

WestWard Quarterly

The Magazine of Family Reading



Fall, 2004

Index	Page 3
Poems	Pages 4-11, 13, 16-22
Corner on Youth	Page 12
Short Story Contest Winner . . .	Page 14
Writer's Workbench	Page 22
Contest Notice	Page 23

**IN
THIS
ISSUE**

To our readers . . .

We have moved! Our new address to be used in all future correspondence is:
WestWard Quarterly, P.O. Box 250, Kirkland, Illinois 60146 USA

What a busy time the past few months have been but we are finally settled in our new home, having moved from the suburbs to a small town where we hope to enjoy our retirement years.

We are just a bit late getting the magazine out but I am very pleased with the quality of poems and stories we have for this issue. Thanks again to all our subscribers and contributors.

Congratulations go to Jane Stuart of Kentucky, our winner in our fall sonnet contest, with her sonnet "The New Beginning." Congratulations also to a new contributor, Julie Thorndyke all the way from Australia who is our First Honorable Mention winner with her sonnet "Christmas Day," and to Marlene J. Bonney, our Second Honorable Mention winner with her poem "Concert at Daybreak."

Our next contest is for a poem about "Family." Don't forget to read the latest Workbench article with some helpful hints for inspecting your poem or story before you send it out for publishing.

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all! Our next issue will be out in January, 2005.

Shirley Anne Leonard, EDITOR

WestWard Quarterly

Shirley Anne Leonard, Editor
P.O. Box 250, Kirkland, IL 60146 USA
wwquarterly@aol.com, 800-440-4043

WestWard Quarterly showcases the best work of upbeat writers and poets. Our magazine's philosophy is: "Adversity happens. Find the eternal purpose behind it." Reflect an uplifting, positive or gently humorous attitude in your submissions. Send all letters, guidelines requests, submissions, contest entries, or queries to address above. Send SASE for response.

Maximum Lengths: Short Stories - 2000 words; Essays - 1000 words; Poems - 40 lines. Shorter submissions have a better likelihood of being published. The Editor reserves the right to edit material. For more information, visit our web site, <http://members.aol.com/wwquarterly>.

All rights revert to authors upon publication. Please credit *WestWard Quarterly* for prior publication if you later submit your work to other publishers.

©2004 Laudemont Press.

Subscriptions — \$12/year US and \$15 foreign (4 issues). Single issues — \$3 US, \$5 foreign. Make checks payable to Laudemont Press.

Index to Fall, 2004 Issue

Poems

The New Beginning by Jane Stuart	4
Christmas Day by Julie Thorndyke	4
Concert at Daybreak by Marlene K. Bonney	5
Autumn Reflections by Shirley Anne Leonard	5
Woods by Marie Bleecker	6
Grandfather's Bookcase by Wilda Morris	7
Wisteria Garden at Giverny by Vincent J. Tomeo	7
The Owls by Amanda Auchter	8
River Run by d.n. simmers	8
The Teflon Brain by Charlotte Poplawski	9
Fall Haikus by Raymond J. Flory	9
All Quiet Now by Patrick L. Flavin	10
Love's Balm by Robert Donald Spector	10
Success by Vivian Bolland Schroeder	11
Rolling Hills by Margarita Engle	11
Santa's on a Diet by David Fox	13
By the Letter by Nancy E. Martindale	16
I Love You, Too by Sara Irene Robinette	16
Researcher by William Wooley	17
It Was Just a Plate by Ilene Mitchell	17
It's Me by Yvonne Johnson-Pressley	18
Holy Spirit by Kerri Anderson	18
The Wonder of You by David Waites	18
Legacy by Shirley Anne Leonard	19
Lead on, O Lord by Richard Leonard	19
Street Encounter by Janet Goven	20
West Wind by Cecil Boyce	20
Lucky Thirteen by J. Alvin Speers	21
You Were Always There for Me by Donald G. Harmande	21

Corner on Youth

Sleep! Sleep! Sleep! by Christopher Easley	12
Doublechin Tubbelly by Ricky Lyons	12
Perseverance by Karl Erickson	12

Short Stories

Yard Sale Tycoon by Sharon Fotta Anderson	13
I'll Never Forget Her by Sheila B. Roark	14
The Redwoods by Harry T. Roman	15

Departments

Writer's Workbench	22
Contest Notice and Ads	23

Art from Microsoft Clip Art, Corel Clip Art and other sources.

