

Bulletin

Volume 47 Number 8

June 2025

T H E P O E T R Y I S S U E

What Makes a Poem?

By Rick Pressler

"I know it when I see it."

- US Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart describing his threshold test for obscenity, 1964.

What makes a poem a poem? Do you know it when you see it?

The question brings me back to the 1976 classroom of a humanities teacher at East Brunswick High School, Mr. Michaud; every inch of every wall was festooned with handmade posters quoting poetry, passages from novels, and lines from movies. There was one by William Carlos Williams, which I particularly loved, even though, at the time, I doubted it was actually a poem:

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

The poem was published in the 1930s as "This is just to say," but did Williams originally intend it as an

apology to his wife, written on an odd scrap of paper and stuck to the icebox door? Does a note of apology become a poem if it is written by a poet? Or is a poet just someone who knows how to write a really good note?

When I look at, listen to, and read closely the world around us, it seems like poetry is not so much *drawn* from everyday life, but rather that everyday life is so *replete* with poetry that it overflows into our consciousness the moment we start to pay attention. I think back to Mr. Michaud's poetry-bedecked classroom as I sift through the printouts of this year's submissions spread across my dining room table--far too many to include, even with our additional eight pages. They cover a lot of ground in both style and substance, each a different approach to language, each a sensibility of its own. Where does it all come from? What is a poem?

For me, the answer is easy: *I don't know*. It's hard to rule out any combination of words spoken or written, for which the author makes a poetical claim. Beyond the very sensible dictionary definitions, writers throughout the ages have offered their own definitions, which run the gamut from helpful and succinct to obtuse and longwinded. Going back 175 years or so, Edgar Allan Poe offers a lengthy but useful explication in "The Poetic Principle" (<https://www.eapoe.org/works/essays/poetprnc.htm>). He does us the favor of conveniently summarizing the 7000-plus-word essay:

I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to the 47th edition of the Roosevelt Borough Bulletin. Issues run from September through July. We will not publish in January and August.

Roosevelt Borough Bulletin Submission Process

The Bulletin welcomes submissions for news items, information of local interest, letters to the editor, poetry, and visual arts. We ask all contributors to adhere to the following submission guidelines:

- Send your submission to the email: rooseveltbulletin submissions@gmail.com.
- Send your submission as a Microsoft Word attachment or as plain text with in the body of your email. Please do not send PDFs.
- Please include images as separate files.
- The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication (e.g., January 15 for the February issue). Submissions received after the 15th will normally be printed in the issue following the one currently in production.
- Most submissions will also be added to the Bulletin web site. Allow up to one week for submissions to appear online after publication of the print edition.
- Please name your files with your last name, or the name of your organization, and the month.

It's natural that people have second thoughts about what they've written, but we want to discourage multiple submissions of the same thing, whenever possible. When this is necessary, the revised version should be clearly named as a revision.

The Bulletin board members are thrilled to see that people are utilizing the Bulletin as a forum for communicating about our community's most critical issues. And it is impressive that Roosevelt has supported this publication for so many decades by contributing both financially and intellectually. We are committed to providing you with the best publication possible—your support of our submission guidelines will enable our volunteers to most effectively meet that goal.

The MEALS ON WHEELS program delivers prepared meals to Roosevelt seniors who need this assistance. Though meals are provided free of charge to recipients, the cost to the program is \$2.50 per meal. Donations to help cover these costs May be sent to Interfaith Neighbors, 810 Fourth Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712

SENIOR CITIZENS: There is a S.C.A.T. bus provided by Monmouth County Division of Transportation that comes to Roosevelt and will take you shopping to ShopRite in East Windsor. There is no charge to you for this service. If you wish to go, you must call the S.C.A.T. bus at 732-431-6485 and press 1. Give them your name, address, and the town you are from, and where you wish to go.

An archive of all past issues of the Bulletin can be found online at www.mazicmusic.com/rbb.htm, courtesy of Mark Zuckerman. Current and recent issues can also be found online at www.rooseveltboroughbulletin.org, the official website of the Borough Bulletin. To have the Bulletin sent to you by email, please send your request to rpressler32@gmail.com.

The Roosevelt Borough Bulletin is published monthly, except August and January by Roosevelt Borough Bulletin, Inc. P.O. Box 221, Roosevelt, NJ 08555

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“The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty” applied to “words,” with “Taste” as the only judge...this covers a lot of ground! We can fit everything from Homer to Emily Dickinson to Shakespeare to Nikki Giovanni to Dylan Thomas to Public Enemy, not to mention Joni Mitchell, Captain Beefheart, and all those limericks. And while Poe minimizes the moral component in his definition, it’s hard to dismiss the moral value of any peaceful act that results in the creation of beauty.

Which brings us to something like a “Why” for this issue, even if we’re vague about the “What.” The purpose of dedicating an entire *Roosevelt Borough Bulletin* to our poets, local and adjacent, is simply to offer our community something beautiful, no strings attached. You can reflect on the meaning of these verses or just roll with the rhythm. Unlike Poe, you might find something of the Truth in many of them, but perhaps of a more personal nature than he would have recognized.

Welcome to the poems! Thank you, poets!

