

# fireweed

*poetry of Western Oregon*

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## fireweed

*fireweed: poetry of Western Oregon* is published quarterly, featuring fall, winter, spring, and summer issues each year. *fireweed* features poets living in the western half of Oregon, though poems need not be regional in subject. Manuscripts should include a return envelope with sufficient postage. Inquiries about submission of reviews or essays are welcome. Please be sure to include a biographical note with your poems or your prose.

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RUTH ELLIOT PERKINS

*Signals*

In the center of the field—  
Skies darkened just past dusk—  
He peers at his global positioner  
Looking for a satellite  
To tell him where he is.  
Around him dart the first fireflies,  
Pulsing beacons, signaling that  
The center of the universe  
Is always everywhere.



JUDITH MONTGOMERY

Grass

All flesh is grass. My sister and I sprinted  
from the sermon, slid from Sunday dresses  
into dungarees and shirts Mommy snatched  
stiff-dried off the line. Summer set us free

to race whittled sticks below the bridge,  
catch katydids stringing up the moon,  
and whisper secret codes for Girl Scout camp.  
I was ready to fly up from Brownies, change

as magically as Dorothy changed in Oz  
to emerald dress and matching emerald sash.  
Weeknights, while my mother peeled potatoes  
at the kitchen sink, I swung unpatient feet

beneath the oilclothed table, yearned over  
catalogues of gear, praising green-and-gold  
socks, canteen, belt, jaunty felt beret.  
My Daddy marked his students' awkward sums.

On Sundays, after church let out for good,  
we drove with Daddy to the rich folks' long  
sweet lawns. He keyed the mower. Leigh and I  
played jacks and dared each other to roll down

the light-sprinkled hills that bloomed in clover,  
dandelion, slopes of tasseled grass.  
We tumbled powdery pollen high and wide,  
clouds of meadow blossoms seeding sky.

Our father striped the nap of velvet hills,  
cross-hatching his mathematical design.  
He never faulted us for getting in his way  
or loading up the air with golden dust

that he took in as shallow as he might,  
the white asthma mask knotted double tight.

JUDITH MONTGOMERY

The Vacant Motel

Sweet Home was my home  
for 40 years. I used

to handle my own rig, loaded  
keel-even, stacked with sappy pine,

trucking to the mills above the town,  
the Santiam below chock full of trout.

Left arm burned by window sun,  
right arm steering true, winch site

to planer, centered straight—  
hill to home, Susan and the babes.

I could park forty tons of wood  
between two narrow lines. Could

muscle steel chains on at ten degrees,  
at 5,000 blizzard feet in Mackenzie Pass.

\*

Multiple sclerosis. You might not  
have heard the name, unless like me

you'd been slowly knocked  
plumb down to nothing.

The doc said it was myelin—the sheath  
that wraps your nerves away from danger,

your oiled envelope that holds  
the maps—attacked.

The body twisting out of true,  
to nothing but a hut of scar.

It came on gradual at first:  
two tires leaning past the line,

the E twisting to an I  
across the clinic chart, the turn

too hard to right. The rig  
canted in Cody's ditch, load a bust.

Susan white-faced at the ambulance,  
eyes starred up in tears.

\*

In my day, Suze and I,  
we'd rig the camper up,

slip off to Honeyman State Park.  
The tide blew us alive—

sharp-calling gulls, a pitch of clouds  
scattering blue sky,

a mile of sun to skid in.  
Dune sand shuffled into pillows,

sting-grass stripped across  
bare feet. Skin.

Susan's blouseknot falling loose.  
Blue sweat zing.

\*

Today, my son-in-law  
and my second daughter drive me  
to the beach. I'm belted in the back,  
watching bug-killed pines slide by,

and the cemetery where the hearse  
turned in with my Suze.

The mills are going under, what used  
to peel a ton of logs

each skinned down to the white  
to brace new-start homes,

a driftboat dream, my grandgirls'  
treehouse, ladder. Rocking chairs.

My stuff's been packed  
in three boxes riding in the trunk. Below,

the river shrunk: September irrigation.  
Steelhead melting in the heat.

Bog grass flashes green,  
then the swell of dunes. I can see

north and south along the beach,  
but not be on it:

sand's a road that slips  
beneath a crutch.

