

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

Memories have a way of attaching themselves to objects, to details, to physical tasks, and here, George Bilgere, an Ohio poet, happens upon mixed feelings about his mother while slicing a head of cabbage.

Corned Beef and Cabbage

I can see her in the kitchen, Cooking up, for the hundredth time, A little something from her Limited Midwestern repertoire. Cigarette going in the ashtray, The red wine pulsing in its glass, A warning light meaning Everything was simmering Just below the steel lid Of her smile, as she boiled The beef into submission, Chopped her way Through the vegetable kingdom With the broken-handled knife

I use tonight, feeling her Anger rising from the dark Chambers of the head Of cabbage I slice through, Missing her, wanting To chew things over With my mother again. 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) 2002 by George Bilgere, whose most recent book of poetry is "Haywire," Utah State University Press, 2006. Poem reprinted from "The Good Kiss," published by The University of Akron Press, 2002, by permission of the author and publisher. Introduction copyright (c) 2009 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.

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 orient-ed; no smut, slander or liable material.



New blooms--Photo by Patrick Ready

Hunting Of The Coon

Take a moonlit night and a carbide light And folks around that love to hunt the coon And with baying hounds sniffing all around You may walk for miles neath a frosty moon.

Along rippling streams where the crawdad gleams And ole wily coon waddles slowly by The dogs get that scent and away they went And Oh to hear the sweetness of their cry.

That ole coon was treed by that red-bone breed Their wailing resounding throughout the night And their baying broke to a sharper note As ole wily coon climbed the highest height.

Hound dogs treed that coon neath the palest moon The carbide light reflecting from his eyes Mem'ry takes me back to that ole hound pack Where I still can hear the sweetness of their cry.

Caregivers

By Hazel Stone 1444 Pagewood Ave. Odessa, TX. 79761 hazels@grandecom.net

Mother Teresa said: "The most important medicine is tender love and care."

Perhaps no other role in life speaks so powerfully of the blessing of giving and receiving than that of a caregiver. A caregiver knows the deep satisfaction of serving God by caring for God's loved creations.

No one can be a good caregiver unless they possess wisdom, courage and a heart filled with love. Caregivers are evangelists of encouragement. Sometimes they can hold the hand of the person when the person is frightened or in pain, but caregivers give beyond what seems humanly possible to give. Relying on God within them, they have the love, strength and understanding to tenderly care for other creatures of God. Serving others releases us from selfishness. The way of service is the way of release from preoccupation with personal trouble.

Caregivers are expressions of God's love and are dedicated people who express compassion and reverence for life. They are the hands and feet at work which lend a tender touch and solid support to one who needs someone to lean on.

Things happen for a reason, and God is always in charge of every unfolding experience of life. Caregivers often say:

"Each morning when I wake I say, I place my hand in God's today."

These lines are from a verse by Florence Scripps Kellogg from something she wrote called, My Hand in God's. When someone is facing the eminent death of a loved one, just knowing that God is near can give the assurance needed. His love will uphold them and He will guide them and make their way bright and happy. Caregivers have an excellent

opportunity to be expressions of God's love. They are able to see beyond what physical eyes reveal. They can enfold and release God's love to people who need relief from pain, fear and confusion. Caregivers give beyond what seems humanly possible to give because they can allow God's love and understanding to flow through them. 1 Thessalonians 2:7 states: "But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children". The spirit of God is the strength, courage, peace and wisdom for the caregiver at all times and in all circumstances. Even when going through challenges, the caregiver experiences blessings. The caregiver gives comfort and care to others from God's spirit within them. They are grateful to bring faith, hope and love to others in times when such comfort is needed.

The spirit of God, through their voice, speaks words of comfort to someone who is afraid; through their hands, provides care and relief to someone who is in physical pain; through their arms, surrounds a lonely person with an embrace of divine love; through their prayerful thoughts, lifts the spirits of someone who is in despair. Whatever house you enter first say, "Peace to this house!" (Luke 10:5). You can be "at home" with God whenever you may be.