Grand Canyon

Rocks that waited

Over a billion years

For us to arrive

Elves Chasm gneiss

The Vishnu Schist!

Phantom granite

Geological layers

The color of inner organs

Bus loads of gawkers line the rim

Taking selfies with an abyss

While bighorn sheep skitter past

Admiring another view

Of a cliff face cat eyeing ravens

In bands of shadow and light

— Wes Czyzewski

BROW ON BATTLEGROUND ROAD

After days of distraction, fractals of my life lie on this land fanning out with the slope before me. I hear pages turning, most gentle crinkle in the world. Brow claims the hill’s sacred slope from which Jesus spoke. Sweep of land bold and humble, dream of my solo soul life when died and alived.

Coffee-black lingering in my mouth, cherished darkness of life. Yes, hold your tongue, glue it to the roof of your mouth. I walk but at the same time my legs take their own walk.

Brow of land, clearly full of thought. Imaged rhythms pick us up. Locations are everything they say. Paid my dues for you.

Earth curve rises like consciousness, sweeping into each direction, thinking north, taking its time, south changing its mind. I know this gentle hill, my own brow ushering me down into a quiet bow.

Beware, silence encourages belief. Woods fixed in earth parade across like soldiers. Innocent trunks up straight in thought, accepting all light offered, swallowing, expelling thought. Tree chorus behind, rooted yet marching down brow sides north and south. Day lying in my body as if laid down by war. Bloody brow never protests time.

— David Sten Herrstrom

For Murray

You moved your seat to the couch
from the stable Eames that has remained constant these thirty-odd years.

Muffled museum taxis' swish
- in all seasons of rain and slush.

The eternal Central Park is steady as spring hopes.

My pages turn forward, unfolding dreams,
and backwards, unraveling loss, those almost forgotten intrusions.

Seated face to face; sipping from snifters to quell those demon shadows.

Imperceptibly your shift catches my patient's eye.

Your gaze envelopes,
like the hundreds of untitled books to my back.

The time piece is disallowed
there is no clock -
in your consultation room.

My boy at the switch of his electric train set;
whirrs...
the static clanking of reverberating history.

My boy looks back at the piano, Daddy.

Her smile was for me, Mom's rosy cheeks.

There was my youth there on the carpet, legs folded, yoga style,
like my rocking in the chair across from your listening.

You moved to the sofa from the leathered chair, and I saw you.

— Robert Axel

Sunset Beef

Somehow the moon finds
Its way into my business

Soaking in the dusk
It sneaks through branches
With a lopsided grin
As if it knows what I'm after

Hunting for images

And Sirius is as much to blame
Shining bright as a jetliner
Through the intricate trees

All remote all done before
But this time it's not staged

Maybe these correspondences
Are not the usual twilight show

Maybe some realignment is overdue

Since Edison we've lost the night sky
Tricked back into our caves
While the cosmos waits

Expecting an answer that's not some joke

— Wes Czyzewski

Doodling is a civilizing activity.

Songs rise out of Silence and good conversations and drift off in clouds.

I have a grand story – an epic – that I want/have to tell!

And then she, too, followed the treble notes and disappeared above the trees.

We're still a little short on bread, but we have a house full of colorful chairs.

Art and Poetry by Ron Kostar

Doodling is a Civilizing Activity

When I doodle without thinking I often end up doodling exotic cities like Alexandria Amsterdam Nice and the Aztec ruins beneath Mexico City.

Ms. C, my ex-psychic, once told me that though I live in the woods and think of myself as a Nature-loving Romantic, deep down in my subconscious I harbor a strong desire to live in proximity to people.

"In the beginning there was Noise," she went on to say, "and your doodles are your attempt to bring form and colors to your noise, just as cities are humankind's attempt to bring shapes and colors from our louder collective Silence."

"Doodling is a civilizing activity," she added. "Keep doodling!"

— Ron Kostar, 5/25

LOON JOINS ME

Curious about my kayak body
loon joins me,
coursing three feet away
sleek as a nerve. Escorting me

as if counting my strokes, he lives
just below surface
in translucent space. Body
of lake breathing

as slowly as tall pines
in the whisper of birdwings. Lake
holds its breath and loon

disappears through its skin,
appearing
a hundred yards ahead
out of the lake's eye
like an unexpected tear. And sings,

his phrase delicate as rain
prisming the day, a lonesome
note. Silence. Then her
answer, not mine.

— David Sten Herrstrom



Snakes by the Lake - Photo by LLP

Morgenstern: an Invocation for English Readers

By George Sturm

Christian Morgenstern (1871-1914) is described in the German Wikipedia as a German poet, author, and translator. He may have been all of that, but his greatest and longest-lasting fame was as a versifier of the absurd. I think of him as an early German version of Ogden Nash, and perhaps a bit more biting comedy. Here is an example:

German Original (1905)

Ein Wiesel
saß auf einem Kiesel
inmitten Bachgeriesel.

Wißt ihr,
weshalb?

Das Mondkalb
verriet es mir
im stillen:

Das raffinierte Tier
tats um des Reimes willen.

Literal Translation

A weasel
sat on a pebble
in the midst of a brook's ripple.

Do you
know why?

The moon calf
divulged it to me
surreptitiously:

The artful animal
did it for rhyme's sake.

