

FIREWEED

Poetry of Western Oregon



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CONTENTS

Dianne Williams Stepp	ROSES	5	Timothy J. Whitsel	IRON HORSES, LOST STARS	26
Gary Adams	WORDS	6	Michael Jenkins	WHEN COUSINS CAME TO VISIT	28
	MODERN POETRY	7	Carter McKenzie	THE DROWNING	29
✓ Tim Applegate	THE PROGNOSIS	8	✓ Virginia Corrie-Cozart	HEARING FOR THE FIRST TIME	30
	THE BENEDICTION	9	Michael Feld Simon	BELOVED	32
Kenn Mitchell	RIVER	10	Carla Perry	THIS WOMAN WAITS	33
	WATCHMAN: REFLECTIONS	11	✓ Diane Averill	PASSAGEWAYS	34
Patrick Hartigan	ROADSIDE PASSES	12	Judith Arcana	WE MUST DIE, LOVE ACCIDENT	36 36
Kaia Sand	PROVISION	13	Jason Knapp	A PROPOSITION: S: A PREFERENCE (ONE)	37 37
✓ Charles Goodrich	A SPRUNG DAY	14	Sean Patrick Hill	ROCKING M	38
Fred Harrison	NUNC DIMITTIS	16	Rachel J. Harrison	FOR LUKE ON THE ART OF LOVING	39
Sherron Norlen	MIGHT	17	✓ Michael Spring	TO THE UNKNOWN	40
✓ Michael Spring	HAIKU	18	Erik Muller	REVIEW: <i>Molecular Jam</i> BY DAN RAPHAEL, AND <i>Unbending Intent</i> BY RODGER MOODY	41
Heather B. Moore	CONVERSATION AT AN INTERSECTION ONE NIGHT	19	EDITORS' AND CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES		45
Laura Winter	10 PIN VISITATION RITUAL OF TWO WOMEN	20 21			
Robert Davies	LOST IN THE DEEP PURPLE #I	22			
Paul Ventura	POCO DIABLO	23			

Dianne Williams Stepp

ROSES

I have been afraid for them,
their fierce blooming.
Gold, apricot, scarlet faces
blazing with effort.
The spindly weeds
trailing their dry tufts of silk
in the parched soil at their feet.
Under the ground, in the sweet,
white pith of their roots,
what has happened to nurture
this frenzy? In the intricate tunnels
of darkness? Each evening now,
I come out of the house. I trim
the dying from the living blossoms.
I cut the stems to the V of the first
five pointed leaf. I let the petals
fall to the ground at their feet.
I place the hose at the root of each bush,
I sit near them while they drink.

WORDS

arching of vine maple
swan or snake-like
rushing down this hillside
in only a few decades

I see this because I don't expect it
it is not in the words 'vine maple'
this green cascade, this
trembling in cool winds

it is like
seeing the blue sky
without the words
'blue' and 'sky'

MODERN POETRY

time was you could turn out a halfway decent
poem on a vegematic
a poem that would not talk back
you could invite it for tea
it would not seduce your wife

all you needed were images of birds and dead greeks
2lbs almond flavor iambic
and youth being a spring day

nowadays even superman can't turn out
a good poem
adjectives run the streets—nearly smashing cars
and you can hear the lawn scream as it is cut

the motto of most poetry is
'this space for rent'

for poetry to not be the arcane specialty of
Byzantine business bees
a poem must be like after a rain
water dripping off eaves and trees
a child runs out and with triumph
jumps and scatters a puddle

THE PROGNOSIS

In the brief
moments of dawn
the light reveals

a lone white heron
poised at the edge of a pond.
It could, of course, have been

there for hours, for days; there is
no way to tell.
And perhaps, she thinks, this is how

the world itself once unfolded:
light brushing the calm waters
of a primordial lake, the first

winged creature.
And perhaps, in some other life,
she would know what to do now,

how to compose herself, how to
point out to the passing nurses
the perfect simplicity of

a heron, the light
on the water, the reflection
of the trees.

