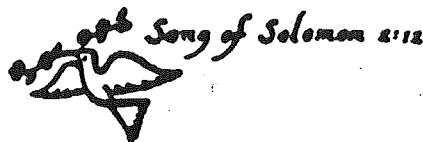




## The Voice Of The Turtle



AUGUST 2008

### IN REMEMBRANCE OF HENRY URBANEK

It is with tremendous sadness that we report the passing of beloved, longtime Society poet Hank Urbanek. Our cherished friend died in Kennedy Hospital from MDS complications. The Society offers all of its love and powers of condolence to his widow Virginia Fleming, a charter member, wonderful poet, and one of the nicest people we know.

Hank and Virginia's love story was the first great romance that truly blossomed in our nurturing midst. Virginia and Hank met at a Parents Without Partners function: a Wine, Cheese, and Poetry Night. The evening's proceedings featured taped poetry by Hank's favorite poet: Robert Service. It was a magical night; two hearts were in a soft, receptive mode. Some sparks started to fly, and Virginia invited Hank to come to a Society for Poets of SNJ Christmas meeting at Mg Merlanti's home in Woodbury. He accepted; and that's how it all started. They were together ever since. Hank had a new favorite poet.

The Society loved Hank. He was a longtime Treasurer, a collector of antique tools, and a sweet man with a ready-smile. The following is Hank's obituary (minus the funeral announcement) as printed in the Gloucester County Times on 7/16/08.

*Henry "Hank" Urbanek, age 83, died on July 15, 2008. Born and raised in Philadelphia, he lived in Woodbury from 1963-1985 and has lived in Pitman for the past 23 years. He graduated from Dobbins Vocation and Technical School in Philadelphia*

*and attended Spring Garden Institute. He was a WWII Army Veteran serving in France as a Tank Operator in the 214<sup>th</sup> Ordinance Heavy Maintenance Co. Tech. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade.*

*Hank worked for the Franklin Institute as a Draftsman and Designer in the Research Center and retired after 42 years. He was a former member of the Woodbury Lions Club and served as president when the Lions Club founded the West Deptford Am-balance Association. He was a member of the Society for Poets of Southern NJ, the Computer Nerds Breakfast Club, Treasurer for the Kids Who Need a Break Christmas Party in Pitman, and the Crafts of NJ Tool Club. Hank was an avid square dancer and enjoyed summering in Highlands, NC.*

*He was predeceased by his first wife Iva (nee Egolf) and sister Ruth Nelson. Survived by his wife of 23 years Virginia Fleming, children Carol (Ronald) Woolcock of E. Berlin, PA, Edward (Toni) of Boyers, PA, Eric (Maryann) of Sarasota, FL, step-children Rosemary, Clifford, and Michael Fleming, brother David of Horsham, PA, 5 grandchildren, and 4 step grandchildren.*

*Those desiring may make a contribution to the Kids Who Need a Break Christmas Party, PO Box 93, Pitman, NJ 08071.*

We were very happy to have Virginia with us at our August 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting for our Hank Urbanek tribute. We read his poems from anthologies, a poem Mg wrote for Hank and Virginia, and another Hank poem Virginia brought along.

(continued)

Surely, the highlight of the meeting was when Society member/guitarist Bob Barnett asked Virginia if she and Hank had a favorite song. Virginia, without hesitation, answered that "Morning Has Broken" was "their song," and that she was disappointed it wasn't played at Hank's funeral service on July 19<sup>th</sup>. Bob, without hesitation, played and sang the beautiful song, brilliantly. I think I speak for all when I say it was one of the most emotional, heart-touching moments in SFPOSNJ history. Virginia wept; we all wept with her.

Virginia is, understandably, hampered and somber by transition and loss, but is, otherwise, feeling pretty well. She isn't going to make it down to her other home in North Carolina this year, but hopes to make it back there next spring.

We wish her all of God's blessings, and thank God for the many blessings she and Hank have brought us.

Peace.

