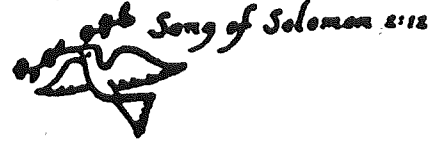




# The Voice Of The Turtle



JUNE 2008

## NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Society for Poets of Southern New Jersey will be on Friday, June 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30. We'll be at our usual hangout: The Woodbury Friends Meeting House at 124 North Broad Street (Route 45-across the street from Charlie Brown's Restaurant).

It'll be our first meeting of the summer of 2008, and the only one at the Meeting House. July and August's meetings will be at alternate locations...stay posted.

## ROBERT'S RAPID RECOVERY

The Society is happy to report that Robert Hawthorne is recovering well from his *descending branch-versus-noggin* incident.

He still has headaches, but is otherwise doing quite well. At May's meeting, he expressed his great gratitude for the outpouring of concern and well-wishes he has received.

"Hey, that's what friends do." Poets just happen to word their sentiments with a bit more style.

We hope Robert continues to move swiftly and carefully down the road of recovery.

## HOPKINS HOUSE HAPPENINGS

The Poetry in the Park series is under way at Haddon Township's Hopkins House; they are each Monday this month at 7 PM. The address is 250 South Park Drive. The phone number is (856) 858-0040. The web site is [arts.camden.lib.nj.us](http://arts.camden.lib.nj.us).

Check it out!

## CRITIQUE MONTH

It's been a while, some people have asked, and so we're a-gonna do it: *This month is a critique month!* What's a "critique month?," some of you new members may ask. Well, good people, that is where each attendee is encouraged (but certainly not required) to bring 10 to 15 copies of a poem that he or she feels has greater potential than it has yet to realize. *You like it, but you invite input from your kind, positively constructive friends to help it become its best.*

We generally do the critique thing in the second or third round, so we'll see how it goes.

## THERESA'S MISADVENTURE

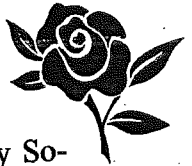
Robert Hawthorne wasn't the only Society member who had an accident last month. Theresa McGinnis had a vehicular misadventure, from which, as she put it, she acquired a greater understanding of the definition for the term "whiplash." Although she has had some pain in her neck and back, she was able to attend May's meeting. We were glad to see her, and happy she's doing better.

We hope she continues to return to tip-top shape.

## FIRST FRIDAY SING

July's first Friday is July 4<sup>th</sup>. My guess would be that their gathering will be shifted to an alternate date.

To get the full scoop, contact Bob or Meed Barnett at 965-5347 or via [bob@westjersey.org](mailto:bob@westjersey.org).



