

# WestWard Quarterly

*The Magazine of Family Reading*



**Spring 2006**

# To our readers . . .

Spring is a time for celebration! The winter is past and vibrant colors of new life come forth. In spite of the turmoil in our world, spring is a reminder that the universe and its Creator tell us that rebirth is in the scheme of things. This gives us hope.

With this issue we have made more changes in the magazine with additional pages in order to use more poetry and two short stories instead of one. We have also added two pages for light verse which we are calling "The Lighter Side," and will continue to publish poems from high school students in the "High School Poems" section.

From now on we will pay non-subscriber contributors in copies, as most small poetry journals do, instead of cash. This will allow us to have a larger magazine and still keep within the costs of publication. We hope to add more features as our subscribers grow in number.

It will also be necessary, with the Summer 2006 issue, to increase subscription prices to \$15.00 U.S. and \$18.00 foreign, and single issues to \$4.00 U.S. and \$6.00 foreign due to increasing postal costs and because we are expanding the magazine to 32 pages with this issue.

Our quarterly poetry contests will continue as usual, and the deadlines will be stated in each issue on page 23. Contest information and submission guidelines can also be found online at our website, <http://members.aol.com/wwquarterly>.

**Shirley Anne Leonard**, EDITOR

## WestWard Quarterly

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*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>.

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Subscriptions: — \$15.00 per year U.S. and \$18.00 foreign (4 issues).  
Single issues — \$4.00 U.S., \$6.00 foreign.  
Make checks payable to Laudemont Press.

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Cover Image: *Crocuses, Wheaton, Illinois, Spring 2004.*  
Photo by Richard Leonard.

## Featured Writer . . .

Marlene Kaye  
Bonney

Michigan



I began writing as a young teen; I had always been an avid reader, as well, and I truly enjoyed challenges from my school English and Literature classes that utilized both of these fields. Acquaintances often commented on my newsy letters, and I was encouraged by teachers' comments about my creative writing assignments. I faithfully wrote in diaries when I was growing up, which was a therapeutic way for me to deal with the turbulent feelings of youth. Now, I record each day's activities and notable occurrences in journals and it is a family quip whenever there is an argument about when or where something happened to ask me to look it up in my journal!

It has always been easier for me to share my innermost thoughts through the art of language on paper, which continues to fascinate me. It is very fulfilling to be able to express an exact feeling or idea with just the right turn of phrase or series of words. I feel a sense of completeness and accomplishment when I can clearly get a hold of someone else's attention by creating an order or musical quality of words that grabs them and pushes them to think beyond themselves; and, in addition, turns their thoughts to God.

Through the years, I have written poems as an emotional release and to communicate special thoughts to loved ones. I only began submitting my writing publicly three years ago after attending some church seminars on "Focused Living" that brought me to seek my unique destiny in life.

In my opinion, good writing causes the reader to crave the next line, next paragraph, next page; and, at the same time, triggers the imagination as it portrays descriptive pictures of the intended message.

I enjoy reading aloud, especially rhyming poetry, and that is one of my favorite venues of writing. Helen Steiner Rice's poetry has had a definite impact on my life, as well as works by poets such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Robert Frost.

I have been married for 35 years to my first sweetheart, Wendell; both of us are still active in the church in which we grew up together. We have two married daughters and one son and also, two young grandsons who are a great joy to us, and whom we are privileged to spend time with on a weekly basis. I work outside our home as a part-time church office secretary and do computer entries for an on-line marketplace bookseller. Along with writing, I enjoy embroidery, knitting, plastic canvas needlework, and reading for pastime activities.

I have had two of my poems published by the Nazarene Publishing House in their *STANDARD* publication; an Honorable Mention from a poem contest by Sowing Seeds of Faith; an Honorable Mention for a poem submitted to a writing contest by Remley Agency & Associates; an essay accepted for an Anthology to be published soon by Obadiah Press; a front page write-up/photo in the Jackson *Citizen Patriot* Newspaper on my winning entry essay on what it means to be an American; several poetry submissions to *WestWard Quarterly* have been published, along with being a winner of last year's short story contest and having 2<sup>nd</sup> place Honorable Mention for the sonnet contest and a 1<sup>st</sup> place Honorable Mention for another poem, as well.

Truly, a blank page is an artist's canvas, waiting to be filled with the paints of scripted thought! My desire is to continue composing artistic creations for public appreciation!

## A New Beginning

Patches of green, patches of white;  
Cold, steamy air, scraps of sunlight.

Glimpses of green amid brown lawns;  
Crocus peeking, breaking in song.

Cold, sleety rain changing to snow,  
Melting as soon as sun rays glow.

Chilly—then, warm; Warm—then, chilly,  
Nature decides—willy-nilly!

