



NEWSLETTER #33

Fall 2000

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Check out:

◇ **Dick Crispo—Coming September 23-24!**

◇ **Creative Arts Retreat—Coming Oct 14-15!**

◇ **Connie Regan-Blake—Coming Jan 12-14, 2001!**

◇ **Jay O'Callahan—Coming May 11-13, 2001!**

The Creative Edge: The Way Of The Arts is a nonprofit public benefit corporation formed in January, 1989. It operates under IRS Code 501(c)(3) for the educational purpose of sponsoring programs that introduce and develop for individuals the inner creative process used by experienced artists of all fine arts disciplines. In particular, these programs have as a foundation the belief that expression consciously based on intuitive material from the psyche and expressed in one or more channels of artistic endeavor supports healthy development of both the individual and the society. Furthermore, the underlying creative principles are the basis for a healthy way of life.

Issued: 9/7/00

Board of Directors:

Marlie Avant
Donald W. Mathews
Kyla McCollam
Barbara Rose Shuler
Patricia Waldin



THE NEWS

Fall 2000

No. 33

Programs Scheduled: (See pages 4-6)

• Dick Crispo	Painting in the Wild	Sep 23-24, 9 a.m.
• Illia Thompson	Writing and Beyond	
Donald Mathews	Creative Arts Retreat Weekend	Oct 14-15, 9 a.m.
• Connie Regan-Blake	The Art and Heart of Stories	Jan 12-14, 7 p.m.
• Jay O'Callahan	Finding & Telling Stories	May 11-13, 7 p.m.
• Donald Mathews	Dream Work Seminar	Continuing, 9 a.m.
	Creative Arts Fellowship	Monthly, 1st Sat-9 a.m.
	Creative Development & Dreams	E-mail or as scheduled

I am excited about an expansion of storytelling with Connie Regan-Blake's visit in January. This time we will start with traditional stories that captivate our interests and see where they take us. Connie will also present at the Monterey Library. I am sure this limited size group will fill in a hurry so act now if you are interested. Of course Jay O'Callahan will also return next year on the tentative date indicated.

Dick Crispo will return with another painting workshop in September. Our focus will be the hills!

The Creative Arts Retreat Weekends continue with a return to writing and image making with Illia Thompson. It's time to sign up!

A'musings returns with more thoughts on creativity from your directors!

This issue of Letter Box is striking to me in its expression of soulful subjects. At a time in our lives so full of daily requirements and administrative detail, it is rewarding to receive meaningful attention to the often neglected darkside issues of pain and death. These themes have remained hidden from modern consciousness far too long. With their release into the light, lightheartedness and joy can again be freely felt.

I am pleased to receive some feedback from those wishing continuance of the hard copy newsletters. However, I continue to wonder how Creative Edge fits into your busy schedule. E-mail or postcards letting us know your thoughts and desires would be wonderful!

Send your work now for the next Newsletter, submissions are always desired! DWM

New & renewed Members of the Creative Edge:

Patrons: None

Associate Members: None

Friends: Marie Dean, Anya Kucharev, Faye Zimmerman, CA; Mary London Jackson, VA.

We invite newcomers to our free mailing list— membership with your fully tax deductible donation is totally voluntary.

Newsletter Distribution: 1427 — Current Membership: 6 Patrons, 4 Associates, 7 Friends.



Marlie Avant

I have been very blessed this past year to have been part of numerous sacred circles where woman have come together to heal. I can't help but feel that many of us are being called together to support and empower one another as we awaken to an inner wisdom that is calling us forth to face future, unburdened by our past. It is indeed time to move past our pain and sense of separation and to re-member who we really are.

I shared with a number of you my trip to the Ancient Bristle Pine Forests. The trees

are among the oldest living things on the face of the earth. I sat with one and wept, rejoiced, but mostly I listened. It taught me something very important... twisted and knarled, yet so full of grace... like a dancer, firmly rooted yet reaching, turning towards the heavens?... No... towards the future. It whispered to me, "turn towards life...always turn towards life. Strip yourself of unnecessary burden. Face your future... naked! Say yes! Yes to Life!

I am just beginning a new relationship with that simple three letter word "Yes". I've said

it millions of times... I've been slave to the oughts and shoulds and worried so about what people might think. It has not always been my yes. So many unconscious "yesses" in my lifetime. My voice is emerging... my yes is emerging... slowly, a bit cautiously... but emerging just the same. Yes!

I believe I am not alone. Many of us are shedding old beliefs that no longer serve us and are opening to new possibilities. We are sensing that we must break ranks and step out into a new sunrise. ▶▶▶▶

Donald Mathews

In a dream recently, I was expressing with great conviction wisdom I learned. I discovered the purpose of life and in the dream I said to a group: "The purpose of life is simply the pleasure of life itself!"

Awake, contemplating this thought, I realized it is very true and the deepest pleasures in life are often found in two ways: in relationships and through creative expression! Clearly these two central aspects of the human process are interrelated! And as they develop, we reap

the reward of being more fully present with all experiences and finally enter into deep communion with life—sharing the special wonder of our common participation in it!

