



Chaparral Updrafts

from the
California Federation of
Chaparral Poets, Inc.

serving California poets for over 65 years

Volume 69 #4

April, 2008

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Presidents Message

April 25 26 27

That's it. That's the whole message, one line, one word and three numbers. It's the annual convention, a time for poets from all over the state to get together. A time to put faces to names, recognize some who have been showing up in the winners column in *Updrafts*. A time to discover who has managed to put the best words in the best order in this years annual contest and, hopefully, to find a little time to relax, have dinner with friends and rejoice in the company of people in whom you find a common interest. It's just the best time for poets to read to poets.

Remember, this year's annual contest is the time and place we will learn who the lucky and talented winners are. The first public announcement will be made at the convention. Yes, there will be a later posting on the Chaparral web site but wouldn't it be fun to hear it live. You don't have to be present to win but you do have to be present to share in the excitement. Actually it is a good thing you don't have to be present to win, because each year we recognize prize winning or honorable mention poets who hale from places outside of California .

Here's a word to the wise. If you have decided this is the year you are taking home the Pegasus or the Roadrunner you do have to be present. I know, I know, we have made an occasional exception on the attendance rule and with the right set of circumstances would again but that is the exception and not the rule. So bring your track shoes and be ready to be recognized.

CALIFORNIA
FEDERATION
of
CHAPARRAL
poets
inc.

We still need a convention chair for 2009 in Modesto. If interested contact President Ed Bearden.

Back Burner Blues

MONTHLY CONTEST WINNERS

on the topic of Blues and Ballads

I have a huge back burner.
There is bubbling and hissing from pots of every size,
handles either warped or missing
encrusted with burnt offering surprise.

Put on the heat years ago, rising steam curls;
someday never comes, as the kitchen fan whirls.
Long wooden spoons try to stir the thickening sludge.
I've tried to move one pot forward, it refuses to budge.

Excuses lie, rinsed in a colander draining,
dripping brows overhang intense eyes straining...
first scattered outward, then inward timidly:
I've got the back burner blues, first degree.

Healthy choices flirt while inner voices bicker,
taunting and jeering the befuddled picker.
Protraction endures at the crowded cooking station,
while my soul laps at the shore of a finite incarnation.

I have a huge back burner.
There is bubbling and hissing from pots of every size,
encrusted and filibustered with burnt offering surprise.
Will this unfinished business ever complete?
What will it take, at least to turn down the heat?

Steve McCord - First Place

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updrafts**

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Please send news and information items to the editor one month in advance of intended publication date. For questions involving membership, either new or renewal, please contact the treasurer.

Visit our website:
<http://www.ChaparralPoets.org>.

Stay Home, Young Cowboy

Look far beyond these prison walls,
There a magic country lies.
Where purple mountain majesties
Reach up to desert skies.

It's springtime in Wyoming
And it's there that I would be,
But I'm locked in Federal prison
For as long as I can see.

When it's springtime in the Rockies,
It's Hell to be locked up here.
I long to be where the winds blow free;
In fantasy, run with the mule deer.

Many years have come and gone
Since that day I chose to roam.
If I could retreat, I'd plant my feet
In the Platte River Valley of home.

So, when it's springtime in Wyoming,
Raise up your wandering eyes and sing,
"Stay home, stay home, young Cowboy.
There's no place like Wyoming in the spring."

Eugene Shea - Third Place

The Ballad of Carly Jo

When I left I had vowed that I'd never return
and I stayed away many long years.
Now I'm back in home country where memories burn.
It's hard to hold back bitter tears.

Bitter tears for poor Papa who left us so young.
Bitter tears for poor Mama who loved the wrong son.
No tears for my brother who should be forgot
for selling our land for the town parking lot.

When Mama got old, brother Bud, he got smart.
He had a computer where you have a heart,
and he hated the work on our shabby old farm
so when Mama was ailing he turned on the charm.
He said, "Mama, you're tired," and flashed her a smile
"If you sell this old place you can rest in real style."

As the oldest I worried and I asked her once "Why?"
She just kissed me and offered this foolish reply
that paid never mind that I tried to protest.
"Hush, now," she said. "Carly, this is all for the best."

Next to Papa we buried her late that same year.
All her cash went to Bud who said with a sneer
"I'm leavin' this dump - pardon me if I gloat -
I'm spending MY cash for a sea-go'in' boat."

I took only albums and one cedar chest
and our lives from that moment forever digressed.
But I treasure those keepsakes from hard childhood years
and wiped away oceans of once-bitter tears.
Brother Bud lived his life mostly like he had planned
'til his boat "Restitution" sank deep in the sand.
Yes, Buddy left laughing thinking cash was the best
'til he drowned in his sailboat off wild Pirates' Crest.

Selma Calnan - Second Place

2008 CFCP, Inc. Monthly Contests

Except where otherwise indicated, poems are limited to 28 lines of text. All forms accepted for all categories.

