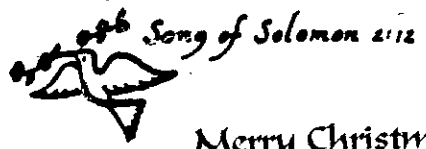




The Voice Of The Turtle



Merry Christmas!



DECEMBER 2007

NEXT MEETING/HOLIDAY DINNER

We have, each December, a night to remember, an evening of splendor, with memories sweet and tender. This year's holiday dinner/poetry meeting will be on Friday, Dec. 28th. We'll be in the beautiful home of the gracious Carolyn Furio (228 Marlton Avenue, Pilesgrove, NJ 08098 - 769-2112 - directions are in this skillfully crafted newsletter).

It's a pot-luck dinner event. So bring some yummy edibles and **please be there by 6:00**. We'll try to serve up the grub by 6:30. If everything proceeds in a timely fashion ("Ha!"), we'll start our meeting about 7:30.

On this fun-filled, busy evening, we'll mix pleasure with politics, as we elect our officers. We'll also be reading our Pollyanna poems and our holiday favorites (old and new).

The more of us that are there to share the evening, the more special it will be. We sincerely hope to see you on the 28th.

The Society for Poets of SNJ lovingly wishes all of its members and friends all the best in this holiday season and in the coming year. May we all be blessed with Peace, Love, and beautiful poetry.



BIRTHDAY BARDS

The birthday choir sang for Cindy Steinberg on December 4th. Our "hostess with the mostest," Carolyn Furio, celebrates within a big celebratory week on the 26th.

El Presidente Lynette Milanese blows the cake-perched candles out on January 24th. Joy Frederick is "the happy birthday girl" on Jan. 27th.

Happy birthday, bards!

POLLYANNA POETRY

It has become a Society for Poets' Holiday Tradition: Pollyanna Poetry! For active members, I have written (in Christmas red, under this story) the name of another active Society poet. By "active," I mean someone who regularly attends meetings. (Of course, the SFPOSNJ greatly loves all its members. Don't feel like a less important member if no name in red appears on your letter...it's just that not everyone knows everyone.)



Your assignment is to write a poem (holiday, or otherwise) for your Pollyanna Poet. We'll read them at the big meeting. If you do not have a name written under this story, but would like to write a poem, please call me (Anthony M. - 856 423-3762) and I'll give you some names to choose from... or just write to or about any poet you'd like.

Be a sport; write a poem!

Happy Hanukah!

DUE: DUES

Here's a gift idea, holiday shoppers, how about a year's membership with the SFPOSNJ? For a paltry \$15, you, or your giftee, can enjoy the pleasure and honor of membership with the hippest band in the land, the coolest group in the loop, the neatest club on the hub, the grooviest organization within realization, the dandiest society of notoriety: the Society for Poets of Southern New Jersey!

You can renew or begin your membership at any Society function or by mailing a \$15 check or money order (no traveler's checks, I.O.U.'s, or Acme coupons, please) to the newsletter's return address.

Open the gate to a great '08!

NEW FEATURE!

The Voice of the Turtle is proud to announce (Sound the trumpets, please!) a brand new feature to grace its already information-packed and poetry-swollen pages: Linda Richards' Secretarial Minutes! I won't have to write anymore "Last Meeting" stories, Linda's got it covered with impeccable detail, flavored with her own humorous spin. I do want to mention, however, that last month's workshop/meeting with the Friends was "way cool." We wrote four group poems and at least seven other poems were born that evening.

Linda read her October Minutes to us at last month's meeting and received a hearty round of applause. I know you'll like this month's offering, as well.



Society for Poets of Southern New Jersey

Minutes – Beginner – Poetic Permit
Holder

November 30, 2007

By Linda Richards, Secretary

Attendance: Lynette Milanese, Anthony Milanese, Kenny Milanese (looking quite well), Robert Hawthorne, Joanne Hawthorne, John Glass, Alice Glass, David Steinberg, Dennis Deems, Vern Rose, Marsha Gaspar, Owen Steward, Virginia Fleming, Hank Urbanek, Joe Valentino, Kathleen Mohrman, Lynne Stock and me (Linda Richards). Jay Jay Bolton stopped by as did Anthony Mohamed and James Roane. This was the first joint meeting of Poetry Society and Woodbury Friends.