Relationship has two faces: inward toward the multiple aspects or characters often hidden in our psyche and outward toward a broadening spectrum of others. By others, I mean not only people, but all creatures, plants and finally, after ending common feelings of separation and defense, life itself. Being in "nature" is often so

rewarding because we experience a sense of wonder in our relationship with the broad natural universe. With an open attitude, we see that everything seems to contribute to the beauty of life in its own way. I admit this often requires strength and imagination to overcome fears and limiting perceptions—often fears and perceptions developed and forgotten from earlier life stages. This is particularly true with regard to knowing and accepting one's self! ▶▶▶▶

Kyla McCollam

Do dreams show us about our creative process? I believe dreams often show the way, act as a warning and provide insights for the process of creating our lives anew. To illustrate this is a recent dream: I am riding a bicycle on my way to school, nearing the Twelfth Avenue exit near Marina, when I see construction work ahead. As I am taking a side path around

the site, I realize that I am bicycling atop a concrete wall carefully steering this narrow edge so as not to slide off. A big wind comes up and blows me into the air. There is the sense of flying, floating and nearing the ground. I think that if I pedal just right, I'll hit the ground without crashing. I am able to land and continue on.

One of the benefits of creativity is the ability to make anew. Sometimes our life is like a construction site—lots of big machinery (issues) moving around, kicking up lots of dust, noise and confusion. Detours take us off our course. There are signs to heed like "Road Work Ahead" which let us know life will be showing us its curves, ▶▶▶▶

Barbara Rose Shuler

"Leave your hometown and fly to Tashkent." Thus begins my exotic itinerary that culminates in a 10 day trek through the mountains and valleys of Kyrgyzstan. Tashkent quickly gives way to other central Asian cities—Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva, names evoking the old silk trades, turbaned Khans and the "great game," as Kipling called it; the jousting of England and Russia over much of Asia.

"Enjoy Tanzania!" beamed the ticket agent at the Monterey airport, apparently unable to wrap his mind around such a destination as Tashkent. Who can blame him? For most, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan sound as distant as Timbuktu.

My "hometown" recedes rapidly now as I fly over Greenland enroute to Tashkent in a Lufthansa 747 cattle-packed with travelers. Overhead a Disney film entertains

passengers with talking cartoon dogs. The appealing four-leggeds are singing Mozart arias to me, however, courtesy of "The Magic Flute" on Channel 3.

I am thinking about the man sitting next to me at the terminal, an earnest fellow who clutched the latest very fat Harry Potter book while speaking on a cell phone in measured sentences peppered with careful verbs. He was assuring ▶▶▶▶

Patty Waldin

Art techniques can be learned. Creative craftsmanship can be taught. Art making as an activity has been a most natural and intimately human form of expression, universally familiar through all cultures, all ages. Why then all the fuss?

Why do some of us feel the pull of that

"other" level of creativity? The one which we spell with a capital "C," and approach with such heroic passion? The one for which we devise a kind of reverent shamanism?

Our studios become sanctuaries and retreats. We devise rituals of meditative

self-purification to still the ego's chatter. We light incense, and candles. We carefully select exotic sounds—birdsong, rushing water, sacred music, drumming—background insulation in preparation for reuniting with a separate reality that lies deep within the silent Wisdom of our higher selves. ▶▶▶▶



Marlie Avant

We are not denying our past pain, but will not remain frozen in a place of fear and suffering. We are gathering the tools of transformation as we remember the ancient wisdom that resides within each and everyone of us. We are praying in unison now. We are un-drowning. Our tears become sacred, our stories make us one. We remember we are not alone. We are not looking back but within, to release our burdens so we can be free to fill the void with forgiveness, hope, compassion and love. We are praying together for patience, courage, humility and strength.

We are coming together heart to heart, minds set with clarity of intention... the intention to heal in order that we may serve. We are remembering how to pray.

ALTAR
I place my prayer upon the altar
Candles burn
Scent of copal and rosemary
I am remembering the ritual
of prayer
the soul has never forgotten
and like a flower, scented sweetly,
opens fully to surrender

it's woundedness
Heart to heart healing
I am awake
I will never go to sleep again
I cannot sleep
even my hunger is fed differently now
the holy spirit fuels my appetite
I breathe in and savor a sweet nectar
mystery
where hummingbirds hover
heart to heart I heal
sacred tears quench my thirst
the holy water cleanses me
and I become virgin for the first time.

Donald Mathews

Creative expression for me is the ability to successfully explore and communicate about the mysteries found in our relationships. The mysteries exist in our emotionally guided perceptions from our inner and outer worlds. As we find form or means to communicate about what has come to our attention, the content of the mysteries may be revealed. If personal expression about "what is working us" is thwarted, we often become frustrated and eventually jaded in our relationships—relationships with both self and others.

Our most common and often richest form of communication is conversation. Simple honest conversation with someone or something we feel is present to receive from us is often all that is required to satisfy our deep human longing for self expression! This is partly what makes prayer so powerful! There is a holy something or someone present to listen and witness! An inward directed conversation or exploration allows us to occupy both sides of this sacred dialog.

