

# The Voice Of The Turtle



JULY 2008

## NEXT MEETING

July and August are the two meetings when the Woodbury Friends Meeting House is **not** available to us. But thanks to our wonderful, hospitable membership, we haven't yet had to meet in any open lots or parking areas. Our next meeting is not in July, however, it will be on **Saturday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>** at the home of Theresa and Bill McGinnis at 232 Night Hawk Circle in Thorofare, NJ. It'll be a special meeting with a special start time and a special summer pot luck dinner. We'll be gathering at 4 PM, this early start hopefully presents an opportunity to our members with night vision issues.

Okay, pretend you're at The Meeting House: make a left, going south on Broad Street (Route 45) towards the main intersection in town, make a right onto **Delaware Street**. Go west (towards Interstate 295). Continue on Delaware Street right under the highway. If you're traveling by way of 295, take **exit 21**, upon Delaware Street, and go west towards National Park and the Delaware River. Soon you'll be in the River Winds area, you'll see a big display at the Grove Avenue intersection. Continue on and look for balloons. At the fourth **Left**, turn onto **King Fisher Way**. You'll be on that a very short while, then you'll **bend right** into **Night Hawk Circle**. Right there on the corner, at **house 232**, you'll see the McGinnis home...again, look for balloons. If you miss the King Fisher turn, you'll see the Community Center; turn around.

Theresa's number is 848-9429. Bring a dish and we'll see ya there!

August's "other, later meeting" will be at the Steinberg home.

## HANK AND VIRGINIA

The Society sends its most heartfelt well-wishes out to Hank Urbanek, who has spent some time in Kennedy Hospital, recently. He's a great guy, we all love him, and pray he's feeling his best soon.

Not long ago, Virginia sent me a nice letter. She sent it along with two things I encourage everyone to send: dues payment and poetry for the newsletter.

Virginia and Hank are two of our favorite people. They are also amongst those members who don't drive at night.

We pray they are well, and we hope to see our friends again, before too long.

## POETIC CHALLENGE

by Lynette Milanese



Anthony Mohamed had a poetic challenge: Write new words to the "Star Spangled Banner," or write your own national anthem. This is an interesting challenge.

So (with apologies to Mr. Key), "Oh, say can you write new words to the national anthem?"

Share them at the August 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## HOPKINS HOUSE HAPPENINGS

Poetry in the Park continues at the Hopkins House on July 14<sup>th</sup> when Conchetta Risilia is featured. On August 11<sup>th</sup>, Oni Lasana will be center stage. Both readings are on Monday nights from 7 to 9 PM.

The House is at 250 South Park Drive in Haddon Township. You can call them at (856) 858-0040. You can also get their full schedule of events (It ain't just poetry!) via [arts.camden.lib.nj.us/](http://arts.camden.lib.nj.us/).

Things is happening!

(So is poor grammar.)

Society of Poets of Southern New Jersey  
Minutes (Commercial Poetic License)  
June 27, 2008

Attendance: Anthony & Lynette Milanese, Joanne & Robert Hawthorne, Claudette Keegan, (her niece) Lori Shropshire, Theresa McGinnes, Joe Valentino, Vern Rose, David Steinberg, Bob Barnett and me; Linda Richards/Carol Cannon.

Narcissa's Art Festival: Not mentioned in the newsletter were participation by Claudette who was "in charge" while I went for an air-conditioning break or the heroics of Lynn Stock. Although not feeling well that day (and declining a ride), Lynne arrived on her bicycle with her cane across the handlebars with some ice water, watermelon, napkins and a song/poetry book to relieve me after four-hours of fun in the 90 degree sun. She was selfless in her desire to encourage the crowd to participate in sing-alongs and in her attempts to put a positive spin on the poetry portion of the festival. We hope both ladies understand this omission was the result of a miscommunication on my part and not a lack of appreciation for theirs.

Back to the meeting: Claudette read works of her own and others as well including "Bobby," a poem about a reunion with her brother after a 23-year separation from when he was just five. Feeling more comfortable among us she showed her truck-driver/drunken sailor side with a poem about the rewards for hard work. Lori, new to the meeting read Someday, Somewhere, Broken Toy and Parenting. She found someone she could really relate to in the work of Bob Barnett, whose pieces I can't say enough about in terms of their cleverness and humor without sounding as if I were being paid.