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"Everything that irritates us about others, can lead us to an understanding of ourselves."* -- Carl Jung



### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for The Society for Poets of Southern New Jersey will be on Friday, August 29<sup>th</sup> at the home of David, Cindy, and Steven Steinberg.

By popular demand (we seem to enjoy "breaking bread" together), it's another potluck dinner. So bring along a dish and try to be at the Steinberg homestead by 6:00.

If you're traveling north to Haddon Heights, take Interstate 295 to Exit 29B; if you're going south, take Exit 29. That'll put you on Route 30 West (The White Horse Pike). From 30 West, make a left on Station Avenue. Go over the railroad tracks and make a right on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Look for house #113 on the right.

The Steinberg hotline is 547-3860.

We hope to see you all for our summer of 2008 finale.



### FIRST FRIDAY SING

The next First Friday Sing will be on September 5<sup>th</sup> near Smithville. For further specifics, call Bob or Meed Barnett at (609) 965-5347 or visit [bob@westjersey.org](mailto:bob@westjersey.org).

Check it out, y'all.

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### Minutes - August 2, 2008 Society for Poets of Southern New Jersey



In attendance were Kathleen Mohrman, Dennis Deems, Joe Valentino, The Milanese (or is it Milaneeses?), Claudette Keegan, Lynn Stock, Virginia Fleming, Bob Barnett, Vern Rose, David & Kenny Steinberg, me (Linda Richards/Carol Cannon) and our wonderful hosts, the McGinnis Family. Although they weren't all in attendance physically, the surroundings told part of the McGinnis story and it quickly became evident that they are all talented and good-looking.

Wow! What a meeting. These minutes are incomplete. The meeting started at 4:00 PM and I left at 11:00 PM and it was still going strong. As far as I know, everyone is still at the McGinnis house.

Part (and maybe all) of the meeting was a stirring tribute to Hank Urbanek. Poems written by him were read by others in the group included some that were never before read. A newspaper article about his many accomplishments and generosity was circulated. Graciously and beautifully, Bob sang (and played) "Morning is Broken," Hank & Virginia's favorite song and I doubt there was a dry eye in the house. What a kind thoughtful gesture. Sometimes Bob is just too perfect. If he wasn't such a nice guy, I would smack 'im.

Tissues were required again when Kathleen graced us with her presence for the first time in months and read poetry about how, through faith, she was able to deal with very serious obstacles she was facing and go back and write some cool and inspirational poems about the experience. Lynn, Lynette and Virginia contributed to The Crying Game with passionate readings.

Ah, but the high-mindedness did not last. Into the toilet again with Number One – “Portolét Blues (Port O’Lay Blues)” by Lynette and its new sequel, Number Two, “Do You Know the Way to Portolét?” sung by Bob to the tune of the Dionne Warwick song about San Jose. Once again, a movement was started.

Lynette reminded us that there was a “Star-Spangled Challenge” issued by Anthony Mohamed; we should work on any personal modifications to the words (or better yet, the tune which hardly anyone can sing.)

Claudette read some poetry her 92 year-old father had written in the late ‘30’s; a very sentimental peek into his life, the military and the tone of the country at that time. She thanked the Poetry Society for their role in this new connection between her and her father, her and poetry, her father and poetry, her and her father and poetry, her and us and poetry. Okay, I’ll shut up.

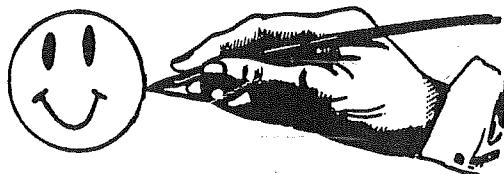
Vern read a poem designed to ensure that none of us ever brought him a cheap bottle of wine. Do they still sell Ripple? Priceless was also quite clever and funny. Dennis read from his repertoire of treasurer poems written that made mention of Hank as well as reading a couple of poems Hank’s wrote and some that he wrote.

David brought pictures Cindy had taken in Italy and Lynette brought pictures taken on their camping trip and I was glad I forgot to bring my pictures. Both provided us insight into their experiences and Cindy’s first-time outing with her new digital camera proved to be exceptional - another miracle from the Steinberg household. Oh, and Steven, the rice dish was excellent. In fact, the huge spread of food was exceptional. David also contributed to the passion of the meeting with his poetry and presence.