Birds chirp wildly, adding their voice,  
Requesting warmth as their first choice.

Creaky, old bones lift to the sky,  
Inhaling sweet Spring's lullaby.

Fresh hopes surging, renewing faith,  
As Easter dawns upon each face!

*Marlene Kaye Bonney, Michigan*



## First Prize Winner

### Sugar Art

This morning,  
 on the breakfast table  
 in the nook right by the kitchen  
 our Hanne became Picasso,  
 spilling sugar into  
 the shapes of crooked houses  
 misshapen flowers  
 and even a beagle she'd once met  
 named Bailey.

An outsider might well doubt  
 novice Hanne's artistic wiles,  
 but right there on the breakfast table  
 in the nook right by the kitchen,  
 I know that I saw magnificent homes  
 and beautiful spring flora  
 and trusty, lovable old Bailey  
 if only with my little girl's  
 help.

*Randy L. Boone, Pennsylvania*

## Honorable Mention Winner

### Quest for Truth

Is it in falling, silver rain  
 in the yellow beam of sun  
 is it somewhere in the brilliant night's star shining  
 is it in the book of knowledge  
 must you study theology  
 is it hidden in the richness of opining?  
 Life is more than the eye can see  
 would men do more than kill their time  
 inertia will not find truth, the only reason  
 to travel the road less chosen  
 where truth embraces absolutes  
 it is the rhythm in the changing of the season.  
 You can not escape the presence  
 no denying the unveiling  
 shows how obvious was the sorrow in your despair  
 a prisoner no longer bound  
 the search dispelled all inaccuracy  
 revealed like morning sun burns the mist, and clears the air.

*Janet Goven, Pennsylvania*



### Almost

A "near miss" at the plate resulted still  
 In a bona fide home run.  
 A "near hit" frightened the bejabbers  
 Out of the pedestrian,  
 Who shook a trembling fist  
 At the offending vehicle which sped away.  
 There is no similarity in the result—  
 The terms so casually interchanged—  
 Of what was almost a casualty  
 And what squeaked by as a success.

*Vivian Bolland Schroeder, Texas*

## Poets Who May Never Outing Their Songfulness I

(after a Title by JoEllen Kwiatek)

No one who has not lived in Tuscany  
 can know what it's like to live in Tuscany.  
 There are hills and where there are hills there are valleys.  
 There are valleys and where there are valleys there are hills.  
 This is not meant as a metaphor, though valleys  
 can be metaphoric as anything and some hills  
 are crowned with rustic villas that cypresses  
 like guards or attendants line the road to, cypresses  
 that point like steeples, even cypresses  
 that stand together, venerable in a clearing, cypresses  
 of which it has been said they stand to welcome, cypresses  
 the greater number of which translates "Welcome" in Tuscany.

*Ed Orr, Illinois*

## Why I Write Poetry

because someone has to give deep sleep its voice  
 because I know what I want because I don't know what I want  
 because the novel I wrote left no forwarding address  
 because the west wind passes through my soul  
 because I have a need to cry a lot when no one is watching  
 because my heart is a marshmallow  
 because my feelings are a hike in Montana  
 because my ball point pen is a glitzy want to wand  
 because my family deserves a hero who loves them  
 because I'm trying to stop the revolution of noise between my ears  
 because my life is not a parking meter but a crystal vase  
 because it's my job to pick up stray pets and give them a home  
 because music whispers in the ears of spring leaves  
 because love is the wiser part of ourselves  
 because it's not yet time for me to die

*Tom Rich, Montana*

## Feminine Persuasion

Abigail

woman of beauty and  
 discerning wisdom

married

to a man of very  
 brutish character

determined

to counter his  
 rudeness to David

sought

to dissuade the king-  
 to-be from vengeance

served

as the Lord God's  
 messenger of peace

received

praise and honor  
 as a true peacemaker.

*Joyce Bradshaw, Texas*

## Faith

Rain falls on and on,  
 collects in our driveway,  
 pours over the ruin  
 of our lawn.

Squirrels, still wearing  
 thick winter coats,  
 paw through sodden leaves  
 for last hoards of acorns.

Robins and jays, optimistic  
 with signs we cannot see,  
 gather damp twigs  
 to build wet nests.

I must borrow faith  
 from the birds.  
 Perhaps the robins are right  
 and spring will come.

*Joy Harold Helsing, California*

## Finally Here!

Shackles fall,  
 like winter underwear  
 from liberated legs;  
 lungs experience welcome ease.  
 It's seventy degrees and wind  
 melts icy memories to puddles,  
 evaporates our tears, ruffles up  
 breezes of contentment,  
 brings decrees to bury hatchets  
 we hope we'll never seize again . . .  
 not even next November  
 when we freeze.

