

President's Message — By Terri Robinson

Hello fellow writers,

It's National Poetry Month and in celebration we have included some poems by members and friends, as well as a little poetry education. We hope you enjoy it. I told Amy I'd try to write something, but it's a little like asking a country music artist to sing an operatic aria – it could be done, but listening to it could be painful. I think I'll stick to this writing this message!

We have some big plans in the works, one of which is a writers conference. If that is something that you would like, please drop us a line and let us know. We would love to hear how we can help and serve our writing community. Another idea is to get our reading circles reorganized and we are looking for writers who would like to get together and share their works-in-progress. Please contact us or drop us a message with your ideas.

Whether it's reading these poems or joining a writing circle, we encourage positive constructive criticism that helps authors grow and improve their work when responding to someone's work. No one should feel like their literary constructions have been torn to bits.

Here are some tips if you are a part of a reading group. They hold true even if it's just someone asking your opinion on a passage or idea.

1. Be gentle. Our words are our babies and nobody likes hearing one or two are ugly ducklings.
2. Be honest with grace. If you are asked your opinion and don't like something, it is not appropriate to say it stinks. But in honesty, you could say it may work for some people, but personally, it doesn't work for you. If pressed for details, remember to be kind.
3. Start and end with something positive. Nothing is all bad and as Mary Poppins said, even the worst medicine is easier to swallow with a little bit of sugar.
4. If there is a problem, suggest a solution or alternative. Constructive criticism helps us to grow and build and on what we're doing. It does not tear things, or people, apart.
5. Play fair. Stick to what is being discussed and don't bring up other complaints or past conflicts.

I must say it feels a little weird to include these tips because my experience in these groups has been so encouraging and helpful. The writing community is one of the most giving and supportive groups I know. I have no doubt that culture will continue with our league activities.

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Special points of interest

- Celebrating April as National Poetry Month
- Memorial to former IWL Member Larry Telles (Page1)



We received the sad news that Larry Telles recently passed away. Larry was a member of the Coeur d'Alene chapter of the IWL. Larry worked in graphics, taught multi-media courses, illustrated children's books and was CEO of Bitterroot Publishing. He was very active in the IWL and preserved many IWL conferences by photographing the events. He was well known by most members in the League for his writing as well his sense of humor. He wrote and published a number of books including:

Lights Camera Action The story of Helen Gibson—the silent serial queen who became Hollywood's first Professional Stunt Woman.

The Hooded Rider of Whispering Pines

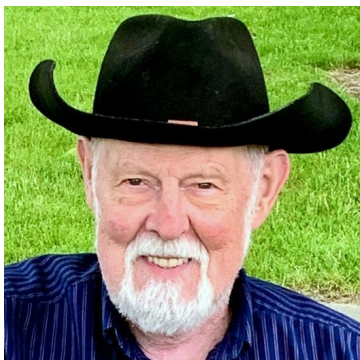
A Brief History of the Silent Screen (and the World At That Time)

Percy, Clarence, Qst and the Arrl

IWL Archives: CDA Chapter Member, Larry Telles April 12, 2021

“From the dark side, Edgar Allen Poe, a serious writer, once wrote about a gathering of ravens. They symbolize “unkindness.” The Idaho Writers League, for me as a writer, is the polar opposite. It isn't dark, but it's a beacon of light. It's a gathering of writers, novice and professional, young and old. It is a place to learn the trade of writing from your fellow writers. All members are encouraged to write and the camaraderie is never ending. It will only take one meeting and you will want to join.”

Larry



EIWL POETS: National Poetry Month Submissions

Cube

Two and a half
stands alone just fine,
but one point five
walks a wobbly line.

One point five seeing
opportunity to meet,
bumps into two 'n a half
on a busy street.

The polygons meld
as they meet face to face.
With a tingling sensation,
they develop a base.

Soon they are buzzed
by a low flying plane
which lands on the box
and the mass goes insane.

Each part of the cube
Now frozen, just sat—
contemplating the fate
of Schrodinger's cat.

Writer's Block Pantoum

Erase the line another time
To get the rhythm right
Something's wrong with this old rhyme
Been working hard all night

To get the rhythm right
I read the poem once more
Been working hard all night
The clock says half past four

I read the poem once more
Think I'll take a break
The clock says half past four
I fight to stay awake

Think I'll take a break
Something's wrong with this old rhyme
I fight to stay awake
Erase the line another time.

