Hello, dear Friends of Poetry!

Welcome to the second issue of the 40th year of the California State Poetry Society’s California Quarterly (CQ)! We continue in this issue, Vol. 40 No. 2 edited by Nancy Cavers Dougherty, our series commemorating GREAT CQ POETS AND EDITORS with a tribute to James MacWhinney.

I met Jim MacWhinney, who is Maura Harvey’s dad (Maura is also a CQ Editor), many years ago when Julian Palley showed me his poetry and introduced me to him. Incidentally, Maura wrote her dissertation in Spanish Literature at UC Irvine with Jerry as her advisor. Jerry Palley himself, whom Jeanne Wagner commemorated in CQ Vol. 39 No. 4, is bearing up valiantly as an 80+ year old person with a razor-sharp mind. He resembles, as I told him yesterday, every day more Don Quixote de la Mancha than a retired university professor. Naturally, he was flattered! In upcoming issues, we will celebrate the work and creativity of other CQ movers and shakers; the next will be Jack Fulbeck in the Vol. 40 No. 3 issue, edited by Maura Harvey.

We are indeed in a mood to celebrate and hope that you are, too! We want to thank all our members for having been so faithful to us and to the cause of poetry world-wide. We would also like to urge all past and present contributors to become members! As outlined in the CQ issues themselves, there are several membership categories. Please send your memberships directly to our Membership Chair, Richard M. Deets, at: 2560 Calabria Court, Dublin, CA 94568 or contact him at RDeets@att.net if you have any questions.

And do keep the poems coming! Submissions to CQ Vol. 40 No. 3 were accepted until the end of June. Submissions for Vol. 40 No. 4 are being accepted until the end of September. We hope soon to establish a website to facilitate submissions – and a whole lot of other stuff!

Thanks to all those who have written us in praise of the CQ. And I’ve some good advice from steady contributor Charles Rammelkamp, editor of The Potomac Quarterly. When he goes to a poetry reading, he mentions the CQ, inviting people to submit to it (Box 7126, Orange CA 92863 – until our Internet web site opens for submissions).

Our greetings to you. Enjoy the water and green grass – and good writing!

Yours truly,

Margaret
UMSaine@gmail.com
Here is a fine poem first published in *CQ* Vol. 38 Nos. 1 & 2:

**INQUISITIVE EYES**

In brief moments,
On passing walkways,
Eyes bearing light
Come to behold me,
Filling softly
The hollow of my soul,

Precious moments
That give me to see
Wisdom and love,
And take comfort
In the beautiful eyes
That regard me,

Serene moments
Of the eternal sphere,
Where thoughts and feelings,
In silent expression,
Make of our solitude
A joyful encounter.

*Catherine Ross, Riverside CA*

In the following, I present two CSPS Monthly Contest winners from the March contest, as well as one last poem published elsewhere.

**SPRING DESPITE GWAWING TORMENT**

I sit among green shrubbery in our backyard
while sun warms the earth and bird twitter
fills the air. Orange blossoms unfold,
their sweet scent is carried on the breezes.
All around me nature renews herself
in spring celebration. Unthinkable not
to be here next spring. Inside me something
ugly, malevolent rears its head, biting
with fangs. I wish I had nature’s powers
to heal and revive. Looking at a cornflower sky, I briefly forget. Splendor of spring contrasts with chaos in my life, making me keenly aware of moments such as this, of joy I’d have to miss. My eye catches lazy lizards sunning themselves on the rocks. Hummingbirds dancing, circle the honeysuckle, insects seek nectar sustenance, wildlife in motion, thriving. Life goes on with or without me.

_Ninette Freed, Palm Desert, California_
_Ist Prize, CSPS March 2014 Monthly Contest_

A MOTHER SPEAKING

On the first warm day, we planted tulip bulbs you and I, a mother-daughter team.
“Not too deep,” I cautioned, “and not too far apart.”

Then the fever came. You lay among the sheets like a bulb planted too deep. I sat there while you dreamed and in the darkness whispered words, love to bring you back, to spark the bloom again. I regretted I’d admonished when you muddied the floors and badgered the cat, wasted all my flowers. At your side, I stayed for hours and you hardly stirred. In the black delirium I learned what it is to be a mother.

When the fever broke, life resumed, but the strain of fallow years pulled us wide apart. Remembering the tulips we put down, I must have planted you too deep.

_Lillian M. Fisher, Alpine, California_
_2nd prize, CSPS March 2014 Monthly Contest_
NEON NIGHTS

Up on the bandstand
honeyed sounds pearl from
twin horns
elegy in brass
bemoaning the fifties

leftover luggage, it’s what
says you’re home
loose and easy in
an old man’s dreamland
air thick with Baker, Coltrane
cool Clifford Brown

nursing a tonic water
dictated by decades
you peer thru layered smoke
to take in the piano player
mumbling Buddha, lost to Nirvana
who, from cuffs of dazzling white
sends ten brown mice
scurrying up the keyboard

damp brow bathed in luster
he bends close to the ivory
talking times, places, that
he’s been and you’ve been
eras lost to lemonlight

no guns go off, no
young girls bare their legs
still, you draw one
quick breath, knowing
you’ve caught a ride
back to when
nights that mattered
were strung in neon

Thomas Feeny, Raleigh, North Carolina.
First published in Verve, 1997

Your Poetry Letter editor
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