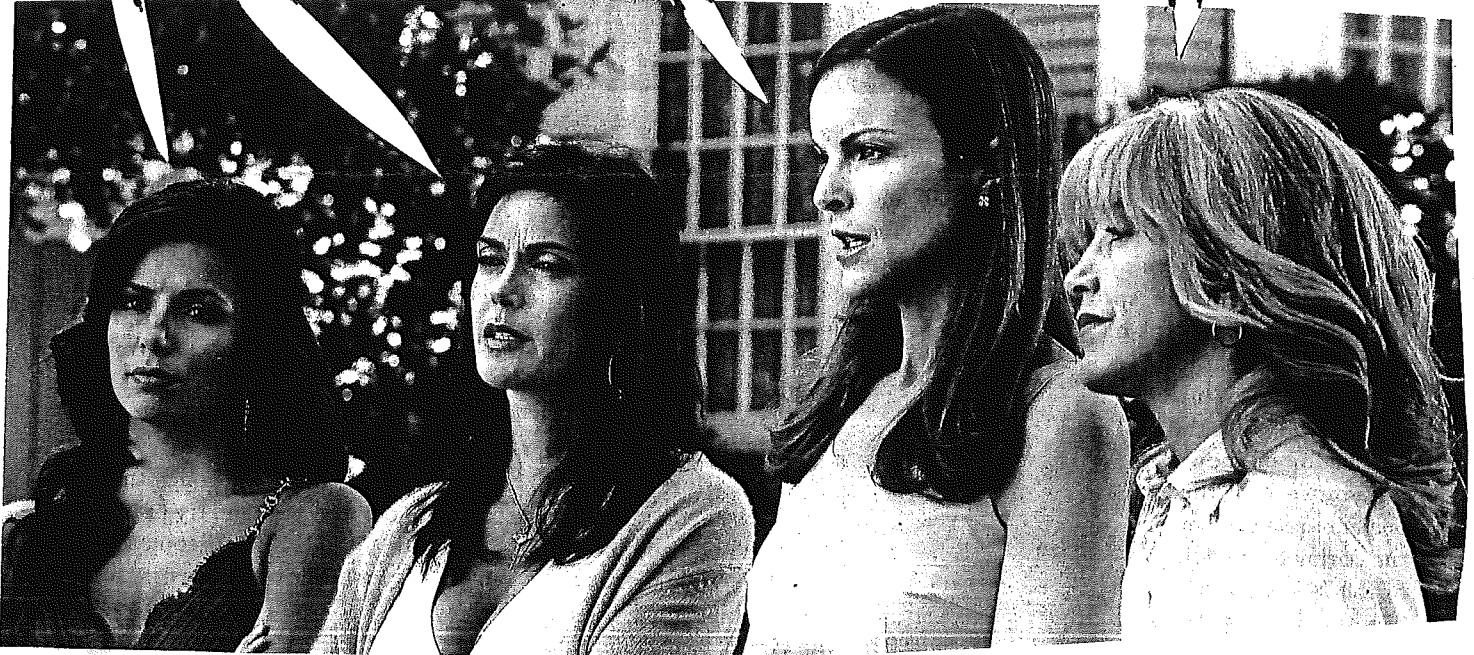
## OVERDUE; DUES

Please put an end to this ridiculous soap opera; pay your dues, already.

If everyone renews beforehand, we may have July's meeting in Wisteria Lane.

If you have yet to renew, there will be an asterisk under this story as red as my hair. Hey? Where's Edie?

I don't know. My guess: committing a crime or sleeping with someone. We're desperate; please stop watching trash tv and pay your dues.



Minutes – May 30, 2008  
Society for Poets of Southern New Jersey



In attendance were Anthony & Lynette Milanese (Kenny was wandering around too), David & Cindy Steinberg, Robert & Joanne Hawthorne, Dennis Deems, Vern Rose, Lynne Stock, Joe Valentino, Claudette Keegan, Theresa McGuiness, Bob Barnett, newcomer, Tom/Mike Grasso and me; Linda Richards/Carol Cannon.

The May meeting was a combination pot-luck dinner, poetry reading and birthday celebration/tribute to our founder, David L. Steinberg. The food, poetry and camaraderie were of the highest caliber.

To open the meeting, Lynette, assuming David to have the wisdom of his years, asked that he select a favorite poem of hers to be read. Like Johnny-on-the-Spot, she whipped out the requested poem, "Portolét Blues" which was not about wine, docks, face cream or potato chip companies. It set, in part, the tone for the meeting. We were all up a creek with a paddle. Additionally, she presented David with a poem as a birthday gift and he read it to the group. "Nude" was another request.

Tom amazed us with his first read-out-loud poem; a deeply passionate piece; as were his others, leaving him looking "flushed." His alter-ego, Mike, made a contribution to toilet humor. Claudette dazzled us with her first read-out-loud poem (except for family) written for a doctor that had shown compassion while treating a family member.

She also wed a weely a-daw-wa-ble poem about an Easta wabbit. Kudos on the strawberry salad. Both new to reading but certainly neither Tom nor Claudette could be considered amateur poets.

Dennis read a moving and grateful poem as his tribute to David and the very important and positive role he (and others) have had in his life. After giving David his "Old Man Kit," I was happy not to hear him say "You shouldn't have." I then proceeded with my guilt/awe inspired poem that was my tribute; then read some troubling poems written by Carol.

"Singing Joe" amused us with his theme poems but had to leave early for his second job that will enable him to afford gasoline. Lynne paid tribute to David by speaking warmly and emotionally of their 18-year (wow; they're both old) relationship. She then read a song.

Anthony read both an anecdotal piece and a poem that were tributes to and explanations of his own long and productive relationship with David, Cindy, and Steven. He told of how important the roles of each couple were at the other's wedding. David dedicated "Afterglow" to the group.

Cindy impressed us by reading (the first time I've witnessed) two selections, then left to pick up their Miracle Child. She promised to say "hi" to the Pope for us and we're all looking forward to the pix at the August meeting. Arrivederci and have a good time!

Vern, who very meticulously prepared an awesome potato salad that I'm hoping to duplicate, gave us a bit of history and read his sequel to Flander's Field. Robert gave anecdotal tribute to David and "read" a poem that he had written from memory. Joanne paid tribute to David as well in her always upbeat way.