Cover image: Colorado National Monument, 1976. Photo by Richard Leonard.

Sonnet Contest Winners

The New Beginning

Jane Stuart, Kentucky
Winner, Sonnet Contest

When love was true, there was no fear of love.
Night took away our fears, day lullabied
All bitterness and comforted self-love
That fell like shadows from our weary eyes,
Until we rose again on a dove's wing
To cross the mystic circle of love's sky
And hear the heavenly chorus angels sing
That added to the distant lullaby
From earth that quieted when love was gone,
From seas and ocean that rested their fear,
From night that vanished into early dawn,
And day that left at last without a tear
So that true love brought back a sweet romance
That mingled heaven and earth inside love's trance.



Christmas Day

Julie Thorndyke, Australia
First Honorable Mention, Sonnet Contest

Blue jacaranda petals decorate
Tall limbs that upward stretch toward your glory,
Proud agapanthus blooms don't hesitate
With starbursts white to illustrate the story
Of God incarnate, Jesus Christ the son
Who dwelt on earth and shared our mortal cry —
His blood like flame tree blossoms, scarlet on
The warm, embracing, blameless, summer sky.
A woman, not a man, and still not wise,
I have no rare, expensive gift to bring.
The beauty of the earth that meets my eyes
Is yours, and yours the meagre song I sing.
Come, with the trees our hearts and praises lift
And worship Christ, the first, best Christmas gift.



Concert at Daybreak

Marlene K. Bonney, Michigan
Second Honorable Mention, Sonnet Contest

The Master Maestro poises arms and hands
To direct the orchestra before Him.
With bated breath, I watch His mute commands
Spark harmony with nature's seraphim.
Brightened tree leaves flutter and twirl slightly,
While squirrels and butterflies play in tune.
With radiant colors ruffling lightly,
An awakened sun grants warmth to the loon.
Grass is rippling, freed from the morning dew,
And billowing clouds float o'er the blue sky
As the Master's unseen hands prompt, on cue,
Creation's instrumental lullaby.
Oh, Matchless Master of earth's blended songs,
May I join in praise to You all day long!



Autumn Reflections

Shirley Anne Leonard, Illinois

Early autumn's drowsy bees
imbibe the fallen apple's tang
while flowers show their brightest face
before chill winter's cruel embrace.
Sun shows herself in crisper dress
And after supper seeks her rest.
The meadows keep their summer gown
'til snow-clouds drop their feathered down.



Woods

Marie Bleecker, Hawaii

When I was a child, I liked to play alone in the woods
 where everything seemed so calm and pure.
 The bubbling stream was scarcely visible,
 overshadowed as it was by the lush, rich deep foliage of the trees.
 I loved to be by the banks of the stream, watching leaves fall
 into the rippling water, and then float away.
 I loved the scent of the wildflowers and the golden sunlight
 falling through the trees.
 Even the tiniest leaves left their flicker of a shadow on the sunny grass.
 The dogwood rained its pinkish flowers on dewy grass,
 bluebells grew in the shadows, swaying daisies ruled the fields.
 Peace lurks in the soft murmur of a summer breeze.
 Here I read, sang and dreamed, spending long sunny hours.
 When I grew weary I would lie on my back
 and gaze up at the sky and watch the clouds sailing across it.
 Black thunderclouds would sometimes come up,
 bulging with passionate tears,
 bursting with sound and flashing fire.
 The primroses would grow pale and wither.
 I did not weep for them, I knew they would return next year.
 I stayed until the moon would come out to bid me good-night.
 The moon had just risen, its light fell on the horizon
 while it was rising out of a cloud.
 Perfect peace seemed to flow on me with the moonbeams.
 A new star came out in heaven and watched from above.
 Life paints an immortal dream, ecstasy beyond fear, splendor beyond anguish.
 Today there is little peace in the world that we know.
 Here's to walking on the sunny hills of yesterdays
 Glorious, peaceful, happy memories.