As this millennium transition year closes, I am approaching my seventieth year after many conversations and life activities. I can feel the pleasurable call of simplicity, presence and intimate conversations with my fellow life travelers. It is a feeling of coming to rest, basking in the warmth of life's existing experiences. It also heralds the beginning of another new phase in my life in some mysterious way yet undeclared! In the short run, I do not know were it will lead. Time will tell as I continue to trust the process!

Kyla McCollam

slowing us down and taking us on another route. Sometimes it takes a while before we are back on path. Why a bicycle instead of a car? Maybe I'll supply more of my own power and use a simpler way of navigating. The realization of my ability to steer atop a brick wall makes me think of my teaching job dealing with the bricks in the wall. The mirror

provided by this dream has renewed my awareness and appreciation for this work on the road of my life. Since the dream, I feel more confident maintaining the growing edges of my teaching experience.

The dream is a warning that could mean changes or invisible forces pushing me to fly, float and land, on course, with my wheels

continuing on and on. I find this comforting and confirming. I have limited flight time in my dreams: one time I spiraled up and another time I was floating while tethered to my mother. This time showed growth in my ability to go with the air flow as a teacher, dreamer and student of life. Being carried by the wind symbolizes a fresh, new experience.

Barbara Rose Shuler

his listener that "the architecture of the software will tap superior Internet resources."

seen the Moon's pale fingers on the towers of Samarkand."

In the book attached to me right now, an English writer has just arrived in Tashkent, a long-yearned-for event in his life. Since childhood the cities, desserts and mountains of Central Asia had romanced him. He wrote these lines of verse as a teenager:

The writer reminds me of the Harry Potter man. He too enjoys a magical otherworld—this one full of adventures of a bygone era—while crafting professional sentences about post Soviet realities in the cities of his dreams.

promise of the new, the unknown. If we listen, we'll hear Timbuktu's of the Soul coaxing us gently, sometimes urgently to explore terra incognita which we map with our minds, hearts and experiences.

"Through the reveries of Poets I have glimpsed the enchanted Land and

The creative spirit in us loves dreams, the

I'll be in Tashkent in 10 hours, but it is the mountains that beckon most to me, the Tien Shans, "the mountains of heaven" they call them—ancient, remote and completely unknown to me. Time for a nap.

Patty Waldin

Engaging this Creative process is as illusive, intense, and all consuming as connecting with the I AM. And so we make ourselves illogical... whimsical... intense... and all consuming...

depths, until the pain of not surrendering, exceeds the pain of the creative bends which inevitably follow such raptures of the deep.

embody for us, like our dreams, are an unmistakable travelogue of our own creative adventure. And—just perhaps—the evidence of our having dialogued, however primitively, with our Creator.

Filled with doubts and uncertainty, one tends to avoid plunging into such

The products created can seem unrecognizable as having come from our own hands... Yet the messages they



“If you look for the truth outside yourself, it gets farther and farther away.”
—Tung-Shan

Background:

Our thoughts and imaginings are fed continuously by our emotionally guided six senses. Mystically, we receive dreams and intuitions to evoke our imagination. Therefore, along life’s way, we perceive and store a whole range of personal and collective experiences and visions triggered by these processes.

Like creative artists of all kinds, we all have within our psyche this rich flowing wealth of personal and collective history and unexamined mysteries of creation. As a resource, it is a full treasure chest waiting to serve our glorious response to life. When we chose to manifest our unique expressions and bring them into the world in support of life, we fulfill our soul’s gift to community, Spirit or to Divine Creation.

Our urge to express from the heart through our natural ability to sing, dance, draw, tell stories, write poetry,

and make other highly creative expressions of all kinds from this personal wealth, provides a way to find, and meaningfully travel, the inner and outer roads of a rich life experience.

Instead of critical judgment, when we have appreciation and curiosity about our own and each other’s personal process, a door opens to imagination, inspiration and our soul’s deeper longing. An open supportive group with deep respect for each person’s journey gives sacred witness, provides safety and trust for intimate sharing.

Further, it facilitates spiritual and mystical aspects of life where meaningful collective themes spontaneously emerge. Thus we gain strength to share the universal joy and pain of being human and courage to creatively participate in service to life.

Community Projects:

The Creative Edge supports various programs and collaborative efforts in the community where the creative process of individuals and groups is enhanced. Donald Mathews, the Executive Director, is available to advise or facilitate various interdisciplinary groups for special projects. He provides information, inspiration and emotional support from his wide variety of experiences.

Creative Arts Fellowship:

The monthly Creative Arts Fellowship is a public gathering seeking self awareness and presence through a practice of contemplation, mutual support and intimate sharing. Our shared stories, dreams and artistic expressions of all kinds then become a deep source of wisdom.

This free living room group is for those interested in sharing their creative work and process from a personal point of view. Facilitated by Donald Mathews, it is for all skill levels. Bring an image, poem, song, story, dance or other creative expression that intrigues you. Meetings: the first Saturday each month except July & August. 9 a.m. till noon. No fee.