*Margaret Longenecker Been, Wisconsin*  
 First published in *A Time Under Heaven*

## Rain II

Leaping water fugue  
 Splashing crystal  
 Doting  
 Dashing  
 I like the sound  
 Tapping on my window pane  
 Pitter patter  
 Little baby feet  
 Cotton clouds roll in  
 Curtain mist blunts my view  
 Listening to the rain  
 Waiting for Act II

*Vincent J. Tomeo, New York*

## Promise of an Eagle, to a Friend

*"for Rita Hartje"*

### *Sin & Confession*

You've asked me to speak of eagles.  
 Of diurnal flight over moonlit valleys.  
 I was to offer you the brazen talon  
 of its faith, hope, and love. As a song.

But I lied when I said I could spring  
 this bird from my heart willingly.  
 I betrayed myself into thinking  
 I was the keeper of its valor. I am not.

In truth, it flies through me but doesn't see me.  
 A ghost of old tears reflects from its eyes.  
 And though my soul is wretched and my ego has lied,  
 I long for your unconditional love. In dreams...

So many nights I've fallen asleep in your heart!  
 Awoken in the world your words have built.  
 I can't kiss your angelic face, but I hear its soft music.  
 It sings that our distance is illusion. It's not real.

### *Redemption*

You've asked me to speak of eagles.  
 Of nocturnal flight over sunlit peaks.  
 To take your hand, guide you across clouds,  
 and illustrate the strength of God. I have. In you.

With faith, hope, and love under wing,  
 you have flown softly, quietly through me.  
 The embers of your saintly energy  
 raining down upon my soul. I weep.

Because *you*, my friend, are the eagle.  
 You see me.

*jason e, Illinois*

## Mary and Leon's Cottage

(Forest County, Wisconsin)

In the deep dark of a Northwoods night,  
in a silence deeper still,  
I nod off to sleep beneath a starful sky,  
the "lap" of the lake I'm on, my lullaby.  
Life is good when we let it be,  
when we go away and yet come again  
to the truth that what we call bliss  
is no more or less than this:  
dreamless sleep in the dark silence  
of a starful Northwoods night.

*Brian C. Felder, Delaware*

## Brand New Stepbrother

*Cottage by the Jetty, Venice, Florida, Summer 1943.*

*In Memory of G.F.P., 1929-2000.*

*For R.P.T. and B.R.T.*

No doubt I'd bugged you, overstayed  
(brats will) the quiet I'd invaded.  
I'd finished second, you eighth grade,  
in military school you hated.  
A hatchet in your upraised hand,  
a whoop and holler on your tongue,  
you chased me barefoot in the sand  
around the yard – you were "high-strung."

Out fishing off the Venice jetty  
you caught a hook's barb in your calf.  
You told us as we supped — spaghetti —  
"Pushed through, barb snapped, backed out."  
Wry laugh. As I slurped sauce, I first could feel  
a warmth for you in that ordeal.

*Leland Jamieson, Connecticut*



## Grandpa's Bench

"This is my bench, I like it best,"  
Grandpa said and laughed a bit.  
He would stop his daily walk,  
look around, then stretch and sit.

The early spring would catch him there,  
with warming sun and birds' new song.  
The tree gave shade from summer's heat:  
nothing in the world was wrong.

Fall's cool winds and rustling leaves  
could not deter him from this place.  
"Wear one more sweater," he would say,  
"enjoy fresh air and say your grace."

Winter came with snow piled high.  
Grandpa's winter, too, approached too fast.  
The bench is empty but I think,  
his spirit there will last and last.

He might see the metal plate,  
his name, all fastened on the wood.  
He'd shake his head and then declare,  
"Now it is my bench for good."

*Gisela Woldenga, British Columbia, Canada*

## The Mystery of Capper's Crossing

*J. Alvin Speers, Alberta, Canada*

In the quiet little village, familiarity between residents left small room for secrets. When "Old Henry", as he became known, arrived he did not readily fit in. He kept to himself, maintaining his own counsel. The innocent meddling of personal questions was turned aside, and Henry built a wall of silence around himself.

Because he did not readily trust new acquaintances with his inner thoughts, suspicion and unfriendliness against Henry grew among the other people of his new locale.

Henry had arrived by bus after arranging to rent a small cottage at the outer edge of Capper's Crossing through the office of the village realtor. The little home, with sizeable lot, including space for a nice garden, had been occupied by widow Simpson until her death earlier that summer.

Henry patronized local businesses but made few friends. The pushy questions to a newcomer did not give him a chance to gradually feel comfortable and share the story of his past. He just retreated into a shell. Mutual reticence made interaction with the people of the small community terse and aloof. It was peaceful co-existence, nothing more. Henry was observant while keeping to himself and learned a lot that was going on around him.