Grandfather's Bookcase

Wilda Morris, Illinois

Mother speaks the words with reverence
 when she says "Father's Bookcase,"
 perhaps because Grandfather laid the boards
 down, sanded them smooth and nailed
 sturdy shelves to the frame he made,
 and brushed on a finish, bringing out
 the deep beauty of the wood. For me,
 though, it was Grandmother's shelf
 because it held the anthology
 of verse, that large red book
 which held most of the poems
 she held in her heart and recited
 without reference to a printed page.
 Here I found adventure, riding
 through heat and rain behind Lasca.
 Here I found the pictures carved in words
 of soldiers, young lives snuffed away,
 laid to rest in blue, laid to rest in gray,
 and saw the flowers brought with love
 to both. I would read Grandmother
 parodies of *And Jenny Kissed Me*
 and how that great batter, Casey,
 saddened Mudville striking out.
 When day was done, I turned pages
 till I found another friend introduced
 by Grandmother with no book in hand,
 turned the name of Abou ben Adhem
 over on my tongue, and prayed with him,
Count me as one who loves his fellow man.



Wisteria Garden At Giverny

Claude Monet, Oil on Canvas (1919-1920)

Vincent J. Tomeo, New York

In a tranquil garden
 Hush sway of petite purple flowers
 Hanging cradled from a vine
 A gentle breeze ruffles
 A dangled shoulder bough
 Perfume
 Random buds bloom
 Dazzled by fluorescent beams
 Surging from a quiet Sun
 When will I ever get my work done?



The Owls

Amanda Auchter, Texas

The owls have migrated south,
using the branches of my pine trees
as their all-night rest stop.

I shine a flashlight on them,
watch as some sleep, wonder
if they check their internal roadmaps,
ask each other which way to turn,
which way is home.

One settles in a tree alone, silent,
catches his breath. We eye one another,
suspicious of our movements.

I pick the black pearls of ants off my shoes,
suffer the bites, step back into the driveway.
The stray owl launches outward, circles over
the spindle top of branch and needle,
then is off, now faceless, eyeless,

bathing in the moonlight. He flaps, calls,
directs the sleeping, the lost, the tired
onward through the thicket of darkness and fog.



R i v e r R u n

*d.n. simmers,
British Columbia, Canada*

On the road
early this morning
all the square donut cars bumper
to bumper:
come off a bridge;
look down to see the river
turn into a silver snake coiled around
the giant body of an old wood building
black against the silver curve:



wish
I had a camera;
shaking my head
as I went by trees
leaves falling
felt pleasure
sweeping:
a picture out
of the old settler day
as I
carry my briefcase
full of
worry.

The Teflon Brain

Charlotte Poplawski, Illinois

Life's daily activities bring a plethora of thoughts popping in the brain much like popcorn. In the flash of a millisecond a smart idea appears, in a wink of a blink – 'tis gone. Kapootz! The Teflon Brain. In and out like a Chinese laundry. Some think it's funny. Is there a pill that will connect the dots, or tie the disconnected ends together?

The brain must learn to train the turns
that twist and turn in waves so wild
that choose to hide what came apart
that burn or guide or lame the heart.

When Jane asked Wayne what she should do,
he told her to brew a cup or two,
not to worry but take a deep breath
and don't hide the fact, the brain's in the head.

So don't get excited or be misled
for what Jane had was a pain in the head.

'Tis not the Teflon that got in the way
which made her thoughts slip-slide away
but too many notions came out her ear —
that stops her thoughts from sounding clear.



Fall Haikus

Raymond J. Flory, Indiana

Winds of autumn sweep
red, brown and gold leaves into
the valley below.

Lights of the harbor
call to my vagabond soul —
sea gulls welcome me.

Overhead, geese head south
in crisp autumn afternoon —
soon, winter is here.



All Quiet Now

Patrick L. Flavin, Massachusetts

All quiet now, just wind and birds to sing
As if the earth waits to feel a new day
As we look away, see what the hours bring.

The wind is cold so its breath has a zing
We wrap our robes of content as we lay
All quiet now, just wind and birds to sing.

The birds flutter about, some take to wing
Visit the neighbor's yard across the way.
As we look away, see what the hours bring,

Remembering we have had many a fling,
But not enough, for we now yearn to stay
All quiet now, just the wind and birds to sing.

There's something peaceful, — shadows gathering
To amend, turn rainbows from being gray
As we look away. See what the hours bring?

An answer not known from our questioning,
Some riddle made plain as we silently pray
All quiet now? Just the wind and birds to sing
As we look away, see what the hours bring.