After some painful poems, Theresa claimed that she would lighten up the mood and then proceeded by reading a poem about a dead guy. It turned out to be her dearly departed father and, indeed, it did lighten up the mood. "Patient Patients" was clever, funny and something we could all relate to. We were unanimous in believing it should be posted in all ER's and doctor's offices. Theresa also read a warm endearing tribute to David. Bob Barnett played guitar and sang a very entertaining and funny song about how his get-up-and-go got-up-and-went. His presence always livens up the meetings.

And where, oh where, was our fearless leader? Although he read some great poetry, he was distracted throughout the course of the meeting as he was fixated on trying to open the treasure chest that would provide "a map" for expansion of the Steinberg family jewels. After the meeting Tom/Mike gave David tips and caveats about cracking the code. We all had a great time. It was also a very emotional meeting and we decided Kleenex (maybe toilet tissue would be more appropriate) will be provided at future meetings. Lynette tried to close the meeting with "Heart Light" but most of us refused to leave until the lights were turned off (about ten times). Happy Birthday David! See y'all next month.

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"Your body is your vehicle for life. As long as you are here, live in it. Love, honor, respect, and cherish it; treat it well, and it will serve you in kind."*

- Suzy Prudden



## \$ POET

May's \$ Poet was Robert Hawthorne with his "Bless Their Canine Souls." When I was choosing poetry for last month's Poetry Corner, I knew I wanted to include a poem by Robert. When I came across this poem, I knew it had to be in there, as a tribute to both Robert and his friend Winchester, who just passed into doggie heaven last month.

Thanks to the wonderfully generous Karen Springer, Robert won a \$10 gift package (as will every \$. Poet winner until August). He chose a SFP check, to put towards his medical bills, which, proportionally, is like putting the dollar total of the national funding of the arts towards the war debt. But, every little bit helps.

Congrats, Robert! Thanks, Karen!

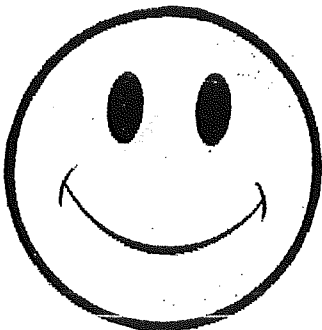
## WOODBURY ARTS FEST

It sounds like the annual Woodbury Arts Festival at Narcissa Weatherbee's house was a great time, although the heat may have hurt the attendance numbers a bit.

The Society thanks Dennis Deems for setting-up the sound system. We also thank Linda Richards and Robert and Joanne Hawthorne for "helping the show go on." They all read, as did charter member Joe Valentino. Others read, as well. Linda was recruiting potential members and coaxing shy poets to read. (Good job, Linda!) Joy Frederick was also present.

The sounds of bluegrass music and electric guitars could be heard; and the art work was excellent.

If you've never been, try to go next year. It's a blast.



## AMAZING ANTHOLOGY DISCOUNT

No, it wasn't just a magical dream you thought you may have misheard; it's true: copies of our sixth anthology, Flowers in a Crannied Wall are now available at the amazing price of 75 cents! They are slightly water damaged, but the poetry is not watered down. (Excuse my *dry* humor.) They and all our fine regularly-priced anthologies and other booklets are available at all Society functions, or by mail.

Take note: only one copy of Georgia Wurster's Men are Like That and Other Myths remains; and only three copies of Anthony Milanese's Intense Intentions In Tents are left.

Support the group that supports you!

Buy.

Bye.



## TURTLE CORRECTION

It has been known to happen. Last month I (Mr. Newsletter Editor/Anthony M.) made a boo-boo in May's otherwise perfect The Voice of the Turtle. At April's meeting, Vern Rose handed me a paper that said "Words to Tap" atop a lyric. I must've misheard him when he told me they were the actual words to the old somber, bugle, military-send-off-standard: "Taps." I thought it was the title to a poem Vern wrote.

At May's meeting, Vern explained this to me, and that he cannot take credit for that lyric.

On that same paper, Vern mentioned another item of interest, a possible "phrase of the month," if you will: "Eye Rhyme." An eye rhyme is words that look like they rhyme, but do not. For example: "lint" and "pint," or "lose" and "Rose."

Thanks for the fun facts, Vern. Sorry I misinterpreted some of it.

## AMPD 2008

Hey, thanks again to everyone who helped make May's 5<sup>th</sup> annual Artists Musicians Poets and Dancers (and, no, I haven't been able to convince Lynette to change the name from "AMPD" to "DAMP") a rousing success.

We take this moment to thank the **Paulsboro Sons of Italy** for their donation of \$25. It arrived too late for mention in last month's fantastically informative and exciting Voice of the Turtle, but not too late to be as greatly appreciated as all of our fine sponsors' gifts. It's a nice organization (and that's not just the Italian half of me talking).