Then mysterious happenings began to occur at various locations in Capper's Crossing. One morning shortly after Mr. Jameson senior arrived home from hospital, subsequent to breaking his leg in a mishap, the recovering gentleman's son Roger went to get the nearby city newspaper off the porch. As the front door was opened there was a clatter, and Roger stepped out to find a neatly carved cherry wood cane hanging over the outer door-knob. During the following days it proved an invaluable aid to the senior Jameson's mobility.

When the school band had opportunity to compete in the City music festival, a budget problem seemed likely to prevent the enthusiastic members from participating. During the final days before the event, among other smaller donations was an anonymous money order payable to "cash" for a hundred dollars to put the fund just over the needed amount.

The school principal arrived one late October morning to find a large box labelled "for Grade one jack-o-lanterns." Inside were half a dozen fine

orange pumpkins. What fun the children had in class as they were transformed into leering spooky lanterns, under carefully supervised use of paring knives by the children.

In other parts of the small settlement equally helpful occurrences were noticed with curious surprise: a basket of Netted Gem potatoes left at the back door for the enjoyment of an appreciative aged recipient; an elderly widow's garden cleaned of dead plants and vines which were left neatly bagged at curbside for garbage collection, on a Saturday afternoon when nearby residents were absent shopping, leaving the benefactor unknown.

Meanwhile, Old Henry showed up regularly on his rounds shopping for meager needs. Habitual coldness was now routine. There did not seem to be time for others to cultivate the confidence of the solitary old chap.

Roy Hamilton, a keen young reporter in the village, lurked unobtrusively with camera ever at-the-ready to substantiate stories he might stumble on. As a matter of fact, that very camera had been found in the mailbox at the youth's parents' home after the news made the rounds how much the budding newsman needed such an accessory when he could ill afford it. Periodically a roll of film for the precious equipment was found in the mailbox.

The young correspondent was learning his craft well. Get all the facts — do your homework before breaking a story. He therefore filed pictures of Old Henry in a separate file, initially paying little attention. He could hardly have said why he saved them all; it was just his methodical way of covering all possibilities for some future story. Notes and other pertinent slips of paper were sometimes added to the new file as well. When the implications hit the youthful newsman, he did not know what the right thing to do was. All the pieces of the puzzle fitted. A photo print showed a sturdy branch missing from the cherry tree at the rear of Henry's rented home. Another picture showed Henry at the money order vending machine outside the Post Office, and the carbon retrieved from the trash basket showed the one hundred dollars remittance payable to "cash." And so the file contents made the truth evident about the unselfish generosity of the elderly "newcomer."

Roy wrote a fine article for the paper about the various beneficial incidents, without using any names. 'Have local residents given a benevolent gentleman a fair chance?' was the closing question. With the mysteries solved, relations between Capper's Crossing longtime residents and Old Henry were transformed. He was unreservedly regarded as a friend by all. His past did not matter, because his presence proved a blessing to new acquaintances.

## Soak Away

Soak away your troubles  
but where do they go?  
funneling down the drain  
to another sort of flow

Soak and you sit in them  
pull the plug and be rid of them  
a whirl of a water spout  
wearing down all the grout

Washing away the dirt and decay  
wash it away all through the day  
washing machine, fluffy and clean  
just like a sieve through a screen

A splurge on the urge  
of the ancient sea surge  
and the suds and the bubbles  
will get you out of trouble

Holding soap without rope  
it's such a slippery grope  
immerse and transform  
while a dripping is drawn

See how we can be changed  
our internal order re-arranged  
maybe something beautiful  
and strange will come of this  
a piece of bliss  
be sure to keep it

*Alexandria Levin, Pennsylvania*

## Ecstatic Voices

Give me the dulcet strains of orchestral suites  
On any evening of the year  
And my heart will melt and  
My soul soar to heaven's gates  
Hovering as a lark in  
The quiet of the evening's dark.  
Let me hear the ocean roar  
And crash upon the jagged rocks  
Beneath white roughened cliffs,  
And my heart will tremble,  
Then abate as the sea ebbs from shore;  
Let thunder shatter a quiet eve  
And lightning burst and strike besides,  
For then my Spirit filled with ardour  
Will gaze at the rolling sky with awe.  
Listen to the whisper of prairie grass  
As it sways in the wind as I pass,  
And my heart fills with nostalgia  
For my home, here it will always be.  
And as I hear your blissful laugh  
After years and years spent apart—  
My heart leaps fervently with glee  
Completely filled with felicity!

*Grace Hartley, Manitoba, Canada*

## Communication

It's not just her mouth and eyes,  
not just her hands moving  
when she speaks.

Beneath the table,  
her sandaled feet tap  
their own commentary.

