

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY:

Vivid Details Bring Poem To Life

BY TED KOOSER
U.S. Poet Laureate

This marks the fourth time we've published a poem by David Baker, one of my favorite writers. Baker lives in Granville, Ohio, and teaches at Denison University. He is also the poetry editor for the distinguished Kenyon Review.

OLD MAN THROWING A BALL

He is tight at first, stiff, stands there atilt
tossing the green fluff tennis ball down
the side alley, but soon he's limber,
he's letting it fly and the black lab

lops back each time. These are the true lovers,
this dog, this man, and when the dog stops
to pee, the old guy hurries him back, then
hurls the ball farther away. Now his mother

dodders out, she's old as the sky, wheeling
her green tank with its sweet vein, breath.
She tips down the path he's made for her,
grass rippling but trim, soft underfoot,

to survey the yard, every inch of it
in fine blossom, set-stone, pruned miniature,
split rails docked along the front walk,
antique watering cans down-spread—up

huffs the dog again with his mouthy ball—
so flowers seem to spill out, red geraniums,
grand blue asters, and something I have
no name for, wild elsewhere in our world

but here a thing to tend. To call for, and it comes.

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The Upside Of A Would-Be Mechanic Boyfriend

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray:
I'm a busy, poor veterinary student with an old, 1989 Volvo 240 DL. I have a wannabe boyfriend/mechanic who likes to tear into things and see what's inside, then put things back together the best he can. I appreciate his efforts very much, but there are times when I hesitate to risk mistakes. I am wondering what you think about an inexperienced home mechanic changing a fuel pre-pump on my car? The engine light code and physical symptoms all say the pre-pump is bad. I am so poor that I would love to buy a pump on eBay and have this guy put it in for me. However, the Volvo mechanics say pre-pumps are a very tricky business, and even new ones might go bad. Should I listen to them and pay them the big bucks to fix it? Or can I save some money and let my guy try it? What do you think? — **Janel**

TOM: Well, let's look at the upsides and downsides of each approach, Janel. If you go to the Volvo dealer, the upside is that the car will be fixed correctly. And presumably, they'll even guarantee the work for a while.

RAY: And you'll get to drink all the free, lousy coffee you want in their waiting room.

TOM: The downside is that you're going to pay quite a bit for that privilege. You'll pay a markup on the part, and you'll pay in the neighborhood of \$100 an hour for labor.

RAY: The advantage of having your mechanically inclined would-be boyfriend do it is that it'll cost you a fraction of that price.

TOM: The downside is that he might leave your car in pieces. Or in a smoldering heap.



CLICK & CLACK

RAY: And if he DOES manage to fix it, it may take a restraining order to get rid of him after that.

TOM: But if you think you can handle the interpersonal expectations that may come from this, I'd definitely let the would-be boyfriend try it.

RAY: But first, have him confirm the diagnosis. The most common symptom of a bad pre-pump is that the car doesn't run well when the gas tank is nearly empty. But since I don't know of any computer code for a bad pre-pump, you want to do a little more diagnostic work before digging in.

TOM: Start by unplugging the power to the main pump. Then turn the ignition key to the "run" position. If the pre-pump is working at all,

you should hear it groaning from the back of the car.

RAY: Then, to see if it's actually pumping anything, unplug the fuel line where it goes into the main pump, and see if a steady flow of gasoline comes out. Did I mention he should extinguish any cigars before doing this?

TOM: If no fuel comes out, then the pre-pump is bad and your adventure begins.

RAY: The pre-pump on this car is located inside the fuel tank. If memory serves, it's accessible from above (fortunately, it's been a while since I've had to do one of these). There's a plate on the floor of the trunk that you remove, and that gives you access to the tank so you can reach down and make the swap.

TOM: But rather than just buying a used pre-pump on eBay, I'd get a new Bosch pre-pump, just like the one that's in there. You may find one online for less than the local dealer sells it for. The advantage of using the original pre-pump is that it fits easily, without requiring any "improvisation."

RAY: If you have the right pre-pump, it should snap in there pretty easily. It's not a terribly difficult job. Just be sure to test it before you close everything up.

TOM: Just like you would in veterinary medicine, Janel. Good luck!

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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Clay County Sheriff's Office Investigating Missing Woman

VERMILLION — The Clay County Sheriff's Office is investigating a report of a missing person.

A report was received Saturday morning of an abandoned vehicle on Highway 19 south of Vermillion at the Missouri River. The vehicle is registered to Barbara Zenk, 52, of Vermillion. She was formerly a resident of rural Newcastle, Neb.

Attempts to locate Zenk at the area her vehicle was located have

been unsuccessful. As of Monday morning, she has not reported for work at Masterworks in Vermillion or at the University of South Dakota, where she is employed as a custodian.

Searches have been conducted along the highway and the banks of the Missouri River in the area where the car was located, both on foot and by air. A tracking dog has been brought to the scene.

None of the efforts have suc-

ceeded in locating Zenk.

While there is no indication that Zenk may have jumped or fallen from the bridge or walked out onto the ice, law enforcement officials said they are not ruling out those possibilities at this time. The area was mostly ice-covered on Saturday morning. The ice was solid beneath the bridge, with no apparent open spots.