**Thank you, Sponsors!**

## BIRTHDAY BARDS

Month six has six SFPOSNJ birthdays. The birthday parade began with Theresa McGinnis' celebration on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Our beloved founding father, David Steinberg, blew out 65 candles on 6/5. Barbara Perlmutter cut the cake on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Dennis Deems had a nice party on the 13<sup>th</sup>...his birthday was the 17<sup>th</sup>. Joyce Lee Williams-Slater completed another orbit around the sun on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Secretary Linda Richards finished our partying month with her big day on the first day of the summer: June 20<sup>th</sup>.

July's lone birthday bard is Ruth Van Veenendaal. She missed having our seventh June birthday by one day – she celebrates on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Happy Birthday, guys and gals!

## SUMMER '76

by Joy Frederick  
(from her Touch Love Gently)

It's so peaceful and quiet  
here tonight  
in the park  
Only the sounds of nature  
can I hear  
The soft breeze that rustles  
in the trees  
The birds chirping far beyond the way  
and the crickets, somehow knowing,  
it's the ending of another day  
It's so peaceful and quiet  
here tonight  
It's a time to sit and think  
thoughts  
of only you  
Thoughts tho,  
find me  
wishing - - -  
dreaming - - -  
That you were here too

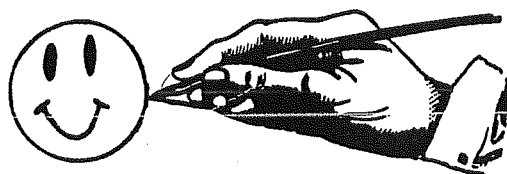


## Poetry Corner

### Y? BECAUSE I LIKE YOU

by Joe Valentino  
(from his Seasons of Thought)

Though I see you now and then,  
It seems I never do  
The feeling is here again  
That I am missing you  
So take my feelings written here  
For what they may be worth  
It's simply that I like you  
As a person on this earth



# Poetry Corner

## AGE RAGE

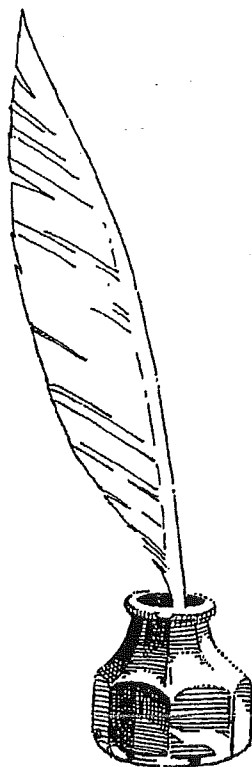
by Karen R. Springer

She will NOT fade away  
And she makes that quite clear;  
Not in her fiftieth, sixtieth  
Or seventieth year.  
There'll be a time when she's gone  
(and some people may cheer);  
But until she drops dead,  
She's very much here.

Her profile's still high  
And her skirts are still short.  
Decades she does not deny  
But her style they'll not thwart.  
Her spirit's a General  
In the Army of Life.  
Her face has no wrinkles,  
They're just service strips.

She won't take up knitting,  
Stereotypes not embrace,  
She's not into quitting,  
And she's right in your face.  
She's tanned and she's tough  
She walks with a strut;  
And her profile's not bad  
When she sucks in her gut.

Her brain's never been bigger.  
She's sharp and she's smart.  
Her reflexes: hair trigger  
And she's got a huge heart.  
She still burns with ambition  
And, with pride she will say  
In Time's War of Attrition,  
She's doing OK. ☺



## NOT YOUR RUN-OF-THE-MILL DAVID (A Legend in Our Own Minds)

by Linda Richards

You're not the guy who wrote some Psalms  
or the kid in the Goliath story  
You're not one of the Copperfields  
of Dickens or magical glory  
You didn't wear a coon-skin cap  
as once did David Crockett  
Or get to see Spiders from Mars  
from your hi-tech hi-fi rocket

You didn't pose naked for Michelangelo  
and all the world to see  
Or open your own hamburger chain  
to compete with Mickey D  
Or bend it like Beckham or do a thing  
that we might think is sinister  
Nor head a presidential campaign  
or serve as a Prime Minister

You didn't marry Liza Minnelli  
although your wife can sing  
We don't think of Davey Steinberg's Locker  
as such a morbid thing  
There's a lot of David's out there  
so you'll be glad to know  
A mention of Van Halen's lead  
and the Saint is as far as I'll go

I speak for the entire group  
when I say I don't know whether  
You realize that we like you more  
than all these guys put together  
Your poems of passion, kindness, humor  
and smarts we get to see  
Your sense of self and how you fit  
with world and family

AARP called you a senior citizen  
ten long years ago  
Now officially at retirement age,  
there's something you should know  
Misquoting (again) something written  
before your son was alive  
We will still need you. We will still feed you;  
when you're 65!