*Wilda Morris, Illinois*

## Shoes

Shoes have always fascinated me.  
 I wanted white boots at the tender age of three,  
 just like my classmate in our nursery!  
 Alas, my folks did not agree.  
 Certain rules were decreed without reason.  
 Black suedes were only for the winter season.  
 Following Memorial Day, it was whites and patent leathers.  
 But after Labor Day, fashion gurus said “Never!”  
 Ballerinas and white bucks with thick sox were keen.  
 If you had to wear galoshes, you tried not to be seen.  
 “Gym” shoes, as they were called, were for school.  
 Whoever thought they’d become cool?  
 In the working world, I wore three-inch narrow heels.  
 They squeezed my toes until I squealed.  
 Through the years I gave up the “slinkies.”  
 Thongs and open toes hurt my pinkies.  
 I still look for fashion in my size, which are rarely in.  
 I wish they would make more size tens!  
 Now sneakers with Velcro straps are what I wear  
 Today, they seem to be the most comfortable pair.

*Betty Reffke, Illinois*

## Legacy of the Red Admiral

He floats on a string of blue mist,  
 as high as his wings will take him,  
 higher and higher  
 and higher still.  
 He hasn’t caught on to his insignificance,  
 too small in a world too large.  
 Riding the swell,  
 he’ll live and die with the rest.  
 But he will live gracefully.

*Bambie Starr, Michigan*

## SPRING PERFORMANCE

Winter bows her old lady’s white head  
 As the season of young womanhood emerges,  
 Bony arms flesh out as they don green garments  
 Standing against a heavenly blue background.  
 Perfume arises from spring’s flowery skirt,  
 Filling the creeks with musical tones.

*Charlotte Ann Zuzak, Pennsylvania*

## WHO SAYS I AM OLD?

I cannot run,  
 but I can shuffle well.  
 I cannot jump,  
 but I can lift my feet.  
 I cannot sing,  
 but I can croak with joy.  
 I cannot sleep,  
 but I can pray for friends,  
 see visions, dream dreams.  
 I cannot bend,  
 but my heart leaps with joy.  
 I cannot stretch,  
 but I can reach for a star.  
 I cannot hear,  
 but music embraces me.

My eyes are dim,  
 but I have my own show:  
 not drive-in theatre,  
 but built-in memory—  
 laughter, tears, hopes, fears.  
 A panorama of my life,  
 lived by me.  
 I am producer, director,  
 scene changer.  
 and, of course, prompt.

How blessed  
 an old woman  
 am I!

*Elsie Hemming, New South Wales, Australia*

# The Beautiful Poetry

*Janice Porter Hayes, Utah*

The tractor hummed across the field, leaving ribbons of newly plowed earth in its wake. Missy Payne stood on the farmhouse porch, smiling as her husband turned in the cab of the tractor and waved. She waved back, knowing from the huge grin splitting his tanned face that Clark was happy being back on the farm where he belonged.

Missy stepped back inside the house and surveyed her kitchen. Pots of paint and stacks of decorating books lay scattered across the kitchen table. Since they'd bought the farm after Clark graduated from college, Missy had spent hours updating and redecorating the old farmhouse. Now only the kitchen remained and Missy had almost decided on a wallpaper border with an apple cart motif but then she'd fallen in love with a wildflower border she'd seen in her latest decorating magazine. Now she didn't know. What should a true country kitchen look like?

Missy picked up an abandoned paint brush and sighed. Maybe she'd ask Clark's mother to come over and help her decide. Missy was no farm girl but Clark's mother had grown up on a farm and along with Clark's father, had raised all their children on the farm just up the road. Missy's mother-in-law always seemed to know the answers to everything, from how to bottle tomatoes in the fall to how to sew a table runner from a yard of cast off fabric. Clark even told stories of his mother milking cows and operating farm equipment like the tractor he now worked across their cherished, few acres. But Missy's mother-in-law often said that every farm wife had to start being a farm wife at some time. Missy, she said, would catch on.

Putting down the brush, Missy stepped into the living room. She may not know farming yet, but she did know art and using her knowledge as an art student, Missy had painted this room a quiet blue then added stencils of her own design in the soft rust and yellow colors she loved. Now the room glowed with a warmth and life which made Missy proud. She moved to the fireplace she had painstakingly stripped and refinished a subtle, antique white. A jar of yellow tulips sat on the mantelpiece, coordinating perfectly

with the painting Missy had hung on the wall just above; a painting called the "Milkmaid" by her favorite painter, Johannes Vermeer.

The painting made the entire room feel peaceful. In it, a seventeenth century Dutch milkmaid poured milk from an earthen jug into a bowl on a table covered with food. The milkmaid looked serene and completely focused on her work. She seemed to find great contentment in providing food and drink for her family.

