

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY:

Honeymoons: Living Up To The Dream?

BY TED KOOSER
U.S. Poet Laureate

A honeymoon. How often does one happen according to the dreams that preceded it? In this poem, Wesley McNair, a poet from Maine, describes a first night of marriage in a tawdry place. But all's well that ends well.

FOR MY WIFE

How were we to know, leaving your two kids behind in New Hampshire for our honeymoon at twenty-one, that it was a trick of cheap hotels in New York City to draw customers like us inside by displaying a fancy lobby? Arriving in our fourth-floor room, we found a bed, a scarred bureau, and a bathroom door with a cut on one side the exact shape of the toilet bowl that was in its way when I closed it. I opened and shut the door, admiring the fit and despairing of it. You discovered the initials of lovers carved on the bureau's top in a zigzag, breaking heart. How wrong the place was to us then, unable to see the portents of our future that seem so clear now in the naïveté of the arrangements we made, the hotel's disdain for those with little money, the carving of pain and love. Yet in that room we pulled the covers over ourselves and lay our love down, and in this way began our unwise and persistent and lucky life together.

*American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation, publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Poem copyright ©2009 by Wesley McNair, whose most recent book of poems is *Lovers of the Lost: New and Selected Poems, Godine, 2010*. Poem reprinted from *Five Points*, Vol. 12, no. 3, by permission of Wesley McNair and the publisher. Introduction copyright © 2009 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.*

HEALTH

From Page 1

that sounds dramatic but it truly is," she said.

Negrete said her body has no natural immunity, which means it can't fight common viruses or bacterial infections.

Negrete worked for years as a nurse before becoming disabled. She said she would get frustrated when she heard co-workers talk of buying houses and new cars, not realizing how much of her own income was going toward prescription costs.

"No wonder I don't have so much to show for all the hard work I did," she said.

Michelle Vogel, executive director of The Alliance for Plasma Therapies, said insurance companies are forcing Nebraskans with life-threatening illnesses to choose between their medications and feeding their families.

"You're really putting patients who rely on these lifesaving therapies in a situation of choosing whether to be disabled or abled, life or death," she said.

Her Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit advocates for patients in need of plasma-derived therapies, such as the ones Negrete gets. Sen. Cornett is president and chairwoman of its board.

Vogel said she's heard from many patients who are paying high copays after their insurance companies reclassified their drugs into the pricey Tier 4, often with little notice.

"It's so wrong," she said. Spokesmen for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska and United Healthcare said they're still evaluating the potential impact of the legislation.

Pat Bourne, a vice president for Blue Cross and Blue Shield, said: "As written, it will dramatically and unfairly shift costs to other policyholders."

Under the bill, insurers would no longer be able to offer a tier that assesses copays that are based on a percentage of a prescription's cost, that exceed the cost of the lowest prescription copay in the plan by 500 percent.

The bill would also require insurance plans that include a limit on out-of-pocket costs for medical benefits to count prescription copays toward that limit or institute a limit of \$1,000 per person or \$2,000 per family for out-of-pocket drug costs.

The Legislature's Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee was scheduled to hold a public hearing on the bill on Tuesday. A hearing was also scheduled for another bill (1088) from Cornett that would require insurance companies to notify patients and their doctors before substituting an alternative drug for a prescribed one.

Cornett did not respond to several messages left by The Associated Press.

Richard Cauchi of the National Conference of State Legislators said he didn't know of similar laws restricting prescription copays in other states.

Vogel said similar bills are being considered in California, Maryland, Minnesota, New York and Wisconsin.

DAMAGE

From Page 1

may also be eligible for individual assistance, Lowery said.

The 40 FEMA workers will also be looking at damage on the Standing Rock Sioux, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate and Cheyenne River Indian reservations.

The South Dakota Rural Electric Association has said 15,500 customers lost power at

some point, including 3,800 with the utility that serves the Cheyenne River reservation and surrounding area.

Cheyenne River was part of a broad area in northern South Dakota that lost electricity.