THE BENEDICTION

In the quiet hours of a country dawn
he would rise

from the same old dream,
the dream of dying, to pull on cold pants
and lace up hiking boots and set off
down the deer path through his little
patch of woods into the open fields
still glistening

with dew, feeling the first
touch of sun on his shoulders and the wind's
faint breath which held, perhaps, the seeds
of the afternoon rains, crossing the creek
above Isaac's pasture where the dapple grey
bent, as in a painting, to its parcel of tall
grass, past the row of broken fenceposts
still leaning against the sun
until he came to Nelson's pump
where he would grip the rusty handle and wait
for a trickle of water to fill the metal cup, raising
the cup and drinking then wiping his mouth
with the back of a sleeve he would gaze up
at the far hills veined with elk trails

where the dead slept, where the dark paths
still shuddered to the memory of moccasin and wheel,
and he would lift his arms in benediction
to every mystery that would remain, forever, unknown,
to the natural order, which is disorder, his heart
still now as the light in the trees deepened
and the hills fell seaward and a solitary hawk,
riding the current, circled high overhead.

RIVER

after bill hotchkiss

the indians called it *willamette*
—the river that fell from the sky
somewhere in those black mountains
—slithered like a long snake
through steep canyons
& lay in the hot valley sun.

long before the dams
& lumber mills killed
salmon runs, this was
sacred water:
bright blue-silver green
where gods bathed
in august thunderstorms.

the river that once ate
mountain guts—
it is an old river now—
slow & lazy.
eats only sewage
& bald tires.
in the thin light of midnight
i can hear the laughter
of water remembering
water remembering.

WATCHMAN: REFLECTIONS

the wind over rust & pigeon dung
walls that sag, swollen with rain
& neglect: machines that no longer
have purpose. here is the graveyard

a single line of footsteps through dust
—a sign the watchman before me
made his dutiful, boring rounds

apple core by the corner phone
covered with a condom: a sick bastard
but i leave the joke for my relief
to decipher

i punch 17 keys into this old clock
that nearly keeps time. i listen to the wind
& rain. piss in the black pond
behind a curtain of cattails & darkness
& wait for the next round

Patrick Hartigan

ROADSIDE PASSES

Prairie Rose Rough Blazing Star
(natives) Rattlesnake-Master or
Little Bluestem, genius, genius
brillianting genius, refiguring
siloining Ironweed, Compass Plant
(native) "edges orienting North
and South" no eyes for the self
for New England Aster (native),
"85% of here was prairie" while
you speak truly, and I will say
Leadplant or Butterfly Milkweed
(both native) until I'm through
Grayhead Coneflower's "drooping
petals" Spiderwort's lean blue.

Kaia Sand

PROVISION

White branches dangle
like fish skeletons
in front of the sun-paled cross.

I do not feel like talking today.

Charles Goodrich

A SPRUNG DAY

Deep fog at dawn.
Trouble waking.
I grope downstairs
with a bad dream tagging along.
The bluejay's scream
speaks worlds.

*

Midmorning sun
quivers in a mist,
a candle behind muslin.
I pin her clean blouses
to the clothesline, humming.

*

Before lunch
a quick hard rain.
All the weeds
pulled this past two hours
lick their wounds,
bite down,
re-root.

*

Shirt off,
straw hat shading face,
I half-snooze in the grass
while the stainless sun
tattoos my chest.

*

Perverse wind.
Black clouds pushing in.
Raindrops big as teeth.
I run for the house
and, suddenly shivering, watch
as the cherry tree is stripped of its blossoms.

*

Then it's clear again. Steaming.
Sunrays drill the moistened earth.
I need to dig. I want
all vegetables now. My spade
flashes through the ground.

Fred Harrison

NUNC DIMITTIS

I plant
With no expectation of growth,
Crowded, incautious, indiscriminate,
Like my life has been.

Come harvest season
I'm wild with fury
That, cruelly, something grew
Beyond my doing.

