

# *G E P P O*

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

Volume XXXVI:2

March – April 2011

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Members' Haiku for Study and Appreciation – donnalynn chase, Editor

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8485 windy day  
a spray of peach blossoms  
on the tabletop

8493 Japanese maple –  
bowing my head  
under its orange branch

8486 moving one branch  
lets the water flow  
spring creek

8494 passover seder  
our annual visit  
to our past

8487 a new squeak  
from the trampoline  
early spring

8495 Easter Sunday  
he is risen indeed  
say the faithful

8488 spring snow melts  
and golden forsythias  
reemerge

8496 radioactive plumes  
coming our way  
the cat yawns

8489 spring melancholy  
the old man speaks to himself,  
"Snow keeps pouring down. . ."

8497 tumble weed  
rolling into an outhouse –  
spring wind

8490 napping alone. . .  
the cuckoo sings  
the highest Zen

8498 the chorus of migrating  
wild geese –  
early spring

8491 turtle-shell scrimshaw  
in the Polynesian museum –  
the shift of leather shoes

8499 in grandma's wooden trunk  
a broken old teacup –  
spring cleaning

8492 rush hour –  
a cold apple  
held to my forehead

8500 green light  
everyone in a hurry  
even the birds

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|---|--|
| <p>8501 wintry Sunday<br/>more time in bed<br/>and hot cocoa</p>                                    | <p>8512 Overnight downpour –<br/>plum blossoms pounded by hail;<br/>pink beauty endures.</p>     |
| <p>8502 Easter coming –<br/>wherever you are<br/>I long to be</p>                                   | <p>8513 Fragrant and fragile –<br/>cherry blossoms burst and fall;<br/>fleeting pink beauty.</p> |
| <p>8503 first fruit fly flutters<br/>between pages until, 'till<br/>I close my book shut</p>        | <p>8514 Bright mustard flowers<br/>against a cloudless blue sky –<br/>snow on eastern peaks.</p> |
| <p>8504 on my all fours, ah,<br/>I release from my small mouth<br/>the red anemone</p>              | <p>8515 under this snow<br/>somewhere<br/>the woodpile</p>                                       |
| <p>8505 Galilee evening. . .<br/>the minaret's blue neon<br/>turns out its true green</p>           | <p>8516 in the sun<br/>bowing<br/>tiny blue flowers</p>  |
| <p>8506 single rose<br/>blooms today<br/>the color of your lips</p>                                 | <p>8517 morning sun<br/>slowly the white moth recovers<br/>from the night chill</p>              |
| <p>8507 my short fuse<br/>needs a longer string. . .<br/>friendly fire</p>                          | <p>8518 mustard seed faith –<br/>the heat of an ashes cross<br/>over my third eye</p>            |
| <p>8508 Cymbidiums –<br/>didn't bloom this spring<br/>what did i do wrong?</p>                      | <p>8519 first daffodils. . .<br/>a toddler's joy expands<br/>over bright yellows</p>             |
| <p>8509 a booming wind<br/>in the eucalyptus grove –<br/>my puny arms</p>                           | <p>8520 from the tides. . . bodies<br/>cover the winter seashore<br/>tsunami anguish</p>         |
| <p>8510 happy on the trail,<br/>the stranger smiles and points upward –<br/>passing spring moon</p> | <p>8521 falling dusk<br/>deep in the underbrush<br/>a robin chirrup</p>                          |
| <p>8511 mercury sea –<br/>staples out of his chest today;<br/>soup for supper...</p>                | <p>8522 March wind<br/>I tuck my chin<br/>into my scarf</p>                                      |
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|---|--|
| 8523 hospice vigil<br>outside the hospital doors<br>new lilacs bloom                                | 8534 spring cleaning<br>the calico dips one paw<br>in the puddle                       |
| 8524 trunks of burned pines<br>against the horizon<br>– summer cloud                                | 8535 spring cleaning too late<br>among the agapanthus<br>glistening snail smears       |
| 8525 winter wind<br>the passionless stars<br>agliter  | 8536 vernal equinox. . .<br>identical twins suspended<br>on a see-saw                  |
| 8526 nest-twigs<br>aloft in the crow's beak –<br>an early death                                     | 8537 spring cleaning. . .<br>brand new screws and wire hanger<br>for the wren house    |
| 8527 her medicine<br>in dad's old pill box<br>shadow-snow   | 8538 scudding clouds. . .<br>the distillation<br>of wild daphne                        |
| 8528 first spring gust<br>a shudder as the glider<br>unlocks  | 8539 loud rustling<br>a pheasant going loopy<br>in the undergrowth                     |