Reminder: Elections are next month. Anyone interested in being an officer can contact David, who reluctantly accepted position of "Nominations Person" to ensure no political shenanigans among current officers.

We all got Christmas presents so now we have official tools to get writer's block; a blank book, a pen and a pencil. Thank you, Lynette. Lynette led off with

a prayer, since we were meeting with the Friends, followed by a workshop. We wrote a group poem, a group prayer about peace, and a couple of other poems. Maybe she's been involved in one too many youth groups although the homework was not mandatory but extra credit. Anthony read a new poem he had written about faith and gratefulness.

Events for December were discussed. I do not include them because they will be in the newsletter. Call or email Lynette or Anthony if you have any questions. There were three commercials – candy bars, chapbook sales and praise for Anthony's newsletter and then we returned to our regularly scheduled program.

Joanne read, ironically, "To See or Not to See" and, for the first time in months, graced us with her reading. Vern read his "best, shortest, sweetest religiosity" poem and, yes, religiosity is a word. "World's Greatest Treasure" was in sharp contrast to his very graphic poem about Steve Irwin being barbed to death by a stingray. Kathleen (who informed me that she was not Catherine the Great but Kathleen the Great) "broke the rules" by reading her beautiful epic poem, My Prayer for You.

Robert, while out on his nightly Peeping Tom walk, developed an idea for "Looking Through the Window Conditioner," inspired by Anthony's TV poem. Both Lynne and Robert stole – I mean read – poems written by the Milanese. Good readings, I might add. Dennis read Haiku and told of his rewarding work with urban youth.

Joe amused us with "Rock & Roll Hall of Fame" while Marsha read her poem about her sleeper car that was not on the Hi-Speed line (as well as other entertaining works). Alice Glass read numerous cutting-edge pieces about peace, politics and Larry Craig. John Glass was thankful for the life he has led and expressed his hope that we could all be as blessed. Virginia Fleming read a number of poems that were outstanding and bore repeating. Robert cleared up

(continued)

the mystery of "Eternality" and read it again this month. It turns out that eternity was a real word before Robert pronounced it as such. I looked it up I still don't have the hang of this minute thing yet. I wrote down David's name three times but don't know why. He must've done something that I thought was so memorable that I didn't need to write it down. "Walk on Water" has some unknown significance although it might've been part of a poem read by Joanne.

See ya next month.



OFFICERS 2008

No, Oprah Winfrey is not championing Barack Obama as our new Society President (although, he is a good writer)...he's running for something else.

December is election month for us, a time to vote for our four elected officers. All of 2007's current staff, President Lynette Milanese, Vice President Vern Rose, Treasurer Anthony Milanese, and Secretary Linda Richards have already expressed the willingness to carry on at their positions. But please know that **all members** are encouraged to make the ultimate expression of dedication to our group by running for one or more of our offices.

If you want to "throw your hat in the ring" (Or, hey, if you have four hats, "go for it!"), please call our nominations contact person David Steinberg at 547-3860. He'll announce you as a candidate and the political process will unfold. (Don't worry, there is no mud-slinging or electoral colleges involved.)

\$ POET

October's \$ Poet was none other than our illustrious President: Lynette Milanese. Her "The Life-Tuner" (from We the Poets/Anthology V) was the top vote-getter, to "net Lynette a \$10 get."

Thanks to the fantastically generous Karen Springer, all \$ Poet winners until August will receive \$10 prize packages.

Congrats, Lynette! Thanks, Karen!



POETRY BOOKS: THE ULTIMATE CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Most Christmas stockings are at least five and a half inches wide, meaning Society anthologies and chapbooks by individual members would slide within easily. Copies of five of our ten anthologies (numbers IV, V, VI, VIII, and IX) are still available: Windows of the Spirit (only 9 copies remain), We the Poets (15 remain), Flowers in a Crannied Wall, VIII, and Mosaic. They are all \$5 each, four for \$15. Georgia Wurster's Recurring Themes (10 remain) and Men are Like that and Other Myths (2 remain) are also available through the Society at \$3 each. Lynette and Anthony Milanese's Poets in Love (\$4) can be purchased at any Society gathering, as can Anthony's Intense Intentions In Tents (\$2 - only 6 remain).