\*

Down at the edge of tide, sandpipers  
blur and scurry. Binoculars

could bring them close,  
but not to eyes blind to center lines.

When I'm along, my children use  
that blue stick-man sticker

to park in the wide berth  
set aside above the cliff—

the edge too far to try to fall  
out of any stumble-body.

Down the street's the old folks' place  
where they try to make you live

in chairs with wheels. Tourist  
trash has overflowed the bins.

The Vacant sign hangs crooked  
from the Sailor Jack motel—

every last thing  
skidding out of true.

For C.C.

TERRY BRIX

### Gray Cranes Migrating

The Kearney, Nebraska area is a flyway for gray cranes,  
Moving from Texas in spring, north to Minnesota and Canada.  
They land en masse on corn stubble fields as though sitting in rows  
of bleachers

Watching some crane version of March Madness or "bug ball,"  
Long necks moving up and down in unison as though applauding  
Or maybe just rejoicing the chance to be with the opposite sex again.

GEORGE ESTREICH

Departing Flight

The runway pause concentrates the dread.  
Then sickening acceleration, noise  
like the blank roaring the brain makes, rising  
away from a certainty: I felt my weight  
increase, like an inverse of your own,  
an undertow straining at the center  
of each cell. The riptide of home. I wanted  
to give into it, to let it wash

a lighter body from me, one passing  
like a ghost through the heavy bulkhead  
and sinking in a feather-fall, dwindling  
slackly through the depths of the air towards you,  
towards the folded shadows of suburban roofs,  
letting me go, taking his place at your side.

GEORGE STALEY

Synecitic

Today, as I have my 262nd haircut,  
the 56th by Barb,  
she tells me her bi-focals, much needed,  
lie in a drawer at home, useless.

The line between the prescriptions  
interferes with her work,  
cuts across the arc of the ear.

Pointing along the top curve of my left ear,  
she adds, "A bad line *here* ruins the haircut."

Though I understand little in the craft  
and art of haircutting,  
I know line disruptions  
in the arc of the ear.

CHRIS ANDERSON

Passing Out

The air crisps like burning paper,  
the edges curling back to the center  
until there's nothing left.

Your collapsing fabric  
is sucked into a bottle  
where your eyes blink back.

A string is plucked from the bowel  
and drawn through the trunk  
and yanked tight above the head  
until it snaps

and the body falls  
like a sack, like a bag of nickels,  
and it has nothing to do with you  
anymore.

You have arrived  
at some other point.

CHRIS ANDERSON

The River is Always Tilting

The river my dad is swimming in  
is always tilting, the far shore sere,  
the water wide and black, rippling like tin,  
all of it aslant, untrue. An old tire bumps  
in the shallows. My father's legendary dog  
is sliding off the bank. And dad has just broken  
the surface, he has come up for air,  
his shoulders pale, his face a blur,  
little waves breaking off in circles  
from his slender, ghostly breast.



LINDSAY DUNE WARREN

Sunset

dust and clouds slung across western ridge,  
sun pigments fill a still-life bowl  
with lemons, ripe peaches,  
a pomegranate or two and grapes.

GUEST POEM

JANE GLAZER

The Dearest Freshness

*Clearable water. There from the start. The sight  
And run of it, unpolluting itself  
From the muck of dragwork so quickly  
I remember eating snow.*

*And one night at a party  
in Fayetteville, Arkansas, a woman leaving,  
Driving home, then driving herself straight back  
With the book she meant to read from. Her accent  
Was southern, perfect for each voice  
In the little scene she chose, from a story set  
In a field beside a river.*

*Children playing  
Stop and line up and cannot take their eyes off  
Something deep in the flow; and then one says  
"That's us down there," and it goes clean through me.*

*That's us down there. I see us every time.*

—Seamus Heaney  
in *Threepenny Review*, Winter 2000

Leafing through the Winter 2000 *Threepenny Review*, I discovered this poem "The Dearest Freshness," and I read and reread it several times. As the days passed, I nearly memorized it, so great was my response to the dominant image, and so great is my admiration for Seamus Heaney's art. First, the title caught my eye. The words "dearest freshness" are out of synch with much of contemporary poetry, a bit too sweet for modern tastes. But the pleasure of recognizing the allusion was the greater pull, for I knew it to be taken from Gerard Manley Hopkins' beloved Italian sonnet, "God's Grandeur." In the specific line from which the title is

taken, "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things," Hopkins found hope in the sordid world of mid-19th century England. Despite the human trampling of it, he praises the regenerative miracle of nature in a paean to the Holy Ghost. The rhyme-remembered final line ends, "with ah! bright wings," a reassuring, uplifting hope, based in Hopkins' deep spirituality.