Love's Balm

Robert Donald Spector, New York

Let love be your guiding principle
Whatever it is that you do in life..
For love has the friendliest spirit
And is the way of combating strife
When all else that you try has failed,
You'll discover that love can be
A balm and a happy solution
To all the pain bringing misery.

Success

Vivian Bolland Schroeder, Texas

He came alone
Nurturing visions of Utopia,
Lured before the turn of the century
From the Old Country
By land merchants and specious ads
To the far reaches of America.

Confronted by hailstorms and heat,
He clung with tenacity to immigrant dreams;
Seized boldly from rattlers and coyotes
Hostile primitive land,
He dug a well of pure water,
Planted and harvested sorghums and corn;
Strung miles of barbed wire,
Constructed toolsheds and barns,
Shelter for pigs and white Leghorns,
And finally a sturdy home.

Welcomed in time were neighbors,
And among them a bride.

Then, in seven stalwart godly sons
The Utopia of my great-grandfather
Became rewarding fulfillment,
His early dreams no match for his contribution
To the success of this promising land.



Rolling Hills

Margarita Engle, California

The dance of a landscape
is slow and rhythmic.

Cry of a hawk
rustle of leaves

soundless wind
creates music
for the movement of trees
and the wingbeats of crows

while wistful time learns
graceful steps.



"SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP!"

Christopher Easley, Illinois - age 13

"SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP!"

Waking up, making my bed, running up the stairs.
 My body begins a lasting chant: "SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP!"
 Putting a bandage on my hurt toe and running to change my clothes,
 My body tells me, "Sleep! Sleep. Sleep."
 Eating breakfast and rushed a bit, my body is saying,
 "SLEEP. SLEEP. SLEEP!"

Getting in the car and writing this poem,
 My body's yelling "SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP!"
 Lord give me the strength to serve you today,
 While my body's SHOUTING, "SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP!"



Doublechin Tubbelly

Ricky Lyons, Michigan - age 15

Doublechin Tubbelly ate, and ate.
 He was forever passing his plate.
 No matter whether 'twas early or late,
 Doublechin Tubbelly ate and ate.

Doublechin Tubbelly was so fat,
 He couldn't stoop over to pick up his hat.
 He broke every chair in which he sat,
 For Doublechin Tubbelly was so fat.

Doublechin Tubbelly was so big
 The ground would shake when he danced the jig.
 'Twas often said he resembled a pig,
 For Doublechin Tubbelly was so big.



Doublechin Tubbelly was so large
 He looked like a Mississippi River barge.
 He couldn't get into his own garage,
 For Doublechin Tubbelly was so large.

Doublechin Tubbelly went on a diet —
 Or, at least, he said he'd try it.
 But he gave it up before the first night-et.
 He just couldn't go on a diet!

So Doublechin Tubbelly still is enormous,
 And that should be a lesson to warn us:
 If we do not wish to be multitudinous,
 We shouldn't put so much food in us!

Perseverance

Karl Erickson, Illinois - age 13

Many times you will have to see
 How things will come to be.
 If you can't
 do not worry,
 do not even scurry.
 And therefore you will get it done,
 And this will teach you perseverance.



Yard Sale Tycoon

Sharon Fotta Anderson, Pennsylvania

Every spring my sister Mary and I have our annual yard sale at her farm. We enjoy this opportunity to get together, visit, and raise extra money. Each year is a special event in some way, but last year's yard sale will probably be the most memorable.

The morning of the sale, my sister's husband was unable to baby-sit my small niece. Mary and I wanted to keep "little Rhonda" occupied while we set up, so we gave her a small box of items to sell. We were swamped with customers all day. Rhonda had a large crowd surrounding her card table also and she was having a great time.

At the end of the day we counted our profits. The sale was a success even for my niece. In fact, we couldn't explain how she had accumulated such a large sum of money from so few trinkets. We supposed her charm accounted for her fortune.

However, that evening I received a telephone call from my sister and the mystery was solved. It seems after bathing Rhonda, Mary went to get the child's pajamas and discovered most of my niece's clothes were gone, and the closet was empty also. Dumbfounded, my sister questioned Rhonda about the missing clothing. With a big smile my niece replied, "I sold them at the yard sale, Mommy."

Santa's on a Diet

David Fox, New York

Santa's on a diet,
 Not a cookie will he eat
 unless, of course, it's low-calorie
 or with fiber or whole wheat.