“Mating vs. Fighting” was the clever and observant result of Anthony and Kenny’s conversation about the birds and the bee(tle)s. Claudette read some sayings she had used as part of artwork with dried flowers and framing. Theresa read a very clever and amusing piece about mail, among others and told us more light-hearted stuff about dead people. Joe read a poem by Kenny as well as some of his own.

Many times—too many I’m afraid—I am so impressed by poetry that I simply write down a few words and I am absolutely certain that when I see them, I’ll be able to make sense of them. This month’s list of interesting but puzzling notes include: Father, Hard Times, Eclipsing Ugliness, and Surviving Ego Scenarios. In my defense, this was an extraordinary meeting and there was so much good stuff going on....blah, blah, blah.

See ya’ at the next meeting if this one is over by then.



## The Society for Poets of Southern NJ

It is a breezy spring day. The sun is shining brightly, but it's not too hot. A zephyr creeps under your clothing, carrying with it just enough oomph to keep you cool and relaxed. You are sitting on the itchy grass, playing with harmless green blades, pulling them from their roots and splitting them down the middle, finally weaving them together to create a bracelet that Mother Earth herself would envy.



Words have a magic about them; they embody personalities, they can cut you like a knife, or fill your heart with joy. They are sung, they are spoken, they are written, they are yelled, and they are whispered; sometimes they rhyme and other times their hard and abrupt sounds pierce the ear. Each word carries with it a poetic element that helps to create the beauty that is language.

What better way to express your inner thoughts and imaginative spirit than with a group of people who appreciate that ability. The Society for Poets of Southern New Jersey (SFPOSNJ) is just the group any poet is looking for to share that common bond. The SFPOSNJ are a group that formed in 1980 by four friends, and they have since expanded their friendship to reach out to those who also share their common interest. Today their society has grown to nearly forty members.

Poetry does not need to have a reason for being; it just is; and on that note, the SFPOSNJ respects and welcomes all walks of life. "The group really represents a broad spectrum of society; consisting of teenagers, senior citizens and everything in between," says the society's president, Lynette Milanese. They are not a group that prefers one member to another; race, gender, and religious beliefs are not a standard, they only ask that you have a love for poetry. "Members needn't be published poets, award-winning poets, or even poets at all. They need only have a love for poetry; all the beauty, revelation, humor, pain, and experience that detail and compose our lives."

For a mere 15 dollars, via check or money order, anyone can join this innovative clan. On the other hand, if you are not sure you want to join, you can come out to a meeting to see for yourself what the SFPOSNJ is all about and how they go about it. Lynette Milanese, the group's president of four years, says she considers the SFPOSNJ "one of South Jersey's best kept secrets," but she is hoping to spread the word and draw people into the group's dynamic atmosphere.

April is an active month for the SFPOSNJ, since it is Poetry Month. They try their best to get out for events around the South Jersey area. Some events that have gone on in the past have been writing workshops/exercises and poetry readings. Most of the events that go on outside of Poetry Month are due to the public's recognition of the group and requests for poetry readings or workshops. Many a times you will find them in a school or library, but lately volunteer representation has been low--so if you are interested, do not hesitate to contact the group!

Members have also gladly read their poetry for audiences around the South Jersey area. These readings have been at libraries, schools, bookstores, art festivals, coffee houses, and even on the radio! To find out about future readings, be sure to check their website ([westjersey.org/SFPOSNJ](http://westjersey.org/SFPOSNJ)) for updates or check their newsletter!

Poetry is a result of some of the most creative minds at work, so why not add your own creative juices to that mix. Each month the SFPOSNJ gathers to listen, share, and comment on each other's poems. These meetings are regularly the last Friday of each month at 7:30pm at Friends Meeting House, 124 N. Broad Street, in Woodbury. If you are interested in attending a meeting, but you would be a first time attendee, make sure to contact Lynette Milanese prior to the meeting to confirm location and time. You can do this via email at [SocPoetsofSNJ@yahoo.com](mailto:SocPoetsofSNJ@yahoo.com) or by phone at 856-423-3762.