Seamus Heaney, like his mentor before him, holds the belief in regenerative nature. We are led to suspect it with the first line of this poem: "Clearable water. There from the start. The sight." The word "clearable" echoes possible improvement—like clearing up a misunderstanding, clearing up anger with forgiveness, letting time clear the burden of grief, etc. So Heaney's poem begins on a note of letting things settle, of getting back to the beginning. Then "water," the most essential element for human survival, the sustaining, life-giving rain, or the river of life, is followed by "There from the start." It has been there forever. Always, since our origins in the great sea, long before the beginnings of history, there was water. And the first line ends with "The sight," and even though it flows into the next line, the sound of the word itself suggests insight, or vision. So, even before the reader dips deeper into the poem, the gaze of the artist widens beyond the merely personal. Add this first line to the title, and one is tempted to believe the poet is speaking of renewal.

Hungry for hope, refreshed by the possibility of an affirmation, we read on. He elaborates, "...And run of it, unpolluting itself/ From the muck of dragwork so quickly/ I remember eating snow." A first stanza image of something so pristine, so fresh from the sky as to be pure, being "eaten," is a brilliant image of what sustains us. Metaphorically, we must eat to stay alive. Eat what? That which is irreducible and true, before the soil of traffic or commerce or struggle for power, before selfishness or ego or greed, all "the muck of dragwork," a typical Irish term of clearing out the drainage ditch or plowing through mud. Here, paraphrased, it is getting

down to bedrock, to the eternal flow or foundation of life.

Even before I read it through the first time, I expected the poem to have a kind of devotional tone, to focus on the surprise and delight in nature that reassures us. Raised a Roman Catholic in a rural corner of Northern Ireland, the eldest of nine children, Seamus Heaney infuses his poetry with the sensuous memories of nature in childhood on the family farm, and with moral choice, however subtle, a hallmark of his work. Reading it, then, I was thrilled to find the poem not only met my initial expectations, but also, like the speaker in the poem, it went "clean through me." The potency of allusion in his title set the mood.

Allusion is a poetic device for borrowing, indirectly, the emotional power of a previous recognizable source. When Robert Frost titles one of his poems "Out, Out...", a reader automatically finishes the Shakespearean line, "brief candle." This hints at a poem about a life cut off in its prime, and indeed, Frost writes about a young boy's death. The reader then responds on both levels, however unwittingly: Lady Macbeth's mad recognition of her role in the bloody murder of King Duncan, and the young boy's desperate holding up of his bloody hand, realizing the consequence of the buzzsaw accident. In Seamus Heaney's masterful allusion, "The Dearest Freshness," the reader finds both the faith-based themes of Hopkins—"nature is never spent"—and an inclusive humanity that marks Heaney's world view—"something deep in the flow...that's us down there,"—spoken to all of us.

In the second stanza, Heaney lightens the theme by telling us a little story about being at a party where, one imagines, people are reading their favorite poems or pieces aloud to each other. Behind this image, one can sense a camaraderie of like minds, a common language of the spirit. A lady has forgotten the book she meant to read from, leaves the party to go home to get it, drives back. She wants to share it that badly. She could



represent the frenetic behavior of any of us, distracted by too many things, who search for the "story set in a field beside a river." The story is our life. The field is our territory or our place in time, and the river, "there from the start," the universal flow that goes on and on, "unpolluting itself," (provided the pollutants of mining slag, sewage, heavy metals, and fish-killing pesticides do not interfere with nature.)

And she loves to read. "Her accent/Was southern, perfect for each voice/In the little scene she chose, from a story set..." The power of story-telling has spell-bound audience since time began, and the poet paraphrases her chosen story: "Children playing/ Stop and line up and cannot take their eyes off/ Something deep in the flow, and then one says/ 'That's us down there,' and it goes clean through me." Here, the "clearable water" idea in the first line is echoed as the poet admits he is washed over with the symbolism of it. Beholding the pastoral innocence of undefiled nature gives man a sense of wonder and a childish delight with the world.