Creative Arts Retreat Weekends:

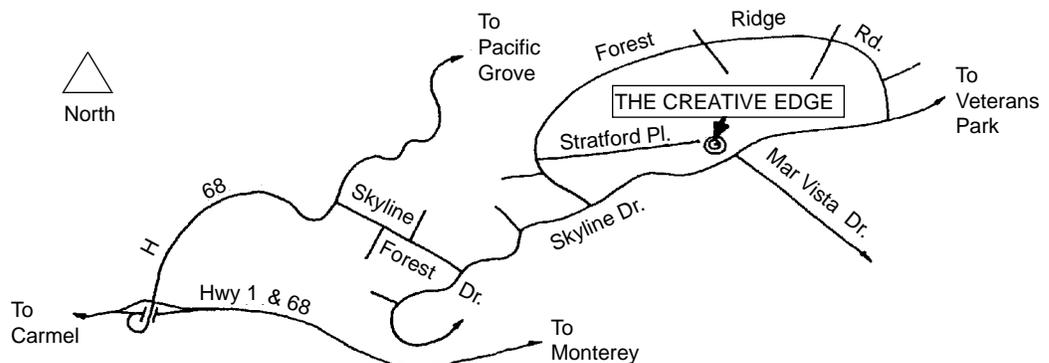
Explore with the core fellowship of Creative Edge Artist-Directors. Away from busy lives for either one or two days in a small intimate group, we leisurely seek the authenticity of our soul’s call. Although primarily a weekend of self discovery, we open to the power of collective energies and guest facilitators to bring and share their special talents with us.

Forming a safe circle of support for dreams, sharing and contemplation, we use lots of free time to follow our personal muse with reading, writing and other creative work. Mask-making, paints and clay are available in the studio. Lunch is provided. Typically offered each year in the spring & fall, 9 a.m.—5 p.m.

Special Workshops & Seminars:

Special workshops and seminars are scheduled throughout the year with different facilitators. Call for information or addition to the mailing list.

Reservations are made by sending your check payable to The Creative Edge. There is a \$20 handling fee for refunds.





Donald William Mathews is an artist, educator and Founding Director of The Creative Edge where he teaches and edits the newsletter. He has diverse degrees and professional experience with teaching credentials in education, management, fine arts, engineering and mathematics. He has studied and gained wide experience in various psychologies and other disciplines searching for a deep understanding of the human experience, creativity and spirituality.

“Come with me into the great hall of my heart. I will light the candle of my thoughts and I invite you to light yours.”

—Donald Mathews

In particular, he has been involved over the years with the Association of Transpersonal Psychology and Process Oriented Psychology. He facilitates trust and intimacy in order to find wisdom from individuals and groups based on his continuing journey learning from life.

Married over forty-five years to his musician wife Lou, they have 3 daughters and 7 Grandchildren.

Monthly Dream Work Seminars:

By experiencing the vital images and wisdom of each other’s dreams shared as our own, we gain an in-depth understanding of our selves and our common human experience. Limited to eight venturesome people seeking spiritual depth.

January—May & August—November:
9 a.m.- noon on the 3rd Saturday of each month,
Fee: \$15 each or \$12 each in a series of 3 or more.

Creative Development & Dreams:

Donald Mathews responds to personal questions involving development of one’s creative process through artistic expression and the use of dreams as an intuitive resource (E-Mail, Telephone or other exchanges). This usually involves an intimate exchange seeking hidden talents, thus activating the individual’s deeper resources. Sliding scale fee: \$25-35 each hour’s work.



Illia Thompson, author of *Moments* and *Gracious Seasons*, teaches creative writing at Monterey Peninsula College and is a journaling workshop leader throughout California. She also leads groups in Mexico and aboard cruise ships.

Illia is dedicated to sharing her knowledge and love of writing. She is a master at creating a safe and supportive place in which to learn. She inspires simplicity, clarity, and passion as groups recognize the treasures of keeping a record of their lives in a new way.

“Tis quite the dare to be happy, to open one’s heart after dismay”

—Illia Thompson

Writing and Beyond—A Creative Arts Retreat Weekend: October 14-15, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

In this one or two day creative arts retreat, co-lead with Donald Mathews, we will experience

the power of written words as they become springboards for further artistic explorations.

Forming a safe circle of support with the core fellowship of Creative Edge Artist-Directors for sharing and encouragement, we will start with gently guided writing experiences about the little visited rooms from memory, dreams or fantasy. Sharing leads to further inspiration!

Then, using some different form of creative expression that fits us, paint, clay, collage, or whatever comes to mind, we will extend our creative themes. Finally, we will learn from each other by sharing personal discoveries.

Lunch & simple art materials are provided.

Fee: \$95, Saturday only: \$50.
(\$75/\$40 prior to Oct 1.)

Computer Users:

Adobe Systems Inc. provides an ideal cross-computer program for distribution with their PDF file format. PDF files are read by Adobe’s free Acrobat Reader (AR) software available for download at <<http://www.adobe.com>>. (There are links to Adobe from the CE Web site.) This system works on all types of computers and gives an easily read presentation adjustable in

format with a menu click for different size screens. Buttons allow viewers to conveniently jump around to different pages. Images are in color! Desired hard copies may be printed on your own printer. PDF files with all past newsletters and other materials are already available at the CE Web site! Downloading is quick and easy because of compression technology.