Prior to each meeting, a newsletter is compiled to let members know what is going on within their circle. It is a good way to let members know what will be covered at upcoming meetings, and recaps past goings on and meetings. The Voice of the Turtle, as the newsletter is called, is also a great way for new members and existing members to find out about events and happenings in the area. It also highlights original poetry straight from the minds of the SFPOSNJ members. Overall, The Voice of the Turtle is a creative addition to the society that really exemplifies the close tie between members.

Aside from producing a monthly newsletter for their members, the SFPOSNJ have also published ten anthologies. These anthologies are available for purchase through the website. It is also important to highlight that while as a group they have been published; thirty-some members have been published individually, with a combined total over sixty books!

Inspiration can strike at anytime, and my best suggestion is always having a pen and paper handy!

For more information regarding the SFPOSNJ please visit [westjersey.org/SFPOSNJ](http://westjersey.org/SFPOSNJ).

For more on local Organizations, visit our [South Jersey Organizations](#) page.

**Author:** Amy Steinhauer

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### POETIC CHALLENGE

Society poet Anthony Mohamed proposed a poetic challenge: write new words to "The Star-Spangled Banner" or a new national anthem.

Bring your products to the August 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.



### \$ POET

July's \$ Poet was Virginia Fleming, for her poem "If I Were Happy Forever." Virginia accepted a \$10 SFPOSNJ check.

We thank Karen Springer for her generous donations towards our \$ Poet prizes. There will be no vote from August's Voice, and so Karen's donation fund, that doubles our prizes from \$5 to \$10, will continue until October.

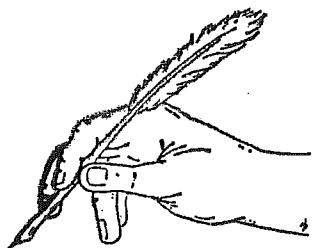
## OVERDUE: DUES...LAST CALL

Eight is enough. For eight month (one for each of Michael Phelps' Gold Medals), we've asked for you to renew your membership. Your mortgage company would've been hassling you if you were 8 days late. Hey, we're no mortgage company. You're not meat or a money cow to us...we love you. But even those who love you have to draw the line, somewhere.

Dear friends, as your newsletter editor, I, Anthony Milanese, feel my most difficult duty is to discontinue our beloved members' lifeline to our Society. I agonize...dear Lord, I hate to be a mean business man and make "the cold chop."

Please renew at our next meeting or by mid-September. Mail your \$15 via the newsletter's address. Otherwise, I'm afraid this will be your last newsletter. The Voice of the Turtle will be silenced.

Be a part of the life-force that is the SFPOSNJ. We help you define yourself. You help us define ourselves. You belong.



## MAGAZINE ARTICLE

The Society for Poets thanks Amy Steinhauer for her fine article about our group in July's edition of South Jersey Magazine On-line. She did a very nice job; we appreciate the kind promo.

Her article definitely showed poetic prowess; it would be great to have her at a meeting.

The article is included, in its entirety, in this newsletter.

Thanks, Amy!

## LAST MEETING

The Society thanks Theresa and Bill McGinnis for opening up their beautiful home to us for what developed into a marathon session of remembrance, poetry, eating, and fellowship. We surely hope we didn't over-stay our welcome. It was a wonderful and important meeting.

The Hank Urbanek tribute was special and warm. We're so glad Virginia was with us.

It was also great to have Kathy Mohrman back. She had missed some meetings because of family troubles (most specifically, her son-in-law's open-heart surgery). We are so glad things are better, and so glad to have her back.

Theresa and Bill: you rule! Thanks, again.

## BIRTHDAY BARDS

I neglected to mention July birthday bard Dorothy Lamar, who cut the cake on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

August's birthdays include that of Penny Bilsky. Editor/Treasurer Anthony Milanese counted another candle on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Sy Perlmutter wore the funny hat on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Bob Barnett strummed the birthday song on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Steven Steinberg celebrated on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

September's lone birthday bard is artist/poet/story-teller Meed Barnett, who notches another loop around the sun on 9/19. God bless, and happy birthday!