The reader will understand that it more or less defies poetic translation and accounts for the fact that Morgenstern is virtually unknown in the English-speaking world. But I thought it might be fun to see if a Morgenstern-type of verse could be produced in English, and here are a few examples.

An Ant

An ant
Stands at a slant.
With all its might
Can't get upright.
It tries, but can't.

Is it too stout?
It gives a shout
To other ants, above and under,
Who hear his cries, but wonder
What all the shouting's all about.

He cries.
An ant tear leaves his eyes.
The others hear his desperate yelp
Run quickly to his side for help
To upright him and energize.

The ant,
Once again elegant,
Stands upright and, what's more,
In praise and proudly, on the floor,
Sings ant song and a solemn chant.

The Unicorn

From the very day that I was born
I've been searching for a unicorn.
I've even searched the Colosseum,
The Louvre and local art museum,
But all I've ever found was porn
Perhaps that's why I'm so forlorn.

Morgenstern

English readers quickly learn
Poetry by Morgenstern,
Witty, often on the money,
It is genuinely funny,
Sometimes a linguistic bash
And predating Ogden Nash,
In translation it's not vermin
But superior in German.

Leviticus

Yum-yum, a certain type of fish is
Surely certified delicious.
As told in biblical details
They need to have both fins and
scales.

But strictly, we are warned and bid
To keep away from shrimp and squid
And oyster, lobster, God forbid,
For these on all counts must be rid.

Further pursuing Bible study,
Our legal grasp should not be muddy.
Seafood's not the sole cliché
To which Leviticus has a say.

Assure you'll not be trapped in mud
Eat only if it chews its cud
And if it has divided hoof
Eat it, you'll be Whiffenpoof.

That's a dragon or relation.
Pig is an abomination.
That's how the Law Semitic was
As put down in Leviticus.

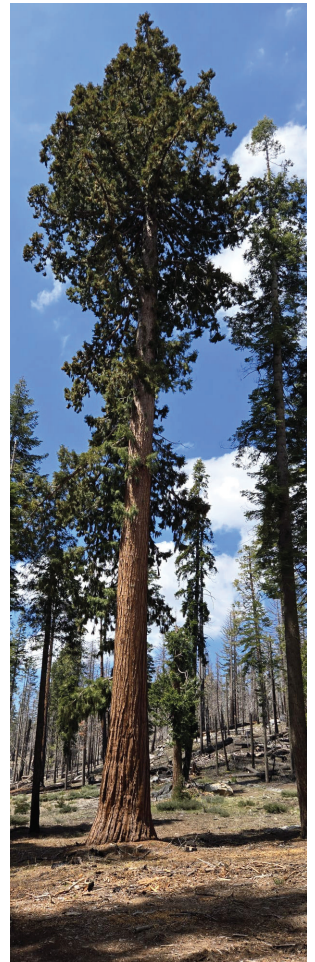
SHARING

Across from my sidewalk bench three Muslim women embraced by grey-to-green petals, grey-to-white flowers jacked over flared white-blue dresses, each humbly flaunting headscarves curving themselves like snails. One's bold grey-to-black statements silently bending the parking meters.

The yarmulka man

in grey sitting diagonally across the sidewalk from them talking with a friend, unaware of their world, as they are of his, yet sharing sun, heads risen from earth like tired tongues creating gentle word-waves. Only the parking meters, hearing each, decide as I, to ignore their gods and stand in their holy silence.

— David Sten Herrstrom



Seven Collages

When I was a kid, I thought I could hide behind a twig by closing one eye.

Songs rise out of solitude and lively conversations and drift off in blue clouds.

And then she, too, followed the treble notes and disappeared above the pine trees!

The thing about scatting is it gets you breathing, and the thing about breathing is it gets you thinking; the thing about thinking is it gets you seeing, and the thing about seeing is it gets you traveling. Even if you don't go.

Love is a foreign language we struggle to translate.

Sure, we're still a little short on bread, but we have a house full of colorful chairs!

The purpose of life, as Job said, is to stand up straight.

— Ron Kostar

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Congratulations to the graduating 5th graders



The Nature Poem

I am a small, red ladybug.
I wonder what it would be like to be bigger.
I see leaves falling and kids playing.
I hear leaves swishing through the air.
I want to know what it feels like to be stronger.
I am a ladybug.

I pretend to be stronger and better than the other bugs.
I feel the wind swishing on my beautiful wings.
I touch the soft grass to remember my family.
I worry that I'm not good enough for the other bugs.
I cry that I don't see the pretty nature anymore.
I am a pretty ladybug.

I understand that nature helped me through my days.
I say a prayer every night about pretty nature.
I have a dream that the bees will be my friends.
I try to become stronger.
I hope I get loved by nature.
I am a ladybug.