In a single last line, Heaney drives home his point. "That's us down there. I see us every time." That mirror of our faces in the water is all of us, reflected by the way we see the miraculous world. Do we appreciate it, do we recognize the simple "run of it"? Are we deluded by a desire to control, to dam the flow, or swayed by ambition or hollow verbiage to ignore it? Can we distinguish the false from the true, can we "remember eating snow"? Just the simple truth of what it means to exist in this precious world that keeps forgiving us over and over is an act of devotion. Seamus Heaney sees "us every time," is never unaware of "The dearest freshness deep down things," of the gift of life and the way we sanctify it. In this lovely poem, he gives us a chance, as readers, to see our own reflection in what he values. I was delighted to find it, for his breadth and depth of spirit, his wonderful gift of imagery and allusion enlarges me.

A friend thinks my reading of this poem is unnecessarily complex. He suggests it is the voice of a

poet who is growing older, thinking of his wife and the imminent end of their love, that "down there" suggests the grave. But isn't that the charm of contemporary poetry? Instead of the 19th century moral tag at the end, telling us how we should feel, we are now free to respond with our own half of the aesthetic experience, however we perceive the meaning.



FRED HARRISON

**My Cat Listens**  
to a Language Poem, Spoken

Blue swan, egg yolk unmixed,  
If when white bricks endure.

Mildness thrumps the early morning dawn,  
And sea, blue, churns to white  
Beside the evening lark.

When the ear turns stone,  
Eyes sharp to sketch neither toad  
Nor galaxy.

Quite.

FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN

**Parable**

The package said the rechargeable  
screw gun was the latest in  
'technological advancement and  
would revolutionize the way I  
put screws in anything so  
I bought it thinking a revolution  
might be at least amusing but  
the thing was protected by a  
space-age poly-something or other  
which wouldn't tear away or  
pry apart so I dug in the  
junk drawer for my medieval  
orangish-yellow-handled  
screwdriver with the rust-flecked  
prong and was just about to  
gouge my way to revolution when  
the double-digit receipt made me  
think of how many weeks' worth of  
good coffee I could buy for the same  
amount of money so I put the  
unscathed poly-sealed technological  
marvel back in the bag and took  
it back after with I bought a  
half-pound of Starbucks then made  
myself a fine cup of coffee and  
to celebrate used my old screwdriver  
as a stir stick.

FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN

*My Quarrel with the Particular  
to Charles Simic*

We sit shoulder to shoulder, divining 500  
pieces of a jigsaw, one at a time.  
"What's it supposed to be?"  
I ask. "Who knows," you say. "That's the fun."

By four a.m. my head puddles. "Can  
we stop now?" I groan. "No!" you snap,  
greedily eyeing the fugitive pieces.  
"Daylight takes the mystery out."

At the beach I am alone, dawn  
and wave breaking for the first time  
again and again. A gull arrives.  
I have been here before.

JAMES DOTT

*Burning Slash in January*

A dust of snow,  
the piles of cedar slash still smoke.  
The ruts in the road are fossilized,  
the puddles, solid.  
We sit in the crummy, engine running, heater on,  
sipping thermos coffee, waiting  
for the sun to clear the ridge  
so we can try to burn what's left.

I think of the woman I lived with in New Mexico,  
this hour, this day, only a year ago:  
drifting with a languid kiss, a light caress, and contented  
smile  
on the deep quiet before dawn.  
A cock crows up the road, ours answers, a dog joins in.  
The prism on the east windowsill diffracts the first rays  
into a band of color above our heads.  
The oak fire in the stove damped down the night before,  
now a few coals fading in a bed of ash.

These mornings I rise before four  
untangling from the dark, the clinging dreams of work,  
fires that will not light, the clutched sheet and quilt,  
trying to wake away from wanting.

Sun shafts through firs along the ridge.  
Ed sighs and says, "Well, let's do it."  
We climb out, pull on gloves, fill drip torches with diesel-  
gas mix,  
spit tobacco, and light their wicks.

