

POETS' CORNER

Our own Poet Laureate, Lew Thomas, in discussing the ongoing efforts of Science to explain the world and its ways, concludes: "For perceiving real significance when significance is at hand, we shall need minds at work from all sorts of brains outside the fields of science, most of all the brains of poets, but also those of artists, musicians, philosophers, historians, writers in general." (from 'Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony'). So there's your challenge, you poets, and all you non-scientists who follow the humanities.

The response to this corner's blandishments has been moderate in volume but enthusiastic in content. Six classmates have sent in twenty poems, including six from Chick Doak, who writes: "I live now in an apartment in Devon, Pennsylvania and spend all summer at Crystal Lake, Michigan . . . sailing, swimming, gardening, repairing our houses, picnicking on Lake Michigan's shore, fishing, entertaining. Haven't done any mountaineering for three years and probably won't do that any more".

PEAK EXPERIENCE

In summer snow,
Somewhat exposed on rock and ice,
We venture to the highest top.
Below the peak on every side,
Over blue-green ice . . . under dark crags,
Wisp little clouds.
Then time is up and down we go.

Persimmon trees
In Tennessee bestride a hill.
The soldier sits beside a tank.

Small shafts of late October sun
Brighten the notes his flute pours out.
Beneath the tree, in golden light,
Dances Anitra's dance.

The child was small
Too young to know the danger road.
She wandered toward the other side
To pick a flower or pet a dog.
The awful wheels . . . a sudden dash.
The child is saved.
I love that man.

Charles B. Doak, Jr.

We thought Josh's AIDS poem well done, timely, but a bit scary. His comment, "Won't scare our old studs". What did he mean by that? Anyhow, we've told him we want to be the first to know when he sees a ray of light.

AIDS

Insidious means deceit and wily treachery,
It implies a danger not well understood,
It typifies the stealth by which attacking AIDS
Secretly invades immune defense,
A parasitic hidden dread disease
Which sneaks aboard at time of thoughtless lust
Or with transfusion poorly regulated,
Or self-abuse with intravenous drugs
Without fanfare at time of seeming health.

Though AIDS is not precisely fatal in itself,
As T-cell bastions fail and slowly crumble,
The vandal saprophytes and pathogens
In hordes invade the weakened citadel:
Kaposi, pneumocystis, candida,
Encephalitis, meningitis too
All ravage the defenseless body wreck
And slowly ebbs the tide of life,
Insidious onset, in the end to die.

F. T. Billings

POETS' CORNER

Henry Beerits writes from Maine: "I'm sending a bit of doggerel . . . a little whimsy. You did mention Ogden Nash, didn't you?" - - Henry's doggerel sets a new record - 44 lines of poetry all rhyming and no repeats! Eugene Field did it for 24 lines, and Francis Scott Key for 20. But all of Henry's 44 lines would not fit in the cramped Poets' Corner without crowding out several other briefer poets. So we give you the first 5 and the last 3 lines. You'll get the idea.

A SCOTSMAN'S DILEMMA

We're awarding a very excellent cruise
To the man who is willing to give up booze.
Here are the tickets - the question is - whose?
Shall we state that the tickets are Davey McHugh's?
Or count them, instead, as Dan McGrew's?

(Here 36 lines are omitted ending in crews, yews, cuckoos, ooze, accuse, queues, etc.)

Which one of these worthy men would you choose?
I'll duck the decision if you will excuse
A person who dislikes to get into stews.

Henry Beerits (Ed. Get the idea?)

George Constable writes, "I might as well expose my folly and send you some of my poetic efforts over the years . . . It is amusing that so many crypto-poets surface. Isn't old age a kind of second childhood?" (Nothing wrong with that! Ed)

TELL ME NOT ALL

Tell me not all but part
 And let me guess the rest
Show me your towers through the trees
 Bend the path to hide your garden's end.

With a faint smile
 Hint the buried treasure
I had rather peer through gothic shade
 Than see the nave bright-lit.

Candle light is best, and silhouettes,
 Teasing the mind to probe for unseen gold.
The diaphanous, the purposed blur, the veil
 Distant horns heard through the morning mist.

Drop me some clues, my love,
 But - leave a little puzzle.

George Constable

POETS' CORNER

WAR IN THE GULF

Peace - magnificent!
So few dead - miraculous!
None of mine - thank God.

Peace - ever too late.
One is dead - heartbreaking.
One is mine.
Brokenhearted.

Theron L. Marsh

Oil Spencer has just moved into a life care community - Kimball Farms at Lennox, Mass. He comments: "For some obscure reason, after a lifetime of engineering, geology and business, my endeavors have turned more and more to what they call 'the humanities', including writing on local history, water color painting and the like. I am probably the most unpublished poet in northwest Connecticut. . So I enclose a bit of doggerel in hopes that you will see fit to get me out of the unpublished rut. The sonnet was inspired by an article in the same vein in the N. Y. Times. . . You will note that it is somewhat plagiarized from Sir Thomas Wyatt.

A SONNET

Concerning the Kiss That's Not

I flee from them that sometime me did seek
To greet me in a way quite circumspect.
I have seen them gentle, tame and meek,
Place naked cheek on cheek, or ear or neck,
Thus never put themselves in danger
To take bread at my hand, And now they range
Quite wild, and often remember
To seek busily a continual change.
But now from me they are most fleet,
For I no longer turn my cheek.
Straight with naked lip on lip I meet.
Hence very few now me seek.
But those who do seldom complain,
And sometimes they return again.

Frank N. Spencer

(With apologies to Sir Thomas Wyatt, author cir. 1520 of a poem
the first line of which reads: "They flee from me that sometime me did seek. . .")

Ed. The rhyming pattern of Oil's sonnet is Shakespearean - neither Wyattian nor Spenserian. Nevertheless, we are recognizing it as a new breed - a Spenserian Sonnet. The title of Wyatt's poem (not a sonnet) is VIXI PUELLIS NUPER IDONEUS, which means _____?

POETS' CORNER

A note from Sib Hoobler: "... I was particularly touched by Phil Horton's poem - what a talent. It encouraged me to send a sampling of my poetry, written at Madison and never published anywhere".

ON REACHING SEVENTY

On eagle's wings I soar
Each decade I crest the wind
Seven now and more.

HAIKU FOR THE FALL

Autumn waters slide
Under maple leaves congealed
Frozen stillness soon.

TO OLD FRIENDS WHO'VE HAD PROSTATE OPERATIONS

The reverend now lies prostrate
With misbehaving prostate
Can he now to us relate
How was he found apostate?

We hope the doctors did excise
The cells that might metastasize
The treatment then for these old men
Consists of love and estrogen.

Sibley Hoobler

Last word from our pro, Lew Thomas: "And the poets, on whose shoulders the future rests, might, late nights, thinking things over, begin to see some meanings that elude the rest of us. It is worth a try". (from 'Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony').

Ed. We've just started. We're trying, Doc, we're trying!



P-rade fans — June '91, Nancy Carter, Rita Ludlum and Justine Keidel