— Izzy Green
5th Grade

Divine Celestial Trio

Sun, Earth, Moon
Father, Child, Mother
Father, Son, Holy Spirit

The Divine Trio forever recalls
Love is the greatest dimension of all
Hearing and heeding whenever we call
Forever continuing, as we rise and fall

The Celestial Divine
Transcending through Space and Time
Leading all realms from before and behind
Knows evolution is not a straight line

The Divine Celestial
Knows that Life on Earth is most special
The Sun and the Moon baptized the Earth
Preparing the Universe for our time of birth

Father Sun and Mother Moon
Watch us grow on Earth's warm womb
Through dawn and through dusk our Parents keep
Guard over us while we wake and sleep

Father Sun makes mornings rise
Mother Moon stirs evening's tides
Father Sun settles down to rest
Mother Moon beams, and all are blessed

The Future moves
Through the Present and Past
Ever slow
Ever fast

We are the Children of the Divine
Always remember
We are Beloved
We are Forever

— Claudia Luongo
Completed on 12-21-24 for Holiday 2024 card

BETWEEN THE CRACKS

Love speaks in the vibrancy
of a camera-captured smile
thirty-five years old of a shy six
year old girl, blonde curls flouncing
around her unblem'd face on a windy beach
late afternoon with her grandma laughing
in a Carpe Diem sweatshirt, chuckling
both at their combined lack of worry, an
empty ancient amphora for concerns that need
never desire for content, nor should.

Love whispers among the salty sea breezes
bracing beach-lingerers in the background;
sand plumes off a surfer's flip-flop as she
exits the shoreline to the fading giggles
and shouts of summer carefree abandon
among school children not in school,
self-medicated by their inherent hysteria
of such democratically welcome a claim.

I remember being barely as tall
as my mother's bureau where were kept
her dainties and doilies as tiptoeing I'd
sneak a look into the top drawer.

Love stabilizes that tremor of doubt
wandering every stage, and that
unnamed, stages every wonder.

— Bill Barrett

Cats
Soft, Gentle
Purring, Sitting, Looking
Yarn ball, Cat Bed, Cat Tree, Toys
Running, Hissing, Meowing
Fur Up, Fierce Eyes
Dog

—Hailey Green
5th Grade

Potluck

Someone brings mac and cheese
to the potluck, says it has
five kinds of cheese:
four that melt, one that doesn't.
I ask, is the fifth one recalcitrant
or steadfast? Determined
or absent minded? Lazy
or just likes attention?
Does it persevere through
thick and thin, never ever
giving up?
Someone else says,
Just eat

— Judith McNally

Senior Corner

OH THE PLACES THE SENIORS GO



We have been to see the tulips galore~
The tulip farm has every color~ and then some more~
It is a treat for the eyes and soul and heart~
All this natural beauty - makes you fall apart~
Right here - local - millions of tulips - ours to adore~
A short trip - a feast for all - that's the tour~
We have been to a concert in Princeton University Hall~
A truly majestic place that allows you to hear it all~
The restaurants have all been above par~
Continental and Italian all close by - not too far~
And then there was the Health Fair- at home here~
At Boro Hall- info and goodies- oh my - oh dear~
Oh the places the Seniors go~
The Seniors -yes- they are in the know~~~~

Adrienne Cheshier

Poetise 2

I forget

Try to remember

How, what should I do with a mind that generates guilt, how do you ungenerate it

Not me!

How do you know it's not you – did you ask someone else?

That's not polite!

ASK

How do I ask? Did you, do it? Was it you? What is it?

Automated confidence in your motorized memory skills.

Show me your motorized memory, How do you do it?

I ask all questions with ME in it.

Show ME?

You see.

Stop showing off. You don't know how to do it on purpose. Oh yeh?

Are you so sure I'm not self-centered enough? Fooled you, I used self-centered this time-

ha- ha(my initials).

— Albert Hepner

**The Love Song of
Vivian Maier**

I want to be an
unfound
photographer
in my non-existent
future

You'll see the
baritone eyes
in my lens
the laughter
of uncertain
the begotten
milieu

I don't want to
publish
I lived with them
mortality
robbed them

I hope they fetch
a nice price

— Stephen Ring



Punk show at Oxacan restaurant, New Brunswick, NJ | photo by Daniel Hoffman

FOG ACCOMPANYING ME ON THE WAY HOME

Driving home through the country after shopping,
I dream breakfast—blueberries, coffee, raspberries

accompanying me as if I were a prince.
I am a cherisher of fruitful words,

but they hover just above the unknown within me.
Indigestible memories as if I were mindful.

Fog lives above the lake, a pillow plank
declaring with silence its independence from water.

Mind-mist and earth-cloud live together,
exist above and now within my body.

— David Sten Herrstrom

Winter and Spring Diamante Poem

I am a swimming webbed feet otter.
I wonder what it is like to be a land animal.
I hear clams opening.
I see my pup.
I want to see the world.
I am a swimming webbed feet otter.

I pretend I can go to the bottom of the ocean.
I feel like a mouse.
I touch the sand with my feet.
I worry I might get eaten.
I cry when my pup does.
I am a swimming webbed feet otter.

I understand that something bad might happen.
I say I am smart.
I dream I can swim as far as I want.
I try to keep my friends safe.
I hope I can teach my pup well
I am a swimming webbed feet otter.

— Kenny Seijas
5th Grade

An Epic Story

(the same poem sounding two different ways)

I have an epic story
That I need to tell
But I can't find the words
In the wreckage left by the garden gnomes.

When the train pulls into the station
You will smile wanly and wave.
And in the morning it will dawn
That you are irretrievably gone.