The burning begins.  
All day it will be too cold to break frost.

JAMES DOTT

August 10, Winnemucca, Nevada

Last night, driving in from the east  
smoke from a range fire tinted  
the setting sun to a burnt brown-red.  
The ragged horizon of Summit Peak  
went flat and black  
against the ambered sky.

The first stars burned through the back-lit blue  
and the lights of the mines at Golconda and Midas  
flared up out of the sagebrush,  
like dense, near constellations.

At the edge of town the vast gravel parking lot  
at the fairgrounds was filled with buses, pumpers, vans—  
staging area for the fire south of town.

Too tired to eat we found a motel and were soon asleep  
in spite of crickets and rattles and trickles of air conditioning  
and the Interstate still stretching west and west behind closed eyes.

By morning the west wind has cleaned the air  
and roughly whips the American flags on Main Street  
still up from the rodeo, ready for the fair.  
Under the awning of the San Fermin Basque Café  
tourists, travelers, gamblers, and locals  
gather for breakfast.

At one table they're talking truck tires,  
at another the mileage to the next night,  
our waitress tells us thunderstorms  
are predicted by late afternoon  
but will bring only dry lightning, no rain.

On the way out of town  
the bank thermometer already reads 81 degrees.  
We head north, to Oregon, on 95,  
the dry grass is laid flat in the wind.  
Somewhere today, something's going to burn.

SHARILYN SMITH

## Lightning

It is the summer I turn seven  
and we are bursting out from behind the screen door  
counting our heartbeats between the flash of the bolt  
and the jolt of the thunder  
hungry for the blinding blue deluge  
holding our breath in the hot dry air.

Our skins are too tight, and we crack  
becoming giddy and wild as the rain splats down  
hooting out a tremendous cry of water  
and water, and water.

We kick and spin in the gutter's torrent  
in our rumpled short shorts and dirty bare feet  
holding hands in the flash flood  
a whirl of long hair, shining limbs  
the rain voice shouting without words  
in homage to the blinding light.

We crane our necks to drink  
in greedy upturned gulps  
straight from the sky.

*(part of a longer work called "Lightening")*

SHARILYN SMITH

### Preparation for Rain

In that first sharp week of October  
the silent monotony of summer at last  
begins to speak

the thick impatient dialect of rain,  
and it holds only one word.

I buy a six pound axe. No more excuses  
and maybe only one day left  
to split and stack the wood.

Here is the way, with my body  
hurtling towards these cylinders of white cedar  
I split my life, crack it open  
just so, the bright raw grain  
exposed and pungent,  
the axe head lodged  
in the splitting block,  
and a jubilant sliver of kindling  
winging off into the thistles.

I learn to read it all, muscle  
and the arc of the swing,  
breath, the flexing of abdomen  
and the groan of release timed just so.  
I become wood.  
There is no stopping

until all of the rounds are quartered  
the woodpile stable and sound  
the red glow of pain in my shoulders  
fluent in that lilting tongue.

GREGG MOSSON

### Northern Winds

Eggplant and gold streets  
shriveled  
from polar penetration.

Seven days there is solely  
mountain-slide of winds.

But then a midnight of becalmed  
coolness. Each plant  
and each person  
was aware  
as if within an iceberg:  
a cruel pointillism  
curvaceous  
and juicy  
as the chilliest intellection  
pared.  
One could almost hear  
the gastric vegetable rumblings  
of entombed, poker-faced plants.  
One child tapped, tapped, tapped.  
The freeze was as chilling as  
continental drift.

Cold quelled us.  
Then slacked. We came back.

Rhododendrons glow. Squat ferns uncurl  
purple palms  
to a sun that is not giving.  
The vegetable world unfurls *I give I give*  
in its last effulgence,  
as cars push water  
up and down the roadway,  
like dew rising  
in thunderous dawns  
of hot plains.



GREGG MOSSON

December Ice

Frost-webbed grass:  
a thousand handfuls of starfish.

REVIEW

ERIK MULLER

*West of Paradise*, by George Venn (Ice River Press, 1999)

In *Marking the Magic Circle* (OSU Press, 1987), George Venn sets out ways to measure good living and good writing for the Northwest and anywhere else. His yardsticks work well to measure his own new poetry, showing both its considerable achievement and its shortcomings.