Mail to:
The Creative Edge
8 Stratford Place
Monterey, CA
93940

or call:
Donald Mathews
(831) 373-7809

Registration Form:

Name: _____ Telephone: () _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Amount enclosed: \$ _____ E-mail: _____
 Please register me for the _____ Seminar/program. Date(s): _____
Please send: Map Motel information Back copies of Thoughts on Creativity (\$5)
 Information flyer for the _____ Seminar/program(s)
 Please accept my donation. Friend (\$5 plus), Associate Member (\$25 plus) or Patron (\$100 plus)
 Please change my mailing address. Please remove my name from your mailing list.



“Our art reflects who we are and where we live.”
—Dick Crispo

Dick Crispo is a well known respected teacher and artist on the Monterey Peninsula. He conducts workshops around the world and represented the U.S. Government in Latin America as its American Cultural Specialist. He was selected as one of the top 100 authorities in the world in the field of Art History by U.S. News & World Report magazine in 1989.

Dick Crispo is the winner of 31 awards and a gold medal from the Italian Academy of Works of Art. He has had 73 one-man shows and his work is represented in over 300 private and 34 permanent public collections.

Raised in this area, Dick has developed over the years a keen sense of the place. He will guide us into his many secrets using demonstration, lecture and personal guidance.

Finding the Spirit of the Land: A Sense of Place A Weekend Painting Workshop September 23-24.

This is an opportunity to enjoy the wild beauty of the Monterey Peninsula and particularly the rugged coastal mountains and fields while we search for the spirit of the land in paint. If you have never experienced the joy of painting on location, this is the opportunity to begin.

This workshop is for everyone, beginner to professional with demonstrations, lecture painting on location and critique! Saturday lunch provided. A materials list is available. (Your choice of oils, acrylics or water colors!)

Fee: \$100 (\$90 before Sept. 11.)



“Stop the words now!
Open the window in the center of your heart and let the spirits fly in and out”
—Rumi

Connie Regan-Blake is one of America’s most celebrated storytellers. Drawing on her Irish heritage, Southern roots and gift of humor, she has captivated the hearts and imaginations of audiences around the globe through powerful performances and workshops helping shape and ignite the American storytelling revival.

As a storytelling teacher, Connie creates a challenging, supportive and playful atmosphere guiding participants through traditional tales, literary stories and personal narratives. She has presented workshops in many settings, including Omega Institute, Hollyhock, and the Glistening Waters International Festival in New Zealand.

cultural heritage, imparting the wisdom of our ancestors and sharing our creative imaginations. Through relaxed writing, talking and telling in a trusting group, stories allow remembering in a way that bring back smells, emotions and visuals, thus enabling us to take off the protective layers of everyday life, become more present with each other and get a closer look at our “true voice.”

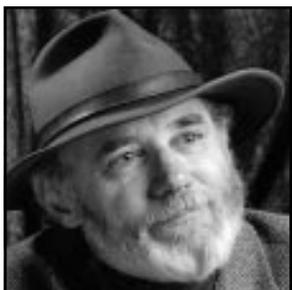
Giving life, giving breath to our stories can be a path towards awareness—a sacred journey, especially when we remember to follow our heart and keep a playful sense of fun as the story takes us to another place. Telling from this authentic place deepens personal relationship with the story and each other. At the same time, the story’s true power is released for listeners.

The Art and Heart of Stories January 12-14, 2001

Traditional stories are one of the most powerful ways we have for preserving our

Limited to 16, this workshop is for both beginners and professionals! It meets Fri.: 7-9 pm, Sat.: 9 am-4 pm (Lunch included.), Sun.: 9 am-noon.

Fee: \$250 (\$225 before December 15.)



“Each human being is a galaxy... Yet we live most of life superficially, unaware of our vast inner world.”
—Jay O’Callahan

Jay O’Callahan has been creating and performing stories now for over 20 years. Time magazine called him “a genius among storytellers....” “A virtuoso,” echoed the Boston Globe.

Jay O’Callahan crafts the details of ordinary life into extraordinary stories containing deep spiritual wisdom. There are no gimmicks or clever tricks opting for the quick response so often found in today’s entertainment. Rather, with artist’s imagination and attention to authentic detail, he brings to life his personal perception of experience in telling the unfolding story. Then, combining his intimacy with the audience’s deeper experience, participants discover their own stories.

Finding & Telling Stories A Weekend Workshop May 11-13, 2001

In the warmth and trust of a special Monterey home, Jay will give a small supportive group the opportunity to experience this highly unique creative process. We will playfully examine rich stories hidden in our memories. “We are beings in a universe that is alive with creativity, with wonder.” says Jay... Wanna dance?”

Fri.: 7—9 p.m., Sat.: 9 a.m.— 4 p.m. (with lunch), Sunday: 9 a.m. — noon.

Fee: \$240 (\$220 before April 1) Limit 12.



Fair Oaks, CA

TRAGEDY

Tragedy appeared on the road today:
the shocking stagger
of earthbound bird.

Struck by mindless machine,
the majestic red-tailed hawk,
unable to escape
mankind's flow,
moved blindly forward
seeking release from unforeseen pain.