From the nine books mentioned, you can purchase any 6 for \$20, or all 9 for \$25! (What a bargain!)

Several other members have books for sale...they are all worth having. I'll give you the names and numbers, call these good people and get some good material that will truly enrich your existence. These distinguished authors are: Erv Bilsky (845-0656), Virginia Fleming (589-7232), Joy Frederick (218-8732), Carolyn Furio (769-2112), Helene Layton (215 824-0941), Theresa McGinnis, and David Steinberg (547-3860).

Poetry: always a beautiful gift.

Merry Christmas. Happy Hanukah. Happy New Year.

Happy Holidays!



ESPRESSO POETRY

The next poetry readings at the King Street Espresso Bar in Gloucester City will be on Fridays December 21st and January 18th. They will begin at 7:30.

They are nice gigs! Call (856) 456-4408 or do www.kingstreetespressobar.com up on the fancy thinking box.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The principal art of the teacher is to awaken the joy in creation and knowledge."

- Albert Einstein



Commodore Barry Bridge

Rte. 322



DELAWARE RIVER

295

Merry Christmas

to Woodbury
45

32

Richman's Restaurant at intersection of 40 and Kings

KINGS HWY
CAROLYN FURIO : 769-2112

Rte 45

From 295 Exit 4 go east onto Rte 48 (Harding Highway) into Rte. 40 E. Make a left onto Kings Hwy. In 0.4 miles, make a right onto Marlton Road.

2ND HOUSE ON RIGHT (WHEN COMING FROM KINGS HWY) 228 Marlton Rd

Rte. 620

MARLTON RD.
Rte 40

HARDING HWY

Rte. 48

EXIT 4

Poetry Corner

THE CHRISTMAS SHIP

by Carolyn Furio
(from her Just Touch Me)

I dreamed I had a Christmas tree
twenty-two feet tall.
Daddy said, "It's much too big,
Let me get my saw."
I protested vigorously.
The tears began to fall.
"Try it, Daddy. Just try it, please.
Pull it into the hall."
He looked at me as fathers do
and whispered, "You old fool."
Dragging with all his strength,
he entered the vestibule.
The center hall was six feet wide
and cut the house in two.
Twenty eight feet straight ahead
the back door was in view.
Father pulled, his face bright red,
as branches brushed his hair.
I cheered and cheered to urge him on.
"See, Father, we're nearly there."
He looked toward me and shook his head.
"Pray tell, we're nearly *Where?*"
"Inside the house." I countered
as he backed into the stair.
He tried to hold his temper.
Angry words were in his throat.

The tree looked like a long green ship
locked in a hallway moat.
My little brother, Richard,
peeked through the kitchen door.
"Wow! That's the biggest, beautifullest tree
I ever saw before."
Mother came to watch us too
and she exclaimed with pride,
"You're right, Richard. It's beautiful
just lying on its side.

We all collapsed with laughter
then got the Christmas balls
to decorate our Christmas ship
dry-docked in the hall.
We never had another tree
even half that tall,
but each year, we reminisce about
our Christmas ship in the hall.

CHANNEL OF INSPIRATION

by David Steinberg
(from his Loving Spirit...)

A channel of inspiration through me flows
And fills my being wherever it goes.
Touching others so I've been told
The love it brings them as it unfolds.

The words just flow and I want to share
The eternal within me that I have there,
Let those whose heart I touch be not sad
Of the words of comfort, to help them be glad.

You see, these thoughts are not really mine,
I bring them to you from a source Devine.
My message here that I bring to you
Is even you possess this gift, too.

To tap the resource within, you must beseech
To that Eternal in you, that you try to reach.
And look inside to that voice and say,
"Our Father Who Art In Heaven," you pray.

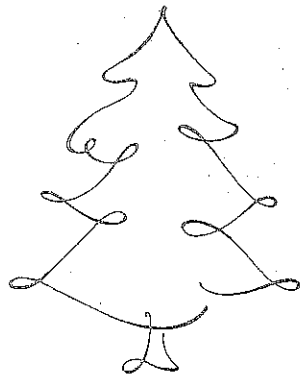
Soon you will have reached that place
Where inspiration starts out with but a trace.
Whatever your talent, ideal or desire,
You will find that spark to light that fire.