And, so,
The tired harvest season comes along,
As for all of us,
Wilted leaves, spring blossoms gone,
The fruit left for others.

Sherron Norlen

MIGHT

If I could walk
backward
up the side
of a sequoia
brightly flicking up
a breeze with four smoky,
see-through wings,

working two extra limbs,
prancing a patent leather,
narrow-waisted torso,
swishing a plump
black ass,
looping lego-link threads
here and there for info,

if I could lift a Peterbilt
by the bumper
with my teeth,
yes —
could do,
could enter
this minute waspness.

Michael Spring

HAIKU

beside the thin creek
I slap myself over and over—
the mosquitoes!

the clump of flies
looks like an open eye
on the dead opossum

it is raining—
a moth is caught circling
in a hollow tree

Heather B. Moore

CONVERSATION AT AN INTERSECTION ONE NIGHT

"I fell asleep at a stop light once," my friend, Steve, said.
I could just see him humming
through the dark in his automatic Honda, the wide
black street stretching out around him, cooling.
I know that quiet home-searching, how lines emerge
themselves. I know how a long night drive vibrates—
that shift from freeway
to street, that first stop light after
the slow glide down the off-ramp.
The car hums low, and that red light,
trusted, warm, still . . .
"I woke up when I heard the light turn green," he continued.

Laura Winter

10 PIN VISITATION

the purple galaxy
spins
down the lane
this frame
splits

 a gutter ball
one more wall
banger
 evens up
 the handicaps

one more shot
 can't count
 the pins
 suddenly
 they burst into flames
then big-assed women
 dance by
wearing only red collars
 strike

RITUAL OF TWO WOMEN

She curbs her impala

 a pot blossoms
 carrion
 smashed flies
 hibiscus
 disguise my window

I rub a porthole
 in grease

She pulls a toast
 from her paper bag

 dishrag waves

Robert Davies

LOST IN THE DEEP PURPLE #I

Abruptly he is there
this trim motorcyclist.

He takes off his helmet
he smiles.
It is my friend
his face turned purple.

He takes off his mask
extends his gloved hand
the arm breaks off:
Cool.

He takes off his skull.
Hello, he says in the husky
blue denim voice
of a lover who waits.

Paul Ventura

POCO DIABLO

The sisters, crones, cronies were inviolate
in their togetherness. They lived up the side of the mountain
in a cranny cracked blue to the open
lovely canyon—ochre, rust, lavender—
of the heart, and called it Poco Diablo,
little devil. His songs come from there
where he can cook up bright red dust storms,
sudden columns of air spiraling into nothing.

He floats out over that ruddy desert pocked with jade,
comes in through the screen, gets in my suitcase, my
toothbrush, my hair,
makes my toenails grow, keeps my limbs milky green, says
don't mind, keep cool, stay hot
on the scent, in a heartbeat, learn to ignore
the numbers being juggled in the air. Watch out for the
streets—

a number might fall on you
and glitter like a snowflake in your hair.

HABITAT

My dad had to say my name
three times before I woke.
I rubbed my eyes. The birds'
chatter had barely begun.
We stepped from our tent at dawn.
I wore my favorite sweater,
the hooded one with rainbow stripes.
Along our walk, Dad pointed up
at finches, orioles, an eagle soaring
overhead, so rare I felt
burnished by his presence.
I was eight, Dad thirty the year
we watched so many birds. Mom
said it was for his nerves
and told me to be a good girl.
I recalled the year before:
tranquillizers,
my father's tears,
and nights spent worrying
in the basement.
Dad loved our walks
and teaching me the birds. I learned
each species has its own way of living
but depends on everything else
to keep it alive.

Now I am thirty, my father alone,
living deep in the Michigan woods.
He calls me whenever the barred owl
drops by—Do you remember
what he says? You bet, Dad.

Who cooks for you?
Who cooks for you, all?

I called my dad this spring—
I'd seen a pair of eagles
soaring above the fields
on my way to work.
I had thought they were near
extinction so long ago
but he told me—
in that teacher's voice—
That's just life
in a habitat, honey.