Black truck brings
the gift of death,
her final flight,
twisting skyward
only to fall
bloodied and alone.

Tragedy knocked on the window today:
delicate mourning dove,
tricked by reflective glass,
tumbled, twitching, to the earth.

Beak wide open,
body convulsing,
wings beat futile rhythms against hardened stone.

There is no escape.
A final gush of blood,
a heaving sigh
and once bright eyes fade away.

Tragedy stepped closer today:
horrified witness to life cut short.

I drive by, helpless.
I kneel down, helpless.
Able only to offer
tearful prayers that
joyful flight of
two small souls
continues
unseen.

Carol Lynn Mathew-Rogers

Salinas, CA

With much interest and enjoyment, I read the Spring, 2000 edition of *The News*. I found *A'musings* to be intimate, inviting and insightful. I particularly liked "I AM," submitted by Julia Blixt. The expression of thoughts aroused my own spirit of contemplation and creativity. Taking advantage of the heightened spirit, may I submit a'musing (or two)?

BLISS IS THIS

I want bliss
for bliss I know...
not so elusive
as hard to hold.

I swim in it
and it in me...
Behold now,
Divinity.

**SOFT SMILES AND
ANGEL WINGS**

The bright sunshyness
bursts through
the clouds and mist,
like a candle flame
piercing the darkness.

In its' wake
is left,
the exuberant,
mingling kaleidoscope
of colors,
as night merges with day.

The clouds part,
giving proof
that the sun was there
all the time.

In their gentle movement,
they form soft smiles
and angel wings.

I stand breathless,
stunned by the simplicity
and the subtlety
of forces
greater than my own.

The overpowering
grace of gratitude
swells my chest.
This morning...
enlightenment
has vanished the distance
and I am one
with the dawning sky.

Betty Anderson

Portsmouth, NH

WIDOW'S WALK

I walk out
into the chill
of a November afternoon,
uneasy, restless
with widow's concern.

Broad panorama
of pewter ocean
and sky
spread before me,
solitary landscape
to match my mood.
On the bluff,
Chatham light
blinks its warning.

I walk down through
the tawny marsh,
dotted with thickets
of dark cedars,
low lying bushes
of topaz, russet, old gold.

As I bend to pick
three perfect blossoms
nestled in the yellowed leaves
of the rosa rugosa,
sunlight pierces slate skies.

Anne Dewees

Tucson, AZ

For the first time this afternoon I spent some time at the Letter Box On Line where you posted my poems. It was very enjoyable reading both mine and others.

It's Saturday and I thought of the gatherings in your fine house this morning for some reason. I went to a church service led by a very well-spoken Jew... It is always fun to sing and think about scripture, be it the Christian Bible or another book as fine as your beloved Tao Te Ching... It is good that so many can share their writings through your facilitation.

Chris Lovette



As always, "The Creative Edge," has, once again, offered itself up as communion. Not the communion where we go separately to the altar railing, but the holding of hands and the receiving together.

I like the printed page and the thought that many eyes are reading the messages at the very moment that I am reading them. It makes me feel connected. I even love the emptiness I begin to feel after months have passed and I try to remember when the last issued arrived. The child like way I count on my fingers forcing memory to obey. The way my step quickens as I realize soon, soon it will arrive.

Do I want "The Creative Edge," to become more convenient, less costly, go Internet? No. There is a price to be paid for convenience, and that price is the loss of the personal touch. We have lost too much of that already. What I do wish for The Creative Edge is that all those who so freely read this newsletter would begin to support it with donations.

I am a poet, a writer, a communicator. I know what it is like to produce a creation. The time and energy it takes to put all your deepest thoughts into written form and send it out into the world. Hoping that someone will support your dreaming.

I send to you my twenty dollars. And when it is possible I will send it again, and again. If that is what it takes to keep this hand held communion alive. I would miss this green bird perched in my mailbox. I would miss its sweet song that says, "I am here, take me home—open me, there are others out there dreaming with you."

Colorado Springs, CO

I admit that my thoughts are self-serving, for I do not own a computer. I use to have e-mail, but when e-mail began masquerading as correspondence, I gave it up. I love you and I miss you signed at the end of someone else's story was simply not enough. It was convenient, but it certainly wasn't intimate. As a poet, intimacy is the one thing I cannot afford to give up.

I choose to spend my time, and my money in others ways. I choose to support The Creative Edge. A newsletter that I have come to appreciate. I choose to spend a mere five cents a minute on a long distance call to a friend so that I might drink in the sound waves of their voice. I choose the slow, deliberate thought form a letter demands. Somehow, for me, a blank sheet of paper invites intimacy, initiates courage to think and rethink your deepest thoughts.

I particularly liked this last issue of The Creative Edge. The part you refer to as the A'musings. For me, all the thoughts, all the poetry seemed to be speaking of a falling away. And nowhere in all the writing was the illusive why present. It was as if the falling away itself was the answer.

With this new millennium, I too, have felt this falling away. It feels as if we have been placed in the eye of the hurricane, but there is a dilemma present. Do we move with the storm hoping to maintain its center. Or, do we stand firm hoping the storm will wear itself out before it passes over us. I send to you my poem on these thoughts, this falling away, this waiting, this unknown space.