You see, Mrs. Claus is kind of worried.
 (Santa's getting rather stout.)
 The problem isn't getting in the chimneys,
 but sometimes getting out.

Santa's joined a health club
 to stay in tip-top shape,
 so don't leave him fresh-baked brownies
 or worse yet, pie or cake.

He's trying his best
 to fit into this year's suit.
 So if you must leave him something
 it's best to leave him fruit.





I'll Never Forget Her

Sheila B. Roark, Texas

Honorable Mention Winner, Short Story Contest

It has been a long time since I have been in the eighth grade, but after almost a lifetime of living, I still remember my favorite teacher from elementary school. She was a unique character, to say the least, and one I shall never forget.

I attended Notre Dame School for twelve years. It was a private girls' school in midtown Manhattan run by a group of very caring and loving nuns. In those days, they wore a full habit that always demanded respect from all the girls who were part of the Notre Dame family. Their flowing black gowns, and heart shaped headpieces emphasized their deep devotion to their calling. Everyone who attended their school loved them dearly, including me. Since they were our surrogate mothers during the day, we called them Mother. The practice in other Catholic schools was to call the nuns Sister, but not at Notre Dame, our nuns wanted their school to be our home away from home, and to have the nuns become our second mothers.

Notre Dame is a college preparatory school that emphasizes learning and has very few extracurricular activities. I had many good teachers during my twelve years at Notre Dame, which has now become a high school, but my favorite teacher was Mother Genevieve. She was only five feet tall and about six feet wide, with eyes the color of a new spring morning that always shined with an impish twinkle. Her face was as fair and fine as alabaster, and her smile lit up the room. When she got mad, it never lasted long, and in a short time she would bounce back to her usual cheery self.

She was more than just a teacher, she was an entertainer who would perform in the strangest ways to emphasize our lessons. I remember one day in an eighth grade drama class she was teaching us how to do a death scene properly. The next thing I knew, she was laying on the floor with her feet in the air. Of course, the class was stunned not knowing what to do. We just stood there with our mouths opened afraid to move. She laid on the floor for about thirty seconds, arose with the dignity of a queen, and as she smoothed out her habit declared, "Now girls, that's how you do a dying scene."

Then there were the days when we would get her annoyed. When Mother Genevieve got mad at us for not paying attention, she would do strange things with her eyes. She would move them back and forth with such speed, we thought they would take flight. Her soft blue eyes became a blur as she scanned the room searching for troublemakers. Of course this always stopped any noise immediately and enabled her to continue her lesson of the day.

When she wasn't demonstrating dying scenes, or moving her eyes at mach speed, she was a wonderful teacher. She was able to make our lessons come alive in a way no other teacher could. When she taught us about the Middle Ages, we could feel the coldness of the castles where kings lived, and the pain the serfs suffered as they toiled in the fields.

When we studied about China, she taught us Chinese writing and let us sample some of the food the people eat. She opened up the Asian world to us and helped us understand what it is like to live there.

She also taught us to love our language and to appreciate its beauty by analyzing the works of the masters in her own unique way. She would have us read these works out loud so we could savor their magnificence which made these masterpieces come alive for us. She always made her lessons so vibrant that we looked forward to going to school each day. No one ever wanted to miss anything Mother Genevieve had to say.

She had other wonderful qualities besides being a gifted teacher. She was always available to listen and advise if anyone needed a strong shoulder to lean on. She never turned anyone away who needed her help in any way, and tried to be a friend to all.

This woman, who was loved by all, was a combination of a comic, a teddy bear, and a brilliant teacher. She magically opened up the world to me enabling me to appreciate its wonder and beauty. I recently heard that she passed away and feel a tremendous sense of loss over her passing. I often think of her and of all the precious gifts she gave me so long ago. My hope is that every child who attends school is lucky enough to have a teacher like Mother Genevieve so that they too can think back to their school days with fond memories like me.



The Redwoods

Harry T. Roman, New Jersey

Even the babbling brook that ran through did so with a certain reverence as though its water were used for sacred purposes only. There would be no jumping fish here. Birds kept their chatter to a discreet level. Larger animals did not intrude. Surprisingly, the noisy humans kept quiet too, much too quiet for their character; but they did so without prompting or complaint and that was very much appreciated.

It was also quite clean. Very little evidence of human trespass was noticed. Signs and rules were obeyed in the thin, diffuse, aromatic light that managed to reach the forest floor. It smelled like a giant cedar closet.