IRON HORSES, LOST STARS

So your father
never will make it to God's kingdom
gripping the wheel.
Jesus never understood
the importance of a fine car,
or nosing through town
aboard a gleaming four-by-four.

Since the advent
of the first surreys and buckboards,
knees have not been bones
we *Homo sapiens* use
to giddyup or steer.
The Dodge Polara endured
how many model years?

When you were small
Daddy drove you everywhere
in a noisy Volkswagen bus.
Like a Tin Woodman painted orange
and buff, it had no heart.
It let us down
just before funerals.

Its seized starter
would silence glad afternoons;
clip all talk, two hundred downpour miles
from our doorway.
No warning.
Not a silence one would choose, trapped
by seat belts with no give.

Owning homely cars that won't go,
suddenly,
but go again
after ridiculous short rests,
this is the beginning
of knowledge.
Are you naked
wearing two coats, Hannah?
Angry, joshing your mom
the spring you learned to read,
your daddy swore he detested those days.
He grew few skills
at staying powerless in a big country.
Summers can be cold here.

WHEN COUSINS CAME TO VISIT

If I squinted I could make out
something familiar in their faces.
Maybe it was dead Grandma June
or the man on the late news
wanted and still on the loose.
I was only old enough to be told.
Told not to talk to strangers
and told to sleep between them
downstairs on the basement floor.
Wide-eyed I'd listen for Mama
murmuring in the living room,
floorboards creaking above me,
lumps of cousin beside me
shifting and descending into dream.
Then all would quiet and deepen
and I'd hear the darkness ease in
and out of their foreign bodies.
My shoulders would squeeze in
and I'd feel, clear from the kitchen,
the silent steak knives glisten.

THE DROWNING

For nine days she prayed
that her children be returned.
Miracles happen. Her husband,
holding photographs of his sons
before a television crew,
was no longer estranged.

Letters folded to her chest
*I want you but I don't
want your babies*
she dreamed
the rutted road
leading to this shore,
the low green ramp

awoke, weeping, *they were taken*
I know, I saw the car
how it disappeared. Miracles happen.
She would save them, children
softly rising, learning forgiveness,
given to the power of the Lord.

HEARING FOR THE FIRST TIME

Three o'clock light flattened Riverton
with no relief
as I trudged to my piano lesson.
It drained color
from the Johnsons' wash
drying on the back porch
and faded the last wilted roses.
I edged around the mongrel
lying across the path
to the house and warmed
my hands for scales, a new assignment.

Hearing Clair de Lune for the first time,
I stood behind my teacher
not daring to breathe
as she played moonlight
tracing an arc from
Paris to Oregon. It moved
by arpeggio across the water,
shone in whole-tone chords,
rode high in delicate pianissimo.

The 1944 calendar from Ed's Garage
tacked to a nearby wall showed
fluorescent moondust on noble firs.
The lunar phases revealed
October tenth in solemn full face.
The sun crazed finish on the upright,
daylight seeping through the transom,
Mrs. Hartly's mink, furtive and smelly
in the pen outside the window
couldn't quell the music's glow.

When the last pale note faded,
I half-floated down the dusty drive
and through the community long
past its zenith.
Still hearing Debussy,
I threw my arms wide
over the rutted streets.
Oblique sunlight leaned into evening,
softening the gully
behind Old Man Gibson's shack
where his low-grade coal mine
lay abandoned.
It illumined the smoke
from cookstove chimneys
and the logged-over hills
behind the school house.
Even Riverton would rise with the moon.

Michael Feld Simon

BELOVED

The wild bells blooming in February
know that I've been waiting, like time
expecting the ocean to write in the sand,

how the water boils as the sun sets
how stubbing out clouds against the horizon
is like being tickled.

Pretending I am the afternoon, leaning gently
on my last light, I come looking for you.
Beloved, you are not easy to recognize.