Patricia Ann Doneson

THE VOID

**I lay
in waiting,
for what—I do
not know, is it for prey,**

Or for purpose?

**The heart
quickens in
this unknown space**

**Waiting—
as the thistle
waits for the bud
of a rose that seeks**

Life from the thorn.

**Waiting—
as the night waits
for light to burst upon**

The horizon.

**I surrender
to this waiting
as life surrenders
to death, knowing that
death and dying are a part**

Of living.

**This day
has died and a part
of me has died with it.**

**Who will
I be tomorrow,
the thistle, the
thorn, or the rose?**

Soquel, CA

From dark, to darker, now to darkest in my poems. Or maybe this poem isn't. Maybe I'm just nervous and fearful, for The Far Shore, more than any other poem, makes me feel vulnerable. For years I suffered from depression not knowing what it was, not naming it. When I was diagnosed as clinically depressed, I resented it and tried to keep it secret. When in states of

depression I contrive not to see people. Years of therapy did little if any good in my battle. I must add that I do now take medication and it has made a difference. So, this is a coming out, of sorts. A coming out because I want to say to anyone who suffers from this thing, and the consequent feeling of worthlessness, you can find help.

Today, I find myself with two questions: first, am I in love with the idea of depression? And, second, and more importantly, can I learn to love depression enough to accommodate it and see through to that other side I believe is there?

**THE FAR SHORE**

**Standing on ice
feeling the cold
making me numb.
How long have I been here?**

**The ice beneath my boots
crackles, crazed, frosted spider webs around me.
I can feel it give to my weight.**

**I am on a flooded low land
now frozen with black ice.**

**It is so cold.
The sky is an engraver's template gray
and it is so cold.**

**I stand on ice looking at the shore:
Fields with dead grass.
Beyond, a factory.
Abandoned.
Every so often a piece of it falls
then everything waits, counting,
until another something falls.
It may take years.**

**Every little careful step I take,
the ice crackles white lines
in frozen lightning bolts.**

**My fear
is not that it will break
and I will drown,
but that it won't.**

**I turn and concentrate on the shore.
I step, little steps, listening to the ice.**

**I step, trying with each step,
to care. One step, one pause,
one try to care.**

**Each step slips.
Reduced to only keeping my balance.
My weight turns me on the ice,
step, turn, care,
step, turn, always,
always toward the far shore.**

**It will soon be night.
I step, slip, turn.
It will soon be night
and nothing matters.**

Donald Marsh

Carmel, CA

Dick Criley (10/2011-6/18/00) was a civil rights and labor activist whose battles for personal freedoms and equality spanned seven decades. At his death he was Executive Director of the Monterey County Chapter of the ACLU. Elliot Roberts served on the Board with him and was his neighbor on the Big Sur coast of California.

SPLITTING WOOD (Elegy for Dick Criley)

**The metal maul splitting the metal wedge,
Like the clapper hitting the inside
Of a bell, drifts up the mountainside
Over the coast highway; rings above
The tremulous cadence of the waves,
The ocean speaking as oceans do
Of the eternal note of sadness
In a world so like a darkling plain
Where ignorant armies clash by night.**

**Splitting wood—the heft of the twelve-pound maul;
The deliberate, slow raising above
The shoulders; the grip on earth of outspread
Feet, the life of muscles rocking soft and
Smooth and moist; the arc above the head, then
Falling of its own weight, guided by
The miracle of human sight—shoulder,
Arms, hands, eyes so coordinated
That the flat head of the maul strikes solidly,
Squarely on the flat head of the wedge, hits
True, and rings, and the wood splits, the halves
Of the round falling cleanly from the block,**

**The way your mind worked, focused so clearly,
So cleanly—you knew the grain of what stood
Before you; how to place the wedge—you cleaved
Issues, and while you could not—no human
Can, some things too gnarled to split—stop the waves
From echoing on the shore, stop the turbid
Ebb and flow of human misery, you
Let us hear the pure sound of what could be,
Of a world attuned to the common good
Where love and need are one, and all honored.**

**Now, only memory, the sound of you
Splitting wood. The maul handle you have worn
Smooth waits for our hands. You have shown us how
We go on. Now, before us, the woodpile—
Cypress, pine, oak, madrone, eucalyptus—
Waiting to be split.**

(Quotes from the following poems appear in "Splitting Wood:"
Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach"
Robert Frost's "Two Tramps in Mud Time"
Gary Snyder's "Axe Handles")

Elliot Roberts



DOC, Tennessee Colony, TX

I thought I'd mention that the Spring Issue #32 at the section *Thoughts on Creativity* was very inspiring. For me, creativity is my attempt to share my innermost feelings and thoughts with others because I think that most all of us have something to share with others that just might be interesting and beneficial in one way or the other. Being imprisoned, my writing is my escape and allows me to find something new and different on a regular basis.