In a press release, the sheriff's office said that, while its investi-

gation has found that Zenk has been dealing with depression, there has been no indication that she is deceased. The matter is being considered a missing person case.

Anyone with information regarding Zenk's whereabouts or her vehicle parked near the Vermillion/Newcastle bridge on Highway 19 should contact the Clay County sheriff at (605) 677-7100.

YMS Band And Orchestra Concert Tonight

The Yankton Middle School Instrumental Music Department salutes Music In Our Schools Month with a concert featuring the bands and orchestras. The concert is at 7 p.m. tonight (Tuesday) in the Yankton Middle School Gymnasium.

Featured groups will be the Red Jazz Band, the YMS Orchestra (grades 6-8), the Black Jazz Band, the Sixth Grade Band and the Seventh- and Eighth-Grade Band.

The YMS Bands are directed by ReNae Jackson and the Orchestras are directed by Kim Evander. The concert is free and open to the public.

Vermillion Second At State Debate Tourney

WATERTOWN — Vermillion took second place in the Class A division of the 2010 South Dakota State Debate Tournament, held Friday and Saturday in Watertown.

The Vermillion team is coached by Bob Trzynka. Lennox took home top honors in Class A, while Sioux Falls Lincoln was the sweepstakes champion in Class AA.

In the Class AA division for Yankton:

- Emily Bosch placed fourth in U.S. Speaking, while teammate Malory Schulte was sixth;
- Sophie Holtzmann took second place in International Extemp and second place in Lincoln Douglas Debate;
- The team of Bosch and Schulte tied for third in Policy Debate; and
- Stormi Hoebelheirich and Taylor Tielke advanced to the quarterfinals in the Public Forum Debate.

In the Class A U.S. Speaking competition, Sam Miller of Vermillion won top honors. Dylan Daniels of Vermillion was fifth.

In the Class A International Extemporaneous category, Tyler Gutzman of Vermillion was second and Jingyi Sun of Vermillion was fourth.

In the Lincoln Douglas category, Janani Ragothaman of Vermillion took second.

In policy debate, the Vermillion team of Sam Miller and Tyler Gutzman took top honors, while teammates Luke Dodge and Dylan Daniels took second.

Gov. Contracting Workshop Set For RTEC

A free workshop designed to show individuals and businesses what they can do to become federal government contractors will be held at 10 a.m. Friday, March 12, at RTEC, 1200 W. 21st St. in Yankton.

During the workshop, "Introduction to Government Contracting," participants will learn which initial steps they need to take to become eligible to bid on and land federal contracts.

Although there is no charge to attend, participants are asked to RSVP to RTEC at (605) 668-5700.

This workshop is being offered thanks to a special partnership between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the South Dakota Procurement Technical Assistance Center Office in Yankton and the Regional Technical Education Center (RTEC).

Troopers Plan Increased Presence At State

LINCOLN, Neb. — Troopers with the Nebraska State Patrol will be conducting high visibility enforcement efforts in conjunction with the Boys State Basketball Tournament March 11-13 in Lincoln.

Beginning Thursday and continuing through Saturday, troopers with Headquarters Troop-Lincoln and Troop A-Omaha will focus on high traffic areas in an effort to reduce crashes. A \$7,800 grant from the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety (NOHS) will help pay for the special enforcement efforts.

Neb. Offers Gamblers Assistance Program

LINCOLN, Neb. — While gambling may be a fun activity, for a few people gambling can become a serious, life-altering problem that disrupts their lives.

The Gamblers Assistance Program (GAP) in the Division focuses on reducing the negative impact of problem gambling in Nebraska. In FY 2008-09:

- GAP provided approximately \$700,000 for outpatient treatment services, serving approximately 250 people affected by gambling addictions.
- Health professionals received more than 500 hours of gambling-related training and education.

- GAP contracted with over 15 entities to provide direct treatment, education, and helpline services to address gambling addictions in Nebraska.

Anyone can use the compulsive gambling helpline, which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In FY 2008-09, the Helpline handled 2,133 calls, an average of 178 per month, providing information, crisis intervention, and referral services.

Information on gambling prevention and treatment programs is available by calling the national helpline at 1-800-522-4700. Free services funded by the Nebraska Lottery are available through the Gamblers Assistance Program. These services are not tax-funded.

A wide range of information on problem gambling services is also available by going to www.dhhs.ne.gov/networkofcare/.

SAAC's Share Your Sole Collects 2,000 Shoes

VERMILLION — The University of South Dakota Student-Athlete Advisory Committee announced today its "Share Your Sole" shoe drive has gathered more than 2,000 shoes. The collection will now be donated to the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation through the Cheyenne River Youth project.

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- Make a gift of roses to someone special in your life for no reason...Just Because!
- Or Purchase a dozen roses to donate to a: Hospice Patient - Cancer Patient - Care Center Resident
- One dozen long-stemmed roses for only \$20 to be picked up on April 6th at the Benedictine Center - 1000 W. 4th St.
- Variety of colors available - first come/first choice

Roses can be ordered at the following places in Yankton: before Thursday, March 11th, 2010

Benedictine Health Foundation Office, 668-8310
Avera Sacred Heart Hospice Department, 668-8327
OR

Order online at www.averasacredheart.com and click on "Roses...Just Because"

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