Being already at one with me,
more intimate than light and shadow at dusk,
to see you, I must come in disguise.

Carla Perry

THIS WOMAN WAITS

Forget the small talk.
The sun is setting.
Indulge me,
tenderly.
Pretend I am fragile,
nearby.
The rising moon you see
is my own.
You've been away too long.
This woman waits,
walls down
fears stashed
with good intentions.
Fall is coming
and a fire would be nice.

PASSAGEWAYS

At age nine her parents locked her out
every time they left her to go shopping
in their car she called the Green Tomato.
She'd fumble at the doors and windows
awkward at locks as a bumblebee
moving from clover to clover.
Sometimes the garage door
would open. Then she'd remove the wood
from the woodbox and crawl
through slivers of light
to emerge in the livingroom
beside the chill brick fireplace,
sure to be back outside, the wood replaced,
before her parents returned.

At seventeen, her boyfriend's sperm
made it past that detour sign,
her diaphragm, and on up the road despite
the bad weather of contraceptive foam.
She found herself alone
in that time when war was more
legal than abortions,
her boyfriend off to Canada.
Looking down at her belly
was like running down the smooth
slope to the grass where
they'd made love, and time
never seemed to end until
the moment her mother
said *You're showing*
and made her stay inside
so neighbors couldn't see.

Allowed out for doctor's appointments
she had to reach the Green Tomato
past her mother's warning: *Don't walk
in front of the picture window,*
past her father's World War II footlocker
stiff-cradling old photos
and mustard-brown blankets,
past the thin lip of the
grass edger kept in the garage.
When they returned, her father
said *Stay in the car*
while he shut the heavy
garage door again.
In artificial dark she entered
her parents' house
through the utility door.

Once inside she'd look
at the woodbox, think of the coming birth,
wishing that the dead wood was back
outside being trees again, the pine
and cedar moving in the blind wind.

Judith Arcana

WE MUST DIE, LOVE

Read the signs; they say use caution, expect delays
frequent high winds, occasional violent storms
then yield, and be prepared to stop.

After eternity we will be porcelain
talking soft together we'll hear shadow music
while time falls like rain through light behind us.

ACCIDENT

your lie drives through the night in a dark car
while here at home ice heaves under the road
there's no blood, no broken glass, just
one headlight blind, the other a knife of light

Jason Knapp

A PROPOSITION:

I only make \$4.00 an hour,
But we could play Scrabble on Sundays,
Reserve a table at the public library,
Converse with strangers about theology and politics at the
local KFC,
Star gaze (with the left over chicken),
Lose our cares in the subtle combustion of a home-made,
candle
And whisper bits of French and Latin till sleep catches us
on our lumpy, worn Queen-sized mattress.

S: A PREFERENCE (ONE)

When I am ill for at least three days,
I would prefer to sleep on the floor,
With only two blankets,
And a closed book by my side.

I can understand your preference.

I feel that this may last my whole life.

I believe that it will,
And I will always offer you a pillow.

ROCKING M

She sews my buttons
on her father's farm,
he and i work on the car
in the cold oil shop;
a dry fire burns in the stove,
scrapwood burns in the barrel.

Sheep in the wet pasture
bathe in gray october wind,
chickens lay brown eggs in straw,
raspberries ache on the vine.

Wild apple souls ripening,
the roadside of autumn
on the outskirts of corvallis;
the day rolling overhead
gathering our harvests
in a basket of clouds.

FOR LUKE ON THE ART OF LOVING

You say your eyes
have been opened to yellow,
not because of the sun, or fire, or warmth,
but because of acres of
mustard outside

your window and
the buds of ranunculas
mounted on ridiculously thin stalks,
which your landlady placed all
along the hall.

What color have
my eyes been opened to this
spring? I'll sit on this yellow curb and try
to answer my eyes have been
opened to blue,

not because of
the sky, or water, but just
because of the blue-roofed house that I passed
to get here and the distant
slope of mountains.

What's that you said?
The years have been good and you'd
not have my hair yellow again? Well, and
I would not have your eyes
anything but brown.