**THE BEAUTY OF THE MOMENT
(or A Hang Glider's Joy)**

He lived for the
delicious shiver
like the flutter in
his belly when he
looked down off a
skyscraper,
this time it was
indescribably better
as the thrilling-shiver caressed
his spine when he stepped
over the safety railing at
the very edge of the
gigantic sandy cliff with
countless rocks below,
instantly he's reminded of
what is meaningful,
the beauty of the thrilling moment.

He's hypnotized by the crashing
waves leading him on
as the earth crumbled slowly
under foot,
he waits with tensed nerves,
toes clinging the
treacherous ground of beautiful
Laguna Beach Park,
then he's checking the hang
glider with shaky hands from
a sensuous inner heat,
relaxation takes over as he
l—e—a—p—s—
a strong ocean breeze carries him away,
instantly he's reminded of
what is meaningful,
the beauty of the thrilling moment,

*Chester Vinton HAAS III
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Salinas, CA

My collage "The Dreamer" is based on the five characters surrounding the sleeper. Counter clockwise top left is "Memories of the Day", then: "Longing," "Values," "Old Business" and finally "Spiritual Grace."

Linda Losik



Carmel Valley, CA

ANY UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A perfectly round mottled white moon
hovers over the ridgetop at dawn,
not ready to descend.
I remember
how I left her to cross over
in the company of the morning shift,
the ministrations of trained hands.

The tableau remains, narrow
metal frame bed,
sheets whiter
than the moon,
fraudulent pink walls,
thin curtain between roommates
a fallible concession to privacy.

An inadequate minstrel,
I hold her arm,
sing somewhere
over the rainbow,
wanting her to dream in color.

Death knows no limit
to indignity,
steals her flame
in relentless increments,
subduing her mobility to one
restless arthritic hand rising
to beckon her deliverance.

She, in pain, knows it is hard
watching her die,
chases me from the futility
of final hours
with a drawn out wail.

What else could I have done.

NOT EVEN A MONTH

Not yet,
I haven't found the words,
what it was like
a month ago
watching her die,
knowing
the inevitable
on all sides,
hovering behind her gasps
and grim breaths,
a presence in the room.

I am not sure I can
say it today. The clouds
are opening up, emptying
their burden of moisture.
I carry my memories
of her last days,
a cloud
thick with recollections
I cannot release.

I listen to rain
knowing I will one day pour
these feelings of terminal
encounters into poems.
I will be thirsty,
spill into myself
healing waters,
rivulets of words.

Laura Bayless



Monterey, CA

MY GARDEN

**Come with me
Into my vegetable garden.
Each head of lettuce bursts
With a lively green
Energy destined soon to flavor
Somebody's salad,
Satisfying and fresh, and with it,**

**Long, strong green onions,
Once tiny thin seedlings,
Fighting for life against hoards
Of earwigs and snails,
Emerging victorious now,
Thanks to our vigilant
Efforts and regular care,
Not to mention enormous luck,
Watering, weeding, composting,
The help of the sun, the rain,
And a prayer or two
All of which helps.**

**There are beets in our garden,
They fought a good fight,
Alas this season they didn't do well,
Oh well, there are more seeds to plant,
And plant them we will,
Until late in the fall.**

**Last year we ate from our garden all year,
Potatoes galore, parsley and chives,
Jerusalem artichokes, tasty and fresh,
Like manna from God. Praise God!
Our garden is full, and so lovely to me,
That it causes my heart to sing a glad song.**

**It welcomes the birds,
The beautiful bees, and butterflies too.
It's crawling with worms.
It's bursting with promise
Of bounty to come!
I can see it all now on the table,
Tomatoes, Potatoes,
Zucchini, bell peppers,
Oregano, Pole beans, Swiss chard,
Apples and lemons as well.**

**It's so full,
I know that this garden is more
Than a vegetable store.
It is life becoming and being
And growing with joy.**

Shirley Tofte

Black Mountain, NC

I live too far away to participate in your programs, but I do enjoy receiving The News! I am enclosing a recent poem which speaks of North Carolina woods. I know that dogwoods are not familiar to most people in California.

DOGWOODS ARE FOR LOVING

**My dogwood tree hangs over my deck,
It makes an umbrella, and serves to connect
My house and my yard, just like a room
In the spring when my tree is full of white bloom.**

**I watch my tree through the winter chill,
Through the ice and the snow and the wind, until
The green of the tiny leaves shows through
And I know that bloom time is almost here, too.**

**Once when I went overseas in the spring,
My mind could think of only one thing ...
This year I would miss that dogwood bloom,
When again my deck became a garden room.**

**One year, I looked over the trees of my land,
And asked for help from a tree-smart man.
"Cut it down," the man said, "for I honestly fear
This dogwood can't make it through the cold of next year."**

**My own heart froze like a large chunk of ice;
There was no way I could take his learn-ed advice.
So I let the man go without a decision...
My mind's eye was full of a springtime vision.**

**And sure enough, when the next spring arrived,
Because Heaven and I had together contrived,
My dogwood tree a new vigor had found
And looked like a bride in a white bridal gown.**

Mary London Jackson

Thank you for your letters and offerings. Keep them coming. Look for emerging themes that resonate with your own intuitions and creative works. I also invite you to comment on how these sharings facilitate your own life journey. (I will add your address if you approve.)

The Editor.