

PATHOS · HUMOR · HISTORY · CREATIVE NON-FICTION



CALLAHAN COUNTY

STAR SPOTLIGHT

WRITERS SHOWCASE

(All submitters retain ownership)

American Life In Poetry

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

I really like this poem by Dick Allen, partially for the way he so easily draws us in, with his easygoing, conversational style, but also for noticing what he has noticed, the overlooked accompanist there on the stage, in the shadow of the singer.

The Accompanist

I've always worried about you--the man or woman at the piano bench,

night after night receiving only such applause as the singer allows: a warm hand please, for my accompanist. At concerts,

as I watch your fingers on the keys,

and how swiftly, how excellently

you turn sheet music pages,

track the singer's notes, cover the singer's flaws,

I worry about whole lifetimes,

most lifetimes

lived in the shadows of reflected fame;

but then the singer's voice dies

and there are just your last piano notes,

not resentful at all,

carrying us to the end,

into those heartfelt cheers

that spring up in little patches from a thrilled audience

like sudden wildflowers bobbing in a rain

of steady clapping. And I'm on my feet, also,

clapping and cheering for the singer, yes,

but, I think, partially likewise for you

half-turned toward us, balanced on your black bench,

modest, utterly well-rehearsed,

still playing the part you've made yours.

American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation (www.poetryfoundation.org), publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-

Lincoln. Poem copyright (c) 2007 by Dick Allen, whose most recent book of poetry is "Present Vanishing," Sarabande Books, 2008. Poem reprinted from "North Dakota Quarterly," Vol. 74, no. 3, Summer 2007, by permission of Dick Allen.

Introduction copyright (c) 2008 by The Poetry Foundation.

The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.

What Do You Know About Your Family?

What do you know about your family? In recent times there has been an enthusiasm for genealogy, and it can be interesting and important. The search for information of past relatives can be interesting, and important. It can be important, because as people die, they often take their stories with them, or the story of another relative. This makes it imperative that you get the information now, and get it written. The information you supply your family and researches about yourself is also important. You know things. You know things about your relatives. You are the one that can write it down. This form of writing is, different, as you know, from fiction or poetry. You are trying to write description, and the expression of facts. Here, the formulation is secondary. Note though, that it is a literary form, and your attention to the linguistic format and diction is important. History is important. History is being made.

Try writing it. - Patrick Ready

Literary Calendar

November 7, 1874: Poet Robert Frost made his way through the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia, where he had gone to brood, after being rejected by his girl friend.

November 8, 1900: Margaret Mitchell, who wrote "Gone With the Wind," was born in Atlanta, Georgia.

November 9, 1953: The Poet Dylan thomas died at 39 at St. Vincent's Hospital, after a drinking binge at a New York tavern.

November 11, 1854: Louisa May Alcott's "The Rival Prima Donnas," published in the Saturday Evening Gazette of Boston.

November 12, 1935: After a night in the Michigan woods, and allegedly sharing a mystical experience with a tree, Theodore Roethke, recovered in a hospital.

November 13, 1797: Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth began a collaborative effort on "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," which Coleridge would finish.

A Child

The sweetest voice that you may ever hear

Is the voice of a child kneeling in prayer.

Seeking Jesus that seems so near

To protect mom and dad they love so dear.

If we had the faith of a child

What mountains we could climb.

Each day would be a new experience

That each could seek and find.

There is a special blessing

That comes from heaven above.

It's clothed in joy and happiness

And completed with a mother's love.

So when we count our blessings

Let's just stop and think awhile

The Lord must have been smiling

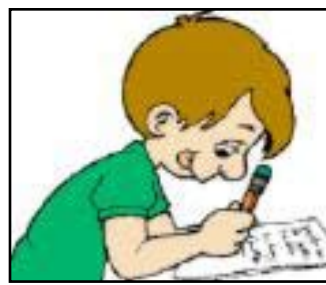
When He sent to us a little child.

By Bob Harbin

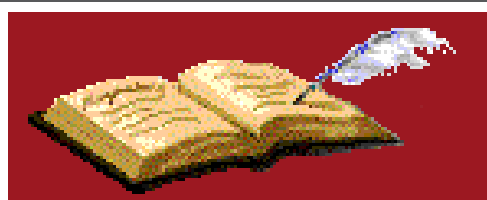


Sunset photo by Patrick Ready

Wanted: Writers & Poets



E-mail address: thebairdspotlight@att.net



The pen is mightier than the sword.

Submissions sought

to:

Star

P.O. Box 29

Eastland, TX 76448

email: thebairdspotlight

@att.net

S.A.S.E, for returns

--WANTED--

20 lines,

double spaced or less

Poetry

Fiction or Non

Each entry with brief biography notes. All must be family oriented; no smut, slander or liable material.

Contacts of interest for writers:

NFSPS Poetry Contests for 2008

Madelyn Eastlund

310 South Adams Street

Beverly Hills, Florida 34465

Poetry Society of Texas

Membership Committee

Lee Carroll

3909 Gable Lane, #611

Fort Worth, Texas 76155

leecarroll.fwps@gmail.com

WANTED: Poetry and/or short stories for this page each week.

Mail to: Star P.O. Box 29 Eastland, TX 76448 or e-mail to thebairdspotlight@att.net

net

Words You Can Use:

Illation: An inference, a logical conclusion, a reasoning.

Lemniscate: This is a noun, and we're glad we have it, for the unopened curvature of the figure eight.

Marcescence: Sort of drooping, it is a withering without the normal falling off, like some of the leaves you see in the Fall that stay on the plant.

Pard: This is an archaic word for a leopard, or panther, probably relating to the ending of the word "leopard."

Pelagic: Having to do with wide and open high seas, not the ones in western Texas.

Writers And Poets!

The Eastland/Callahan County Newspapers announce that the Baird Star will be publishing submitted poetry and short stories. We will also be publishing a literary journal in the near future.

1. We ask for first-time publishing rights. All other rights will remain with the author.
2. There will be no payment, but you will get your works before the general public. We will be sending sample copies to other organizations, the literary world and libraries for their archives and your notoriety.
3. Short stories should be brief. Poetry should be no longer than 24 lines.
4. Each submission should be typewritten, single spaced, with author's name and contact information in the top right hand corner. You must include a SASE for the return of the submission.
5. Please address all submissions to:

Literary Editor

Eastland/Callahan County Newspapers

P. O. Box 29

Eastland, TX 76448

email: thebairdspotlight@att.net

Fax: 254-629-2092

Callahan County Star

Subscription Rates:

\$18.00 In County

\$19.00 Out of County

\$23.00 Out of State of Texas

888-227-1708 or mail to

P.O. Box 29 Eastland, TX

76448