Michael Spring

TO THE UNKNOWN

there are only
so many doors
you can walk through

before you're used
to the unknown

before it wants you
more than you want

it and your dreams
begin to float
in the air

space before you
before you
find sleep

REVIEW: *Molecular Jam* by Dan Raphael
(Jazz Police Books, 1996)

Unbending Intent by Rodger Moody (26 Books, 1997)

Dan and Rodger read together March 20, 1997, at Tsunami Books in Eugene. The reading demonstrated a wide range of poetry, making me wonder, "If I could choose the kind of poet I might be...." Would it be Dan, the large, bear-like man who delivers his poems in long breaths ("sheets of sound" described Coltrane's attack), body swaying, legs planted apart? Would it be his poems of dream and vision? Or would it be Rodger, light of build, hesitant in manner (hard to say whether the self-depreciation stems from pain or humor)? Would it be his poems of memory and desire, spoken earnestly by the person who lived them?

Their books extend the contrasts. Dan's *Molecular Jam* is as aptly titled as Rodger's *Unbending Intent*, for Dan is a jazz instrumentalist whose extended solos traverse cell and cosmos, while Rodger is the protesting voice that must be sure of the constants in the progress from child to adult to parent. Dan's interest is metamorphosis, the more improvised the better. His twenty-nine poems, spanning sixty-four tight-packed pages, enact the extended variations of the changes he loves. Rodger's interest is in naming and holding to memory, desire, and conscience. His twenty-four poems neatly fit twenty-eight pages; his poems enact through compression an effort to define essentials.

If Rodger's poems cohere around a version of character, Dan's cohere around a version of change. To hear Dan read is to be carried into the slipstream of images and a vision of dynamic and complementary systems within the body, earth, and universe. Dan plays his poems better than I can, so as I read I listen for the bard and look for the tree caught in a windstorm. On the page, the poems urge rapid reading. The long lines lope, the paragraphs rise up, and the images (where Dan's work really accelerates) crackle and shift at electric speed. His images surprise by jumping between polarities: technical/natural, microscopic/cosmic, non-human/human. Such differentials make sparks fly! Here are lines that conclude "Vapors":

when the traffic gets heavy here i mean molecular,
taking no air for granted. if you can see a body part
it's gone for now, bringing the fish out in me, a percentage
left behind in the blue syrup light,

my pine shoes clacket this tin sky,
air traffic controllers in my front teeth,
glistening threads of sinuous urine too fine for a phrase to
ruffle
shoulders ferment molecules long as the bible brewing
sunspots
toward my iris, the egg through my skin without leaving
the shell,
biceps hurtling on the breeze numerous as starlings
& fenced produce bags gauzed in exhaust.

Here is a poem about the weirdness of urban air at dusk,
copper-colored, polluted, injected by idling cars. The mutating
speaker becomes released above the city like a figure from
Chagall, but instead of being filled with romance and fancy,
he is full of wires and he leaves a stream of ejecta as he speeds
over the city.

If such change makes for a restless, protean poetry, what does
Dan tell us about change? What is his sense of molecules
jamming? In his poems, change again and again releases us
from the condition of being mere consumers and users of the
planet, of being undifferentiated, of considering ourselves and
others as products. As "Pound of Head" expresses it:

all diseases come from deficiencies,
from disruption or inadequacies in the ease we
slather on
like latex sandwich spread tween bread nutritious as
wallboard,
bread that will outlive us.
I have my lover search every inch of me
for the freshness date, a trademark, a bar-code
to drag across my tombstone's eye.

Much of Dan's work has a Shakespearean tinge of mutability,
of decay and oblivion; yet, instead of memorializing lovers in
verse, Dan seeks more dramatic change than clock time

provides. Consumer culture defines time as routine, as so
many trips by car, so Dan's speaker enters the deep time of
the natural world. He becomes part of the drama of cells and
nebulae.