# Poetry Corner

## ALL POETRY BY HANK URBANEK

(unless otherwise noted)

### NO NAME KIDS

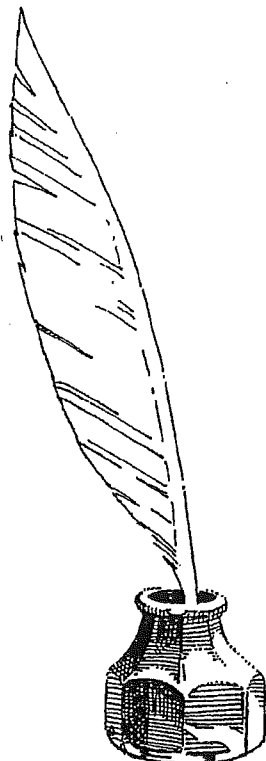
Sitting on white marble stoops  
Theatre-goers parked their car--  
"Watch your car, Mister.  
Only a dime-- nickel,"  
"Na-a, it's O.K."  
Show over: tire flat  
"Gimmee that kid's name."  
We're no-name kids.

Hanging out on Jack's Corner--  
"Let's ring door bells and run."  
Collared by Old Grumpy,  
"What's your name?"  
We're no-name kids.

Sitting at desks  
We shake floor,  
Flick spit-balls  
On blackboard, ceiling.  
Teacher wants names.  
We're no-name kids

Standing at parade-rest,  
Band playing,  
Mud scraped' from boots,  
Board a no-name ship  
To a no-name place--  
No-name kids.

Squatting in a L.S.T.,  
Scrambling down the ramp,  
Racing up the beach--  
What's-His-Name just fell-  
Forward we rushed,  
Us no-name kids.



### TILT

Mother Earth spinning on her axis--  
Animal, vegetable and mineral  
Balanced and held in place--

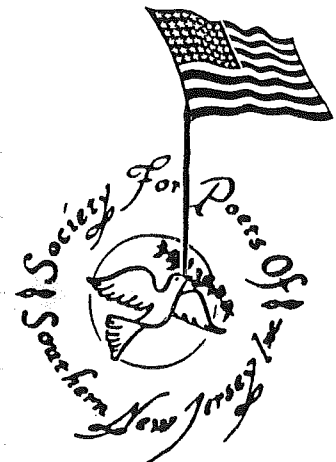
Voyagers shifting her population,  
Lumber Jacks stripping her land,  
Roughnecks gushing her oil,  
Drillers sucking her water,  
Miners gouging her minerals.

Earth signals with drought, flood,  
quakes.  
Man collects data, plots curves and  
Blows smoke into smog-laden air  
Man-made satellites streak in space  
Destroying balance that once held Earth  
in place--

Mother Earth has lost some weight--  
Out of balance she signals with shock,  
quakes.

Man feeds his computers--  
Garbage in equals garbage out.

Man and print out are flung into space,  
Mother Earth wobbles and gives a final  
tilt.



# Poetry Corner

**LOVE IS** by Virginia Fleming  
(included in Hank Urbanek's  
funeral service program)

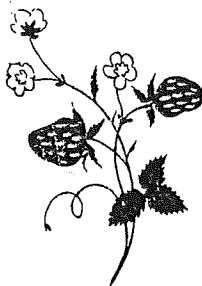
not just a word  
to be whispered in the dark,  
beneath the covers  
in quiet of nighttime...  
it is when you  
feed the birds for me  
(not your pleasure,  
but the steps are icy,  
the snow is deep)



warming the car  
on a cold day  
while you wait for me  
to find my glasses or keys

taking my son to the doctor,  
giving my sister a ride  
(*"...thy people shall be my people.."*)  
listening again to my  
stories, twice told.

Love is  
holding hands in the  
dark of the theatre,  
during prayer time in church  
most of all, Love is accepting me  
just as I am.