A letter from Virginia Fleming was read. Hank is in the hospital where doctors are trying to work up a diagnosis and we all wish him well.

Theresa read "Beach Bums," another clever "punch line poem." Her multi-function pen prematurely lost its writing abilities but, thankfully, may still be useful. It was just as well as we all had headaches anyway and just wanted to be read to.

Anthony and Lynette read a number of sensual and romantic poems, "Blossoms of Hope" and "Sweet Music" to name a few. A voyeuristic fly on the wall is gonna have a hot time in the old town tonight.

David mentioned that Steven was in CA and he hasn't heard from Cindy yet who is in Italy. He may have quite a surprise planned for her return. We hope the phone rings soon and we know all news will be good. David read his masterpiece, "No More War;" my personal favorite on so many levels.

Vern read "Scythe, Snath & Hone," no doubt inspired by his fabulous inventions of all of the above. He also read "Movin' On" and "Street" (or "Strut:" can't read my handwriting) and a poem about how natural beauties make better campers.

Joanne suggested freerice.com which I have vowed to check out even though I'm not really clear on what it is. I know it challenges your knowledge of words and provides food for the poor. Appropriately, Joanne also read "To See or Not to See."

Bob sang a request; then some pieces he had written. The books that he selects his singing material from are clever and funny and his style and energy makes them impossible not to sing along with. He was brilliant. Oh, wait a minute; David was Brilliant. Bob was extraordinary. He read a special version of Serenity Prayer and



dedicated it to Lori. Bob readeth a more Biblical rendition that didn't stinketh. Thou art pushing the limits of my memory and notations if thou expecteth a longer parable. I can't remembereth but it was a funny piece and he shall inherit the earth for reading it to the multitude. Fish and loaves were passed around the table (or was that last month?). He also read "Contra Band" or was it "Contraband" or was it "Contraband Contra Band?"

Robert read "Life's Opportunity" and "Story to tell the Nations." He also read (if I understood correctly) something written by St. Germain via a medium.

Joe read "Baby Smile" about his niece (?) and sang and read other pieces as well. Not having to work the next day, Joe stayed and entertained us for the entire meeting!

Summer was on everyone's mind - "Ocean Thrill," "Summer Pool," "Hammock," "Shell," "Vacation Time" and "Fudgy-Wudgy Man."

Quite a few untitled works were read which I cannot name. The authors remain nameless as well.

I'm on a tight deadline this month so I only have time to mention Now What?, Baghdad, Inner & Outer Radiation, Sparkle, techno-poetry, Blue Collar View, As I See It, bank check clarification, Hoe-Down Hall discussion and something about cell phones and life force.

See ya'll at the July meeting in August.

## \$ POET

Secretary Linda Richards (no relation to Mary) was voted as our June \$ Poet with "Not Your Run-of-the-Mill David (A Legend in Our Own Minds)." It is a totally cool tribute to our heralded founding father: David Steinberg. She doesn't think of herself as a poet, but this fine piece shows that she can most certainly *do it*. She has the heart of a poet. The heart is a muscle. Exercise the muscle and "pump out" the poetry.

She chose to receive a \$10 Society check as her prize package...a check she says she wants to save, and perhaps frame, but doesn't want to cash. And so Karen Springer's contributions to the double-the-\$ Poet fund now extend until September.

Way to go, Linda! Congratulations!

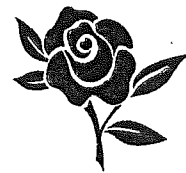
## CRITIQUE MONTH

What if they threw a war and nobody came? What if they threw a critique month and nobody participated?

We had "no takers." No one brought a poem to critique at June's meeting. Oh well. We'll try again, some time. No biggie.



## MEED IN NEED



The Society for Poets has been blessed with many wonderful people with whom we get to share membership. Meed and Bob Barnett are surely two of the newer members we cherish.