Barn Wood

Time grayed and deeply grooved,
Cut and mitered to a square,
I frame this photo of a pioneer home;
I'm older than that house.

At my first use, far to my east,
Men fought, brother against brother,
Some in blue, some in gray;

I was freshly milled then,
Fragrant, newly sawn pine
The color of flaxen hair,

I've earned my color change
And erosion of my softer tissues
By serving for a century and a half;

I first framed a barn door
Set in unpeeled cottonwood logs;
My barn fell forty years ago to I-15;

Progress, they say,
I say, history lost;

At day's end, my barn gave rest
To weary trappers, miners, pioneers,
Thankful for a sheltered night;

Now I frame this pioneer house
Eighteen years younger than my barn,

That old house till stands,
Now wrapped in metal siding
Patterned like its first, wooden cloak.

Perhaps I'll outlast that steel.

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The Birth of a Poem

The water broke
On a pregnant idea.

Panic stricken,
I pace back and forth.
Not ready!
Not now!
Too much to do!
Maybe tomorrow.

My subconscious coach
Pleads for me to
Breathe in—
Breath out—
And again.
That's it.

Finally its time has come.
The words come slowly at first,
Until the rhythm of the contractions becomes
Smooth and regular.
Stay with it.
You can do it.
A little more.
Almost there.
One last push.
And the poem is born!

Tender and beautiful,
Even if it has a face only a mother could love.

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Seamstress of Words

The seamstress of words
fashions every stitch of
vibrant rhyme or phrase.

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Poetic License (Excerpt from poetry workshop material—A. McClellan)

Artistic license is a term denoting the liberties an artist may take in the name of their art. Poets often use their poetic license to create new forms of poetry or create their own style of poetry. This is frequently seen in the haiku form as the 5-7-5 syllables vary from the original Japanese sound units (morae) and haiku now encompasses more than simply nature. What was formerly considered senryu is now commonly considered haiku. Senryu is described by Korkoro Media as being about “daily life and often relatable situations.” The Hai bun form further mixes haiku with prose to form another unique poetry style.

Artistic License:

Entirely at the artists discretion

To be tolerated by the viewer

Neither “good” nor “bad”

Useful for filling in gaps, whether they be factual, compositional, historical or otherwise.

Used consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally or in tandem.

It is helpful to start with a strict form before creating variations. Some of the most common forms are haiku, sonnet, limerick and epitaphs. Lesser-known forms such as the ghazal, sestina, villanelle and pantoum can be challenging but offer great satisfaction for achieving success.

Exercises in form poetry can be a useful tool in breaking writer’s block. Choosing a form limits subject matter forcing the writer to target a smaller group of subjects when forming their poem. The artist should not be limited to their own thoughts and memories but attempt to look at these subjects from a variety of points of view. The poet should also be careful not to push any form too hard causing frustration. Keep in mind that what may start out as a pantoum may be better suited to the sestina form or some other form. “Sestina of Generations” started as a pantoum which gave birth to the “Writer’s Block” pantoum and eventually the sestina took life as well.

Sestina of Generations

Applaud the cacophony of pink and blue
Singing anthems of the future
Parents reaching back into distant past
To choose and form each life
Infants without choices
Searching for their voices.

Adolescents choosing a life
Peer pressure pushing too many choices
Screaming loud in defiant voices
Pulling reality out of the blue
Frightened of the future
And longing for the past.

Toddlers stepping in search of the future
No turning back to grasp the past
Adventure of the looming life
Children discovering choices
Appreciate their voices
Their world is wide and blue.

Educated adults making the choices
Speaking out with well-thought voices
Hoping for gifts of pink and blue
Their own hope for the future
With a will to protect them from the past
And a chance to form a new life.

School children reading of the past
Mistakes others made in life
Learning from another’s choices
Reading words from many voices
Past mistakes can make them blue
And a prayer is said for the future.

Wise old ones with quiet voices
Staring out windows at skies of blue
Holding so much wisdom of the future
From each lesson from the past
Writing stories of an enchanted life
Pages to fill with many choices.

Envoi- Sing the song of past and future. Let us hear those voices.
Cheer each life wrapped in pink or blue; for they may someday make our choices.