Poetry is a foreign language
That we struggle to speak.
And love is an ice-cycle hanging on a rock face
That melts in the afternoon sun.

Eine epische Geschichte

Ich habe eine epische Geschichte
Das ich werde erzählen
Aber ich kann nicht die Werde gefinden
In dem Trummer des Gartenwergeren.

Wenn die Trin in den Bahnhof einfahren
Du wirst lacheln und winken
Und am Morgen wird es dammern auf
Du unwiederbringlich weg bist.

Poesie ist eine Fremdsprache
Dass wir kampfen um zu übersetzen.
Und Liebe is ein iszapfen an einer Felswand
Dass in der Nachmittagssonne schmetzen wird.

— Ron Kostar

SEAGULLS or DUCKS around midnight; SOUTHEAST

White things fall through the air
fall from where something is touched
just before I look at
the whole thing, a dulcimer quiver
a beat, the rhythm system which insists
take hold
a rose in the Atlantic
to sail, maneuver the spiked crisp amenities,
a robe to wear, for you to wear
when you are a Greek in the middle of land
and wow, all those crisp and lively waters that are
energies of the skull. To be, like that
gone through, the whole thing
Eros on the Pacific,
Yeats in the pocket.

— Bill Barrett

SPARE THE NAMELESS

... Doors to infinite be ever open.

*

Under the spell of existence.

*

Objects insisting on otherness.

*

Bounded by great silences.

*

We walk beside otherness watching.

*

Caught in eddies of forgetfulness.

*

The interstices of imaginings.

*

No entrance this bridge; no exit.

*

Aliveness the loudness of silence.

*

The space between the air itself.

*

Roomful of silence remains.

*

Just listen to the stones.

*

What to do with the silence left in a box.

*

Spare nameless from names ...

— David Sten Herrstrom



Minor argument between two teens in Roma camp, Rome, Italy | photo by Daniel Hoffman

The News' Smells

by Oli Macher, translated by Mary Macher

Dedicated to all his doggie-news "reporters"

Yup, I better get going.

'Gotta inhale that air-borne treat.

The air is full of lots of scents
from happenin's on my street.

Yeah, I'll do whatta dog's gotta do,
But then I want the scoop.
Just gotta have my nose-full
Of doggie-world stuff that's new.

Gotta see this and gotta smell that.
That big tree and this weed patch
Are current events and headline clues
That I'm sniffin' out in the doggie news.

So, lemme take my doggie-time
To sniff each leaf and tree.
They tell me stuff I wanna know
And 'splain my world to me.



About The Author:

A former denizen of Azerbaijan, Oli was a student of The Baku School of Hard Knocks where he majored in "Survival for Street Dogs." He immigrated to the United States to pursue and eventually attain his PRD (Pampered Rescue Dog) status. Oli is a multi-talented canine who, after his lack of thumbs led him to abandon his hopes of being a sculptor, decided to pursue poetry as a creative outlet. He currently lives in New Jersey with his adoptive family and enjoys zoomies in his yard and napping on the couch when he isn't out looking for inspiration, adventure, and doggie treats.

Look for these possible but not likely future titles by Oli:

"Oli Poops on Politics: poetic commentary on the dog-eat-dog menu in Washington"

"Puppy Eyes: persuasive uses of side-eyes etc. to get your way at meals, walks, 'n more"

"Trash or Treat: a street dog's guide to safe roadside feasts"

"Oli's Guide to Effective Nose Bumps: how, when, and where to use real force"

"Numerology and License Numbers: Are you wearing your horoscope on your collar?"



Dog
Playful, Happy
Fetching, Jumping, Running,
Very Energetic, Very Lazy
Scratching, Meowing, Sleeping,
Tired, Sassy
Cat

— Emily Leibowitz
3rd Grade

School
Math, science
Write, read, work
Getting educated, down time
Play, eat, watch TV
Video games
Home

— Jacob Wilcomb
3rd Grade

Thunder booming loud makes me feel like I'm on a cloud
Happiness inside me when the lightning is right beside me
Under the ground the worms here the sound
Nothing moves, nothing talks, my sisters don't touch my socks.
Dark clouds help me sleep because the light keeps me up all night
Everything's quiet not a peep from a mouse
Rain drops dripping down windows
Strong booms of thunder close by
Trees sway far away
Over the trees through the town, hopefully the wind will not knock the trees down
Rainbows come after the hard rain and drain all the sadness away
More people stay inside and hide

— Olive Giberson
3rd Grade



I AM

I am a slippery pink worm
I wonder how people feel about me
I hear my friends
I see my future idea
I want people to notice me
I am a slippery pink worm

I pretend I'm famous
I feel the pain of my ancestors
I touch the cleanest dirt
I worry about the rest of the worms
I cry when it rains
I am a slippery pink worm

I understand people think i'm gross
and dont like me
I say thank you to the sun
I dream that people will love me
I try to be the best worm i can be
I hope people will change their minds
I am a slippery pink worm

— Elahni Bethea
5th Grade

WINTER AND SPRING DIAMANTE POEM

WINTER
COLD, SNOWY
UNWRAPPING, SLEDDING, BUILDING
SNOWMAN, FIREPLACE, FLOWER, RAIN
GARDENING, BIRDWATCHING, WALKING
RAINY, WARM
SPRING

— Aidan Defoe
5th Grade

Winter and Spring Diamante Poem

WINTER

COLD, SOFT
Unwrapping, Sledding, Jumping
Snow Angels, Presents, Outside, Easter
Gardens, Parties, Pools
Warm, Rainy

SPRING!