For Venn, a centering place gives arrangement to experience; the magic circle upholds confidence, wholeness, and intimacy. Venn finds himself in such a circle and speaks from it. Our region's literature becomes distinctive, Venn asserts in "Continuity of Northwest Literature," when a writer puts aside imported traditions and develops a unity of poet, environment, and language, as did H.L. Davis and later Theodore Roethke. Venn believes the closely observed environment and the honestly faced interior life reflect upon each other and are joined and expressed by an adequate music.

Much of Venn's new book convincingly marks off the magic circle and even initiates expanding ripples. Many of the poems are given more than adequate language so as to bind Venn's inner and outer worlds and to make his circle touch upon ours. The title *West of Paradise* refers specifically to Venn's birthplace west of Mt. Rainier, yet also points toward the region and condition we readers likely inhabit—a Northwest that no longer can be contained by the epithet "God's country."

Venn organizes *West of Paradise* as a tour of separate Northwest environments—Blue Mountains, Hell's Canyon, rain-saturated valleys, the Columbia and its flow to the Pacific. Superimposed on the spatial order is a stronger thematic one: sections on family, writing, love. The two orders connect the private and regional, human and natural, past and present. Such connections, in Venn's world, occur at the circle's center.

How engaging is this poet's weave of inner and outer worlds and language? Venn is big-hearted, broadly interested. He writes best, I feel, in a commemorative style, reminiscent of Richard Hugo's. Yet Venn is the warmer; he allows for belief. Venn is a fine and frequent elegist. He acts the part of the collector in "Family Scavenger" who stores up the clan's stories and artifacts and seems to declare his role as a poet in a strong final stanza:

You can never be alone in America again.  
The silent lost lives in your bones have come  
to sound. Your mouth begins to sing some song  
you do not know, some pent crude music  
you cannot understand but always hear, some five  
piece ensemble beating in your ear.

My ear responds to this handsome passage, persistently iambic, rhyme-knit, serious, and convincing. While Venn pays tribute to Stafford in this volume as a "cagey poet," Venn is not easy with quick turns and surprise endings. His singing gift shows not in short-lined short poems of the kind that Stafford mastered but in the pieces that are long-lined and lovingly developed.

Both "Passing the Violinist's House" and "Down the Colfax Grade" present exemplary lives. Venn admires people who do their work well, whether or not they are thanked or famous. C. Robert Groth brought an ideal to LaGrande; as concertmaster and educator, Groth wanted local musicians to tune to a true C. He might be the only one to hear that his players were a half tone flat. He might be the only one to care. But Venn praises the losing campaigner—Groth was artist, idealist, corrector of local flaws. Venn's long elegy combines a wealth of feeling and knowledge. It combines poet, environment, language; it marks a magic circle.

So does the commemorative for his beekeeping grandfather. Man and boy drive at night to where they set out the hives:

Our eighty swarms—  
lashed with hemp rope in complex knots—  
flashed white angles across the black windows  
of main street, then we climbed out of Colfax...

Grandfather guides the boy to a natural world where co-operation between bees and keeper produces honey. Man and boy are named George; the boy will grow to farm experience with words, to write his georgics. Here's a poem nobly, tenderly voiced, with authentic notation of inner and outer lives.

If the love poems fail, it is perhaps because they do not deliver according to Venn's measure. Often they are dreams or songs, so they are heavier on the inner world than details of verifiable or sharable experiences. That inner world comes across as vague or cliched because the language needs both inner and outer lives working in harness. "Water Music, The Upper Imnaha River" is an energetic effort to present the lovers in a specific environment, but the inner life does not get adequately developed. In the fifty-plus line poem about a burned over and regenerated logging site, the speaker merely glances inward:

We understood. We too have been through terror  
burned, fought, refused to die, regenerated with  
roots in memory too fine for words.

Venn's yardsticks, his expectations for what is valuable Northwest literature, could be used to evaluate a lot of our regional writing. We read (and perhaps write) poems too weighty with genuine Oregon details or poems too diffuse with uncentered, unanchored emotion or editorial. The blend of the poet's own world with the world of nature or city is not easily achieved. Venn achieves it in most of his new collection. Rightfully acknowledged for his leading role as general editor of the Oregon Literature Series, George Venn deserves further recognition as a poet.



