

G E P P O

the haiku work-study journal of the
Yuki Teikei Haiku Society

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Members' Haiku for Study and Appreciation — Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, Editor

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|---|
| 2986 | blossom viewing
the masterpiece that's
every petal | 2994 | purple violas
smiling on my patio
early morning scent |
| 2987 | skunk cabbage
downwind of an
election year | 2995 | traffic slows
for California poppies
are we there yet . . . |
| 2988 | check point moon
the bicycle thief
waved on through | 2996 | lambs grazing
in Brittany countryside
the taste of <i>fromage</i> |
| 2989 | super wolf moon
left with one less
opportunity | 2997 | almost a native
in his checkered spring beret
which way to Versailles |
| 2990 | long weeks
of self-quarantine
spring dream | 2998 | our hands
share a water cup—
reflecting pool |
| 2991 | thin mist
the line between
hype and reality | 2999 | perennial gardens
might not survive climate change—
sodding a rude word |
| 2992 | muddy road
to the old homestead
your reluctance | 3000 | a little girl
bursts with joy—
peonies in bloom |
| 2993 | soap bubbles
from a child's pipe
our hopes for him | 3001 | Evolution—
there is always
more to say |

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|------|--|------|--|
| 3002 | spring gloaming
my sister visits an island
where no one lives | 3014 | the grating whir
of the pencil sharpener . . .
tax time |
| 3003 | cutting cellophane
from a new calendar—
slap of running feet | 3015 | young forest . . .
the funky two-step
of the timberdoodle |
| 3004 | dawn mist
the bird of paradise
becoming luminous | 3016 | moving van . . .
everything but the growth marks
on the closet door |
| 3005 | my life seems more real
when you talk to me
spring cuckoo | 3017 | first Spring arrivals
in the old farm pond . . .
duck, duck, goose |
| 3006 | snowmelt
coloring the lake blue-green
glacial flour and light | 3018 | first spring snow
how dapper
the worn bracken |
| 3007 | poppy reserve
the unplanned car caravan
at a standstill | 3019 | ah! yes
cries the student
melting snow |
| 3008 | March Madness—
White Rabbit's late for a date
already canceled | 3020 | lifting her face
to the dark night
proxy spring moon |
| 3009 | oxalis—
like Dad the young boy
sucks on a stem | 3021 | fleeting spring moon
short-lived tiaras
on the tarweed |
| 3010 | snagged grackle—
we free him from the mesh fence
mother bird and I | 3022 | winter wind concedes
with plum blossom confetti
march to spring begins |
| 3011 | hunting
for another job—
spring mud | 3023 | full pink moon
at a socially safe
distance |
| 3012 | fewer and fewer
ducks on the river—
the coming of spring | 3024 | spring equinox
fog bedding down
with deer |
| 3013 | bringing back
from the fancy garden show
an air plant | 3025 | mallards
glide silently past
memories |
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|------|---|------|---|
| 3026 | we shelter in place
disconnected
from spring | 3038 | spring deepens . . .
my last Felina bra morphs
into a face mask |
| 3027 | hummingbirds
in spite of the quarantine
still visit the feeder | 3039 | stumping candidates
slip trailing or sgraffito . . .
spring melancholy |
| 3028 | strangers dance
on a spring day—
six feet apart | 3040 | income tax prep—
as commodities dive
the flush valve breaks |
| 3029 | deep in the woods
far from troubling news
I look for new growth | 3041 | gibbous moon . . .
Mom's eight pats of butter
on one slice of toast |
| 3030 | ducks
you never see your tracks
behind you | 3042 | where the hummingbird
was, the apple blossom
trembles |
| 3031 | a willow tree
makes stiff wind appear
in a naughty boy | 3043 | Mother's Day
the smell of bacon
from each apartment |
| 3032 | the first blossom
of thousand cherry trees
radiates light | 3044 | after
the long convalescence
plum blossoms |
| 3033 | rereading
<i>The Narrow Road to Oku</i>
lingering day | 3045 | spring wind—
spider clutches at
the edge of the bay |
| 3034 | shelter in place—
I sneak out a stroll
this first day of spring | 3046 | Alum Rock Park
sara orangetip arrives
to take the waters |
| 3035 | a hermit at heart—
I plant the seedlings
further apart | 3047 | its mating swoop
drops a quarter note
Anna's hummingbird |
| 3036 | late spring dream—
we laugh so hard
it woke me up | 3048 | leap year twenty twenty—
a new genome
trips into the world |
| 3037 | spring sushi take-outs
at least I don't miss
their loud music | 3049 | my gray-haired neighbors
stop for front yard daffodils
a few even stoop |
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|------|---|------|--|
| 3050 | among the lily pads
orange and black tails swish
as Buddha sleeps | 3062 | whiteout
space dances itself
winter poetry |
| 3051 | haze over the moon
one side flattens, our call
ends in silent tears | 3063 | winter beach
ducks
six feet distant |
| 3052 | in the March wind
hike to the top of the hill
where pine trees dance | 3064 | never-ending winter
the mad wind
keeps blowing |
| 3053 | paper cutouts of fish
the child sticks onto papa's back
<i>poisson d'avril!</i> | 3065 | night creeps slowly
black dreams
on broken wings |
| 3054 | camellia path
so many
already fallen | 3066 | sheltering in place—
finches in the porch rafters
nest-building |
| 3055 | April Fool's Day
this year it assumes
a deeper meaning | 3067 | quarantine—
how the children love a tale
of vanquished foes |
| 3056 | deadheading azaleas
next year
will be better | 3068 | washing our hands—
each soap bubble holds
all the colors |
| 3057 | empty nest
the mourning dove's call
never meant more | 3069 | all quiet on the eastern front
returning geese |
| 3058 | bookstore cafe
the barista's smile
affirms my belonging | 3070 | still day
empty streets
echo the silence |
| 3059 | against the current
a singleness of purpose
salmon run | 3071 | toilet paper bets
for a round of gin rummy—
wild west circa 2020 |
| 3060 | desert oracle
the sage with his skull
full of stars | 3072 | nowhere to go
I embrace
my solitude |
| 3061 | eyes closed . . .
playing his accordion
the little blue-eyed man | 3073 | morning walk . . .
yammering in the dead tree
acorn woodpeckers |
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|------|--|------|---|
| 3074 | we listen
to oboe duets—
spring rain | 3086 | April Fool's Day
comparing our signatures
granddaughter and I |
| 3075 | last glimpse
of the three-quarter moon
bedtime ritual | 3087 | windsurfing
a skylark soars into
the spring sky |
| 3076 | in the tide pool
a cluster of hermit crabs . . .
coastal pub crawl | 3088 | springing into life
the daffodil bulbs
planted last year |
| 3077 | gathering crowd—
the egg not frying
on the small-town sidewalk | 3089 | sheltering in place
cherry trees bloom
in an empty park |
| 3078 | drifting snow—
half of the sun dog
hidden by prairie | 3090 | crackers
in quarantine
long day |
| 3079 | fall colours
beginning to show
my niece's 13th birthday | 3091 | seawater sprays
through a blowhole
coronavirus |
| 3080 | wild snow
riming the chairlift . . .
the smell of wind | 3092 | spring wind
a dog's ears wagging
from the driver's side |
| 3081 | time out to explain
quarantine
to the kids | 3093 | so much to do
yet that garden bench
beckons |
| 3082 | white roots
beginning to show
vase of pussy willows | 3094 | groundhog day
he sees the shadow
of his former self |
| 3083 | masks in March
first, Mardi Gras
and now corona | 3095 | trailside
the season's first
wildflower |
| 3084 | pot of gold
breakfast table primrose
"from the leprechaun" | 3096 | new leaves—
the grapevine breaks out
of dormancy |
| 3085 | departing spring
downpour at evening
my sodden shoes | 3097 | the length of Florida
in their own lane
roseate spoonbills |
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|------|---|------|--|
| 3098 | late night squabbles
woodstorks settle
next to great egrets | 3110 | countless . . .
the robins dart wildly
through the trees |
| 3099 | heat shimmer
probing pond's edge
ibis ibis ibis | 3111 | sun's warmth
on my ginkgo tree
little green fans |
| 3100 | rain in the forecast
all the green treefrogs
waiting at my windowsill | 3112 | helmets
and training wheels
spring breeze |
| 3101 | Twelfth night
we give our young sister
Mom's button basket | 3113 | tap dancing
across my deck
spring hail |
| 3102 | light pings
on the hood of my jacket
April rain song | 3114 | Pandemic coping—
vacillating endlessly
between calm, panic. |
| 3103 | green
ruffling from the bud—
her first word | 3115 | A baby blue eyes
blooms on the first day of spring—
a hidden beauty. |
| 3104 | trill of her fingers
on their old grand piano
spring bird sing-along | 3116 | Quarantine quiet—
vibrant bird songs, wind sounds as
the urban din's gone. |
| 3105 | crow flock
the quiet between
laugh tracks | 3117 | Resurrection on
Easter—our cymbidium
revives low spirits. |
| 3106 | before they close the borders
a tranquil sea | 3118 | faded pumpkins
on a light-strung porch
January dusk |
| 3107 | spring deepens
the weary cashier
adjusts her face mask | 3119 | dune sparrows sing
into the ocean's roar
winter day |
| 3108 | compost dreams
everything that flowers
a second time | 3120 | morning fog
a woodpecker pecks on a
telephone pole |
| 3109 | senior apartment
next to the phone
his blood pressure cuff | 3121 | on an aged bush
three lilac blooms breathe
the scent of childhood |
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|------|---|------|--|
| 3122 | loving cat
brings her surprise gift
five dead birds on the doorstep | 3134 | dogwood flowers
the wind riffing through
my book of days |
| 3123 | faithful cat's
pledge of love
purring in my lap | 3135 | vernal pool
the bassoonist
wets his reed |
| 3124 | tomcat
cries his mating call
through the kitchen window | 3136 | in a mood . . .
cumulous clouds
dragging their shadows |
| 3125 | lovesick cat
eager for my kitty
love season | 3137 | white butterfly
flits by like my changing thoughts
life seems fleeting now |
| 3126 | Coronavirus:
after the news I fuse music
with my night sleep | 3138 | a young coyote
stops, stares, then walks away
his tail wagging |
| 3127 | St Patrick Day:
its Tel Aviv celebrations
went viral too | 3139 | white camellia
how we treat immigrants
now and long ago |
| 3128 | desert storm . . . sea squall
the windshield raindrops become
the spots of dry sand | 3140 | at the wood's edge
peeking over the fence
volunteer plum |
| 3129 | Greek Strawberry Tree!
Its blossoms cause its fruit
to drop at last | 3141 | not in the mood to type
my cat naps upon
the keyboard |
| 3130 | a strutting peacock
his brilliant fan on display
she looked, but kept walking | 3142 | mixed signals—
my cat wants to be alone
but stares at me |
| 3131 | the empty mason jar
now filled with water . . .
and pollywogs | 3143 | virus lockdown
extended yet again
widening waist |
| 3132 | first rose
with velvet skin
stretching in the sunlight | 3144 | virus scare
today more attentive
to church bells |
| 3133 | forsythia buds
one runner races
ahead of the rest | 3145 | her bequest beckons
small leather notebooks half filled—
create more haiku |
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|------|--|------|--|
| 3146 | march wind perceived
from my quarantine window—
rollicking pines | 3151 | the crow
doesn't recognize <i>me</i> either
laughing hills |
| 3147 | sitting shiva
for the whole of humanity
in a pretty shroud | 3152 | intent on their work
mourning doves
search the grounds |
| 3148 | wondering if
Amazon Prime will market
Euthanasia kits | 3153 | in fog and darkness
coyotes howl making their
night moves |
| 3149 | spring lockdown—
beyond my doorstep
dragons and unicorns | 3154 | three pine trees
hold up the moon
winter evening |
| 3150 | tranquility
a meandering streak of rust
on the garden table | 3155 | outside the market
masked shoppers wait to buy
—yesterday |