In the last couple months, while Bob has been busy working towards his doctorate degree, Meed has had a tough time of it. She is both recovering from a minor surgery and from an unrelated accident. She slipped in the driveway and banged her head on her car's rearview mirror.

Despite these set-backs, she's hosting an art display on July 11<sup>th</sup> at an art gallery in Ocean City (6<sup>th</sup> and Asbury). Call Meed for info on this gallery exhibit (and when her next one will be) at (609) 965-5347.

We all hope she's feeling her best and that all her artistic endeavors are successful.

## FIRST FRIDAY SING

The next Friday sing-thing will be on Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup>. Call Bob or Meed Barnett at (609) 965-5347 or visit [bob@westjersey.org](mailto:bob@westjersey.org) for further musical information.



## WOODBURY ARTS FEST

Having not been able to attend the festival myself, and not having appointed or hired an on-duty stringer to cover the story, I (Mr. Newsletter Editor/Anthony M.) missed some pertinent information. Mostly, that there were two more Society poets on hand than had been originally reported: Lynn Stock and Claudette Keegan.

Lynn bicycled her way there and was a big help. And Claudette has quickly become a valuable, active member.

Thanks, ladies. Sorry for the oversight.



## KEAN PAULINE

She is the wonderful coordinator of Deptford's Artists and Poets Among Us, she is an inspiration and a big help to Lynette Milanese in her AMPD coordination, and she's an all-around positive person and swell gal.

May we all now pause to send loving, thankful thoughts to Pauline Jonas, who recently supplemented her dues payment with a \$15 contribution to our group.

"Pauline, we haven't yet pointed your kind contribution in any specific direction, but we'll tell you when we do. In the meantime, let us just say *Thank you* and *We love you.*"

## BIRTHDAY BARDS

July's sole birthday bard was Ruth Van Veenendaal who sang the birthday jingle on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

We'll have five birthday cakes ablaze in August. Penny Bilsky will be celebrating (date unknown), and then we have four birthday boys. Anthony Milanese edits another chapter on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Sy Perlmutter cuts the cake on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Webmaster/guitar hero Bob Barnett posts another year on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Junior member Steven Steinberg returns from California for the Society's cake with the lowest candle population on August 21<sup>st</sup>.

Happy birthday, poets!



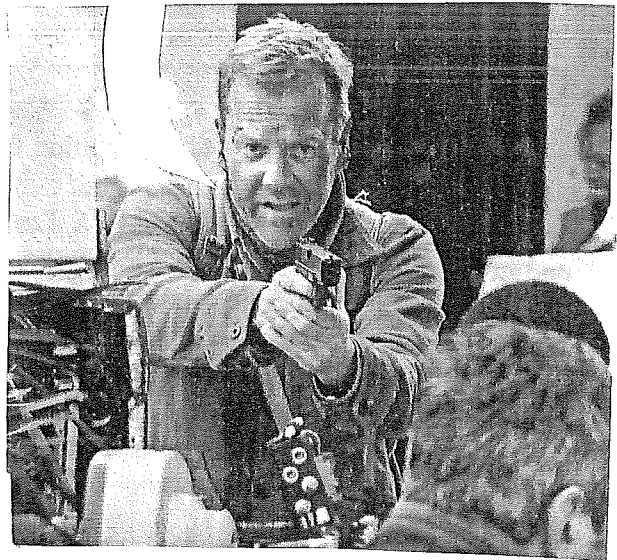
## OVERDUE: DUES

My name is Jack Bauer. I'm an agent with CTU Los Angeles. If I can kill a few dozen bad guys, foil complex terrorist plots, miraculously, continuously, narrowly defy death, and save the world within a 24 hour period, annually, perhaps you can find the time to renew your dues this month.

Chloe has informed me that if you have a red asterisk under this story, our sophisticated CTU records show you have yet to renew. Next month will be your last warning, then I get serious.

If I can fit all my eating and pottying for 24 hour sleepless stretches during commercial breaks, I'd think you could write a \$15 check and mail it to the Society for Poets' Treasurer via the newsletter's address, or simply pay at any SFPOSNJ function.