When I was a volunteer for hospice, one of my patients said on my first visit that he did not want a chaplain to come see him as he was an atheist. One day when I was at his apartment doing dishes, he said, "I have been so lucky to still be here with so many things wrong with me." I felt God's timing was right for me to go sit down and talk with him about God. He was receptive and I'm so proud to say that before his death, he was a child of God.

My first, and easiest, patient when I volunteered for hospice was John. He was

Words You Can Use Wisely

Charivari: This is a group of noises. It could be a musical performance done in a mocking manner, say with brooms, pans, rubber hoses and barrels. Sometimes press rooms sound like this.

Entotic: Things that have to do with the inside of the ear are called this. There is no relation to idiotic, which sounds a similar way.

Gravimetric: Not to be confused with the measurement of the effects of gravy, this word has to do with measurement by weight, those things pulled by gravity. We know, however, that some things dealing with too much gravy, also have a healthy gravity.

Incalescent: A description of the act of becoming warmer, this word may be used in Northern states quite often when they speak of the weather.

Using Diction In Writing

Diction is commonly known as the way that the writer chooses, and uses words. It is one of the most useful and important parts of the writing process. It is also fun. Creativity it can give you. For instance, how many ways can you say something that means "birds?" Robin, beak, finch, wing and talon are a few. You can express the idea of "bird" in many dramatic ways by choosing your own aspect of

"birdness." Diction is also sometimes used to denote how you place words. "The grass was green," can be phrases as "Green was the grass," or "Was the grass green?" "Green beneath her feet, the grass mashed under the weight" is a more extended presentation of the idea. You can have great joy with this!

- Patrick Ready

dying and his wife, Doris, just needed someone to care for him while she took a break to go to the beauty shop, the book club meetings or just window shop.

Many times what I did for Doris was more important than what I did for John. After John died, Doris often came to my house to visit and just talk.

In the 1998 Guideposts (on page 301) Mary Lou Carney writes about her four year old son, Brett, who came from his Sunday School class with a Band-Aid wrapped index finger. The Band-Aid had a heart-shaped sticker on it and Brett said it was to remind him that Jesus is the king of caring. Yes, life for a four-year old is simple, but Jesus really is the king of caring. Caring is a regal way to live!

In the 2001 Guideposts, on pages 261-262, Rick Hamlin writes that when he had his first real office job which was in a mailroom of an architectural firm, he had mastered his duties in two days and when he told his dad that there wasn't much else to learn, the dad advised him to try learning peoples' names. Rick Hamlin learned names and then his dad suggested that Rick learn their kids' names. His dad also said Rick should pass along any praise overheard and Rick was to see that caring for people was most important.

Eleanor Roosevelt once said: "It is a curious thing in human experience but to live through a period of stress and sorrow with another person creates a bond which nothing seems able to break."

We need to stop carrying the burden of worries, doubts

or fears and lighten up. Our minds and bodies relax when we let God help us release the hurts from the past and get on with our lives. God can and will enfold us in divine love and infuse our minds and bodies with peace. He says, "I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

We are not called to criticize or condemn the world and preaching is not confined to words only but to living the gospel so that others will see our good works. Christian love best expresses itself in Christian actions.

A gentleness combined with strength comes through those who are willing to be expressions of God's love and care.

My cousin, Richard Lee Spindle, from Ranger, Texas, was president of Midwestern University in Olathe, Kansas, and the University Chaplain, Randy Beckum, gave the following poem to him one day in 2004. It is a most fitting poem and follows:

"Lord, when I am hungry, Give me someone to feed. When I am thirsty, Give water for their thirst. When I am sad, Someone to lift from sorrow. When burdens weigh heavy on me, Lay upon my shoulders the burden of my fellows. Lord, when I stand Greatly in need of tenderness, Give me someone Who yearns for your love. May your will be my bread, Your grace, my strength, Your love my resting place."

Rhymes To Use:

Exclamatory

Dory

Compensatory

Story

Gustatory

Migratory

Hunky dory

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