Meet this issue's featured artist

YTHS member Joan Iversen Goswell, of Valencia, PA. She is an accomplished haiku poet who lives on a farm with her horses and a Jack Russell terrier named Rosie. Joan has a strong interest in Japanese culture, Zen art, and literature. She also studies *Cha No Yu*, Japanese Tea Ceremony. As an artist she specializes in handmade artists books. She created these striking prints by carving erasers, inking them, then stamping them by hand on paper. Thank you, Joan, for sharing your talents with *Geppo* readers.



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“Snowy Garden” © joan iversen goswell

Spring Challenge Kigo: Cat's Love

catatonic
 after a night of romance
 under the stars
 ~Michael Henry Lee

the sound
 of cats in love
 my loneliness
 ~Deborah P Kolodji

howls echoing
 under our bedroom window
 cats in love
 ~Marilyn Gehant

cats in love
 the neighborhood felines prefer
 my property
 ~Alison Woolpert

old tom
 prowls around the alleys
 looking for love
 ~Ruth Holzer

the lover tomcat
 pulls another all-nighter . . .
 I reach for ear plugs
 ~Elinor Pihl Huggett

in dawn's spring frost
 searching for my white
 lover cat
 ~Ed Grossmith

our lover cat comes
 swaggering across the lawn
 a scratch on his nose
 ~Linda Papanicolaou

middle schoolers
 text each other day and night
 cats in love
 ~Christine Lamb Stern

lingering around
 with a colorful choker
 a cat in love
 ~Hiroyuki Murakami

summer cottage stray
 we try to find a home for—
 stays
 ~Carolyn Fitz

in the still of the night
 penetrating even my dreams
 love cats
 ~Bob Redmond

out my kitchen window
 atop the avocado tree
 a cat's tail flicks
 ~Michèle Boyle Turchi

feral love
 his paw on her room window
 in the cat resort
 ~Kath Abela Wilson

left at the door
 a basket of wiggling fur . . .
 cat's love
 ~Michael Sheffield

growing old together
 the cat and I
 love our sun spot
 ~Mark Levy

cats in love . . .
 no social distancing
 in the pandemic
 ~Michael Dylan Welch

on silent paws
 he comes to me
 my loving cat
 ~Sharon Lynne Yee

cat's love . . .
 in the sparrow's beak
 a tuft of fur
 ~Barbara Snow

cat's unlove?
 love and indifference
 cat's unlove?
 ~Zinovy Vayman

love music
 the cat's chorus reaches
 breaking point
 ~Patricia Prime

the lover cat
 heedless of the spread
 of COVID-19
 ~John J. Han

midnight rendezvous
 with a smile on her face
 the cat returns
 ~Dana Grover

now cats' loving
 a more singular sound
 in plagued city
 ~Lois Heyman Scott

purring at dawn
 on my pillow
 neutered Tom
 ~Stephanie Baker

cool quiet night
 silence broken only by
 the love cries of cats
 ~Marcia Behar

A cat on the prowl—
 for a cat's love in springtime
 is unquenchable.
 ~David Sherertz

Kitty drags himself
 up the driveway—
 a cat's love of home
 ~Janis Albright Lukstein

soft, pink pillow
 and cat flies off the bed—
 "The New Order"
 ~e luke

Correction

Apologies to Barbara Campitelli, whose submission for the Winter Challenge Kigo: Ice was incorrectly attributed to Barbara Campbell.

smiling down
 on what's left of the ice
 January sun
 ~Barbara Campitelli

Members' Votes for Haiku Published in February 2020 *Geppo*

Deborah P Kolodji	2803-8,	2804-2,	2805-1,	2806-4
Michael Henry Lee	2807-1,	2808-3,	2809-1,	2810-3
Dyana Basist	2811-1,	2812-2,	2813-5,	2814-2
Mark Levy	2815-3,	2816-1,	2817-0,	2818-3
Michael Dylan Welch	2819-7,	2820-3,	2821-3,	2822-10
Ruth Holzer	2823-2,	2824-8,	2825-1,	2826-0
J. Zimmerman	2827-5,	2828-1,	2829-5,	2830-5
Bona M. Santos	2831-8,	2832-1,	2833-0,	2834-3
Patricia Prime	2835-3,	2836-0,	2837-2,	2838-1
Neal Whitman	2839-3,	2840-3,	2841-1,	2842-0
Ed Grossmith	2843-2,	2844-13,	2845-4,	2846-2
Alexis George	2847-8,	2848-8,	2849-3,	2850-3
Elaine Whitman	2851-0,	2852-3,	2853-0,	2854-1
Clysta Seney	2855-1,	2856-3,	2857-6,	2858-1
Judith Morrison Schallberger	2859-2,	2860-5,	2861-3,	2862-0
Alison Woolpert	2863-2,	2864-3,	2865-1,	2866-2
Jackie Chou	2867-0,	2868-7,	2869-10,	2870-3
Michael Sheffield	2871-5,	2872-1,	2873-3,	2874-1
Barbara Snow	2875-0,	2876-5	2877-0,	2878-2
Kath Abela Wilson	2879-1,	2880-1,	2881-1,	2882-1
Elinor Pihl Huggett	2883-2,	2884-12,	2885-2,	2886-2
Christine Lamb Stern	2887-1,	2888-0,	2889-0,	2890-5
Stephanie Baker	2891-1,	2892-0,	2893-2,	2894-3
Bob Redmond	2895-0,	2896-2,	2897-1,	2898-3
Mimi Ahern	2899-1,	2900-1,	2901-2,	2902-0
Barbara Moore	2903-4,	2904-7,	2905-4,	2906-1
Hiroyuki Murakami	2907-0,	2908-3,	2909-0,	2910-0
Zinovy Vayman	2911-1,	2912-0,	2913-0,	2914-3
Dana Grover	2915-0,	2916-4,	2917-0,	2918-0
Genie Nakano	2919-1,	2920-1,	2921-0,	2922-1
Marilyn Gehant	2923-1,	2924-0,	2925-3,	2926-1
Michele Root-Bernstein	2927-3,	2928-1,	2929-2,	2930-5
Christine Horner	2931-1,	2932-0,	2933-1,	2934-6
Lois Heyman Scott	2935-0,	2936-1,	2937-0,	2938-0
Beverly Acuff Momoi	2939-8,	2940-3,	2941-1,	2942-6
Sharon Lynne Yee	2943-2,	2944-3,	2945-0,	2946-0
Michèle Boyle Turchi	2947-0,	2948-1,	2949-1,	2950-0
Carolyn Fitz	2951-1,	2952-0,	2953-2	2954-1
John J. Han	2955-2,	2956-4,	2957-4,	2958-0
Majo Leavick	2959-2,	2960-0,	2961-3,	2962-0
David Sherertz	2963-0,	2964-0,	2965-2,	2966-0
Kathy Goldbach	2967-7,	2968-2,	2969-2,	2970-0
thomasjohnwellsmiller	2971-1,	2972-0,	2973-0,	2974-2
Phillip Kennedy	2975-4,	2976-0,	2977-2	
Marcia Behar	2978-1,	2979-2,	2980-1,	2981-0
Barbara Campitelli	2982-0,	2983-5,	2984-3,	2985-0