## Editors' Notes

We are pleased to announce a grant of \$500.00 awarded to **fireweed** from Oregon Literary Arts. We are in the process of seeking more long-term funding to ensure **fireweed**'s longevity. **fireweed** can not exist on subscriptions alone, but every bit helps.

From now on, a subscription renewal/donation form will appear in each issue. If you are unsure about when your subscription runs out, check the date next to your name on the front cover.

Also, **fireweed** is looking for a volunteer grant writer to help secure long term funding. Anyone interested in lending their expertise, should contact Sydney Thompson.

We want to encourage submissions. The delay for the winter issue was based on a lack of material submitted to **fireweed**. Also, please note our new address: 5204 N. Gay Ave, Portland OR 97217.

## Contributors

**Frederick Lewis Allen**, a former college instructor, works as a freelance speaker and teacher. This past year, he has traveled to Brazil, India, Bangladesh and Russia. His poems have appeared in *Sojourners*, *Perspectives*, and other magazines.

**Chris Anderson** is professor of English at Oregon State and author or coauthor of a number of books, including *Edge Effects*, a finalist for the Oregon Book Award in Creative Nonfiction. He is also a Catholic deacon and active in parish and campus ministry.

**Terry Brix**, an engineer, divides his time among Blue River, Oregon; Bozeman, Montana; Scandinavia; and South Africa. Inspired by his travels, he has completed several poetry collections: *Palette of Ice*, *Frozen Lightning*, and *Chiseled from the Heart*.

**James Dott** lives in Astoria and teaches third grade in Clatskanie. Co-host of Monday-Mike in Astoria, James has had poems published in *Hubbub*, *Modern Haiku* and *Pacific Fishing*.

**George Estreich** has had poems published in *Southern Poetry Review* and *Talking River Review*.

**Jane Glazer's** book *Some Trick of Light* was nominated for an Oregon Book Award. She lives in Portland.

**Fred Harrison** is a retired English professor living on the Oregon coast.

**Judith H. Montgomery** lives in Portland, Oregon. Her poems have won the Red Rock and Portland Pen poetry awards and co-won the 49th Parallel Poetry Prize. *Passion*, winner of the 1999 Defined Providence Chapbook Competition, was the recipient of the 2000 Hazel Hall Poetry Prize (Oregon Book Award). The chapbook was completed with the aid of a Literary Arts Fellowship.

Gregg Mosson has had poems in the *Oregonian*, *Street Roots*, *sniffylinings*, and *Benign Chaos*. He recently moved from Portland to Washington D.C.

Erik Muller is co-founder of *fireweed* and served as editor for more than a decade.

Ruth Elliott Perkins is a graduate of the 1996 Oregon Writing Project at Willamette University.

Sharilyn Smith lives in Corvallis, Oregon, where she is setting up her own pottery studio, building intentional community, and working to live on a path with heart. Her work has appeared in *Calyx*, where she is currently a member of the editorial collective.

George Staley has taught writing and literature in Portland for 17 years and before that in South Dakota, Ohio and Connecticut. His recent work has appeared in *Blue Mesa Review*, the *Oregonian* and *Barrow Street*, among others.

Lindsay Dune Warren grew up in small towns along the Columbia when it was still a free-flowing river. A retired Episcopalian priest, he lives in Portland with his wife, daughter, and a menagerie of animal friends.

#### NOTES:

Sherron Norlen's poems in the Fall 2000 issue of *fireweed* were drawn from *Psychic Readings*, a manuscript supported by a 1999 Literary Arts, Inc., fellowship.

Harold Johnson's poems "And You, Gilbert Stuart" and "Stealing The Shortstop's Shoes" in the Fall issue of *fireweed* previously appeared in the anthology *Millennial Spring*.

#### Subscriptions

*fireweed* is one of Oregon's longest running poetry quarterlies, featuring regional writers. We encourage you to renew your subscription and to invite others to subscribe. *fireweed* also makes a great year-long gift.

However, *fireweed* cannot survive on subscriptions alone. Despite an all-volunteer staff, it costs nearly \$500.00 to produce, print and distribute each issue. Therefore, *fireweed* appreciates your subscription and support.

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