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The Rubaiyat (By Doug Ericson— From IWL Archives)

On TV last Sunday, a medical doctor reinforced the oft-heard claim that a glass of wine each day is good for your health. I immediately thought of Omar Khayaam and his Rubaiyat. I first encountered the Rubaiyat while I was in college and when I read the first verse I was hooked. That verse proclaimed--

Awake! For morning in the bowl of night
has flung the stone that puts the stars to flight:
And Lo! The hunter of the East has caught
the sultan's turret in a noose of light.

The smooth rhyming and the exotic Persian echoes in the quatrain impressed me. Omar Khayyam was a Persian who lived in the years 1048 to 1122; he was a poet who also lent his talents to mathematics and astronomy. His mathematical strengths were such that he challenged a theory of the mathematical giant Euclid, and his challenge was sustained. In star watching, he refined the concept of the relative movement of earth and the rest of the solar system. A lunar crater is named for him and an asteroid carries his name. But it his quatrains that brought his name to most people.

In 1859, a reclusive English writer, Edward Fitzgerald, translated 75 of Omar's 400 quatrains as the first version of the Rubaiyat for readers of the English language. Because many of the quatrains can be seen as challenging the existence of an afterlife and also as glorifying the grape, the Rubaiyat was judged by many critics as hedonistic, fatalistic or nihilistic. Of course, that kind of criticism guaranteed an instant readership. Two verses leading to those conclusions follow--

Why, all the saints and sages who discuss'd
of the the two worlds so learnedly, are thrust
like foolish prophets forth; the words to scorn
are scatter'd, and their mouths are stopt with dust.

And --

And much as wine has play'd the infidel,
and robb'd me of my robe of honour—well,
I wonder what the vintners buy
one half so precious as the goods they sell.

Those words not only agitated English language readers through a century following 1859, but it gave Omar Khayaam problems in his lifetime. His praise of the grape, which is a Muslim no-no, and his apparent questioning of the promises of Islam resulted in a trip to Mecca forced on him to prove his Islamic beliefs. One is reminded of Galileo and his punishment for claiming the earth moved around the sun.

Over the years, Fitzgerald issued five versions of the Rubaiyat; I'm quoting from the first version. His fourth version with 110 quatrains was also popular—it toned down the imagery of the first version and raised more questions about afterlife. Many critics have complained that Fitzgerald inserted himself too much into the Rubaiyat. Translating rhyming poetry from one language to another is obviously very difficult. Fitzgerald had to avoid exact words substitutes for those words in the new language that would also rhyme, but he still had to maintain original meaning and tone.

For a hundred years, the Rubaiyat was well known in England and America and it enjoyed academic attention. By the mid-1900s, fewer bars were named "Omar's Place" and fewer literature teachers mentioned the quatrains to their students. In America, Prohibition put a damper on the Rubaiyat. It was taken off many reading lists and some schools and libraries destroyed their copies of the Rubaiyat. We still see some of his most famous verses quoted, however. This one still strikes a romantic chord –

Here with a loaf of bread beneath the bough,
a flask of wine, a book of verse—and thou
beside me singing in the wilderness –
and wilderness is Paradise enow.

And this verse seems to fit many occasions –

The moving finger writes; and, having writ,
moves on; nor all they piety nor wit
shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
nor all thy tears wash out a word of it.

The Rubaiyat is enjoyable reading, and I now believe that maybe we should credit Omar as the first scientist to recognize the health benefits of wine. I'll end with one more of Omar's quatrains—

How long, how long, in infinite pursuit
of this and that endeavor and dispute?
Better be merry with the fruitful grape
than sadden after none, or bitter, fruit.