Attention All Voting Members:

The purpose of voting is to express appreciation for the work of others. Please refrain from voting for yourself; if you do, inadvertently or otherwise, votes for your own haiku will not be counted.

February 2020 Haiku Voted Best by *Geppo* Readers
(received 6 or more votes)

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|------|--|------|--|
| 2844 | the softness
of white sound
snowflakes
~Ed Grossmith (13) | 2939 | at the heart
of the cherry
stone
~Beverly Acuff Momoi (8) |
| 2884 | a side of me
even my friends don't know . . .
wild violets
~Elinor Pihl Huggett (12) | 2819 | the lamp tilted
to light my diary—
the year's first snow
~Michael Dylan Welch (7) |
| 2822 | late-evening sun—
the honeysuckle blossom
finds a hummingbird
~Michael Dylan Welch (10) | 2868 | the option
of starting anew
first snow
~Jackie Chou (7) |
| 2869 | winter blues
the barista's heart-shaped foam
saves the day
~Jackie Chou (10) | 2904 | Christmas meal
the children return
only to leave
~Barbara Moore (7) |
| 2803 | winter beach
more bird tracks
than footprints
~Deborah P Kolodji (8) | 2967 | in the leafless birch
a swarm of golden waxwings
first sunlight
~Kathy Goldbach (7) |
| 2824 | New Year—
entering the decade
that will see me out
~Ruth Holzer (8) | 2857 | kindergarten
my first line-up . . .
by height
~Clysta Seney (6) |
| 2831 | a walk among
floating tree branches—
morning mist
~Bona M. Santos (8) | 2934 | winter regrets—
so many mistakes written
in permanent ink
~Christine Horner (6) |
| 2847 | frost moon
snagged
on antlers
~Alexis George (8) | 2942 | leaving
with the shore birds
spring light
~Beverly Acuff Momoi (6) |
| 2848 | winter wind
throwing itself
a party
~Alexis George (8) | | |

Dojins' Corner

Nov 2019—Jan 2020

Emiko Miyashita, Patricia J. Machmiller, and
Neal Whitman

Greetings to everyone—are you all sheltering in place? What a strange time we are living through. Spring has come to the northern hemisphere, and it is autumn on the other side of the equator. We all hope that you and yours are doing well and are able to weather these uncertain times. We are happy to welcome our guest editor, Neal Whitman of Pacific Grove, CA, a member of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society. Neal is haiku feature editor of the website *Pulse: Voices from the Heart of Medicine* (pulsevoices.org). He is also vice-president of the United Haiku and Tanka Society. In 2019 he was awarded the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Haiku “Best USA” and Gold Medal from Ito En North America Haiku Grand Prix.

We have chosen to comment on the asterisked haiku from the following list of our favorites from the last *Geppo*.

NW: 2807*, 2835*, 2866, 2877, 2884, 2897, 2921, 2942*, 2980, 2983*

E: 2813, 2819*, 2831, 2840, 2857, 2863*, 2877, 2889, 2892, 2903, 2914, 2926, 2934, 2938, 2949*, 2953, 2965, 2967, 2977*

pjm: 2803, 2810, 2812, 2813, 2817, 2818, 2819, 2821, 2822, 2823, 2824, 2826, 2827, 2828, 2830, 2834, 2838, 2845*, 2846, 2864, 2866, 2870, 2872, 2975, 2876, 2884, 2894, 2900, 2901*, 2902, 2905, 2906, 2925*, 2926, 2927, 2939, 2944, 2953, 2961, 2975*, 2978, 2980, 2983

2807 holiday cheer
a kingfisher dives head first
in the drink

NW: The kingfisher, with its energetic flight and piercing rattle, seems to have an air of self-

importance as it takes abrupt dives into the water and, with its sharp beak, stabs the water surface to spear aquatic prey. In this haiku, I imagine that, instead of patrolling a river or small stream, one of these colorful aviators has dipped into my martini glass and speared ... not a small crustacean, but an olive! Or, perhaps you envision a dive into a Christmas punch bowl for a cranberry. The phrase “in the drink” has an old meaning for a body of water, but the double meaning here I believe is intended to bring a smile to the reader, as it did for me.

E: A brilliant blue bird absorbed into its own reflection must be a breathtaking moment. Jade (*hisui*) is named after this bird (*kawasemi*, a summer kigo in Japan), so the bird and jade share the same Chinese character 翡翠. Perhaps the first line does not have to state that the dive is a “holiday cheer”? I think something like “sun at the zenith,” may add a descending feeling as well as the vivid colors to the poem. What do you think?

pjm: This is a rather jocular verse playing with the idiom “in the drink.” The mood of the poem, starting with “holiday cheer,” is light, and the play on the word “drink,” as a social libation and also a large body of water is altogether fitting. However, the kingfisher being a summer kigo unfortunately undermines the whole conceit. I like Emiko’s suggestion, but admit it changes the poem entirely from the light-hearted whimsy that attracted Neal to a more focused appreciation of the kingfisher.

2819 the lamp tilted
to light my diary—
the year’s first snow

E: I liked the way the author is adjusting the small circle of light cast by the lamp to spotlight the page. The year’s first snow is always merry; we tend to forget that it is the opening of a long and cold winter; we are simply happy to see it coming again. So, the tone of this haiku for me is cozy, happy, and it resonates with the sound of snow falling at night, so quiet!

pjm: An intimate, sequestered feeling is created here. The personal act of writing in a diary is placed within the limited cone of light of the lamp. And this interior scene is separated from the rest of the world by the softly falling snow. The scene is one of going inside both physically and metaphorically. And the feeling of interiority is one of the pleasures of winter.

NW: Often it is said that poets, like owls, see in the dark. Well, if not in total darkness, at least their vision can make out what is before them in dim light. Perhaps that is what makes poets special. They have vision without need of a bright light. Well, enough metaphor! Haiku is all about the concrete and, in this haiku, I literally see the diarist tilting a lamp to make out each word as it is entered in the start of a new season. With the first snow, we, too, anticipate spending more time indoors and taking time to express thoughts and feelings meant for our eyes only.

2835 foggy morning
seated on a park bench
a lone woman

NW: Let's face it . . . poets and song lyricists love the fog! We share its image as we use it to convey what is not totally clear. Isn't that what haiku poets aim to do: to say what cannot be said? So, to kick off this haiku, line one, on its own, brings us into that moment of uncertainty. With line two, we are situated in a familiar location that we recognize as a public place: a park. We do not know if this is so early in the morning that only a few folks are out and about, or mid-morning when there is more foot traffic. Some people go for a "walk in the park," whereas, for others it is a shortcut across a city block. In line three the scene is set: woman sitting on the bench. The poet could have used the simple article, a . . . a woman; or, could show us with a number . . . one woman. Ah, but this is a *lone* woman. Oh, it is possible she is waiting for an assignation, but, methinks we are meant, in a way, to remove the space between *a* and *lone*: this woman is *alone*. The poetic elegance of this haiku is leaving

room for the reader to fill in the story. As is said, "I haven't the foggiest notion." I welcome in this haiku a feeling of bewilderment . . . to be in the wild . . . to be lost.

pjm: Fog is an autumn kigo so from the opening line, I know I'm in autumn. The "lone" woman does make me feel lonely and maybe the fog suggests that her story is not clear. Perhaps I'm not meant to know her story—which leaves me with a bit of sadness.