**MORNING HAS BROKEN**  
lyrics by Eleanor Farjeon

Morning has broken  
Like the first morning  
Blackbird has spoken  
Like the first bird  
Praise for the singing  
Praise for the morning  
Praise for them springing  
Fresh from the word  
Sweet the rains new fall  
Sunlit from heaven  
Like the first dewfall  
On the first grass  
Praise for the sweetness  
Of the wet garden  
Sprung in completeness  
Where his feet pass  
Mine is the sunlight  
Mine is the morning  
Born of the one light  
Eden saw play  
Praise with elation  
Praise every morning  
God's recreation  
Of the new day  
Morning has broken



## LANDFILL

Modern man digs  
Archaeological finds.  
Modern man piles  
Archaeological finds --

Museums overflowing,  
Fills over flowing,  
Curb side stacked,  
Road side packed.

Man, the defiler -- his finds  
Now degradeable.  
Man, the delayer -- he's  
Bio-degradeable.

## STANDING NUDE

Torn from lofty home,  
stripped bare by man,  
rolled, stabbed and dragged

across an unfriendly land  
to stand nude  
with leaf-clad strangers,

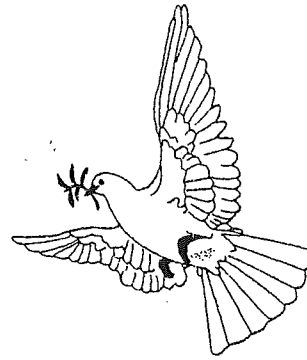
once proud lodge pole,  
its branches now a yoke  
carrying man's singing wires.

## THE LAMP

Lights out again!  
Fumbling for the lamp,  
oil-brown with age,  
I light its short black wick.

As I stare into its fluttering glow,  
Brother is doing sums,  
Sister at McGuffey's Reader,  
Granny with her wish book,  
Gramps and I at checkers.

Lamp in hand  
I climb the stairs.  
A host of calloused hands  
tenderly hold mine steady.



## BULLS

Bulls and Bears short a buck  
yen for a mark.

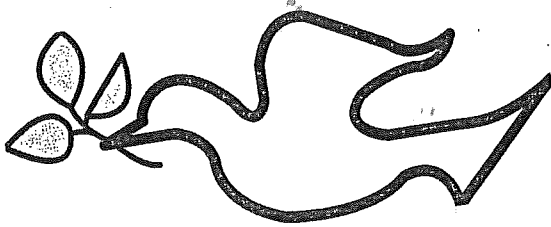
Bulls and Bears long for a buck,  
yen for a mark.

In pits Bears put, Bulls call  
for the future of a buck --

This mark up and mark down  
yen for a put or call  
gives Dow a high --

Us Joneses yen for a short  
call to all this confusion.





**FALLEN TREE**

Bare of leaves,  
others feed its roots.  
Falling across our path,  
we shove it aside.

When our tree no longer needs me,  
beside whose trail shall I lay?

**EACH DAY A LIFE**

by Robert Service  
(included on Hank Urbanek's  
funeral card)

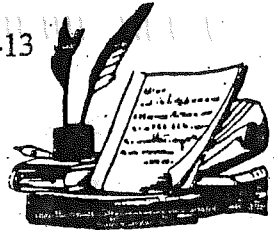
I count each day a little life,  
With birth and death complete;  
I cloister it from care and strife  
And keep it sane and sweet.  
With eager eyes I greet the morn,  
Exultant as a boy,  
Knowing that I am newly born  
To wonder and to joy.  
And when the sunset splendours wane,  
And ripe for rest am I,  
Knowing that I will live again,  
Exultantly I die.

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Vern Rose – Vice President – (215) 676-2763  
Anthony Milanese – Treasurer – (856) 423-3762  
Linda Richards – Secretary – (856) 384-1641

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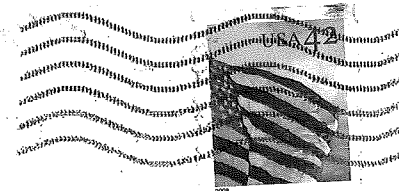
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