If someone had started playing a soft organ hymn, no one would have complained. Most thought and acted as though they were in church anyway. The giant trees did not mind the human-ants at their feet. The real action was going on several hundred feet up in the air. That's where the glory was — where sunlight met the green stuff and the centuries of growth carried on their tradition. Magnificent is hardly the word for such an experience. Many cars left the forest with their human cargo quiet and reflective, pondering the new meaning of *old* that they had just encountered.

By the Letters

Nancy E. Martindale, Ohio

We touched, despite the miles,
A contact of fragile paper,
Words that lent themselves to smiles.

He learned my sacred secrets,
Shared with utter trust
And without regrets.

I read his treasured desires,
Sweet longings of love
Filled with passion's unquenchable fire.

Photos were reluctantly traded,
Hopes against disappointment high
For both as each waited.

He said my eyes danced with light;
His, the perfect shade of blue
Were honest and bright.

Two hearts reached out across the miles,
Soon joined by hands that held us
Heart to heart, smile to smile.



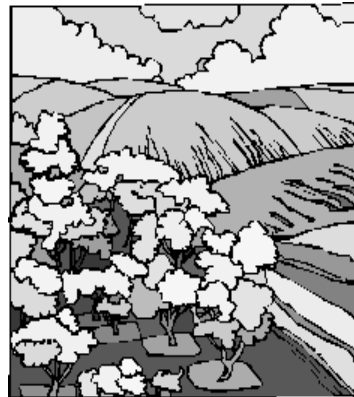
I Love You, Too

Sara Irene Robinette, 1906-1990

I love the scent of pine in sun,
A startled deer who turns to run,
The quiet when the day is done —
And I love you, too.

I love the white-clad mountain tips,
A western sun that gently dips,
A smile upon a baby's lips —
And I love you, too.

I love to camp in leafy shade,
A shirt that's comfortably frayed.
I love all things that God has made,
And I love you, too.



Researcher

—addressing a college student, reference Shakespeare as a Masquer

William Wooley, Texas

His kings were crazy men upon the stage
Who made their cohorts privy to their need
And followed all their kind in thought and deed
For worldly goods, and honor's sinful wage.
His queens were sickly dames of doubtful age
Who gave advice their husband didn't heed,
Or monstrous ones themselves who took the lead
Toward tragedy through jealous-minded rage.
Now as success was his to pawn away,
He made a kingly choice for currency;
Now since the price was right for him to pay,
He made a queenly choice for property,
And when 'twas reached, the climax of his play,
The actor chose to mask his artistry.



It Was Just A Plate!

Ilene Mitchell, New Mexico

Mother's cake plate traveled many miles –
went to the sorrowful and brought them smiles,
then traveled to a lady that lives down the street
her ninetieth birthday – so many friends to greet.

It traveled home and rested in its place.
The picture on the plate is a lady's face.
My mother's name was never put on the plate,
but it always came home, though sometimes late.

The common ingredient in each cake was love;
she made one for a wedding in the form of a dove.
This plate was well known in our small town.
It visited many folks both up or down.

Everyone learned to respect this old plate.
Friendship with others she did create.
Now my mother is heaven-bound,
but memories of the cake plate still abound.

I have replaced the old cracked plate –
found another that's a perfect mate.
Though this cake plate looks the very same,
tradition continues without a name.

Love that is given returns to the giver!



Holy Spirit *(A prayer)*

Kerri Anderson, Texas

Bring to our hearts a song
so that we may sing to the Almighty
with such power of worship
that the angels join in
and heaven and earth stand in unison.

Bring to our souls a shower of humility
so that we may bow down for His greatness
and be cleansed in the light of His presence.

Bring peace to our minds
so that we may sleep with dreams
of the promised land that awaits us,
and let us awake new in faith every day
so that our humbled hearts can sing again!

It's Me

*Yvonne Johnson-Pressley,
South Carolina*

No one can really see
The true substance of me
The covering of my skin
Hides all that lies within
Though my mind can't understand
The willful sin of man
I know that I am glad
That God forgives me when I'm bad
That's why I always pray
God forgive me each day
So this outward covering you see
Is not the real me!