RULES

JANUARY	Water
FEBRUARY	Blues and ballads
MARCH	Grandmother's story
APRIL	Fashions
MAY	Sitting on a train
JUNE	Plastic Pleasures, Tacky Treasures
JULY	NO CONTEST
AUGUST	Pearls and Platinum
SEPTEMBER	What I should have said
OCTOBER	Boredoms (12 lines or less)
NOVEMBER	Spangles and tangles
DECEMBER	NO CONTEST

Contests are open to all poets in the United States and Canada. Each submission must be typewritten on standard size paper with the contest month in the upper right-hand corner. Send TWO COPIES of each poem with author's name and address in the upper right corner on ONE copy. Put no identification on the second copy. Address labels are acceptable. Multiple entries are welcome.

Poems not previously awarded a prize are eligible. A fee of \$2.00 must accompany each poem submitted (3 for \$5.00). Send cash or make checks to CFCP, Inc. DEADLINE is the last day of the contest month. Envelope must be postmarked no later than 12 midnight of that day.

Print contest month on outside of mailing envelope.

NOTE: In any month where insufficient entries are received, those poems which were submitted will be held over and judged with the entries for the following month.

1st Prize: \$25.00

2nd Prize: \$15.00

3rd Prize: \$10.00

Poems will be returned only if stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Allow one month after closing date of contest before sending poems elsewhere. Winning poems will be printed in the Chaparral Updrafts newsletter

**CALIFORNIA
FEDERATION
of CHAPARRAL
POETS, INC.**

Mail contest
entries to

**Cleo Griffith
Monthly Contest Chair, CFCP, Inc.
4409 Diamond Court
Salida, CA 95368-0632
<cleor36@yahoo.com>**

YES! I definitely want to be a member of the California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc. for the year 2008.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____

E-Mail _____

I prefer to receive my Updrafts Newsletter by: ___email ___US Mail
Your membership includes all issues of the newsletter, Updrafts, free entry in the Annual Contest, Monthly Contest information and Membership Roster every 2 years during the membership period. **All memberships renew between 8/1 and 12/31 yearly.** Persons joining between February 1 and July 31 will use the pro-rated formula. New memberships received between August 1 and December 31 will be extended for the following full year.

How to Become a Member

Check the appropriate item:

- ___ Membership Annual/Renewal \$15.00
- ___ New Member (2/1 to 4/30) \$12.00
- ___ New Member (5/1-7/31) \$ 7.50
- ___ Spouse (1/2 regular member) \$ 7.50, \$6.00, or \$3.75
- ___ Junior (under 21 show proof of age) \$ 3.00
- ___ Donation (specify amount) _____
- ___ I am interested in joining a Chapter in my area (name of chapter) _____
- ___ I already belong to Chapter _____
- ___ I wish to join as a Member-at-large.
- ___ We wish to form a chapter of our own (5 or more Regular Members are required to form a new Chapter) to be called: _____

Members-at-Large: Clip this form and mail along with a check or money order made payable to CFCP, Inc. to: Frances Yordan, Members-at-Large Chairperson, 2575 W. San Jose Avenue, Fresno, CA 93711-2733. All others: Send this form along with a check or money order made payable to CFCP, Inc. to: CFCP Treasurer, P. O. Box 1750, Empire, CA 95319.

2008 Convention Update

We currently have 30 people registered for the convention in Ontario. Please remember that you need to make your own reservations with the hotel so if you have registered with the treasurer but not with the hotel it is important to do that quickly. Also, some of you registered but did not send your meal and/or dessert choices. The dessert choices did not get on the reservation form so a lot of those were left off. The choices for dessert are carrot cake or chocolate cake. Even if you have registered and given your lunch and dinner choices please let Roberta know your dessert choices. If you forgot to check your meal choices you can send them to her also. You can email her at bert714@sbcglobal.net or send to CFCP, Inc. at P. O. Box 1750 Empire, CA 95319.

Ursula is in need of volunteers for the book room. As you all know our conventions are no longer hosted by a specific chapter so a lot of volunteers are needed to make things run smoothly. If you can take a turn in the book room or would like to volunteer for something else you can email Ursula Gibson at UrsulaTG1@aol.com.

Please note a change in the monthly contest. By a majority vote of the executive board it was decided that poems previous published but not awarded a prize would be eligible for entry into the monthly contest.

Martha Meltzer, our judge for the February contest, is a native Californian who makes her home in the Northern California town of Pleasanton. She draws her inspiration from her family, her work and nature. When not writing poetry she works at a local elementary school as a librarian. Her poetry has appeared in such varied publications as *San Francisco Street Sheet*, *California Quarterly* and *Las Positas Anthology*. Currently she is serving as the fifth Poet Laureate for Pleasanton.



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