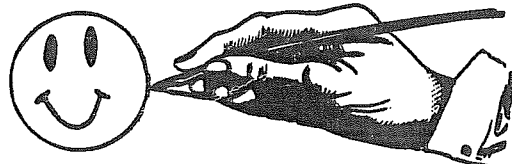
Speaking of "functions," another commercial break is coming up, so I've got to "be going."



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"Pain is deeper than all thought;  
laughter is higher than all pain."*

- Elbert Hubbard



# Poetry Corner

## THOUGHTS FROM A HAMMOCK

by Theresa McGinnis  
(from her Poetry for All Seasons)

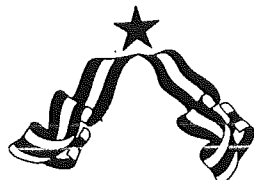
Lying in a rope hammock,  
You can only see green tree  
Leaves,  
blue sky,  
and white clouds.

Suddenly,  
The world doesn't seem so  
dangerous or dirty  
or dismal.

Suddenly,  
There is no world  
Other than where the  
Butterflies, birds  
and angels dwell.

Suddenly,  
There is an ethereal beauty,  
A serene awareness,  
A quiet understanding.

Suddenly,  
There is God.



## (Four Haikus)

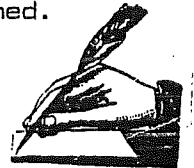
by Penny Bilsky  
(from VIIIB/Anthology VIII)

Velvety old cat  
sleeps peacefully on the chair--  
safe in her own world.

Shimmering rainbow  
resplendent in the heavens--  
bright kaleidoscope.

Gently falling snow  
metered from heaven's own door  
covers all in sight.

This babbling brook  
once so fresh, so crystal clear  
murky now and drained.



## PINE TREES ON ICY ROUTE TWO NINETY-FIVE

by Erv Bilsky  
(from Flowers in a Crannied Wall/Anthology VI)

I saw, at last, the Pines today --  
Stately, beautiful, wintry-alive,  
I gazed at them on my creeping way,  
Bumper to bumper on Two Ninety-Five.

I never saw them at all before,  
Speeding along in the morning crush;  
At fifty-five or even more,  
They simply weren't there in the rush.

But now today the icy slip  
Reduced the cars to barely a crawl,  
The magic wand of a frozen trip  
Grew trees that didn't exist before.

I've heard it said that the brighter side  
Is always there if you care to see,  
And so it was on a slippery ride  
That beautiful Pines grew just for me.

# Poetry Corner

**ALAS** by Hank Urbanek  
(from The Wonder of Wandering/Anthology I)



Mattress in the trash alas  
Did you come from bed of brass  
Could I but read your rents and dents  
Or hear your many tales so tall  
Of life conceived or still denied  
Of trashing love or lonely death  
Or would only phantasy uncoil.



**IF I WERE HAPPY FOREVER**  
by Virginia Fleming

Sometimes I wish that  
summer would never end,  
that night would never come --  
but, then,  
I would miss the softness  
of snowflakes,  
the amber-blush of sunsets,  
the autumn-hush of pumpkin moon --  
if I were happy forever,  
I would not know how  
to share the sorrow of a friend.

**HERMAN** by Sy Pelmutter  
(from The Marriage of Art and Poetry/Anthology X)

I saw Herman the other day,  
He was scurrying across the tarmac,  
Whenever I see him, come what may,  
The little critter is always on track.

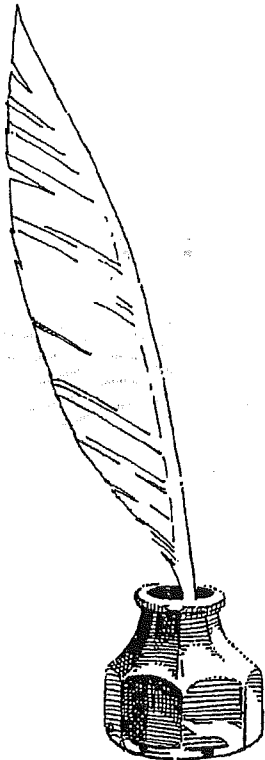
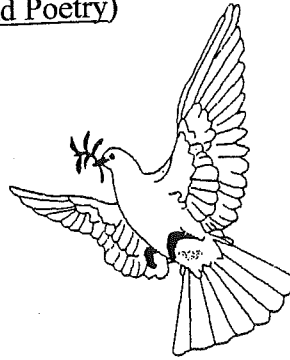
He runs all over the place, you see  
Looking for food, that's his hobby,  
When he stands outside the door and  
Looks up at me,  
I'm tempted to let him in, but my second  
thought says "nay".