Missy knew that Vermeer often painted scenes of normal, everyday life. The "beautiful poetry of everyday living" is how one of her art teachers described it. As she looked at the painting, she agreed. There was a beautiful poetry in the simple act of performing one's daily tasks and in the simple routine of living.

Until she met Clark, Missy had only known the routine of city life; the busy bus schedules, her crowded college classrooms and noisy lunchtime cafes, and she had loved it all. After marrying Clark and agreeing to move back to his hometown and help him run their new farm, the quiet of the country and the relative isolation had startled her. But now, as she woke each morning to help feed their growing calves then fix a hearty breakfast from eggs gathered from their hens, she found herself looking forward to the beautiful poetry that was everyday life on the farm.

The hum from the tractor continued and a slight breeze moved the trees outside the living room windows, dappling sunlight across the walls. Missy wondered if she ought to step into the garden and tend her young plants or walk to the mailbox where she could gather an armful of new lilacs on the way home. Lilacs that were just as beautiful as the wildflowers on the wall paper border she had suddenly decided to use in her cozy, country kitchen.

Missy stepped onto the porch then started up the lane toward the mailbox. Clark would be home for lunch, then she'd spend some time in the garden before evening when Clark and she planned on cleaning out the attic. After which, they would sit on the old farmhouse porch and watch the sun slowly sink beyond the horizon. Then, in the morning, they would wake early and do it all again. Missy smiled, thinking of the painting of the milkmaid in her living room. Through the art she loved, she was learning to love the art of being a farm wife. And Clark's mother was right, Missy felt she was catching on.

## DO

How I'd longed to see Peru,  
India and China too.  
So I bought a boat and oars,  
And embarked for foreign shores,  
Though I'd rarely rowed before.  
But the wind blew more and more  
Till a billow swamped the boat.  
I could neither swim nor float.  
As I slid beneath the sea  
One last thought occurred to me:  
They all told me I could do  
Anything I wanted to.

*William Kummann, Washington, D.C.*

## Lost Words

Sometimes I catch them easily,  
The words I'm reaching for;  
At other times watch helplessly  
As they crash to the floor.  
I try to reassemble but  
They've landed in a jumble.  
I grab too fast for floaters and  
My chair and I both tumble.

Susie thinks it is hilarious  
And joins into the fun.  
Before she hears my "stop," she has  
Already swallowed one.  
I am truly very sorry  
There are no poems from me.  
You will know why when I tell you  
My dog ate my poetry.

*Joyce I. Johnson, Washington State*

## Life: the Label

This gift's for you.  
It's guaranteed to fit.  
100% natural fabric. It breathes.  
One of a kind:  
Slight discolorations enhance character.  
Wear it in good health.

*John Vacca, Wisconsin*

## Almost Perfect

Our family has a member  
Who never drinks caffeine,  
Never tells us his troubles  
And he's never ever mean.

And when it is my fault,  
He always takes the blame.  
Even when I yell at him,  
He always acts the same.

Never ever told a lie,  
Nor have I heard him pray  
And so far as religion,  
He doesn't care to say.

Always ready to play ball,  
Loves the water from the hose  
And when he is exhausted,  
He sports a cold, wet nose.

Long before I took up track,  
Before I learned to jog,  
He would out-run all of us,  
Our four-foot friend, my dog.

*Joseph Fecher, Ohio*

## In the Midst of a Thunderstorm

*Sabrina Kawash, Illinois*

The land is silent, all is still.  
The only sound is of leaves lightly falling  
from a soft breeze.  
SWISH  
The cold air begins to whirl with heaving force.  
Translucent sparks soar through the sky  
brightening the pitch black environment around.  
BANG!  
Clamorous sounds blare through the air  
as though fifty thousand gunshots are fired at once.  
DRIP DROP  
Light petals begin to linger down,  
ten by ten,  
twenty by twenty!  
The rain now pours through the crunchy leaves,  
off the branches,  
absorbing into the hidden ground below.  
The sky now filled with amazing colors  
Hovers over the wet ground  
as the tenacious  
wind blows.

## Sticker Bush

*Ashley Gutbrod, Illinois*

Like the grumpy old man  
who lives down the street  
he warns you not to come too close  
but beneath his mean appearance  
and his prickly exterior  
lives the yearning  
of the child he once was  
As nothing more than a seed  
he knew what he wished to be  
something handsome as a tall oak  
something perfect as a rose  
Instead he was doomed  
he was destined to be  
some kind of hideous  
and spiny monster  
Now he's green with envy  
with a sullen expression  
hiding the child  
who couldn't be a rose  
or a thorn on that rose  
and couldn't even be  
the smallest, ugly dandelion

## King Peter

*Sean Marcucci, Illinois*

King Peter was strong and proud  
A just ruler, fair but firm  
At his command he had a hundred knights  
Each as loyal and just as he

Across the field a hundred more  
Enemy knights to try for his throne  
Each one was evil and cruel  
And had to be brought down

Under the summer sun  
The battle begins  
A charge and a yell  
The mighty armies collide

Small fights break out  
Over the captured and dead  
Common in battle  
But unexplained

Peter stands tall and victorious  
Above the battle field  
His sword glowing  
In the fading light

Off in the distance  
A voice rings out  
"Peter, come in for dinner!"  
"Aww, mom, do I have to?"