Rodger's speaker is a person of conscience. He possesses
character, the same through all the poems. This person is
interested in right action, which is primarily holding out
against the influences of an overbearing father and a
misguided military. This character finds constancy in his
memories (gathering fruit with his family, feeling anxious
about school) and in his desires (curiosity aroused by a girl at
church, the romantic phase of his marriage, his hopes for his
growing sons). Constancy stands against time that hurries
him through the roles of boy, man, father. This stance is clear
in the book's title poem:

A parent's attention shifts
between births almost like fashion
among those monied enough to care.
I can't follow it all, and wonder
will my boys ever see
their real father, how he told
the ship's chaplain that he wouldn't
sail when the ship left port
for the Gulf of Tonkin. Would
they understand his three months
on the psych ward feigning insanity
to avoid the craziness of a country
gone totally mad? *Unbending intent*
was my phrase, the saving grace
that steeled my blood against those
who wouldn't listen, that carried
me through to those who would.

This is Frost-like in its conservatism, its need to be saved by
stepping back from headlong destruction. The speaker needs
to be one of the saved, but he must also find those who will
listen and understand, not just sons, but readers who can
see Rodger's sense of "the saving grace." All of these poems
focus on various degrees of innocence and experience; the

progress from one to the other can be facilitated by a father like Rodger, not Rodger's father, and by acts of love, not violence.

To hear Rodger read is to become lodged in puzzlement and doubt, to feel the tug of memory and desire, yet to be afforded relief because the adult speaker admits that years pass, accepts wryly a life that "doesn't add up, or even need to," and bends a little in the book's last poem, "The Kiss Behind the Kiss":

...I've fallen

away from my barricades;
there's never a defense
against the years or rapture,
and I tumble in the dark.

It's hard for me to choose between the two wisdoms of these poets, between their two voices and stances. Of course, as their reader, I am able to become, if not both at once, then each of them in turn. As I read, I interpret: "I" is a poet's way of *invitation, ingress, imagining*.

Both of these poet/publishers have been generous to Oregon poets, Rodger as editor of *Silverfish Review* (both periodical and books) and Dan as editor of 26 Books. It is fitting that their work comes from Oregon publishers:

Jazz Police Books, P.O. 3235, La Grande, Oregon 97850
26 Books, 6735 SE 78th, Portland, Oregon 97206

E.M.

EDITORS' NOTES

Please address all subscriptions and poetry submissions, queries and comments, to Editors Sydney Thompson and Harold Johnson at *Fireweed*, 2917 N.E. 13th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97212.

You are invited to our *Fireweed* Potluck and Open Reading on Sunday, October 4th, starting at noon. We will be eating, reading poetry, and celebrating the beginning of our tenth year of publication. We'll gather at Willamette Park just south of Corvallis. Turn off 99W toward the river at Goodnight Avenue. Bring a salad, entree, or dessert for four and your own table settings. We will supply an assortment of beverages. And bring two or three new poems to read. For additional details: 541-757-0135.

Among those especially to thank for help and encouragement during nine years of *Fireweed* are:

David Laing
Donna Henderson
Ann Muller
Jackie Melvin
Courtney Cloyd
Darryla Green-McGrath

David is a founding editor and namer of the magazine. He was its producer until Courtney Cloyd took over that multiple chore. Donna contributed editorial insights for a year. Ann Muller proofread *Fireweed* until Jackie Melvin became our copyediting conscience. Darryla's fireweed print is on the cover of just about every issue.

Without poets writing and sending poems and without readers interested in reading them (interested enough to subscribe), *Fireweed* would have had a short, inglorious life. With these people's continuing support, the magazine will likely flourish, and Harold and Sydney will thank you as we do now!

CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES

* GARY L. ADAMS, Eugene, does landscape work, hikes every week, and whenever possible practices Rimbaud's "systematic derangement of the senses." Recently he read his work on KLCC's *Mixed Voices*.

*TIM APPLGATE, Gaston, owns a furniture restoration company. His poems have appeared in *Plainsongs*, *Dog River Review*, and *Scrivener*.

