER-UP

(9 nominations, totaling 63 points)

silence
for some
includes birdsong

— Hilary Tann (December issue)

OTHER POPULAR HAIKU

58 points: "rainforest" — Kala Ramesh — March
54 points: "club moss" — Hilary Tann — March
53 points: "flight delay" — Ben Moeller-Gaa — September
49 points: "heat shimmer" — Lorin Ford — June
48 points: "in a flash" — Alan S. Bridges — June
47 points: "old barn" — Yu Chang — March
46 points: "sunlit icicle" — Wonja Brucher — June
46 points: "morning sun..." — Julie Warther — December
44 points: "deep winter" — Ann K. Schwader — September
43 points: "a flag" — Alan S. Bridges — March
43 points: "winter night..." — K. Ramesh — March
42 points: "heat lightning" — Polona Oblak — September
41 points: "snow" — Helen Buckingham — March
40 points: "mountain pass" — Susan Constable — September
40 points: "Queen Anne's lace—" — Mary Kendall — March
38 points: "when an army" — Michael McClintock — June

POPULAR POETS

This category represents the total number of points awarded to each poet for their entire body of work published in volume 19.

GRAND PRIZE: POET OF THE YEAR

(29 nominations, naming 6 of 6 poems published in Volume 19 = 153 points)

Alan S. Bridges

FIRST RUNNER-UP

(23 nominations, naming 5 of 6 poems published = 138 points)

Hilary Tann

SECOND RUNNER-UP

(16 nominations, naming 4 of 4 poems published = 94 points)

Lorin Ford

THIRD RUNNER-UP

(14 nominations, naming 3 of 4 poems published = 91 points)

Ben Moeller-Gaa

OTHER POPULAR POETS

Yu Chang (5 of 5 poems, totaling 90 points)

Ruth Yarrow (3 of 3 poems, totaling 90 points)

Ron C. Moss (6 of 6 poems, totaling 88 points)

LeRoy Gorman (6 of 6 poems, totaling 83 points)

Peter Newton (5 of 6 poems, totaling 82 points)

Chad Lee Robinson (5 of 5 poems, totaling 82 points)

Julie Warther (4 of 4 poems, totaling 82 points)

Anthony Itopa Obaro (1 of 2 poems, totaling 72 points)

Polona Oblak (4 of 4 poems, totaling 70 points)

Alice Frampton (3 of 3 poems, totaling 68 points)

Michele Root-Bernstein (5 of 5 poems, totaling 68 points)

Robert Epstein (4 of 4 poems, totaling 67 points)

David Boyer (1 of 1 poem, totaling 66 points)

Ann K. Schwader (4 of 6 poems, totaling 65 points)

ABOUT *THE HERON'S NEST*

*where tradition and innovation meet ...
and complement each other*

PHILOSOPHY

The Heron's Nest, founded in 1999, is a quarterly online journal. A new edition is published during the first week of March, June, September, and December. We publish multiple pages of fine haiku in each issue, plus three Editors' Choice Haiku; one of which is presented with the Heron's Nest Award, and receives special commentary. The Heron's Nest also appears in a single annual paper edition anthology each April.

It is our intention to present haiku in which the outward form of each poem has been determined by two important elements. The primary element is the poetic experience, faithfully and uniquely evoked in words. The second element helps to shape the first; it is the poet's knowledge and respect for traditional haiku values. When well balanced these elements result in work that is distinctively and unmistakably haiku. "Poetic experiences" are those that inspire us to express ourselves creatively with words. "Haiku values" are the traditional underpinnings, both Japanese and Western, by which haiku sensibility has evolved into what it is today, and which will continue to shape haiku traditions in the future. There are many ideals equated with each of the various haiku forms. No one poem can embody all, or even a majority of these ideals. Each of us must decide for ourselves what is important in the writing and appreciating of haiku.

Thank you for coming to The Heron's Nest. We hope you enjoy what you find, and share what you have.

STAFF

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TECHNICAL NOTE

This volume is a 2024 reproduction of an issue from 2018 and may contain errors of transcription or typography. For current information about the journal and staff, and more recent issues, please visit us at <https://theheronsnest.com>.