E: Must be damp and chilly! Did she sleep on the bench the previous night? Who would like to go and sit in the park on a foggy morning? A bird watcher? A pigeon feeder? I think "foggy morning" and "a lone woman" might be too close, both giving a chilly impression. What has moved the author to make a haiku out of the scene? Maybe the woman's silhouette was very beautiful and mysterious?

2845 first snow
how dapper
the withered moor

pjm: Look at what the poet did! "Withered moor." There is not a phrase in the English language more morose than this. And yet this poet put that phrase in a poem along with the word "dapper" and suddenly our hearts skip a beat and we are all smiling with delight. See what magic one well-chosen adjective can make?

E: Oh, so quite a lot of snow must have fallen to cover the place, to make it look dapper, like a good-looking chef in his well-ironed white uniform!

NW: No kigo limits a haiku poet's imagination, but "first snow" is in my opinion a special one because it can take the poet and the reader in such unexpected directions, as it did in this haiku. After reading line two, I was totally surprised . . . in a good way . . . that it was a withered moor that was dapper. What flies into my imagination is a well-kept gentleman or gentlewoman of a certain age.

2863 back at the trailhead . . .
 the last sip of good luck tea
 hot from the thermos

E: What a relief! When I visit a Noh theater, where programs take hours to finish, I usually bring my flask of coffee or ginger tea. In case I start coughing, I sip it slowly to calm down my throat. I am careful not to sip all of it till the last minute of the play because I think it a courtesy to not make noise during the performance. And when it is over, it's time to drink up the rest to ease my thirst! Hiking and Noh are not the same, but the relief of going through the whole course and program is the same. I should name my drink a "good luck tea" next time!

NW: Line one brings me to a specific moment in time: we are on a hike and are taking a short break. Now we are ready to again get going and hit the trail! The *miracle* of haiku is that I can taste how good are those last sips of tea kept hot in a thermos and how fortified I feel to continue the journey. Since the *magic* of haiku is allowing the reader to finish the poem, this haiku leads me to recall what in my own life has sustained me to go forward in difficult times.

pjm: On New Year's Day a group of hikers has successfully returned from their trek; their good luck tea lasted and sustained them all along the way even offering them a few drops at the end. That *is* good luck!

2901 back on top
 Mama's Christmas angel
 with a glued wing

pjm: Here is another haiku that succeeds with one carefully chosen adjective. A family treasure, a glass or ceramic angel that always topped Mama's Christmas tree, has been restored to its place of honor after years, maybe, of being packed away with one of its wings broken. Now someone who cared about this family tradition has rescued it, repaired it, and placed it, with all the hopes and

dreams of the family, on top of this year's tree. This whole story is suggested by one word: "glued."

NW: When I learned what was back in line one was an ornament special due to its heritage, I felt a wash of love that must live in this family. I do not know if Mama is still with us, as a mortal being, or is with us in memory. Here I am reminded of the adage that every poet is a "living" poet so long as we read his or her poems. It is that way with loved ones, yes? They are always with us. There is one more gift in this Christmas haiku: line three. The fact that the angel has a glued wing brings me into the experience of *kintsugi* in which something of value is added in an object's repair.

E: The haiku depicts a happy family remembering the warmth and laughter of Mama. The story is quite clear here, Mama's Christmas angel had lost its wing and was not on the tree for a while, but it has been repaired and is back again this year. Somehow, the poem makes me feel that Mama has been gone for a while.

2925 a cut
 of a sawn-off limb
 winter seclusion

pjm: The cut left after pruning—white, raw, and vulnerable. There is a sense still of raw exposure, but also of quiet retreat, of withdrawal to heal—a needed respite after trauma to rest and renew. I would suggest that the first word be changed to "the."

E: A cut is so visible on the bare tree. A fresh cut would be light-colored and if old, darker. The third line gives me a hint of an ample time the author has now, to see not only the shape of the tree, the buds, or the blossoms, but also to look into the tree's life history. And perhaps thinking back to their own history of being "shaped" to meet social demands and commonsense.

NW: My admiration for this haiku lies in the juxtaposition of a cut in line one and a limb lost in

line two . . . for a tree, as with a human, this is a profound loss. My appreciation for this poet's art of concision increases with the resonance of the image of lines one and two with the kigo in line three, "winter seclusion." I imagine that, due to severe weather conditions, or perhaps poor health, an individual is cut off from loved ones or friends . . . if there were any of them in the first place.

2942 leaving
with the shore birds
spring light

NW: What drew me to this haiku was the direction it took me with the first two lines. Sometimes alone, often with my wife, Elaine, I find myself at day's end walking along the Monterey Bay shoreline not far from our home. The shore birds and I have not synchronized watches, but we are leaving at the same time. As I turn to take the path home, overhead a squadron of six or seven brown pelicans are flapping towards the dropping sun on their way home to their roost. Ah, but even before I get to line three, another image comes to mind: spring migration. Well, truth-be-told, perhaps my sight did scan down to line three. Now a bittersweet sensation fills me. While the spring or vernal equinox marks the even division of day and night, the light in the sky in the days before and after this specific day reminds us of much that is changing with one season passing and a new one arriving. In one moment, I welcome what is to come, while at the same time I miss what is over. While holding that feeling, I return to my heading home from that bay walk image: a group of sanderlings who had been running up and down the beach probing for tiny prey in the wet sand suddenly lightly lift and spring into the air as if one body and off these "peeps" go to find a protected place to sleep.

pjm: A lovely image. A lovely thought. Almost all the shorebirds in North America (except for the snowy plovers where Neal and I live) leave the beaches where they winter and head for the Arctic to breed. As they leave so, too, does the delicate light of spring.

E: As the sun sets, birds with bird's eyes head for home before it is too dark for them to fly. The poet wonders if the shore birds are responsible for taking the spring light from the beach with them.

2949 winter morning sun
at the top of each redwood
a lone bird bathes

E: This haiku reminds me of Mrs. Kiyoko Tokutomi and her house located at the bottom of a redwood forest. As I turn my eyes up, acquiring drone's eyes, I see those lone birds perched on the top of each redwood, like the star on a Christmas tree, golden in the early morning sunlight.

pjm: One of the features of a redwood forest is its shady coolness; it's even cooler in winter. I suspect the birds go to the top of the redwood trees in the morning to feel the sun and warm up their chilled bodies. Emiko's remembrance of Kiyoko alone in her house in the redwoods is very poignant. She died on Christmas Day — alone.

NW: The winter morning sun is a kigo that for me evokes two senses. One is the sense of sight. There is a light on a winter morning when the orb of the sun is low and the angle of its rays is low. The other sense is a warming as the dark, cold night is over and moment by moment the land is warming up, degree by degree. Birds can be territorial, so I smiled when I took in the image of each bird selecting its own tree top to begin a new day. I share in the privacy of each bird's sunbath.

2975 old year turns to new—
the cat twitches
her whiskers

pjm: Magical—those cat whiskers. One twitch and the year changes over. Just the thought of this made me happy.

NW: This haiku brought a smile . . . what does this cat know that is hidden from us? Was there something this past year that went unnoticed or is

there “something in the air” that this prescient cat can detect is on its way? I love the mystery of this haiku.

E: I was thinking the old year would pass, would go, but here the poem says it stays and turns into a new one! I thought about an image of a single year turning sixty-five times renewing itself for me, once for each year of my life. And this is done by a cat’s magic, when she twitches her whiskers at the very end of the New Year’s Eve! Amazing.

2983 rain
only sound
comes in

NW: *Haiku is the art of concision!* How often do we repeat this refrain . . . for some of us, a mantra. A mentor, when he learned that in retirement I had turned to the writing of poetry, told me to read, read, read. “Good poems make good teachers,” he advised. For me, this haiku is not only a good teacher of haiku concision, it is a *master* teacher. Five words. Six syllables. This is a short poem . . . a *very* short poem, but it is not small. With one word / one syllable in line one, the reader (at least this one) is wondering, “So, what about it?” The answer in lines two and three hit me like a burst . . . there is a sudden, short wind-driven whoosh and then a steady patter continues. Ah, but I am tucked in! Safe and sound! Oh, my . . . there it is . . . the word

“sound.” As I recited this haiku (I do so alone, in the privacy of my home office) a sadness came over me. What if I lived alone? What if there is no friend to be visiting, expected or unexpected? My only comfort a cup of tea and biscuits, but no one there to share the repast and ride out the weather.

E: Does the poem depict falling rain by the sound heard from inside? Is the poet seeing the rain outside, or just sensing it from the sound that comes in? When I was a child, a severe rain leaked through the roof of our old house! We had to gather washbowls to catch the drops. The rhythmic sound of raindrops hitting the tin washbowls is what I recall, together with my mother’s sigh. But here, the essence of the rain, which is water, does not reach the author, only the consequence.

pjm: I imagine this to be a winter rain. That feels right to me. I wish it said so.