JUDITH ARCANA, Portland, has published *Grace Paley's Life Stories, A Literary Biography* with the University of Illinois. Her poems have appeared in *Calyx*, *Sojourner*, *Bridges*, and *Motherwork*.

DIANE AVERILL, Beavercreek, has a second collection, *Beautiful Obstacles* (Blue Light Press). She teaches writing and literature at Clackamas Community College, where she is an associate editor of the *Clackamas Literary Review*.

VIRGINIA CORRIE-COZART, Salem, divides her retirement living between Oregon and Arizona. The Riverton of her poem is a town along the Coquille River.

ROBERT DAVIES, Portland, wrote a long poem in three parts about a Coast Range lumbering town, Timber. He has an ongoing series of poems about those afflicted by AIDS.

CHARLES GOODRICH, Corvallis, just published a chapbook, *Insects of South Corvallis*. Sunny days, Charles can be seen pedalling just barely ahead of his son Elliot, who rides a trailalong bike. He read last spring at Willamette University with Barbara Drake.

*FRED HARRISON, Waldport, edits *Word*, a journal about words, and writes both verse and humorous essays.

*RACHEL J. HARRISON, Eureka, CA, is a 1997 graduate of Linfield College, a writing student of both Lex Runciman and Barbara Drake.

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*SEAN PATRICK HILL, Eugene, has read his work on public-access radio and TV and in coffee houses. He has work in Lane Community College's *Denali* and *Brain Waves*. His chapbook is *Liquid*.

MICHAEL JENKINS, Grants Pass, studied with Carolyn Forché. He contributed to *Let Us Drink to the River*, an anthology of Willamette River poetry edited by Charles Goodrich.

JASON KNAPP, Salem, a senior at Sprague High School, first published his work in the Young Writers issue of *Fireweed*.

CARTER MCKENZIE, Dexter, co-authored the chapbook *Salt and Shifting Flowers*. Her new manuscript, *The First Ocean*, is ready for publication. She reads at Lane Literary Guild presentations.

KENN MITCHELL, Eugene, has two books of poetry from Pygmy Forest Press: *Poetry of the Deformed* and *The Fatman in the Mirror*. Working for twenty-five years in small saw and veneer mills, Kenn currently makes paper for the outside of cardboard boxes at Weyerhaeuser Springfield.

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SHERRON NORLEN, Portland, has had poems published by many magazines in Oregon and beyond. Her two collections in progress are titled *Entomologist's Dreambook* and *In the Waters of Unknowing*.

*CARLA PERRY, Yachats, has a recent chapbook, *Laughing Like Dogs*. Her activities include photography and co-editing the journal *Talus and Scree*, where several poets in this *Fireweed* have appeared.

*JENNY ROOT, Eugene, poet and poetry performer, has won poetry slams in Eugene. She was the administrator of the Lane Literary Guild's workshops, reading series, and writing center. She was with Story Line Press before it moved to Ashland.

*KAIA SAND, Portland, has had poetry in *Talus and Scree*. She is a 1994 English graduate of the University of Portland.

MICHAEL FELD SIMON, Eugene, is inspired to write by the forested acres he lives on southwest of town.

MICHAEL SPRING, Corvallis, works as a buyer at The Book Bin. His poetry has appeared in *Talus and Scree* and *Poetic Space*.

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*PAUL VENTURA, Portland, is a retired audiologist and member of the Oregon State Poetry Association. He takes poetry writing classes at Portland Community College.

*TIMOTHY J. WHITSEL, Springfield, has studied with David Wagoner at the University of Washington. He is a house husband to his doctor spouse and three children. Tim organizes the Lane Literary Guild's Windfall Reading Series.

LAURA WINTER, Portland, has work in *Talus and Scree*, *Portlandia Review of Books*, and *Northwest Literary Forum*. The moving spirit of the mixed art bag *Take Out*, she is active in the reading and performance of poetry.

* First appearance in *Fireweed*.