*"It does not yet appear what I shall
become in Christ Jesus!"*



The Wonder of You

David Waites, Florida

I take my pen to write to you, you're unique in every way
think of when the earth was born, and here you are today

Fifteen billion years have passed, people were here and gone
all this time, now you are here, it's like a brand new dawn

Be proud of who you are, and everything you do
it was many generations, to get you to be you

Just imagine lives and losses your ancestors have endured,
Random choices added up to have you, be assured

A thousand lives and choices, every detail had to be there or someone else
would be you, now that would be a scare

Stars and planet's come and go, and rivers flow downstream
nature's plan to have you here was more than just a dream

You could have been in history, but now you know I see
that God, in his great wisdom, made sure you'd be with me

Legacy

Shirley Anne Leonard, Illinois

There was a dignity to life, now lost.
I see it in this Bible, aged and worn,
perused by lantern, windows raw with frost
inside this hut where pioneers were born.

I see it in these stately silent hills,
in azure boundlessness of virgin sky,
in lives and deaths devoid of useless frills,
close to the rugged earth, therein to lie.

Men hewed their timber down and built it up
in rustic homes of solid oaken beams.
They thanked the Lord whene'er they sat to sup
and lived reality sparked full with dreams.

The land that bore them shaped them straight and tall
and etched their faces taut against the West.
It pit them strength for strength, victor take all,
and tried them year by year and test by test.

Into it all, they threw a strong resolve,
a courage born of need, a will of steel,
a oneness with their God quick to dissolve
self-pity weaker souls were apt to feel.

And we, who read their sagas, stand in awe,
our ears besieged by wild electric din,
and yearn to see the world that their eyes saw
where truth and noble purpose reign again.



Lead On, O Lord

Richard Leonard, Illinois

Lead on, O Lord
And bring your faithful people forth
To worship you and serve at your command.
Declare your Word
That tells of your surpassing worth,
And guide us onward by your mighty hand.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Lead on, O King, into your promised land.

Let God arise!
Assume dominion over all,
Establishing your throne in righteousness.
We sacrifice
Our praises, and before you fall
With joy to worship, and your name confess.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Lead on, O King, in truth and holiness.



Street Encounter

Janet Goven, Pennsylvania

On the corner of the street
I walked down today,
a beggar stood with cup in hand.
I did not turn away.
He did not speak, but with his eyes
he asked if I could spare
enough to ease his hunger.
To refuse I did not dare.
It was a brief encounter, yet
something strange was in the air.
Could it be that I had entertained
an angel unaware?
Then words I knew I heard before
rang out in clarity:
but for the awesome grace of God
that beggar would be me.
I wondered as I walked away
and thanked my God above.
Was this a test, and did I pass
in sharing His great love?



West Wind

Cecil Boyce, Texas



Blow, west wind, over
The plains and snow.
Cool temperatures fill the air
As the leaves fall everywhere
Leaving the trees bare.

The cold wind blows
Here and there piling the leaves
in ankle deep heaps,
Swirling as only leaves can.

Watch the leaves
As they fall from the sky.
We'll have to pick them up
By and by. Maybe the west wind
will be my friend,
And blow them down the street,
Leaving them under
Someone else's feet.

Note: This poem appeared in the summer issue with the last four lines missing due to a scanning error. We apologize to Mr. Speers and now give you the complete poem.

Lucky Thirteen

J. Alvin Speers, Alberta, Canada

Who is afraid of the number thirteen?
Not this Drugstore Cowboy, from things I have seen.
Never having subscribed to fabled superstition,
I chuckled whenever I saw it on exhibition.
After five years in Her Majesty's service,
About hitting civvie street I was not a bit nervous.
Would you believe, it was Friday, July thirteen
When, release in hand, for new challenge I was keen.
Senior NCOs warned, "It's a jungle out there;
Here in the Air Force, job security you share."
But I would not listen, having things on my mind
So that it was no error to leave it behind.
Across Canada I traveled as equipment installer
In Micro-Wave shacks, and telephone equipment for caller.
From Ontario to Alberta, and points in between,
Over the next hill the grass was always green.
After three-and-a-half years a nest-egg acquired
I quit to build a service station, an enterprise admired.
I sold it on completion before the paint was dry,
Then departed for Calgary, with gleam in my eye.
I rented a room at Three-thirteen Thirteenth Avenue South West
and my entrepreneurial spirit I would put to the test.
I married my wife, the love of my life, nearly forty-two years ago.
Together we thrive, it's great to be alive, and thirteen helped make it so.