From the IWL Archives: Poet of the Year Winners

In 1972 the IWL awarded the first Poet of the Year award to Mary Napier Burkhardt from the Twin Falls Chapter. The League had presented members with a Writer of the Year award beginning in 1966 and chose to recognize poets in a similar fashion in 1972. It was noted that the Idaho Poet Laureate from 1949 to 1983 was Sudie Stuart Hager from the Twin Falls Chapter.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient</u>	<u>IWL Chapter</u>
1972	Mary Napier Burkhardt	Twin Falls
1973	Marguerite Mullberry	Idaho Falls
1974	Lora Flemming	Pocatello
1975	Bernice S. Ferris	Coeur d'Alene
1976	Adah Lempke	Idaho Falls
1977	Bernice S. Ferris	Coeur d'Alene
1978	Bess Foster Smith	Weiser
1979	Phyllis Ruth Chapman	Boise
1980	Virginia Hibbs	Boise
1981	Enid Hooban	Caldwell
1982	Lillian Rich	Idaho Falls
1983	Frances Reid	Boise
1984	Patricia Campbell	Idaho Falls
1985	Jean Z. Liebenthal	Idaho Falls
1986	Marjorie Kock	Boise
1988	Janet Ziebebe (posthumous)	Coeur d'Alene
1989	Joan Silva Knisely	Emmett
1990	Minnie Batt	Idaho Falls
1991	Marilyn Wagenius	Coeur d'Alene
1992	June Knight	Caldwell (Coeur d'Alene)
1993	Betty Rohrsheib	Coeur d'Alene
1994	Mary Ann Hensley (posthumous)	Coeur d'Alene
1995	Eleanor Byers	Coeur d'Alene
1996	Nadine Boss	Coeur d'Alene
1997	Marion Little	Coeur d'Alene
1998	Rosemary Hendrickson	Coeur d'Alene
1999	Saxon White	Coeur d'Alene
2000	Kathryn Hamshar	Sandpoint
2001	Saxon White	Coeur d'Alene
2002	Kathryn Hamshar	Sandpoint
2003	Deloris Henscheid	Idaho Falls
2004	Kathryn Hamshar	Sandpoint
2007	Kathryn Hamshar	Sandpoint
2008	Amy McClellan	Idaho Falls
2013	Cynthia Deatherage	Idaho Falls
2015	Ginny Greene	Twin Falls
2017	Terrance Robinson	Coeur d'Alene

Back Story: Will Petersen and Walrus and Carpenter

By Bret Wilson

Visiting the Walrus and Carpenter bookstore is an old school shopping experience, one in which the atmosphere of the store is as important a factor as the books themselves. Perusing the closely spaced shelves, it's hard not to feel as though one has wandered into a ancient library of yore, true treasures of knowledge and wisdom simply waiting to be found.

Walrus and Carpenter is located at 251 North Main Street in historic Old Town Pocatello. Thanks to the wide selection, readers of all varieties are certain to discover something to love.

Proprietor Will Peterson opened his store thirty five years ago. He's glad he did, as he enjoys running his shop more and more every year. He's passionate about the art of writing, both poetry and prose, and seeks to foster the culture of writing in Idaho.

Three decades ago, he feels as though he inherited a portion of the Pocatello writing scene. Thanks to local talent at ISU, south east Idaho was a hotbed of poetry readings. Some true luminaries have read at Will's shop, including names such as Edward Dorn, Allen Ginsberg, and Robert Creeley.

While the culture of poetry had ebbed over the years, Will feels it is making a comeback. As part of that, he's helping organize the Rocky Mountain Writer's Festival, an opportunity for local writers to share their work with a live audience.

This year, there will be three festival events. The first will be on April 21st at the College Market near Idaho State University. The second on April 22nd at ImPressed Coffee Company in Chubbuck, and the third on April 23rd at Station Square in Old Town Pocatello. The public is encouraged to attend, and while reading slots are filled this year, members of our organization are welcome to volunteer a reading next year!

For those interested in submitting writing, Will Peterson is working on an anthology featuring one of Idaho's most unique locations, Craters of the Moon National Park. 1st person non-fiction is preferred, but all other submissions will be considered so long as the park is the central feature of the writing. Submissions due by July 2022.

While you're polishing up your own work, be sure to check out Will's book series, Idaho Street. This three-part tale seeks to engage readers with the true Idaho experience. The story begins with a man who has lost his job at Fish and Game, and moves to Pocatello where he enters a bookstore and meets a slew of unforgettable characters, kicking off his new journey.

Head over to Walrus and Carpenter for copies of the first two books, "Crawl on Your Belly Like a Man", and "The Ghosts". Will is currently finishing up the third book, "The Velvet Falls", so be sure not to miss out when it arrives! In the meantime, be sure to head over to Old Town Pocatello and enjoy the unique bookstore adventure that is Walrus and Carpenter.

After the thundershower
rain steams from the cinder floor
where monkey flowers and scorpion flowers
are perfectly spaced
as between the hooves
of a prancing horse
in a medieval tapestry.
The cinder rock steams.
And you think of a woman
after lovemaking:
how her body smoked with that fragrance
that perfume she was wearing

By Will Petersen