

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY:

Poetry Does Not Require Unusual, Peculiar Moments

BY TED KOOSER
U.S. Poet Laureate

It is enough for me as a reader that a poem take from life a single moment and hold it up for me to look at. There need not be anything sensational or unusual or peculiar about that moment, but somehow, by directing my attention to it, our attention to it, the poet bathes it in the light of the remarkable. Here is a poem like this by Carolyn Miller, who lives in San Francisco.

THE WORLD AS IT IS

No ladders, no descending angels, no voice
out of the whirlwind, no rending
of the veil, or chariot in the sky—only
water rising and falling in breathing springs
and seeping up through limestone, aquifers filling
and flowing over, russet stands of prairie grass
and dark pupils of black-eyed Susans. Only
the fixed and wandering stars: Orion rising sideways,
Jupiter traversing the southwest like a great firefly,
Venus trembling and faceted in the west—and the moon,
appearing suddenly over your shoulder, brimming
and ovoid, ripe with light, lifting slowly, deliberately,
wobbling slightly, while far below, the faithful sea
rises up and follows.

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Lack Of Button-Pushing Is Not The Problem

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray:
We are Americans living in England, and have a 2000 VW Beetle automatic that I named Betty. I hope you can settle a domestic argument for us (preferably by siding with me). The VW is my "baby," and until I started living with Matt, the car was aging, but otherwise the transmission was fine. In the year since Matt started driving her, Betty's transmission has seriously deteriorated. I think it's because Matt changes gears without pressing in the little button on the shifter. My understanding was that if you don't press the little button before moving the shifter (like from R to D, or D to 2), you can strip the gears and ruin the transmission. Matt says it doesn't matter, and he changes gears in the automatic like it's a stick shift. So, is he hurting the transmission by failing to press the little button? — **Elaine**



CLICK & CLACK

your elbow and putting it in reverse. You have to deliberately push the button to do that.

RAY: And if you're in drive, your very excitable Labrador retriever can't knock the shifter into reverse or park. Why? Because it also requires that extra step — pushing the shift-lock button — and the dog hasn't learned how to press the button yet. In that way, he's a lot like Matt.

TOM: So the shift-lock button inserts an extra step that you have to take if you want to do something that could be dangerous — to you or to the car.

RAY: On the other hand, shifts that are

not considered dangerous can be made without pushing the button. The allowable shifts can differ from car to car, but generally speaking, shifting from reverse to drive, when you're stopped or going slowly, is not considered dangerous. Shifting from drive to neutral rarely is considered dangerous. So you needn't press the button for those moves. And in that sense, Matt is right.

TOM: Right. If the shifter moves without requiring the button be pressed, then it's OK to move it without pressing the button.

RAY: On the other hand, the fact that Matt is shifting all the time suggests to me that he's not nearly as in love with Betty as you are. In fact, I'm guessing that he thinks she's a "chick car."

TOM: Right. And rather than driving her gently and enjoying the derisive sneers he gets from his mates, he thinks that driving it fast, accelerating hard and shifting all the time will somehow make him more manly.

RAY: And if his definition of manly includes paying for a transmission rebuild, then we agree with him, Elaine. But if not, he ought to cut it out and drive gently, or get his own car. Tell him we said so, Elaine.

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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GOT NEWS? Call The P&D • 665-7811

SDSU

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earn an ACT score of at least 24. The scholarships have brought deserving, talented students to campus, Erpenbach said. In turn, SDSU has surpassed an enrollment of 12,000. SDSU looks to continue meeting its goal of increasing its number of new students by 200 a year.

"We have more than 2,500 students on campus who are recipients of Jackrabbit Guarantee scholarships," he said. "We have 12,376 students and growing, but we are also growing quality students whose ACT scores are going up."

SDSU is also recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty, Erpenbach said.

First Dakota National Bank of Yankton has matched its employees' donations for the Jackrabbit Guarantee scholarships, Erpenbach said. "The Jackrabbit Foundation and First Dakota have been great partners," he said.

As a sign of appreciation, the bus entourage delivered SDSU ice cream to the bank for its employees' afternoon break. The bank staff received thanks from the SDSU group, including Students' Association President Brett Monson of Webster.

During Monday's luncheon, Chicoine — an SDSU graduate and Elk Point native — noted the importance of southeast South Dakota for the university. The Brookings school enrolls about 40 percent of the southeast region's students attending a South Dakota public college.

Chicoine added that 1,700 SDSU alumni reside in Lincoln, Turner and Union counties.

"That's a huge commitment, particularly when you see the opportunities in the southeast corner of the state," he said. "It's an important part of the state for us, and we appreciate your support."

The exception to the regional draw is a 13 percent market share in Clay County, home of the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, Chicoine said.

SETTING GOALS

Besides its fund drive, SDSU has launched a four-pronged campaign entitled "Achieving Dreams While Strengthening Local Relevance."

"It's important that we set a direction that we can hang our hat on," Chicoine said. "Our move from NCAA Division II to Division I has given us a different platform for the national achievement of distinction."

The model covers four main areas, Chicoine said.

- Cultivating academic excellence, including the recent addition of an architecture program. SDSU is going through the accreditation process held every 10 years, with the results expected this summer.