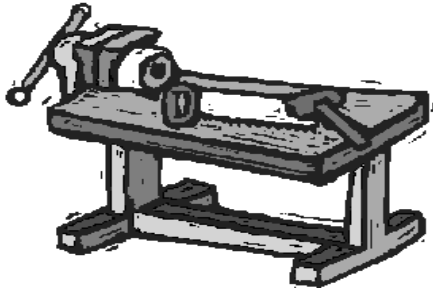
You Were Always There For Me

Donald G. Harmande, New York

In times of need
By my side you'd be,
Confirming my trust in you
Dispensing hope to see me through,
Sharing my dreams,
Inspiring my schemes,



Soothing my brow
Keeping your vow.
From the moment we met
You honored me with your life,
Everything I have to make me complete
I owe to you, dearest wife.



Writer's Workbench

Common Mistakes in Writing

Check your writing *before* you send it to the editor!

Clichés — Using expressions that are so common they bore the reader: raging storm, blue sky, red rose, white as snow, dark as night, bitter cold, etc.

Grammar — A common grammar mistake is using *it's* (it is) for *its* (the possessive corresponding to *his* or *hers*).

Scansion — Starting with a certain meter or beat, and then halfway through the poem changing to another meter or no meter at all. This makes the poem seem to limp along and sound awkward. Either write in free verse *or* meter, but don't combine the two in one poem.

Forced rhymes — Using words that don't contribute any meaning to the poem, but are thrown in just because you *need* a rhyming word.

Obscurity — A poem in which the meaning is so unclear it can't be understood won't hold the reader's interest. If only *you* know what it means, you've lost your audience.

Overused words — Find fresher ones! A thesaurus is a good place to start.

Sloppy work — Poems aren't written in stone. Your first writing isn't necessarily *too* inspired to need a little work. Inspiration is where you get your ideas, but ideas have to be pondered and interpreted, which means *WORK*.

Reversal of natural word order for the sake of rhyme — You've written a good poem but there's a line for which you just can't seem to find a good rhyme. So you reverse the order of the sentence to fit the rhyming word in. This makes it sound awkward. Example: You need a word to rhyme with *rhymed*. You change "The cat climbed the tree" to "The cat the tree climbed."

Generic titles that are too common — Love, nature, friendship, joy, pain. Give your poem a more defined title that brings a fresh perspective to the subject you're writing about.

Wordy poems — Wordy poems repeat the same thought, as if the writer is trying to make the poem longer but has run out of new ideas. There are times a phrase can be repeated for emphasis, or for a haunting quality, or as a chorus in a song. But if that's not what you have in mind, *stop* when you reach the end of your idea!

—THE EDITOR

Advertise in WestWard Quarterly!

We are now accepting advertisements. If you have a writing-related ad — such as for a poetry magazine, a poetry chapbook, a novel or other book, or a contest — you can place your ad here.

Currently we charge only **\$2.00 per column-inch**. Around 100 readers will see your ad. As our circulation grows, our rates may increase.

This ad is two columns wide and two and one-half inches high. It would have cost you only \$10.00 to get your message out to 100 potential readers of your work.

Write us for more details, or email us at wwquarterly@aol.com.

Jack of Hearts, A Full Deck by Jack W. Ardell

A book of short stories, poems and cartoons for winter family reading.

Order now for Christmas giving and stocking-stuffers.

Send check for \$15.00 to: Jack W. Ardell, Ardell Art & Craft, 5140 Fairview Avenue #8, Downers Grove, IL 60515 (630-968-4659).

Poets' Roundtable

Market and Contest Information

826 South Center Street, Terre Haute, IN 47807 U.S.A.

Esther Alman, Editor

Dues \$15 per year (12 issues)

Published by Poets' Study Club of Terre Haute

Winter Poetry Contest

Our winter Contest will be a **Poetry Contest** on the theme "**Family**." Submit a poem in any form on this topic by **December 31, 2004**. See our guidelines and address information on page 2, or visit our web site, <http://members.aol.com/wwquarterly>.

Entry fees: Subscribers (see expiration date on your mailing label), \$1.00 per poem; non-subscribers, \$2.00. Author of the winning poem receives half the entry fees. The winning poem and any honorable mentions will be published in *WestWard Quarterly*.