## OTHER GARDENS YET TO GROW

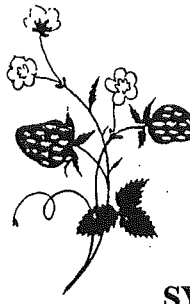
by Helene H. Layton

Summertime green granted wonder  
And whispered of tides other than the sea's,  
Where love was a bright horizon,  
And sunlight kissed kaleidoscopic trees.

Soil underfoot uttered appetite,  
Heroines bending for its seeds,  
While rain gave scent to the orchid;  
The rose's thorn respecting its needs.

Maytime winds made sway fruited meadows,  
While snowy patches promised feed,  
And graceful leaves trumpeted their prayers,  
Hands raised 'gainst the nil from which we're freed.

Vivid blue skies sang forever,  
And children thrilled to the rainbow's creed.  
Hand in hand, they played 'midst the ferns.  
Chiming soft rhymes they'd run off to read,  
In other gardens yet to grow.



## SYSTEM FAULT OR DEFAULT?

by Dr. Raghavan

There is a system in every walk of life  
Wonder of the system is its longevity.  
System defines a standard on its own  
Fault in a system is created by default

Men of a system are the real devils  
They shake off its morals like a hat  
An individual in a system is a part  
It quietly sidelines the one different.

System takes care of its likeminded  
So beautifully & successfully, surely  
So shameful and awful are its means  
So stunning and slamming, oh! God.

As part of a system one gains a lot  
Assured of a smooth passage & joy  
Individuals flock together like ants  
Individuals help each other quickly.

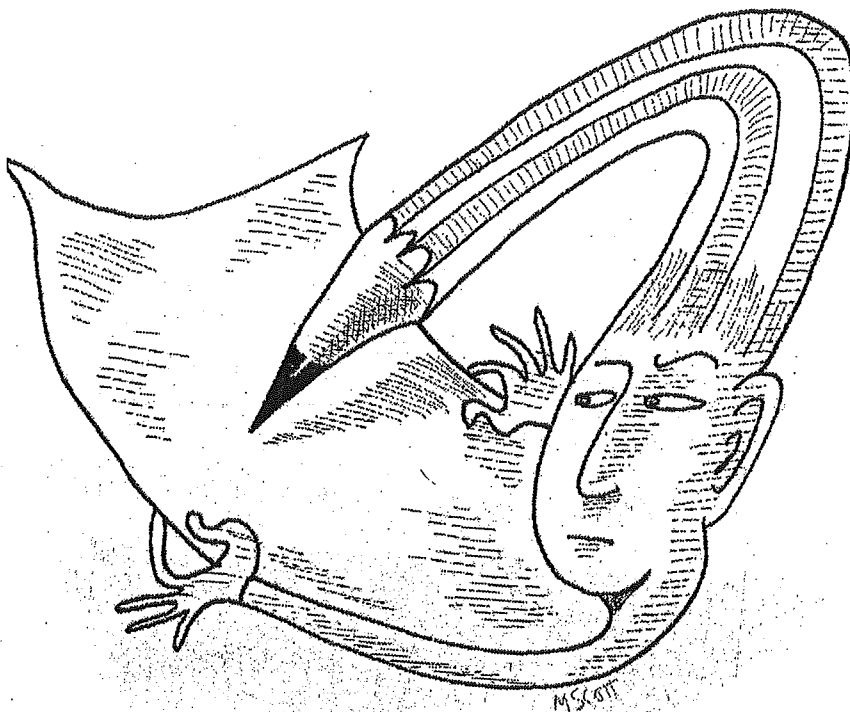
Try to enrage a system by quizzing  
Trifle or tricky a query as you can  
You are easily noted & pushed out  
You keep wondering all the while.

Raghu always suffers in a system due  
Raghu's own stubborn steadfastness  
Come what may, Sacrifice own gain  
Come on, lone life, he never minds.

System gets a jolt only sometimes  
Systemic faults are dealt strongly,  
Systematically & constantly, then  
System changes & accommodates.

(Note: "In Hindu mythology, Raghu was a valorous king of the Ikshavaku dynasty. The name in sanskrit translates to *the fast one*, deriving from Raghu's chariot driving abilities." (From Wikipedia))





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