

PATHOS · HUMOR · HISTORY · CREATIVE NON-FICTION

CALLAHAN COUNTY

STAR SPOTLIGHT

WRITERS SHOWCASE

(All submitters retain ownership)



Summer Flowers

Photo by Patrick Ready

Another Mystery

Getting older never seemed to bother us much before, however, a recent occurrence has us both scratching our heads and wondering if our screws were all tightened and our heads are screwed on right. We had purchased a very expensive instructional DVD, paying almost a hundred bucks for it. We had viewed it a time or two, when the DVD player started to malfunction and we could not retrieve the disk from the machine. We tried everything, and finally, my wife tore apart the trailer, in order to get it out. She really messed it up. It's in the garbage now.

Considering the value of the disk, and the cheapness of getting a new DVD player, we traveled to an appliance store and bought a new DVD player, costing about fifty bucks. We hooked it up and played an inexpensive disk, to see if it was working right. Everything was perfect, so we put the expensive DVD in. It wouldn't play and would not return the disk, no matter how many times we pushed that exit button.

We took the DVD player, with the very expensive disk inside, back to the store. The person was called, who supposedly knew how these things worked. She plugged it in and pushed the exit button and yes... out popped the DVD. Feeling so foolish, we cam home with the DVD player and the disk intact. We put in another inexpensive DVD and it played good and it spit out the disk with only one push. I asked my wife, "Shall we try the instructional DVD now?" "O. K. give it a try," says she. I put the expensive DVD in and "Behold," it wouldn't play and wouldn't eject.

Back to the store we went. They opened it up and proclaimed there was no disk inside. We were highly disturbed, for we were both present, and talked about it, when the disk was put in. Feeling amply fumed, we brought the player home and immediately removed the top to the player and found, to our great wonder, no DVD disk inside.

We searched every nook and cranny of the room, we searched the care, My wife emptied all the trash cans, even the large outside dumpster. No disk was ever found; yet, the DVD player works just fine now.

Weldon and Sue Smith
Eastland, Texas



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.

Happy Birthday, Gwendolyn Brooks!

Remember that poetry is life distilled.

—Gwendolyn Brooks

June 7, 2009, would have been Gwendolyn Brooks's 92nd birthday; to join us in celebrating one of America's greatest poets, check out the Hall Library stop on the Chicago Poetry Tour, which features archival recordings of Brooks reading from and speaking about the impressive span of her work. The program ranges from the intimate neighborhood portraits included in her first collection, *A Street in Bronzeville*, such as "kitchenette building" and "the rites for Cousin Vit," to the political turn her poetry took in the '60s as she became involved with the black arts movement:

And we did such exciting things. And we went into the park and recited our poetry and we went to city jail. And the most exciting thing we did was just to walk into a tavern, and someone like Haki Madhubuti, once known as Don L. Lee, would say, "Look folks, we're gonna lay some poetry on you!" . . . And they would turn from their drinks, temporarily, and listen to poetry, which they hadn't come to the tavern to hear, of course.

The Poetry Foundation website offers a critical biography of Brooks, as well as contemporary articles, including Danielle Chapman's "Sweet Bombs," a review of the recently issued collection *The Essential Gwendolyn Brooks*.

For a broader look at Brooks's effect on Chicago poetry, listen to "Confronting the Warland," an original one-hour radio documentary produced by the Poetry Foundation. The show presents African American poets who have found influence and inspiration living in the city, and features Brooks, Tyehimba Jess, Quraysh Ali Lansana, Haki Madhubuti, Sterling Plumpp, and Margaret Walker in interviews, readings, and archival recordings.

Finally, Brooks is showcased in the *Essential American Poets* archive, selected by Donald Hall during his poet laureateship in 2006. Recorded at the Library of Congress in 1961, Brooks, in her early 30s, reads several poems not available on the Chicago Poetry Tour, including "the mother," "of De Witt Williams on his way to Lincoln Cemetery," and "A Sunset of the City," which ends,

Tin intimations of a quiet core to be my

Desert and my dear relief

Come: there shall be such islanding from grief,

And small communion with the master shore.

Twang they. And I incline this ear to tin,

Consult a dual dilemma. Whether to dry

In humming pallor or to leap and die.

Somebody muffed it? Somebody wanted to joke.

The Magic of Words

Even in today's visually oriented world you can see the value of language. Reading and Writing and Hearing have always been wonderful ways that humans have developed a communication. Sometimes there is nothing more tranquil than to sit back in a comfortable chair, and read. Getting images from the printed word has a variety and nuance that is a special thing. Look at the beauty of the listened word. In its most artful areas, we call this poetry, of which song and song writing is a variety. And then there is the creative part of all the forms of the written word. Here you as an individual can create. You can create an imaginary world. You can describe the real world. You can do this through writing. What a beauty that is! - Patrick Ready

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

Words You Can Use:

Yaffle: This is a green woodpecker. You have seen pictures of a green parrot.

Volucrine: This adjective describes things that relate to birds, especially green ones.

Uredo: Here is a word for the burning sensation in the skin, especially when you see green birds in the wild.

Thoooid: It is not clear where this word originated but it describes anything that is like a wolf or that pertains to a wolf.

Synchysis: If you are confused by fancy words, you may have this condition, but it can apply to general bafflement as well.

Rhymes To Use:

Wildfire

Empire

Pyre

Brier

Perspire

Retire

Inquire

Shire

Friar

On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey

Mortality, behold and fear!
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within this heap of stones:
Here they lie had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands:
Where from their pulpits seal'd with dust
They preach, 'In greatness is no trust.'
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royall'st seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried--
'Though Gods they were, as men they died.'
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings;
Here's a world of pomp and state,
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Francis Beaumont
1586-1616