- Growing the state's economy with knowledgeable graduates. SDSU has 400 Ph.D. students in 12 programs and is expanding its doctorate and research programs.

- "To diversify the economy, we have to be more aggressive with science and technology for economic growth. We need more sponsored research in order to go for grants," Chicoine said.

- "We are two-thirds through the fiscal year, and our grant and contract awards have surpassed \$60 million. We expect to earn \$70 million (by the end of the fiscal year). It wasn't many years ago that we were receiving \$10 million."

- Expanding the reach of SDSU through online courses and international programs.

"From coast to coast and border to border, we are conducting research and affecting people. But we need to connect globally," he said. "We are bringing people (to campus) from around the world."

- Building on the university's financial portfolio during a weak economy and declining state and federal resources.

"For the second year in a row, the Legislature has cut our higher education appropriations. We are expecting at least two more years

of financial challenges in this state," Chicoine said. "We cannot reach our goals without (financial) support. We think, with higher education, we're building a stronger South Dakota."

Agriculture has remained a bright spot amidst the current economic woes, said Barry Dunn, dean of the College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences. He sees "tremendous opportunity" in the farm sector.

"We are increasing the value of everything grown here (in South Dakota)," he said. "Ag is the biggest story in town and will be for a long, long time. This is the best place to be for the next 20 years."

With an aging baby boomer generation, healthcare will remain crucial in the future. SDSU has developed programs to meet the challenges of rural healthcare, said Roberta Olson, dean of the College of Nursing.

SDSU graduated 234 nursing students in 2009 and graduated 104 this spring, she said. The university offers an accelerated 12-month program for baccalaureate degree completion, she said.

SDSU offers the upward mobility program for nurses, Olson said. The university has also expanded its graduate nursing programs and offers a Doctor of Nursing

Practitioner degree. The department receives research and training grants.

GOOD SPORTS

While the university continues to upgrade its programs and buildings, SDSU has received national attention through its athletics.

But don't think the Jackrabbit athletes are dumb jocks, said Athletic Director Justin Sell. The approximately 400 athletes — double the number when SDSU competed in NCAA Division II — carried an average 3.16 grade point average (GPA), he said.

Many of those athletes take challenging majors like biology, engineering and pharmacy, Sell said.

"We have 59 athletes who carry a 4.0 GPA, and 98 who carry at least a 3.5 GPA. Sixty percent of our athletes carry a GPA of 3.0 or higher," Sell said. "Our institution has always been D-I academically, but we were tagged D-II because of our athletics."

The women's basketball team was No. 1 in the nation with a 3.64 GPA, Sell said. The Jacks were tops in the nation for three of the last four years, finishing third the other time.

The team includes Yankton native Ketty Cornemann, who carries a 3.83 GPA in her health promotion major, Sell said. Cornemann, who has excelled with the women's basketball team, will use her remaining eligibility on next year's volleyball team, he said.

Other teams with classroom success, Sell said, were football with a 3.02 GPA, wrestling with a 3.11 GPA — which put them among the top dozen in the nation — and baseball with a 3.2 GPA despite missing 15 to 20 days of class during the season.

Jackrabbit teams have excelled in the national spotlight, Sell said.

The women's basketball team made national playoffs the last four years — twice for the WNIT and twice for the NCAA.

"We are the only school that, during its first two years of (NCAA D-I) eligibility, made it to the national tournament," Sell said.

The Jacks football made the playoffs for the first time in 30 years, Sell said. The team defeated rival North Dakota State for three straight years and defeated national powerhouse Northern Iowa during last fall's

Hobo Day homecoming game.

The baseball team, despite residing in a northern climate, tied for the Summit League championship. The Jacks set a school record for wins, including a sweep of the University of Minnesota, and reside in the top five for runs scored. They take the top seed into this week's Summit League tournament — the first time that Oral Roberts University has not carried the top seed in 12 years — with a shot at the national playoffs.

The excellence has been crucial in making the move to Division I, Sell said. "When you are making your (NCAA) transition, it's important to have critical success early on," he said.

SDSU has gained national exposure in the process, he said. "It's great to see SDSU go over the air on ESPN. When you do it right, it's powerful," he said.

Success breeds success, and more good things appear on the way, Chicoine said.

"The challenge is to keep moving things forward," he said.

Memorial Day Deadlines

The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan will be closed Monday, May 31st, for the Memorial Day holiday.

The following deadlines will apply:

Out On The Town — Wednesday, May 26
Tuesday, June 1 newspaper — 5 p.m., Wednesday, May 26
Wednesday, June 2 newspaper — 5 p.m., Thursday, May 27
Thursday, June 3 newspaper — 5 p.m., Friday, May 28

There will be no newspaper on Monday, May, 31, 2010.

Press & Dakotan

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You Are Invited!

Bob Winter Retirement Party
Crane-Youngworth Field

Wed., May 26, 2010
5:00-7:30 PM

*** 47-Yard Sub**
*** Refreshments**

*** 6:30 p.m. program**
Rain location: YHS Commons

Happy 25th Anniversary Mom & Dad!

Love ~ Jesse, Eric, Josh, Justin, Jacquie & Hunter

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