## Now to Night

*Melissa Wilson, Illinois*

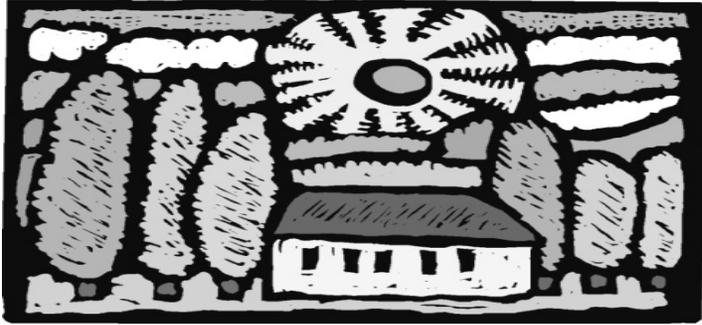
Softly sigh the dewdrops  
as they settle in for the night,  
blanketing the grass  
like a mother tucking in a child.

The wind blows gently,  
barely stirring the grass,  
barely stirring the half-clad trees  
whose clothes have turned to rags.

Distantly some naughty squirrel  
who has crept out of bed  
scuttles and chatters gaily  
to Orion and his sisters.

Astraios' silent, watching sentinels  
don't answer him back,  
but rather watch with golden eyes,  
first winking one then the other.

The night whispers once,  
then fades into silence  
as the woods go to bed  
at last.



## DAYBREAK

another wink of day creases  
from the lofty dappled spaces  
glowing in twilight's splendor  
through the slightly opened door

the soft melancholy matures slowly  
that once emblazoned the black immensity  
when the dainty streaks of light  
herald the beaming yonder knight

the cold hazy light dissolves the stars  
seeping in through the earth's reservoir  
into the ocean of green shrubs and trees  
and a horde of butterflies and bees

the hills are drenched with crystal dew  
then softly glow with flaming hue  
when the first beams of dawn  
repaint the earth's cocoon

the sleepy mountains' crest  
serenely swims out of blue mist  
greeting the royal sunbeams  
with jolly bird's cheers

the morning beauty liquefies  
before my thirsty eyes  
catching me half a dream  
as the splendid spectacle  
embraces my captivated soul

*Rachelle Arlin Credo, Philippines*

## Tussock Bellflower

Summer is glorified by this flower's presence,  
Petal-shaped bells, displayed like tiny cups,  
Naturally sapphire, diamond and amethyst gem orbs,  
Long and slender blossoms under the thumb's touch.

Extended pointed leaves enhance the bloom in the wind's sway,  
Nurturing kisses and gratitude to nature's gifts in the garden,  
As an emblem of constancy to grow for gardeners in life,  
Provoking love in some fanciful images of the future.

*Kristen Howe, Ohio*

## Country Music

Real life stories are my song.  
A father's love is without end.  
The road we travel is long.

A red dirt road makes its own way  
back to our town.  
Real life stories are my song.

School bus driver looks in rear view  
mirror, "one might be President."  
The road we travel is long.

Like an Interstate road  
stretching from sunrise to sunset,  
real life stories are my song.

Where were you on that September day?  
Do you know Jesus?  
The road we travel is long.

My highway is to heaven.  
I pray that you will come along.  
Real life stories are my song.  
The road we travel is long.

*Lynn H. Cate, Illinois*

## Fruitful Sites

Not only the drained and ploughed could yield  
splashes of roses behind picket fences.  
Strange riches hide in my wilderness field.

Repaired and bounded in a wired shield,  
both cleared and trimmed, the present tenses  
of the drained and ploughed will always yield

a future that mocks the hours, then wields  
new blossoms on green expanses,  
contrary to my wilderness field.

Borders of twisted nettles once peeled  
the chants of the wind's malevolences.  
Not what the drained and ploughed would yield.

Soil full of twigs and stones concealed  
the roots that thrived in negligences,  
the amnesias of my wilderness field.

The yellow bramble's flowers, sealed  
in thorns, push through the weeds' defenses.  
Surely the drained and ploughed can't yield  
the riches of my wilderness field.