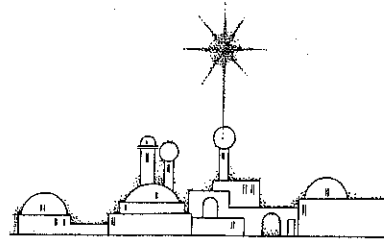
ONE PEACEFUL MOMENT

by Theresa McGinnis
(from her Poetry for All Seasons)

I watch the steam rise from the sink
as I rinse the boiled potatoes.
It fogs up the kitchen window
already blackened by the early night
and creates a coziness
by its sudden burst of warmth.
It mixes with the aromas from the
oven whose belly has been stuffed
with a roast and pumpkin pies.
Candles flicker from the living room
adding their spicy perfume to the
already food-fragrant air.
In the background, my youngest son
taps out "Silent Night" on our piano
as he practices.
Christmas has not yet come
but its spirit has just arrived
and in its peaceful aura
I call the clan to dinner.



Poetry Corner



A COMMUNAL CHRISTMAS

by Karen R. Springer

No matter what we celebrate
When December comes around
It's a season to remind us
All dwell on sacred ground.

The world belongs to everyone.
We must live here in good faith.
There's room enough for each sweet soul;
For every creed and race.

Let us coexist here peacefully
No grain of sand to spoil
Nor covet other countries' wealth
Nor trod upon their soil.

Each creature has a special place
On this marvelous creation
All have an equal right to life
Among our many nations.

It's time to sing a song of hope
So loud the sky can hear it
And blanket every land with love
That warms the human spirit.

Amen

GOD'S GIFT

by Virginia Fleming

Did Baby Jesus smile
at the donkey's funny ears--
and did His Mother Mary
hold Him tightly in her arms
to close away his fears?

Did Daddy Joseph give
Him a finger strong to hold?
Was His swadd'ling blanket
soft and wooly, like my own,
to wrap away the cold?

The stars shone so brightly--
did they hurt His new-born eyes?
Did shepherds bring their sheep,
with their little baby lambs,
when glory lit the skies?

Did Baby Jesus smile
at the angels from above?
When wise men brought their gifts
did He know He was God's gift
of PEACE and JOY and LOVE?



THE GREATEST GIFT

by Karen R. Springer

Two AM Christmas Eve
All were sleeping but me;
So I tiptoed down the steps
To light our Christmas tree.
It always brings me comfort
To sit beside the glow
Remembering lost holidays
From oh so long ago.

But I felt familiar presence
When I reached the bottom stair
And in the muted twinkle
Found my father sitting there.
I crouched quietly beside him
With my head upon his knee.
We spoke of all the good times
With him, my mom, and me.

I shared how much we miss him
Then heard him softly sigh.
Pop said he loved and missed us too.

A tear was in his eye.
He told me he was with us;
That we're never far apart.
Our family's still together
In the memories of our hearts.

And when the sun was rising,
Dad said he had to leave;
But please to kiss my mom for him
And we should no longer grieve.
I wept I had no gift to give.
He looked at me and smiled.
Then said, "You gave the greatest gift
When you became my child."

I watched him slowly fade away
As came the holy dawn.
He spent that treasured time with me;
Then suddenly was gone.
I felt an overwhelming peace;
A closure at long last.
I, too, received the greatest gift,
My precious ghost from Christmas past.

WINTER BALLET

by Joy Frederick
(from her Touch Love Gently)

I awaken
to find bare branches
dressed in snow white gowns
Graceful snowflakes
delicately dancing
through the sky
A winter ballet
is born
Choreographed by God

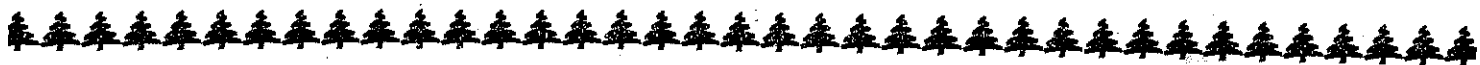


GIFT-WRAPPED GLORY

by Anthony Milanese

Christmas is alive
there is living in the giving
Christ Jesus: alive
as a babe in the hay, and still so today

May the season be a blessing
in gift-wrapped glory
May your days be happy chapters
in the continuing Christmas story



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Happy Holidays