| 8529 her old kimono<br>in need of repair<br>faded blossoms  | 8540 arm-in-arm<br>along the muddy road<br>slipping in rhythm                          |
| 8530 Small girl, running fast<br>her kite rises high, it soars<br>it tugs hard, she smiles          | 8541 children on swings<br>layers of plum blossoms<br>rising behind them               |
| 8531 Sparrows on a line<br>feathers puffed, their bodies round<br>on the lawn, white frost          | 8542 spring melancholy<br>the out-of-sync cooing<br>of two mourning doves              |
| 8532 That highest tree branch...<br>there the hummer views the world<br>. . . and guards the feeder | 8543 basement laundry<br>who's more startled<br>me or the rat?                         |
| 8533 I let the phone ring<br>wanting to share this spring day<br>with no one                        | 8544 flickering street lamp<br>flowing through the shadows<br>the skunk's white stripe |
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|------|--|------|---|
| 8545 | zip zip zip<br>meteors plummeting down –<br>life's risks worth taking      | 8556 | school break<br>the flight path<br>of butterflies                                   |
| 8546 | Sunday services<br>following Christmas –<br>preaching to the choir         | 8557 | the merciless wind<br>tearing blossoms off the trees –<br>there go the flowers      |
| 8547 | holiday dinner<br>her major announcement leaves<br>no taste for dessert    | 8558 | new bird house<br>peeping out the opening<br>furry squirrel                         |
| 8548 | Meadowlark Gardens –<br>cherry blossoms<br>alight on the lake              | 8559 | early morning mist<br>hearing the ducks on the pond<br>but not seeing them          |
| 8549 | a box of matzoh<br>flung from the car –<br>end of Passover                 | 8560 | reserved seats<br>for the senior citizens<br>days growing longer                    |
| 8550 | homecoming:<br>no job no father<br>chorus of frogs                         | 8561 | teacher and students<br>exchange glances<br>spring thunder                          |
| 8551 | Bare branch<br>silhouetted<br>the flying crow                              | 8562 | someone is smoking<br>while looking away<br>tulip                                   |
| 8552 | Paperwhite narcissus –<br>the gossip neighbor's<br>always bloom first      | 8563 | the forsythia<br>still vibrant<br>in twilight                                       |
| 8553 | Snow-laden branches<br>around an empty park bench<br>distant peal of bells | 8564 | first spring day<br>a celebration touching<br>everything                            |
| 8554 | flow of life<br>out of a hollow tree trunk<br>spring cleaning              | 8565 | he loved the sea –<br>this would have been<br>his birthday                          |
| 8555 | crocus clump<br>hanging sheets<br>out to dry                               | 8566 | children painting stones<br>as Easter eggs, learning that<br>life begins with earth |
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- January—February 2011 Haiku  
Voted Best by GEPPO Readers**
- 8567 neither dawn nor dusk  
is ever silent if you  
know why to listen
- 8568 the settling darkness  
erases the world, leaving  
stillness, peace, me
- 8569 the old oak branches  
holding up the sky  
keeping my troubles at bay
- 8570 pastures of orange poppies  
as far as I can see  
sleep. . . sleep
- 8571 seagulls on the lake  
floating with the ripples  
apricot blossoms
- 8572 after the storm  
air heavy with the promise  
of more rain
- 8573 found  
staking the tomato plant  
croquet post
- 8574 his loud gratitude  
coffee for the snow blower  
pouring the sugar
- 8575 my world  
through morning eyes  
California poppies
- 8576 the accident clears  
on both sides of the freeway  
wild mustard
- 8577 spring mudflats  
one whimbrel  
among the sandpipers
- early spring –  
a marriage proposal  
written in the sand  
~ Majo Leavick
- against the foothills  
a red tailed hawk  
and his shadow  
~ Marcia Behar
- the exuberance  
of a yellow daffodil  
in January  
~ Mimi Ahern
- New Year's eve –  
tossing a crumpled intention  
into the fire  
~ Betty Arnold
- spring snow  
the indoor rose  
drops its bud  
~ Michele Root-Bernstein
- in the mirror  
all those years looking  
back at me  
~ David Bachelor
- winter moon  
a whiff of wood smoke  
brightens the dark  
~ Michele Root-Bernstein
- windy autumn  
in his notebook  
a blond strand of hair  
~ Majo leavick
- Starbucks, again  
hoping for a handout  
– winter sparrow  
~ Gregory Longenecker