— Kenny Seijas
5th Grade

Summer Poem

Summer, pool is cold
Running around
Friends and family
Food, laughing is so much fun
Swinging, beach, ice cream cone

— Genesis Mayorga
5th Grade

Flappy Bird

He's a bird
A lot of people play with him
He flies through these green pipes
No matter what he doesn't stop.
His name is flappy bird
A yellow bird with a red beak and white wings.
He relies on you to get him to the finish

— Dan Ruotolo-Lahens
5th Grade

Issue/ Problem	Call
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Telephone outage	Your telephone provider (phone # is on your bill)
Loose or lost dog	Borough Hall 609-448-0539, EXT 0
Road obstruction	911
Trees down	911
Health Emergency	911
Comcast outage	1-800-XFINITY (1-800-934-6489)
FloS outage	(800) 837-4966
Water Emergencies	H2O Services 609-259-8888
Wildlife Issues	877-927-6337

New Jersey Sustainability Summit

By Hilary Wilder



Each year, the New Jersey Sustainability Summit provides an opportunity to learn about new initiatives and approaches from state agencies, non-profit organizations, academia, and industry, which support environmental resilience and equality in municipalities wacross New Jersey. An added benefit this year was meeting Roosevelt's own Drop the Beet team in the Exhibit Hall!

As climate change impacts the economic, social, health, and general welfare of New Jerseyans, municipalities need workable, holistic solutions to meet these challenges. Sustainable Jersey, through its certification program, provides a range of actions that municipalities can engage in towards this end. Roosevelt Borough, which was first certified by Sustainable Jersey in 2017, will be up for re-certification in early 2026. Over the next few months, we will be working on the requirements for actions across a range of categories such as Arts & Creative Culture, Community Partnership & Outreach, Food, Land Use & Transportation, Natural Resources, and Waste Management.

Much of this work will be done by the Environmental Commission and its "boots on the ground" volunteer Green Team. You may have noticed some of the Green Team projects when walking on the Roosevelt Woodland Trail, including newly-built puncheons (wooden platforms that let you walk even after a heavy rain) and the removal of invasive plants that threaten native species needed to maintain a healthy eco-system. Given our upcoming re-certification, your help is crucial!

To volunteer, or to find out more, please go to rooseveltnj.us/pages/ec-green-team-mailing-list, or email us at environmental@rooseveltnj.us. For more information about Sustainable Jersey certification actions, go to sustainablejersey.com/actions/.



Scan the QR code to
join the mailing list

COME, SEE, HEAR, STEAL

If you come to the end of the street
where windows stare
from each side, blank, uncaring as Hollywood shades,
where a steel glint from handcuffs
icepicks your eye.

If you see a pale wrist at rest in a pants pocket,
an eye no less bored than the convenience store across the street,
a uniformed bent knee
heavy as a Fraternal Order, on a black neck.

If you hear through a storm of imploring crowd, helpless as a Stop sign,
“I can’t breathe,” “can’t breathe,” “can’t.”

Feel your ghost skin peel, steal away into our heart
where that bare, black neck slammed to the ground matters or none does,
where on the corner we burn the No Exit sign, the Dead End.

— David Sten Herrstrom



Turtle on the Trail - Photo by LLP

War drobe

Polyglot clothing
expressing “I don’t care.”
in as many ways
as you can wear it

Put on thunderclap
pants
and ride this mortal
storm out

There’s no aegis
on your breast
proclaim yourself
in the rain
of a life
that needs no haberdashery
or shield

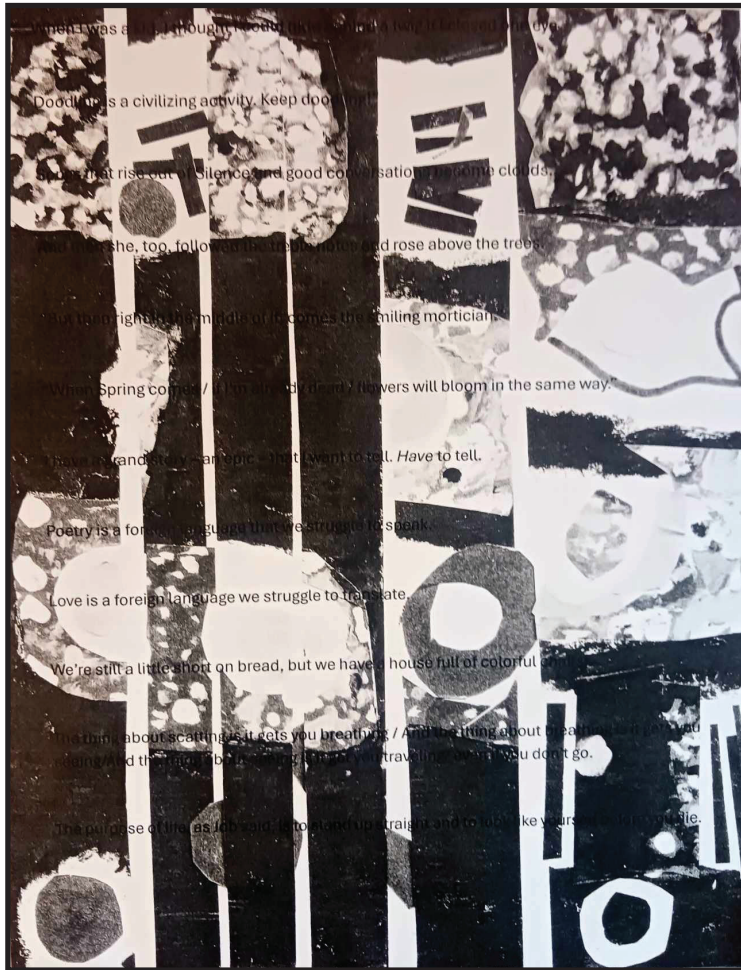
Unarmored
in the onslaught
of the battle’s fashion