The fierce Jan. 20 ice storm coated roads and electrical lines across Cheyenne River and forced shops and schools to close. Before residents could recover from the ice, a blizzard tore through the Dakotas, bringing a few inches of snow and wind gusts between 25 and 50 mph.

What To Do If Your Gas Pedal Sticks

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray:
Recently, there was a large recall of Toyotas because the gas pedal could get stuck on the floor mat and cause the car to keep accelerating wildly. Yesterday the pedal got stuck in my 2008 Honda Accord. What should you do if such a thing happens? — Dan

RAY: Well, whether the gas pedal sticks because of the floor mat or because of any other reason, the first thing you do is hope that you're wearing your brown pants.

TOM: We've talked about this before, Dan, but it's worth repeating — not only because of the Toyota recall, but because this can happen on any car.

RAY: Right. Floor mats can get bunched up near the pedals. People can install thicker, aftermarket floor mats, or those thick, rubber winter mats. Or the pedal can get obstructed by something that you drag into your car, like a chunk of ice or snow, or a kid's toy or juice box that rolled onto the floor.

TOM: So what do you do? No matter why the gas pedal is sticking, first, put the car in



CLICK & CLACK

neutral.

RAY: Why? Shifting into neutral disconnects the engine from the wheels. So no matter how fast the engine is revving, the car will simply slow down.

TOM: By putting the transmission in neutral rather than turning the engine off with the key, you also keep your power steering, power brakes, ABS and lots of other stuff

working.

RAY: And, most importantly, you keep the steering wheel lock from engaging. If that happens, you'll need two pairs of brown pants.

TOM: Some people worry that the engine will rev so high that it'll blow. But that won't happen. Modern cars all have rev limiters that cut off the fuel supply if the engine tries to rev beyond the limit set by the manufacturer. So the engine may sound like it's screaming, but just ignore that.

RAY: Once you're in neutral, calmly coast to a safe stop by the side of the road, and THEN turn off the ignition. Then, if you see that the pedal is clearly stuck on the floor mat, you can throw those floor mats out the window and keep driving. If not, call a tow truck, have the car towed to the dealer and tell them to call you when they're absolutely certain they've figured it out.

Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or e-mail them by visiting the Car Talk Web site at www.cartalk.com.

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Area Seniors To Get Help With College Funding

DANA SANDERSON
Counselor, Wagner School

If you are a parent of a high school senior you are probably very concerned about their future and how to make the tough choices ahead. Important decisions are being made and how to pay for those decisions are probably on your mind. The process of applying for school, getting accepted and then coming up with the money can be frustrating. Every high school senior should be concerned about this approaching expense and should have had a very serious discussion with their parents about it. If not that conversation should be taking place now.

Attending a technical school or a college is very expensive. Many students have not been able to save enough money for college and as a result they must be applying for federal financial aid

and scholarships to pay for that expense.

Students should be applying for as many scholarships as possible and then hope to receive at least one. As you may already know, scholarships can be given for grades earned, talent displayed or community service provided during high school. Applying for a scholarship is the responsibility of the student and not the parent.

Unfortunately many students fail to understand the importance of finding the money needed for their schooling until important deadlines are looming on the horizon. They know they need the money to pay for school, but they don't do anything to address the need.

About half of all students looking for money actually get active and look for funding and the other half wait for their parents to do something to help them. Is this true for your child?

All students should also be applying for federal funding and consider borrowing the money to help pay for most of their educational costs. To do this students and parents must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) application form. Completing the forms properly can feel confusing, stressful and is time consuming. To help in this process a special program is being held at the Wagner School entitled, "College Goal Sunday".

The program will help students and their parents to properly complete the FAFSA and is sponsored by the South Dakota Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

The program involves college financial aid officers and other volunteers who will be here to help guide parents and students through the financial aid process by helping them apply on line. To

get the proper help parents will need to bring along their financial information, tax returns for this year and their questions.

The professionals on duty will meet individually with each participant to help answer questions and provide the computer and expertise needed to complete the process.

The program is being held in the Wagner School LDL room on the north end of the Wagner School building from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 21.

