

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY:

Capturing A Quiet Moment Of Reflection

BY TED KOOSER
U.S. Poet Laureate

Peter Everwine is a California poet whose work I have admired for almost as long as I have been writing. Here he beautifully captures a quiet moment of reflection.

Rain

Toward evening, as the light failed
and the pear tree at my window darkened,
I put down my book and stood at the open door,
the first raindrops gusting in the eaves,
a smell of wet clay in the wind.
Sixty years ago, lying beside my father,
half asleep, on a bed of pine boughs as rain
drummed against our tent, I heard
for the first time a loon's sudden wail
drifting across that remote lake—
a loneliness like no other,
though what I heard as inconsolable
may have been only the sound of something
untamed and nameless
singing itself to the wilderness around it
and to us until we slept. And thinking of my father
and of good companions gone
into oblivion, I heard the steady sound of rain
and the soft lapping of water, and did not know
whether it was grief or joy or something other
that surged against my heart
and held me listening there so long and late.

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CITY

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off Sept. 18," Cull said. "Ted is 100 percent behind anything that involves projectiles, whether it's bullets or arrows. The Eastons are definitely behind it. For us, I think it would be an incredible shot to the arm."

The United States Olympic Committee has partnered with sport groups across the nation to create six such programs that provide training in fencing, weightlifting, judo and a variety of other activities. None of them offer archery.

Cull believes Yankton could be the first to do so with the lobbying efforts being put into place. He said Jim Easton, who is a member of the United States Olympic Committee and was involved in the decision to have Yankton as the location of the Easton Sports Development Foundation's first archery training center, is excited about the idea.

"It was his first baby," Cull said. "I think what Easton is getting ready to do is to endow these regional facilities, of which hopefully we are on the list. I think what we're doing here is something that is going to get us to the front of the pack. Something great can come out of this for the whole community."

"It's one of those things where it could springboard into so many other events, activities and development," added Russell.

Cull said that, with the partnerships involved in the effort, Yankton appears to more than meet the criteria for being eligible for a Community Olympic Development Program. Furthermore, it only requires a small fee to apply, he said.

"I think the commission is behind you 100 percent to get something going with this," Mayor David Knoff said. "We really appreciate your efforts."

In other business, the commission discussed whether anything could be done to speed up

the dispersal of traffic after major events like fireworks shows on the Fourth of July and during Riverboat Days. Also, Knoff wondered whether measures could be taken to improve pedestrian safety.

With 65 intersections in the downtown area, Russell said that it appears little can be done unless the city were to restrict parking to certain areas.

"That's one of the things that led us to just have an open event where people work their ways out," he said. "Quite honestly, it may be the most efficient method to get it out other than restricting parking."

As it is, Russell said the downtown is generally cleared out within 45 minutes. Commissioner Bill Ellingson said people just need to have patience.

"When the fireworks are over, don't rush out. Just sit there and look at the view. If you really want to get out of there quick, park two blocks north of Fourth Street and walk down. There is such a volume (of vehicles) to get out of a small place, I don't think a cop at every corner would do you any good."

Russell said it's an issue he and city staff will continue to investigate.

"It's one of those questions that doesn't go away," he said. "If opportunities emerge or a new idea comes through ... we'll take a look at it."

Also Monday, the commis-

• approved a special events parking ordinance that will allow for the towing of vehicles that are in the designated area. Signs will be posted before the event warning motorists of when their vehicles must be moved;

• held a first hearing for an ordinance that would expand the times during which off-sale liquor licensees can sell their products. A state law that took effect July 1 allows sales up to 2 a.m. instead of midnight. It also allows sales on Memorial Day. The ordinance would parallel the state law; and

• held an executive session to discuss labor negotiations.

Tom And Ray Offer Suggestions For A Fun Business Idea

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray:
I am interested in purchasing a vintage/classic ice-cream truck such as the Divco for a new, gourmet-ice-cream truck venture. I have found rusted, inoperable trucks for \$2,000 and restored trucks for as much as \$25,000. My first question is, is this a reasonable truck to actually put back into service, and at what price? My second question is if you have a better recommendation for a "cool" commercial vehicle. Or just tell me I'm crazy, like my mother, brother and husband do, and maybe — maybe — I'll let this business idea go back into the file. — Kara

TOM: We don't think you're crazy, Kara. We think it's a great business idea. And, more importantly, a really fun adventure.

RAY: Yeah. Maybe you can buy a truck from some other nutjob who tried this same idea and recently gave up? If you're lucky, it even might still have the ice cream in it!

TOM: The cool commercial vehicle right now is the Ford Transit Connect, which is a city-size delivery van. You even can get one that's all electric. But if the truck is also your "store," rather than just your delivery vehicle, I like the idea of reviving a Divco.

RAY: The old-fashioned Divco truck, with the sales window on the side, is the one vehicle that really screams "ice cream."

TOM: I would make two suggestions for your Divco search. One is to look at ones



CLICK & CLACK

that haven't been restored yet. You don't want the \$2,000 rusted heaps that have trees sprouting out of them. But if you pay \$25,000 for a restored truck, you have no idea how well it's been restored. You also may be paying for restored details that you have no need for. Do you really care if the gas pedal has been restored to its original factory condition?

RAY: So look for something that's structurally sound but cosmetically challenged. Find one that runs, so you can evaluate it. But not one that's had every dent knocked out.

Essay: For Obama, Race Means Repeated Distractions

BY STEVEN R. HURST
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Right when President Barack Obama should have been making political hay over big-deal legislative triumphs, race once again blew in with a storm of distraction.

Obama and his administration have proved to be one of the most deliberate, highly disciplined in recent history. Whether you approve or disapprove of his policies, political missteps have been rare.