We invite your responses. Send letters to the *Geppo* editor or send an email.

Summer Challenge Kigo: Deep Tree Shade

Beverly Acuff Momoi

When I was growing up in Memphis, summers were sweltering. Homes were not air-conditioned, and the heat and humidity were like a fever out of control. We sought respite where we could find it. So—although I don't see it often in English language haiku—the kigo “deep tree shade,” *koshita yami* in Japanese, is among my favorites. It conjures up a jumble of feelings and images—vivid and intense.

Deep tree shade is not the light shadow cast by a few outstretched branches or the blocks of relief found under the eaves of a building. It is the shade of big and ancient trees that pulls you in, deep with its promise of darkness as well as coolness. As you can see in the haiku below, there is something magical about it—it is the edge of the unknown, where the occasional flash of color is more intense, where sounds cannot be heard.

What is your experience of deep tree shade? What does it conjure up for you?

Temple of Suma—
hearing the unblown flute
in the deep shade of trees

須磨寺や吹かぬ笛聞く木下闇
Sumadera ya, Fukanu fue kiku, koshita yami
芭蕉 (Bashō, 1688) Reference in Japanese: <https://tinyurl.com/deepshade>

from place to place,
deep tree shade
and roadside gods

木下闇ところどころの地藏かな
koshita yami tokodokoro no jizou kana
子規 (Shiki, 1893) Reference in Japanese: <https://tinyurl.com/deepshade>

sliver of pink
in deep tree shade
the black dog's tongue
Beverly Acuff Momoi, *Acorn: a journal of contemporary haiku*. No. 31: Fall 2013, 17.

*Special thanks to Kat Momoi for providing the Japanese for haiku by Bashō and Shiki.

Please send one haiku using the Summer Challenge Kigo to the *Geppo* editor. It will be published with other members' verses in the next issue.

Kasen Renku from Asilomar Retreat—Part II

Renku is a traditional Japanese linked poetry form that, according to William Higginson, “focuses on the experiences and language of ordinary people, as did early *haikai*. . . . Renku poets seek to represent the full range of humanity and nature in their poems, and link their stanzas mainly through mood and intuition” (50). There are several lengths and forms of renku, with *kasen* renku, thirty-six stanza renku, being the most common length. Renku has formal rules and can be summarized under two concepts: link (“connection and relationship between adjacent stanzas”) and shift (“the diversity of topics and materials and the progression of the renku”) (*Link and Shift*—reference below). The overall structure of *kasen* renku contains four sections: (1) *jo* (Prologue) with six stanzas, (2 & 3) *ha* (Development) with two sections of twelve stanzas each, and (4) *kyu* (Conclusion), with six stanzas.

Each year the YTHS Asilomar Retreat includes a renku party, where teams of poets write a *kasen* renku. The two groups this year chose to have the starting verse, the hokku, be a haiku by or about one of two beloved YTHS members who died in 2019: Jerry Ball and Ann Bendixen. One group’s *kasen* renku was in the last issue of *Geppo* and below is the second group’s renku.

White Chrysanthemums

A *kasen* renku composed at YTHS Asilomar Retreat
Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, California
November 10, 2019

Hokku in tribute to *Dojin* Jerry Ball by David Sherertz (D.S.)

Sabaki (leader): Linda Papanicolaou (L.P.)

Participants: Patrick Gallagher (P.G.), Johnnie Johnson Hafernik (J.J.H.), Christine Horner (C.H.), Michele Root-Bernstein (M.R.B.), Judith Morrison Schallberger (J.M.S.), David Sherertz (D.S.), thomasjohnwellsmiller (—T56), Alison Woolpert (A.W.), and Joan Zimmerman (J.Z.)

- | <i>jo</i> | <i>ha</i> |
|--|--|
| 1. white chrysanthemums
haiku pantheon adds one:
Bashō Buson Ball / D.S. | 7. an ivory key
on the old piano
stuck on high C / M.R.B. |
| 2. finding the way home
by moonlight / P.G. | 8. we could make such
beautiful music together / C.H. |
| 3. night chill
makes us huddle
around the bonfire / J.J.H. | 9. agreed to agree
skipping out on
the couples' retreat / —T56 |
| 4. at the family reunion
all meld through love / J.M.S. | 10. Dad's love note to Mom
tucked in her shower cap / A.W. |
| 5. sated
a caterpillar takes leave
of the tree / M.R.B. | 11. a bicycle
with fresh baguettes
for each pannier / C.H. |
| 6. drought sweeps over
the lowland countries / J.M.S. | 12. headfirst down the pines
raccoons / —T56 |

- | | |
|---|--|
| 13. holes in the roof
make way for a winter moon
to enter the barn / J.M.S. | 25. his tongue worries
the new piercings in his
left lower lip / C.H. |
| 14. an ice hockey game
ends in a brawl / J.J.H. | 26. Oxycontin can be abused
what about Viagra? / P.G. |
| 15. the science exhibit
on water pollution
opens today / J.J.H. | 27. a whiff of bourbon
on the traveler preparing
to meet his ex / J.Z. |
| 16. every fire plug
to be painted plaid / C.H. | 28. the widow relearning
her old come-ons / P.G. |
| 17. branches of blossom
cut with a pair
of antique shears / M.R.B. | 29. just the moon
above
Half Dome / L.P. /— T56 / A.W. |
| 18. the passing spring
seems to be hurried along / A.W. | 30. demanding a recount
on Election Day /— T56 |
| <i>ha</i> | <i>kyu</i> |
| 19. on May Day
a perfect crowd cheers
a perfect parade of tanks / M.R.B. | 31. September song
we all join in
on “precious few” / P.G. |
| 20. that jade dagger bid up
at the silent auction / P.G. | 32. the train no longer
stops in small towns / J.J.H. |
| 21. Alexa
fails to follow my orders,
can she hear me? / J.J.H. | 33. the chocolatier confesses
there is such a thing
as too much chocolate / M.R.B. |
| 22. seniors at breakfast praise
modern dentistry / P.G. | 34. my favorite pair of
strappy Italian kicks / J.M.S. |
| 23. an under-appreciation
for the beauty
of moths / A.W. | 35. there are not
words enough . . .
cherry blossoms / — T56 |
| 24. humid morning
holding back tears at U.P.S. / J.Z. | 36. the lens zooms in
to capture a spring cloud / M.R.B. |

References

Higginson, William J. *The Haiku Seasons: Poetry of the Natural World*. Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2008.
 Kondô, Tadahi Shôkan, and William J. Higginson. *Link and Shift: A Practical Guide to Renku Composition*, last updated
 October 2003. <https://tinyurl.com/Link-Shift>

Message From the YTHS President

Mimi Ahern

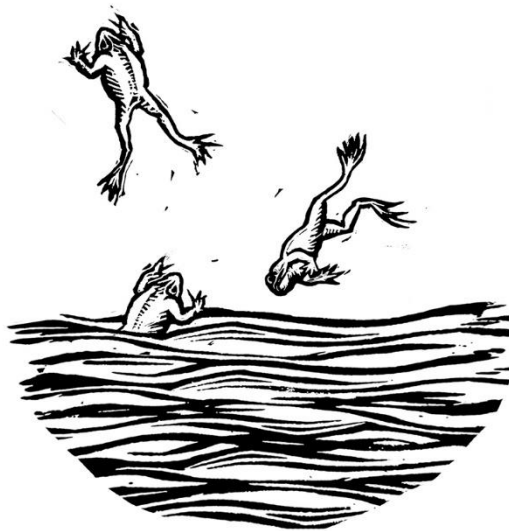
Kiss today goodbye, the sweetness and the sorrow....

With these lyrics lifted from the musical *Chorus Line*, I send to each one of you members of our YTHS family wishes that you be safe and well. How lucky we are to have the precious gift of haiku with which we can convey our deepest thoughts and feelings of this world in all its sweetness and its sorrow.

And how fortunate we are to be connected through the internet and to have the outstanding *Geppo* team of Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, our editor, Christine Stern, Karina Young, Joan Zimmerman, and David Sherertz who have not missed a beat in adapting to the present and emailing you this *Geppo*.

The calendar dates will remain as they are for the year. Please save all of them; if we cannot meet physically, we are making plans to meet virtually.

Moment by moment by moment . . . may some of the moments be preserved through haiku . . . and shared. To quote Margaret Johnson, a 95-year-old volunteer I once had the pleasure of working with: *Write On*.




© joan iversen goswell

“Frogs Frolicking” © joan iversen goswell

YTHS January 2020 Haiku Workshop – History Park San Jose

Alison Woolpert

Thirteen haiku poets gathered January 11 at the Firehouse in History Park San Jose for the first meeting of the new decade. It was an all-day workshop offered by *Dojin* Patricia J. Machmiller. Members were asked to bring haiku struggling to liftoff, and bring they did!