*Jacqueline de Weever, New York*

## Out of Bounds

This road became redundant when the dam  
was built, and half the town relocated.

No more hot patch or plow. Occasional  
backpacked pedestrians appear, to think  
on fallacies of function.

February snows  
decorated with pine needles, animal  
droppings—and, why, a fluorescent green  
tennis ball. A smash that *must have been!*

No, it looks chewed, and I can imagine  
a winter's-worth of housed-up energy,  
excited barks, the bounding, the fetching.

And that's what abandoned roads are for.

*Russell Rowland, New Hampshire*

## Lilacs for Grandma

**A Children's Book**

by Margene Whitler Hucek



“Megan liked to hide under the old lilac bush under her Grandma’s window. But today Megan was worried. She had heard her aunts talking, her grandmother was sick. Lilacs for Grandma tells of Megan’s goodbye to her grandmother, and the love that they shared.

“At the cemetery Megan waited until everyone was in their cars before she placed the lilacs on top of Grandmother’s grave. ‘A kiss for you Grandma,’ Megan said, ‘to send you on your way.’”

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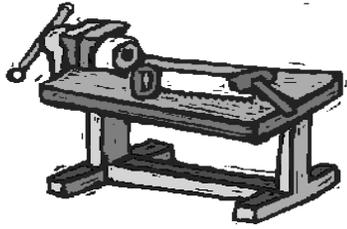
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Currently we charge only **\$2.00 per column-inch**. Around 100 readers will see your ad. As our circulation grows, our rates may increase.

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](mailto:wwquarterly@aol.com).



## Writer's Workbench

### A Rondeau for You

In our quest to explore new forms of poetry, the rondeau lends itself easily to our imaginations. It, like the villanelle we discussed in the last issue, developed as a form of medieval music and then evolved into a variety of forms down through the centuries. It was used to express devotion to springtime, love, nature, and melancholy. Many of its original uses were almost jovial, while the English form tended to more serious verse.

Whether it be the short eight-line light-hearted "Jenny Kissed Me" by Leigh Hunt or the 15-line haunting rondeau "In Flanders Fields" by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D.—one of the most memorable war poems ever written—the rondeau has a lot of possibilities.

Using the short form with eight lines, the phrase of line 1 repeats as line 8; all other lines are of any equal length.

Jenny kissed me when we met,	a
Jumping from the chair she sat in;	b
Time, you thief! who love to get	a
Sweets into your list, put that in.	b
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad;	c
Say that health and wealth have missed me;	d
Say I'm growing old, but add—	c
Jenny kissed me!	Refrain

The longer version consists of three stanzas, a quintet (5 lines), a quatrain (4 lines) and a sestet (6 lines), making the poem a total of 15 lines, each containing eight syllables. The refrain consists of the first few words of the first line of the first stanza.

In Flanders fields the poppies blow	a
Between the crosses, row on row,	a
That mark our place, and in the sky,	b
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,	b
Scarce heard amid the guns below.	a

We are the dead; short days ago	a
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,	a
Loved and were loved, and now we lie	b
In Flanders fields.	Refrain

Take up our quarrel with the foe!	a
To you from failing hands we throw	a
The torch; be yours to hold it high!	b
If ye break faith with us who die	b
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow	a
In Flanders fields.	Refrain

Happy Writing!  
—THE EDITOR



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### WestWard Quarterly Back Issues

Our former editor, Marsha Ward, has sent us some back issues of WestWard Quarterly dating from the Winter issue of 1999 to the Fall issue of 2001. Issues from Summer 2003 (when we took over the magazine) to Spring of 2005 are also available, for those who are unable to view them on our web site.

Send \$2.00 for each copy you request to:

**WestWard Quarterly, P.O. Box 250, Kirkland, Illinois 60146 U.S.A.**

Make checks payable to Laudemont Press.

### SILENCE OF THE DRUMS

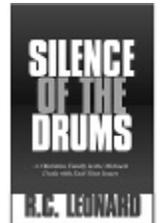
*A Christian Family in the Midwest*

*Deals with End-Time Issues*

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### Current Poetry Contest!

Submit a poem on any topic, any form. Just remember our "upbeat" philosophy—nothing negative or crude. (That doesn't mean it can't be deep or reflective).

**Deadline: June 30, 2006**

Send your entries to WestWard Quarterly, P.O. Box 250, Kirkland, Illinois 60146 U.S.A. Please send SASE if you desire return of material. Entries must be post-marked by June 30, 2006.

Entry fees: Subscribers (see the expiration date on your mailing label), \$1.00 per entry; non-subscribers, \$2.00 per entry. Make checks payable to **Laudemont Press**. Author of the winning entry receives half the entry fees, and the winning entry and any honorable mention entries will be published in WestWard Quarterly.