— Stephen Ring

Formalities

Hello,
grave
existence
sharpening your
tombstone
I’ve come
to say
Goodbye,
will you pass
the word?

— Stephen Ring



Art and Poetry by Ron Kostar

Poetise 1

How dark it is...

You can't even see a star ...

Or an arc en ciel...

It seems so black when nothing is white!

I don't understand that all seems so black and yet so beautiful.

I know I'm not blind

You mean that it's beautiful when you see nothing?

No...no...

But really, yes!

—Albert Hepner

HAWKING THE WORD

Tender breezes nuzzle these palms
today, though that can't stop
the screen door from squeaking.
Azure ceiling cleaved by ospreys
wheeling through cottony cirrus,
these vast overhead architectures
overheated with medieval depiction
melt and drift along unknowing as
the Mississippi, they just keeps rollin'.
Some first responder's siren
spikes the somnambulatory
overhead knavery.

What's the rush, Steve asks,
looking skyward from the chancel
eighteen hundred miles away,
why make the pace of attention
so tiresome just because
big bootied women and their
three-inch eyelashes bat hither
to the point that
your resistance withers
adorned as it is in
its own incontinence.
So much to remark upon,
too much judgment to behold
from this transept;
when Jesus said turn
the other cheek He didn't
mean look the other way.

— Bill Barrett

BEWILDERED

- A So, what did you do today?
- B I went to a drum circle.
- A I didn't know you were a drummer.
- B I'm not – you can just tap on anything.
- A Was this your first time?
- B No – just the first time in a while.
- A What made you go?
- B A beautiful Fall day, warm in the sunshine, thought I'd see some old faces – plus I'm good friends with the leader.
- A How many people?
- B Today? About thirty – mostly people new to me, but that made no difference. Good to see everyone.
- A Any particular highlights?
- B At one point, we were asked to go around the circle and say one word as to how we felt.
- A And your word was...?
- B 'Bewildered.'
- A Bewildered? How so?



Kitten
Cozy, cute
Can be fierce
Makes me feel happy
Awesome

— Daphne Hilburn
3rd Grade - Roosevelt Public School

Doves
Beautiful Majestic
Flies Tweets Sits
Makes me feel free
Birds



— Laylah Schack
3rd Grade - Roosevelt Public School



Football
Happy cheerful
Run throw score
Makes me motivated
Awesome

—Andrew Masterson
3rd Grade - Roosevelt Public School

- B The sky above, the Earth beneath our feet, thirty people drumming slightly different variations on a common rhythm – yet all getting along, sharing a rhythm, sharing a wavelength, passing vibrations on to one another all around the circle. Now and then, a few people pausing, not drumming at all, but yet still together, with all.
- A Then what’s so bewildering? Sounds like such harmony.
- B Bewildering? That it doesn’t happen more often – on a larger scale. Global, to put it directly. To be perfectly clear.
- A You ask a lot.
- B Do I?
- A I think so.
- B Then let’s tap our chopsticks in rhythm on tea cups, croquet mallets chiming in on the hard wooden balls – and most of all, drum the idea into the bone of our heads, that we can be as one.
- A Something to ponder.
- B No. Something to do. Now.

Judith McNally



“Trees”

Branches like to sway
Trees give us clean oxygen
Gives us many things

— Elizabeth Mayorga
3rd Grade - Roosevelt Public School

Summer
100% hot, sunny
Pools, running, jumping
Hot person, cold person
Cold, sick, sleeping
Snow, white floor
Winter

— Sofia Sacayunga
3rd Grade - Roosevelt Public School



“Flower”

Smells like happiness
Has beautiful leaves on stem
Makes me feel better

— Cosima Petrillo
3rd Grade - Roosevelt Public School

Notes to an American Quilt

The Jersey Poems

The Cypria (Fragments)

Fragment #23

Ithaka

It is not down in any map; true places never are.

Herman Melville, Moby Dick (1851)

It's Columbus Day, and
With the obligation of His Name
Like a Telemachus –
Or an Orestes or a Hamlet, not
-Sipping Coke on an
Old broken-down stool
Imagining the Long, Long
Expanse of Ocean
Dreaming in the
Immensity of it.
Thinking, Thinking,
He sees him
Sees himself in the
Mexicans Scurrying Around
Laboring, Laboring.