This program can help you with the questions you have about financial aid. Please come and get your questions answered so it does not have to feel so stressful and complicated. The program help is FREE! Don't let this opportunity for free help pass you by!

For more information contact Dana Sanderson, Counselor, Wagner School (384-5426)

Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program To Begin

PIERRE — A rebate program to encourage replacement of old, inefficient appliances with new ENERGY STAR® qualified models is set to begin March 1 in South Dakota.

The U.S. Department of Energy allocated South Dakota \$772,000 in federal stimulus grant funds for the residential rebate program. The appliances and rebate levels are:

- Clothes washers — \$100
- Dishwashers — \$75
- Refrigerators — \$150
- Freezers — \$150
- Water Heaters — \$125

Rebates will be available on a first-come, first-served basis — subject to availability of the limited funds. The appliances must be purchased on or after March 1, and each household will be eligible to receive one rebate for each type of appliance.

Consumers must fill out and mail an application form and copy of the itemized sales

receipt to receive a rebate. Proof of proper disposal of old appliances, in the form of a disposal receipt or retailer's disposal affidavit, will be required for refrigerator and freezer rebates.

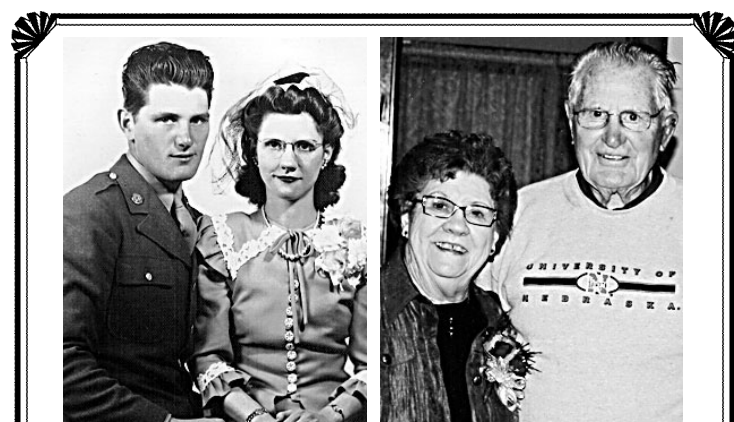
Application forms are available at retail appliance stores or online at <http://ApplianceRebate.sd.gov>. The rebate program Web site also indicates the amount of rebate money remaining, complete eligibility criteria, complete lists of eligible ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances, and recycling and disposal locations.

Consumers with questions may contact the rebate program by e-mail at ApplianceRebate@state.sd.us or by toll-free phone call to 1-866-353-1173. Phone lines are staffed from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday, and from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (CT) on Saturdays.

Hot Machines, Cold Beer...



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Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Heger

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph and Lillian Heger of Crofton, NE, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary February 24, 2010. Lillian Gass and Ralph Heger were married February 24, 1945, at Ft. Hood, Texas.

Their family requests a card shower. Greetings may be sent to:

211 W. Colorado, Crofton, NE 68730.

The couple has two daughters: Elaine and Bob Cox of Phoenix, AZ, and Jeanne Heger and Jim Richstatter of Lincoln, NE; two grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

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Thursday, February 25 12-1 p.m.
Avera Professional Office Pavilion Amphitheatre

If you suffer from high blood pressure or diabetes, have heart disease or history of a stroke, you are at increased risk for sleep apnea. Or if tiredness lasts through the day or snoring begins to affect your sleep, they could be symptoms of a larger problem: sleep apnea.

Please join us Thursday, Feb. 25, to learn from Yankton's foremost experts on sleep disorders and learn if you or someone you know could benefit from a sleep study.

This event is free and open to the public, but space is limited. Please make reservations by calling **605-668-8080**. A light meal will be served.

Michael Pietila, MD
Board Certified Pulmonologist
Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C.

Lindy Mahoney, RPSGT
Sleep Lab Coordinator
Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

Avera
Sacred Heart Hospital

For reservations, call **605-668-8080**