This was the time and place that inner critics were invited to politely join in. In round-robin fashion, each poet shared a struggling haiku. Members first acknowledged what they liked about the haiku, whether it was the form, kigo choice, the image, its sound or rhythm, or anything that moved them. Questions were asked to clarify the poet's intent. Collectively, poets/participants offered feedback for consideration and sought Patricia's expertise.

There were rich discussions about many shared questions: how best might the haiku's images unfold; what is the emotional core of the haiku; how can two kigo appear in the same haiku and have it work (though generally thought to be taboo); what about length, line breaks, the use of ellipses and the em-dash; and even why metaphor (so important to poetry) weakens haiku.

Everyone left with haiku ready for flight; perhaps, they'll land in a journal for you to enjoy, as well.

Attendees: Mimi Ahern, Dyana Basist, Eleanor Carolan, Carolyn Fitz, Dana Grover, Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, Patricia Machmiller, Linda Papanicolaou, Judith Schallberger, Clysta Seney, Carol Steele, Michèle Turchi, and Alison Woolpert



“Happy Frog” © joan iversen goswell

In Search of the Dragonfly—Third Workshop with Patricia J. Machmiller

Alison Woolpert

On January 25, 2020, participants eagerly gathered at Patricia Machmiller’s home near Moss Landing, CA, for the third workshop in her haiku-writing series—this one, “The Craft of Writing Haiku: Form and Sound.” They had brought with them previously written haiku and were ready to consider revision.

Patricia began with a clarification of both traditional and modified traditional (syllabic) forms. This refers to haiku written in 5-7-5, 4-6-4, or 3-5-3 syllable forms. The pros and cons of the different forms were discussed, as well as how syllabic writing makes a haiku sound more conversational. Her comment was, “If your subject matter needs lyricism or grace, that is what writing in these forms does for you.” Participants worked on recasting their haiku and then shared their efforts.

Over lunch break there was time to take the path out to the beach to see and feel the dynamic winter waves that were breaking. Along with some quiet time to revise, poets were busily gathering new material.

The afternoon’s focus was two-fold. One was learning more about writing in the modified modern and free verse accented forms. Participants paid attention to meter and how the ear listens to beats, not the syllables. For example, the 2-3-2 beat poem shows how the even beat lines seem resolved or resigned and the odd beat lines have a feeling of incompleteness or anticipation because of the imbalance. Patricia encouraged them to read their haiku aloud and to then ask themselves if the rhythm worked for what they were trying to say.

Secondly, she addressed sound devices: how the array of vowel sounds and consonant sounds in the English language can be highlighted. Examples of repetition, assonance, alliteration, and rhyme were presented.

Patricia ended with this, “I hope you can get the feeling that every part of the text can add to the poem.”

Participants shared with her what in particular was helpful and what more they might want. Needless to say, all the poets had only positive comments about the successful workshop and expressed gratitude for Patricia’s generosity and for the safe space she creates for poets to be vulnerable.

Here is a *before* and *after* example from Dyana Basist.

my only guest
a young deer pausing
on the teahouse path

became:

a young deer
pauses on the teahouse path—
my only guest

Presenter: Patricia J. Machmiller

Attendees: Mimi Ahern, Betty Arnold, Dyana Basist, Marilyn Gehant, Kathleen Goldbach, Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, Toni Homan, Philip Hsieh, Pushpa MacFarlane, Jean Mahoney, Carol Steele, Thomasjohn Wells Miller, Alison Woolpert, Karina Young



A poet seeks inspiration during Patricia's
Dragonfly Workshop.
Photo by Alison Woolpert.

YTHS February 8, 2020—Ng Shing Gung Temple

Alison Woolpert

Roger Abe set up a wonderful tour of the Chinese American Historical Museum in History Park San Jose. The museum building, a reconstruction of the original 1888 Ng Shing Gung Temple, or “Temple of the Gods,” served the Chinese community as a cultural center.

Docents Brenda Hee Wong and Anita Wong Kwok explained that the two-story brick building was used not only as a meeting place, but also as a school where children could study calligraphy and the Chinese classics, a hostel, and a place to worship. The upstairs temple houses the original carved and gilded teakwood altar that has been lovingly restored. Along with the many artifacts of daily life and celebrations showcased downstairs, there is a pictorial timeline starting in 1850 to the present that shows what was going on in the USA, San Jose, and China.

broken blossoms
the finger-length lotus shoes
for bound feet
J. Zimmerman

Following the tour, members spent time in the history park and later gathered at the Markham House to share their haiku from the day.

two children climb
onboard the winter trolley—
double happiness
Roger Abe

Attendees: Roger Abe, Mimi Ahern, Noreen Brennan, Eleanor Carolan, Carolyn Fitz, Marilyn Gehant, Philip Hsieh, Amy King, Patricia Machmiller, Linda Papanicolaou, Clysta Seney, Carol Steele, Alison Woolpert, and Joan Zimmerman.

Philip Hsieh, Patricia Machmiller, and Linda Papanicolaou at Ng Shing Gung Temple.
Photo by Alison Woolpert.



YTHS Valentine's Day Visit to Yu Ai-Kai Senior Center

Roger Abe

On Valentine's Day 2020, Alison Woolpert and Roger Abe visited the Senior Day Services Group at the Yu Ai-Kai Japanese Senior Community Services Center in San Jose's Japantown. Armed with support from Mimi Ahern and Patricia Machmiller, Alison and Roger shared haiku, including some from Kiyoshi Tokutomi, Kiyoko Tokutomi, and Kobayashi Issa and assisted seniors to create their own haiku and write them on beautiful cards made by Patricia.

Even fueled with hot tea, tangerines, doughnut holes, and chocolate hearts, there was some initial resistance. There were cries of, "What's this word, haiku? I've never heard of it," and "You're really making us work today." Some decided that the best use of time was a nap. At the end there was general happiness with the experience and pride in their successes. Here are some haiku results.

Valentine's Day
a smile, a nod
a connection
Setsu

Happy Valentine's Day
haiku
everybody!
Fumi

Valentine's Day
chocolates, flowers, teddy bears
stores all pink and red
Mehalet

my husband
makes me a happy life!
Valentine's Day
Merle

I'm here in San Jose
wearing red clothes
without hesitation
Ayako (originally written in Japanese)

. . . until our next visit! Special thanks to Yu Ai-Kai Activities and Facility Manager Derek Ives and the Senior Day Services staff for making this a fun event!

Spotlight on the Use of Kigo: Part 2—Summer

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik

The roots of haiku and its use of kigo, season words, go far back in Japan’s literary history. Yasuda (1957) notes that in the earliest poetry recorded, tanka (then called *waka*), only some of the poems indicate season. Ebara, cited in Yasuda, notes that “The way of feeling natural objects as seasonal themes gradually deepened by the end of the Heian period (794-1185)” (146-147). Over the centuries and through the development of various poetic forms, the use of seasonal topics (*kidai*) and season words (kigo) evolved.

Haiku began as hokku, the first verse in linked poems, *haikai no renga*—what is now called renku. *Haikai no renga*, often shortened to *haikai*, became popular with the middle class during the Tokugawa era (1603-1868). At parties, poets took turns writing verses to compose the linked poem. *Haikai* had strict rules, including specifics about the characteristics of hokku. One of several requirements was that hokku reference the time and place the *haikai* was composed. This rule evolved into the use of a season word (kigo) or seasonal feeling (*kisetsu*) by the time of Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694). During Bashō’s time, books on *haikai* printed rules for composition, entire linked poems, freestanding hokku, and a list of season words or seasonal topics. Bashō traveled, teaching and collaborating on *haikai*. Over the years, hokku became independent poems. Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902), poet and critic, wanting to “legalize the separation of the hokku from linked poetry, renamed the independent poems haiku” (Higginson, *The Haiku Seasons*, 68). Now poems composed as hokku,* in addition to those written as independent verses, are known as haiku.

When writing English-language haiku, questions about using kigo arise: questions of cultural relevance, of universality, and of its function. In the next issue of *Geppo*, I’ll address some of these questions.

Example summer kigo listed below are taken from Higginson’s *Haiku World* and the Kigo section of the YTHS website. I encourage you to choose any that speak to you and use them when writing haiku for your next *Geppo* submission.

Season: blaze of midday, dog days, short night, summer months (June, July, & August)

Sky and Elements: billowing clouds, monsoon, Pleiades at dawn, rainbow, thunder

Landscape: clear water, flood, golden hills, summer field, summer fog, summer grasses

Human Affairs: barefoot, baseball, Father’s Day, ice cream, sunglasses, sweat, swimming

Animals: bat, caterpillar, cicada, crayfish, damselfly, egret, mosquito, spider, tiger swallowtail

Plants: apricot, amaryllis, corn tassels, datura, hydrangea, peaches, sand verbena, zinnias

Resources:

Gurga, Lee. *Haiku: A Poet's Guide*. Lincoln, IL: Modern Haiku Press, 2003.