There's no score to settle
No revenge to seek
Other than the pursuit
Of his own Furies
Of his own Self
His own Serendipity

*Athena (disguised as a stranger): Are you, big as you are, the
very child of Odysseus?*

*Telemachus: My mother says indeed I am his. I for my part
do not know. Nobody really knows his own father.*

Homer, Odyssey, Book I (8th century bc)

He gets up, reaches
Into his pocket, and
Chucks all that he's had
In Nickels & Dimes
On the counter.

To that unique
Sound that coins make,
Clinging and Clanking,
Ringing and Vibrating,
as they teeter-totter
to a rest never-coming
and never-ending,
a steel ship in
squalls and gales,
He shoves off.

Tis certain, then, for Cyprus.

-William Shakespeare

Fragment #24

Perth Amboy

Every word is a name.

St. Augustine, De Magistro (391 ad)

My name is a word,
My Logos,
Bestowed by my
Father & Mother,
A Gift

A name is a limb,
A part of a whole,
Bone wrapped
In flesh

A name is a memory,
Of those lost
And those to be,
Bone stripped
Of its flesh

Fragment #25

Woodbridge

*No Man of sense can put himself and his soul under the
control of names.....You must consider courageously
and thoroughly and not accept anything carelessly.*

Plato, Cratylus (399 bc)

The Happy Burdens
Comes Community

To Strike it Rich
With Pick & Shovel

Or Hammer & Chisel
To Break it into Bits

Fragment #26

America

*To know where you are going, you first have to know
where you have come from.*

Inuit Proverb

The name walks
And never dies, A
Memory Eternal

Fragment #27

Spring Picnic

Cannibals? Who is not a cannibal?

Herman Melville, Moby Dick (1851)

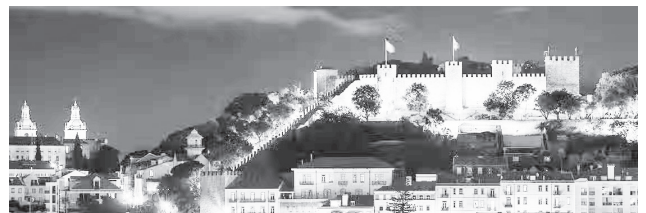
We eat our Dead
Of Boiled Bodies &
Blood Pomegranate
Of Sesame, Raisins,
Almonds &
Spiced Candies
To become one with them

— Anastasios K Parides

Lisbon: visiting St George's Castle

Mosaic lanes tilt uphill
Then cobble down to the harbor
Where massive cruise ships dock
Offloading hordes eager to reach
Castelo de Sao Jorge with its peacocks
And rooftop views for selfies along crenellated walls

— Wes Czyzewski



Contributors to the Bulletin 2025

Contributions received after the 15th of the month will appear in the next Bulletin.

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The Bulletin publishes free-of-charge public information listings from Roosevelt residents and businesses, and from those in the immediate vicinity with ties to Roosevelt. Write: Roosevelt Bulletin, Box 221, Roosevelt, NJ 08555. Contributions are appreciated and are tax-deductible (suggested: \$50.00/year, \$60.00 if over 5 lines.) Deadline is the 15th of each month

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JUNE




4	Weds.	Recycling Pickup	
5	Thurs.	Senior Citizens of Roosevelt River Lady Paddleboat Cruise Toms River	
10	Tues.	6:00 am- 8:00 pm	Primary Election Roosevelt Borough Hall
12	Thurs.	4:00 pm	Roosevelt Public School 5th Grade Graduation
13	Fri..		Roosevelt Public School Early Dismissal
15	Sun.		Father's Day
16	Mon..		Roosevelt Public School Early Dismissal
16	Mon.	7:00 pm	Council Meeting Borough Hall Peggy Malkin, Mayor
17	Tues.	7:00 pm	Planning Board Meeting Borough Hall
17	Tue..		Roosevelt Public School Early Dismissal Last Day of School
18	Weds.	7:00 pm	Environmental Commission, Borough Hall
18	Weds.		Recycling Pickup 
19	Thurs.		Juneteenth
26	Thurs.	6:00 pm	RPS Board of Education Ken LeCompte, President

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Borough Bulletin at P.O. Box 221 or email to
RooseveltBulletinSubmissions@gmail.com.

JULY

2	Weds.	Recycling Pickup	
4	Fri..		Independence Day
4	Fri..	12:00 - 3:00	Roosevelt Independence Day Celebration Roosevelt Public School Volunteers Needed! Please email recreation@rooseveltnj.us
7	Mon.	7:00 pm	Council Meeting Borough Hall Peggy Malkin, Mayor
16	Weds.	7:00 pm	Environmental Commission, Borough Hall
16	Weds.		Recycling Pickup 
21	Mon.	7:00 pm	Council Meeting Borough Hall Peggy Malkin, Mayor
24	Thurs.	6:00 pm	RPS Board of Education Ken LeCompte, President
30	Weds.		Recycling Pickup 

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OfficerEd Szbanz
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609-448-0539, ext. 8

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Mondays 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Inspection Hours:

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<https://rooseveltnj.us/other-government/zoning-officer>

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