Yet for a second time, a government led by America's first black president embarrassed itself with a hair-trigger reaction on race.

In the grand sweep of presidential history, both cases probably will be lost. Still, they gnaw, unseen, like termites on the foundation of Obama's administration.

As hard as the president has tried to downplay race, he

knows he's under special scrutiny for just that reason, a lingering social hangover from this country's profoundly troubling history of enslaving, then segregating blacks.

In the latest incident, a right-wing blogger posted a truncated video of a black woman who worked at the Department of Agriculture in Georgia and was speaking to a meeting of the NAACP.

In the edited portion of the video that was first available, Shirley Sherrod seemed to have been endorsing get-even discrimination against whites. Fox News jumped on the story, which also got wide distribution on other cable outlets.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack ordered Sherrod fired. The NAACP condemned her comments.

But it wasn't long before the entirety of Sherrod's message got out. She was speaking of her own mistake, of having learned a

lesson of redemption.

The White House apologized. Vilsack said he was sorry and offered Sherrod a new job. Obama called Sherrod on Thursday to express his regret.

He said he ordered "my team" to make sure "that we're focusing on doing the right thing instead of what looks to be politically necessary at that very moment."

Had the administration waited a day, it could have avoided all the embarrassment and apologizing. In fact the attack on Sherrod would have turned back on those behind it, seen as an example of nasty extremism.

The White House, however, didn't wait. So the storm engulfed the better part of a work week that otherwise might have focused on celebrating Obama's most recent legislative victory — financial regulatory reform — and his party's defeat of a Senate GOP filibuster that delayed additional payments for

the jobless.

It took time away from Obama's efforts to revive the economy and reduce the near-10 percent unemployment rate.

Nearly a year ago to the day, Obama also tripped up on the race issue. That stumble, seven months into his presidency, distracted the White House when time might have better been spent pushing for Obama's health care overhaul.

Within the next month, opponents had managed, inaccurately, to convey the impression that his plan included death panels for the old and sick, amounted to socialist redistribution of wealth and rationed health care.

While Obama managed to stand slightly aside from the Sherrod case, he was at the center of last summer's brouhaha over the arrest of Henry Louis Gates Jr., a black professor at Harvard University, by Sgt. James Crowley, a white police sergeant in Cambridge, Mass.

Power Outages Hit Mid-Atlantic After Storm

BY JESSICA GRESKO
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — It could take days to restore power to hundreds of thousands of people around Washington after a storm downed power lines and trees and left four people dead, officials said Monday.

The Sunday storm brought cooler weather to the Mid-Atlantic region, which has been through a nearly two-week heat wave, but also left widespread damage in Washington and its suburbs.

Power outages affected more than 430,000 customers. Officials said they hadn't seen a similar outage since Hurricane Isabel in 2003.

Regional utility Pepco reported late Monday that more than 203,000 customers were without power in Washington and neighboring Maryland counties. The widespread damage made it unclear when most would be restored, spokesman Bob Hainey said. Major power lines were down, electric poles were broken, and numerous transformers were damaged.

Other electric companies in

the region predicted power would be mostly restored by Monday or Tuesday night.

Four deaths in the region were blamed on the storm. Officials say 63-year-old Warren Douglas Smith died after encountering severe winds and choppy seas on the Chesapeake Bay while trying to return to land on personal watercraft.

In Beltsville, Md., a tree crushed a minivan, killing 44-year-old driver Michelle Humanick and injuring her passenger.

In Virginia, a 6-year-old boy also died after a tree fell on him while he was walking with his family. In Pennsylvania, police say a 53-year-old woman was apparently electrocuted by a fallen power line in her back yard.

Even as cleanup was going on, the power outages were causing disruptions. Numerous traffic signals were out. In Fairfax County, firefighters responded to 22 fires in the storm's aftermath, and nine car accidents were blamed on the storm. In Prince George's County, Md., darkened traffic signals caused about a dozen accidents.

Nap Nanny Recliners Recalled After Death

WASHINGTON (AP) — Portable baby recliners that are supposed to help fussy babies sleep better are being recalled after the death of an infant.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission announced the recall Monday of 30,000 Nap Nanny recliners made by Baby Matters LLC of Berwyn, Pa.

CPSC says it's investigating a report that a 4-month-old girl from Royal Oak, Mich., died in a Nap Nanny that was being used in a crib. The child was reportedly found hanging over the side of the foam recliner, caught between the Nap Nanny and the crib's bumper.

The agency says it is aware of 22 reports of infants, mostly under 5 months, falling over the

side of the Nap Nanny despite most of the babies being strapped into the harness on the recliner. The Nap Nanny is not meant to be used in a crib and instead should be placed on the floor away from other products, CPSC said.

The Nap Nanny was designed to mimic the curves of a car seat — elevating a baby slightly to help reduce reflux, gas, stuffiness or other problems.

The recliners were sold at toy and children's retail stores nationwide and online from January 2009 through this month. They cost about \$130.

Consumers should contact the company to receive new product instructions and warnings and in certain cases, a coupon toward the purchase of a new Nap Nanny.



Bolin-Place

Danielle Bolin and Geoffrey Place are pleased to announce their engagement.

Parents of the couple are Jon and Alice Bolin of Norfolk, NE; and Ron and Carol Place of Ft. Knox, KY.

Danielle is a 2006 graduate of Norfolk Senior High School. She will graduate from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD, in 2011.

Geoffrey is a 2006 graduate of Ramstein American High School, Ramstein AB, Germany. He graduated from the University of South Dakota in 2010.

The couple is planning an Aug. 21, 2010, wedding.

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