Higginson, William J. *Haiku World: An International Poetry Almanac*. Tokyo, Japan: Kodansha International, 1996.

Higginson, William J. *The Haiku Seasons: Poetry of the Natural World*. Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2008.

Yasuda, Kenneth. *The Japanese Haiku: Its Essential Nature, History, and Possibilities in English, with Selected Examples*. Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1957.

The Kigo section of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society website: <https://tinyurl.com/YTHS-kigo>

(Use the Kigo pull-down menu to see more.)

*Interesting Educational Sidebar: "Hokku" is considered a familiar term today, according to our dictionary-of-choice for *Geppo* (*American Heritage*). Therefore, I did not italicize the word.

2020 Filoli Gardens Haiku Contest Winners

Unfortunately, the April 11 tour and *ginko* at Filoli Gardens in Woodside was cancelled; however, the results of the Filoli Gardens Haiku Contest are in. Three hundred poets submitted a total of seven hundred haiku to the contest. Three Bay Area poets were among the winners. First Prize was awarded to Garry Gay, president of Haiku Poets of Northern California (HPNC). Runner-up was awarded to Linda Papanicolaou, a member of YTHS, as well as HPNC, and Betty Arnold, a member of both YTHS and HPNC, was a Finalist. Congratulations to all three! Here are their winning haiku.

First Prize

daffodil garden
a path into the sunshine
with a bumblebee

Garry Gay

Runner-up

the calligraphy
of leafless vines on brick walls—
a gate stands open

Linda Papanicolaou

Finalist

Filoli winter
greeting—an opulence of
yellow daffodils

Betty Arnold

Memories of Sherry Barto

April 27, 1943–February 16, 2020

From Johnnie Johnson Hafernik:

Sherry Dawn Barto was born in Seattle, Washington, to Roger, an aerospace engineer and poet, and Carrie, a teacher and homemaker. At the age of four, Sherry and her family moved to Southern California. She earned a BA in English from Carlton College in Minnesota and two MA degrees, one in English and Education from the University of Wisconsin and the other in Psychology from John F. Kennedy University in the Bay Area, California.



Sherry worked for the City and County of San Francisco from 1968 until her retirement in 1998 — first in the Department of Social Services and then later in Community Mental Health Services, serving as a social worker, coordinator, and later, manager.

Sherry was an active member of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society and Haiku Poets of Northern California, volunteering and brightening any gathering with her smile. She and Lois Heyman Scott have for the last several years produced the beautiful YTHS Asilomar retreat packets.

Below are several of her haiku published in YTHS anthologies:

west coast tulips
without the drama
of slowly melting snow

waiting for a diagnosis
everything on hold
except my imagination

winter solstice celebrating what's left

From Lois Heyman Scott:

Sherry Barto was the kind of organized person who could provide guardrails for her more nonlinear-thinking friends, such as myself. Sherry liked rules, but she also periodically enjoyed breaking them. In writing, she discovered, tested, and shared many approaches. Utilizing the rich resources of Yuki Teikei Haiku Society and Haiku Poets of Northern California, during the last half dozen years we worked together and sometimes alone on improving our skills in writing haiku. In 2018, she tried “Busōn’s 100,” a discipline of writing ten haiku a day for one hundred days. Her notebooks reveal that this was sometimes difficult, but she deployed word tweaking, whereby the same “aha moment” observation got repeated with just one change of word. Therefore, she was able to make the required quota. I was trying the same thing, but when I couldn’t, I couldn’t. Some days I simply fell short. A few times, I was more prolific.

Sherry was an insightful editor of my wandering, sometimes unconnected phrases. She could strengthen the link, clarify the tone, and most amazingly know what I was feeling and trying to say. I now have her half-filled haiku notebooks, thanks to her own sorting of them into a handy milk carton carrier and her brother’s postmortem delivery. The notebooks are in enticing colors and patterns she chose and sit now on my dining room table inviting me to study their contents and keep writing to fill them, albeit without guardrails and the immediate delight of shared endeavors to which we devoted Thursday afternoons every week. Here is a haiku from Sherry’s notebook:

Sea mist
She walks away
Disappearing



Remembering Sandy Vrooman

February 14, 1941–October 26, 2019

In October 2019, Yuki Teikei member Sandy Vrooman held a going-away party for herself and distributed a new chapbook of her poetry. A week later she passed away. Sandy spent much of her lifetime as an artist. She enthusiastically pursued pottery-making, costuming, bonsai cultivation, photography, writing short-form poetry, and in days gone by, belly dancing.

Sandy left this message for her friends:

Find the beauty of the world and observe it.
Feel the sun and the wind on your face.
Feel the texture of wood, leaves, pebbles, smell the smell of earth or grass or even
concrete under your feet.
Sketch it, photograph it, describe it in your words, feel it.
Render it, and create from a place of gratitude for beauty and joy of life.
Repeat as often as necessary.
Because art is life and life is art.
And it all goes so quickly.

Here are two of Sandy's haiku from YTHS anthologies:

as leaves fall
heart-broken lovers
sit apart

marsh grasses
dancing in the sunshine . . .
come join us

~Patrick Gallagher

The Heart of Haiku

Michael Dylan Welch

Much about the craft of haiku can be taught—and learned. But the art of haiku—the *heart* of haiku—must be innate, or so it would seem. Either you revel in the joys of the ordinary, or you don't. It's as innate as looking at the shells and tide pools at the beach with a keen curiosity, as opposed to discussing stock prices while crossing all that sand. True haiku cannot be manufactured, and the heart of haiku lies in the authenticity of experience—the realness that makes us *care* about the poem and what it presents.

Consider this excerpt from Natalie Goldberg's *Long Quiet Highway* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993) 34-35.

About ten years ago, an elementary school teacher in Minneapolis showed me how a student on a computer could learn to write a haiku. The computer said a haiku was a Japanese poetry form of three lines. It wrote on the screen, 'For your first line, pick a season and type it in.' I picked 'spring' and typed it in. The teacher stood behind me, nodding approval. 'You have written the first line of your haiku. Next type in something concrete about spring; for example, 'The birds chirp.' I typed in, 'The willows are green.'

'Now pick an emotion and express it.' I typed in, 'I am sad.' It appeared on the screen: 'I am sad.'

'You have finished your haiku,' the computer said. Then, quickly, the whole genius haiku appeared in front of the enthusiastic teacher and me:

Spring.
The willows are green.
I am sad.

Then the computer said, 'Very good. You have just written your first haiku. Let's try another one. Usually a haiku has seventeen syllables. . . .'

'Isn't it marvelous,' the teacher said.

I grinned and stepped away from the machine.

Actually, the haiku I wrote wasn't awful. I've heard worse, but it had no human element. It had nothing to do with me. The real essence of a haiku is the poet's awakening, and the haiku gives you a small taste of that, like a ripe red berry on the tip of your tongue. Your mind actually experiences a marvelous leap when you hear a haiku, and in the space of that leap you feel awe. 'Ahh,' you say. You get it. The poet transmits her awakening.

Natalie Goldberg then reminds her readers that "There are no quick prescriptions for writing." That's certainly true for fiction and also true for haiku. And the quickest way there is through the heart.

Indeed, heart is central to Japanese poetry forms. In his preface of the first imperial *waka* anthology of 905, the *Kokinshū*, Ki no Tsurayuki began by proclaiming that “Japanese poetry takes as its seed the human heart.” This is one of the most widely quoted summations of Japanese poetry in all its history. While he was writing mostly about *waka* (now called *tanka*), it still applies today, and also applies to haiku. But there’s a subtlety to this. You want the poem to “have heart,” yes, and to show each person’s “personal heart,” for the poem to feel authentic and individual. But that doesn’t mean that you can be overly subjective, let alone dripping with emotion. You want to *imply* it all. As a result, suggesting emotions is vital in haiku, and it’s advisable to convey a personal voice and to talk about yourself and your relationships—in a balance of sharing and withholding. For example, I’ve written a lot of haiku about my kids (although that’s drying up a bit as my kids get older).

Note another distinction in the Ki no Tsurayuki quotation—he said the human heart is the *seed* for Japanese poetry, meaning that the poem has to begin in the heart, that is, it must begin with some sort of emotion, as an expression of one’s true self. That’s really what lies at the “heart” of haiku. It may grow into something that speaks of you, who you are, and what matters to you, as a presentation of the self (your heart), but it has to begin with personal feeling. As Robert Frost said, “No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader.”