You may wonder who or what Herman is,  
A cute little creature who hangs around  
our house,  
We like having him around and often call  
his name.  
But this funny gray squirrel doesn't always  
play our game.



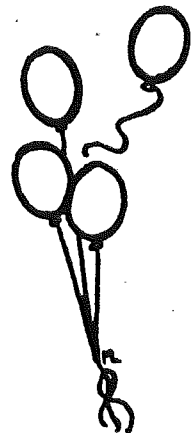
**NEVER ENDINGS** by Dennis Deems  
(from The Marriage of Art and Poetry)

To love  
is to feel  
in fullness  
my own pain.  
To know that I love  
is my only relief from pain.  
Oh the agony!  
...and ah...  
the greater comfort  
of love...  
I am in pain...  
for more of love...



**RAVAGERS OF THE MOON**  
by Carolyn Furio  
(from Flowers in a Crannied Wall)

O eternal beauty  
lantern of the night  
enchancing in all your forms  
at your zenith  
luminous white  
pearl of the universe  
unblemished and unspoiled.  
Target  
for the lust of man  
who raped your parent,  
earth,  
defiled her and  
stripped her bare  
devoiding her of worth.  
Now  
with passionate ardor  
man seeks a new conquest.  
O moon in all your glory  
he will ravage you  
with zest.



**FEED THE FIRE**  
by Kay Bunt  
(from We the Poets/Anthology V)

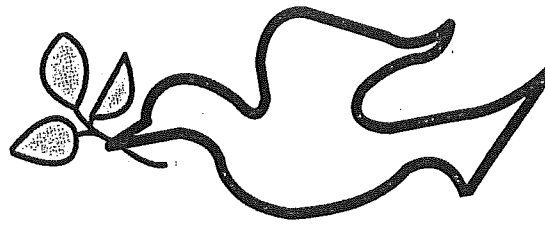
Fear is a slaving wolf  
lured by the scent of suspicion  
who sniffs spores of misinformation,  
snarls at innocents,  
snaps up snippets of gossip.

Lean-flanked, rough-coated, feral-toothed,  
a victim of insatiable hunger,  
he hunts random prey,  
lopes through woods of lunar distortions,  
howling at shadows.

The wolf is kept at bay  
by the flickering flame  
of knowledge. Who will gather sticks  
to keep the glow alight  
through nocturnal ignorance  
till the coming of sun sight?

**DISCOVERY** by Frances Stiles  
(from The Wonder of Wandering)

Stealing, creeping quietly,  
I'll infiltrate every aspect of your life.  
Without your even knowing it,  
I'll find a spot and snuggle in  
Until, before you know it  
There won't be a single speck  
Left of your existence  
That is not also a part of mine;  
And when you discover me there,  
Hidden among all the scattered things you love,  
Maybe you'll get the hint.

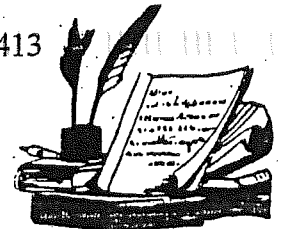


**RELATIVE PERFECTION**

by LeVern Rose  
(from The Marriage of Art and Poetry)

Perfection's degree  
  
defines blemish as much as  
  
blemish ... perfection.

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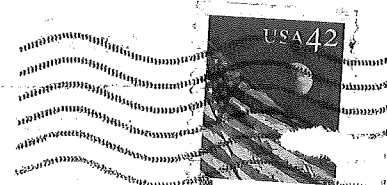
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