Guide for a Newcomer

If someone interested in writing haiku asks you for a recommendation of one book to help them get started as a haiku poet, what book would you recommend? Explain your answer in one or two sentences. This question highlights the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society’s 2020 theme of “Education,” allowing us to learn from each other. Submit your response to the *Geppo* editor by July 15—ythsgeppo@gmail.com. The results along with selected comments will appear in the August issue of *Geppo*. Please be aware that comments you submit may be published in whole or part.



“Frog Comes Out of the Old Pond”
© joan iversen goswell

The 2020 Kiyoshi & Kiyoko Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest Sponsored by the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society

Enter the oldest USA-based international haiku contest honoring traditional Japanese haiku!

Prizes: \$100, \$50, \$25 for the top three haiku.

Contest Rules

- In-hand deadline is May 31, 2020.
- Haiku must be in English.
- Haiku must have 17 syllables in a 5-7-5 pattern. Contest standard is *The American Heritage Dictionary, 5th Edition*.
- Haiku must use only one kigo, which must be from the contest list. Haiku with more than one recognized kigo will be disqualified.

2020 Contest Kigo List

- New Year: first flute
- Spring: dandelion, warming earth
- Summer: drought, waterfall
- Autumn: deer, crickets
- Winter: hibernation, owl

Email Entries

To: Kath Abela Wilson

Subject Line: **Your Name, Contest**

Please single-space your haiku in the body of the email

Fee: \$8.00 per three haiku. Go to PayPal. At “Send money to” type in yukiteikei@msn.com.

At “Add a note,” type: Contest, your name, and the number of haiku.

Paper Entries

To: Kath Abela Wilson

Fee: \$7.00 per page of three haiku. Include check made out to *Yuki Teikei Haiku Society*. Place three poems per 8 ½ x 11 page and send three copies of each page with name and address on **one** copy only. Overseas entrants use International Postal Money Order in US currency only.

Entry Details

- Entries must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration elsewhere.
- Previous winning haiku are not eligible. No limit on number of entries.
- Entries will not be returned and no refunds will be given.
- The contest is open to anyone, except for the YTHS President and Contest Chair.
- Final selection will be made by one or more distinguished haiku poets.
- YTHS may print winning poems and commentary in its journal, website, annual anthology, and brochures. The judges and contest results will be announced at the November 2020 YTHS Annual Haiku Retreat in Asilomar. Soon afterward they will appear on the YTHS website:
<http://youngleaves.org/>
- For a paper copy of the contest results send a self-addressed stamped envelope marked “Contest Winners.” Those abroad please enclose a self-addressed envelope plus enough postage in international reply coupons for airmail return.

2020 Yuki Teikei Haiku Society Annual Retreat
Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, CA
November 6-9, 2020 (Friday – Monday)

Each year the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society hosts a long-weekend haiku retreat at the Asilomar Lodge & Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California. Guest speakers will offer insight into the process of writing haiku. There will be time for attendees to wander and write in a relaxed environment and then share their work with each other.

We are thrilled that Emiko Miyashita will be our featured guest presenter this year. She is the director of JAL Foundation, which holds the World Children’s Haiku Contest. She also is a judge for ESUJ-H, a monthly haiku column of the English-Speaking Union of Japan. Emiko is a *dojin* (leading member) of the “Ten’i Providence” Haiku Group in Japan led by Dr. Akito Arima. In addition, she writes for the *Dojins’* Corner in each issue of *Geppo* with Patricia Machmiller. Emiko will give a reading, a lecture, and a craft workshop.

Other retreat events will include: a traditional *kukai*; a dress-up renku party; an art party; a haiga event; the announcement of the 2020 Tokutomi Haiku Contest; and the presentation of the 2020 YTHS Anthology.

Cost: Please circle the type of room you want and write the total at the bottom.

Full conference fee + shared room (4/rm) + 9 meals	\$ 550
Full conference fee + shared room (3/rm) + 9 meals	\$ 614
Full conference fee + shared room (2/rm) + 9 meals	\$ 700
Full conference fee + single room + 9 meals	\$1000
Full conference fee only	\$ 100
	Total _____

Deposit of \$100 due by July 15. Balance due by September 15. Deadlines are firm.

Please mail this registration form with your check made out to Yuki Teikei Haiku Society to our registrar:

Carol Steele,

To pay by PayPal, send your registration fees to yukiteikei@msn.com. In the “Add a note” put Asilomar 2020 and your name. Send this form to the above address and indicate that you paid your fees by PayPal.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Special Needs (physical, need a ground floor room &/or dietary) _____

Vegetarian Meals: Yes No (please circle one)

A retreat roster will be created with each attendee’s name and email address. If you prefer not be on the list, please check here _____.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

The quarterly *Geppo* journal and annual YTHS Anthology are only available to members with paid memberships. Your current membership expires in December, and **dues for 2021 are due January 1!**

Domestic and Canada dues \$32, Seniors \$26.
International dues \$40, Seniors \$31.

You may pay by PayPal by sending your payment to yukiteikei@msn.com and write the following in the note box: “YTHS Dues—Your name, home address, email address, and phone number.”
(Please include \$1 additional fee for this service.)

Or mail your check or money order to:

Yuki Teikei Haiku Society
PO Box 53475
San Jose, CA 95153

Geppo Editorial Staff

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Associate Editor..... Christine Stern
Layout Editor Karina M. Young
Tallyman David Sherertz
Proofreader..... J. Zimmerman

Thank you to our staff and all the contributors of haiku, articles, photos, and artwork. We depend on your creative energy!

A deep bow to Carolyn Fitz and J. Zimmerman for their donations of colored paper, 2018–2020. Color is a lovely addition.

Geppo Submission Guidelines

Please send haiku, votes, articles, questions, or comments by email to:

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, Editor ythsgeppo@gmail.com

Or snail mail to:

Yuki Teikei Haiku Society
ATTN: J. J. Hafernik, *Geppo* Editor
PO Box 53475
San Jose, CA 95153

For *Geppo* submissions, please write in the subject line:

Geppo Submissions: your name

Submit your haiku single-spaced in the body of the email and record your votes horizontally. In the subject line and the email, include your name as you prefer it to appear in *Geppo*. Please no attachments. Please send only one email per submission period.

You may submit

- Up to **four haiku** appropriate to the season. They will be printed without your name and identified by a number for appreciation and study.
- **One Challenge Kigo Haiku** that uses the current issue’s Challenge Kigo. The poem will be printed with your name.
- Up to **ten votes for haiku** in the current issue you especially appreciate. Each poem you choose will receive one vote; submit the number of the haiku as your vote. The poems with the highest number of votes are reprinted with the authors’ names in the next issue. Do not vote for yourself. Do not vote more than once for any poem.
- *Geppo* is published quarterly. Deadlines for submissions are **Jan. 15, Apr. 15, July 15, and Oct. 15.**
- Note the new email address:
ythsgeppo@gmail.com

YUKI TEIKEI HAIKU SOCIETY CALENDAR—2020

For addresses of events at private homes, call Patricia Machmiller

May 9 10:30-4:00	Haiku Poetry Reading at Overfelt House, Overfelt Gardens Park, San Jose, CA. <i>Ginko</i> walking tour with Roger Abe. Lunch provided at noon. Reading begins with featured poets at 1:00. Open reading afterwards.
May 30 9:30-4:30	One-day workshop by Patricia Machmiller on the revision process. Near Moss Landing, CA. Suggested donation to YTHS: \$60.
May 31	YTHS Tokutomi Contest submissions due.
June 13 1:00-4:30	“Mountains, Days, and Nights: The history of two kigo complexes,” a talk by Phillip Kennedy in Soquel, CA.
July 11 5:00-9:00	<i>Tanabata</i> Celebration at the home of Anne and Don Homan. Please bring a peanut-free dish for a potluck dinner. Newcomers and guests are welcome.
July 15	Deadline for <i>Geppo</i> submissions (members only). ythsggeppo@gmail.com
Aug. 30 10:30-2:30	YTHS All Member Annual Meeting at Mimi Ahern’s home. Please bring a peanut-free dish to share for the potluck lunch.
Sept. 12 1:00-4:00	Haiga ideas and “show and tell” with Carolyn Fitz. Also included: a fun workshop to make your own expressive writing/drawing tool. In Soquel, CA.
Oct. 3 5:00 -9:00	Moon Viewing and potluck dinner (peanut-free, please) at Linda and George Papanicolaou’s home.
Oct. 15	Deadline for <i>Geppo</i> submissions (members only). ythsggeppo@gmail.com
Nov. 6-9	Annual YTHS Retreat at Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, CA. Friday lunch through Monday lunch.
Dec. 12 5:00-9:00	Annual Holiday Party hosted by Alison Woolpert at her home in Santa Cruz, CA. Please bring a dish (peanut-free) to share at the potluck dinner. It is a YTHS tradition for each poet to bring a holiday card haiga to gift fellow poets. (30 copies will be enough.) Guests and newcomers welcome!