## Challenge Kigo Haiku – First Signs of Spring

first signs of spring:  
birds in the yard listen to  
her play piano

~ John Han

a sure sign of spring –  
the sound this morning  
of a lawnmower

~ Michael Dylan Welch

pond turtles  
inching onto warm rocks –  
first sign of spring

~ Betty Arnold

eve of her wedding  
she sleeps with her gown –  
first day of spring

~ Majo Leavick

first sign of spring –  
the mourning dove  
returns

~ Barbara Campitelli

first signs of "aviv"  
on the Tel Aviv hillside  
first signs of springtime

~ Zinovy Vayman

barely spring  
v-room, v-room, v-room  
I'm in full throttle

~ Genie Nakano

first sign of spring –  
"cute guy" stops to admire  
what I am seeing

~ Susanne Smith

Sunrise approaches  
on the first morning of Spring –  
breath is visible.

~ David Sheretz

first sign of spring  
which do I believe  
bright sun or cold wind

~ Dave Bachelor

first-spring like day. . .  
a young mockingbird's voice  
begins then pauses

~ Judith M. Schallberger

first day of spring  
the sound of a freight train  
rolling round the bay

~ Patricia prime

first thunder  
in the dead of night  
spring begins

~ Richard St. Clair

first splash of spring  
washes away the gray –  
energy drink

~ Janis Lukstein

first sign of spring  
the sound of tadpoles singing  
in the early evening

~ Joan C. Sauer

announcing spring  
my mail carrier  
wears shorts

~ Joan H. Ward

signs of coming spring. . .  
a whole village pitches in  
to raise up a dike

~ Elinor Pihl Huggett

three e-mail inquiries  
about her resume. . .  
signs of spring

~ Deborah P. Kolodji

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### Editor's Notes:

In the previous GEPP0 on page 13, the hokku (the first verse in the renku) was written by Shiki and translated by the poets listed.

Sorry to have missed anyone's haiku due to mysterious and human means. Please notify me with any error or omission you observe.

Thank you everyone who sent me their appreciation for the Editor's Pick; always interested in feedback and ideas.

## Spring Season Ginko Suggestions

by donnalynn chase\*

**Ginko—a walk with fellow haikuists for the purpose of studying nature and writing haiku.**

### Step 1:

- Put a small notebook and writing utensil in your pocket or close at hand, leaving your hands free.
- Allow yourself at least 30 minutes for each ginko.
- *Try this:* Study kigo list or saijiki for the area and season.

### Step 2:

- Go into the outdoors; walk mindfully and relax into the feeling of being in nature.
- Remind yourself that you aren't walking to go anyway – you are just walking to walk.
- Become aware of the contact between your feet and the Earth. Walk as if you are kissing the Earth with your feet.
- *Try this:* With each exhale, take one-half step.

### Step 3:

- Allow nature to take over your ordinary mind.
- Take the time to pause briefly over things that are beautiful or interest you.
- Become fully present to the sights, sounds, scents, and sensations of where you are.
- Pausing helps to make space for something to enter. . .
- Notice any intrinsic quality that is being whispered to you.

### Step 4:

- After about 15-20 minutes of being outside, take your notebook out and carry it.
- Allow that something to come in. Go beyond your first impression, “the common thought,” and let your creativity flow...
- Write it down; don't be overly concerned about the form – just get it down.
- People may come by; remain in silence and wait for something that may change, move, or call out.
- Good haiku is written with the grace of time in plain, unsophisticated and unexaggerated words.

- Keep writing – on the same something or change to something else.
- Continue to walk peacefully and in haiku spirit.
- *Try this:* write twenty or thirty poems immediately one after another.

### Step 5:

- Sit down somewhere comfortably and quiet, either a place along your walk or after your walk.
- Review your poems with “The Seven Keys of Writing Haiku” in mind (below).
- Revise, reverse lines, insert kigo, read aloud to yourself, and adjust verb tense and syllable count.
- *Try this:* Put poems away for several months. When re-read again, feel if they have impact and are worth revising or keeping as is.

*\*Inspired by Clark Strand's "Seeds From a Birch Tree: Writing Haiku & the Spiritual Journey" ©1997; Thich Nhat Hanh's "Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life" ©1991; and, "The Attitude of Composing Haiku During a Ginko" by Seicho Hayashi from 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary YTHS Haiku Journal Volume 6 ©1986*

## The Seven Keys to Writing Haiku

from **Patricia Donegan's** “*Haiku – Learn to express yourself by writing poetry in the Japanese tradition*” ©2003; with permission 2008.

### 1. Form:

- three lines
- with or without a seventeen syllable count
- one long breath – say it aloud
- no capitals or periods
- sometimes a dash, colon, comma or exclamation point to show a break
- the break is known as “a cutting word” (*kireji* in Japanese)

### 2. Image:

- clear, memorable image
- not “a flower,” but instead “a purple iris in the sun”
- describe why the moment important with a picture or sketch →

**3. Kigo (season word):**

- refer to nature
- hint at weather & season – puts you at specific time and space/place
- involves more than one sense (i. e. not just sight, but ears, taste, etc.)
- connects with the natural world – more centered on others than yourself

**4. Here and Now:**

- record the present moment
- from own memory & real experience, not imagination
- nurtures haiku mind

**5. Feeling:**

- show through image of poem; do not tell or explain
- strong haiku evokes a strong feeling

**6. Surprise:**

- ahhh! – a moment that wakes you up
- don't try to shock or surprise on purpose
- see the world as it is with a freshness

**7. Compassion:**

- express openheartedness toward nature
- interdependency with all things

**Human Affairs:** balloon, closing the fireplace, kite, shell gathering, grafting, planting or sowing (seeds), plowing or tilling fields, soap bubbles (blown from a pipe or wand), Sleeping Buddha's Memorial Day, spring cleaning, swing, windmill, April Fool's Day/April fool, Boy's Day/ carp flag, César Chávez Day, Doll's Festival, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Palm Sunday, Easter (Easter bonnet/clothes, eggs, coloring/hiding eggs, lily, parade, rabbit, etc., Maverick Beach, May Day (May basket, pole), Memorial Day, Mother's Day, Passover, Saint Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day.

**Animals:** abalone, bee, baby animals (nestlings, fledglings, calf, colt, kitten, puppy, fawn, lamb, etc.), butterfly, bush warbler, by-the-wind sailor, cats in love, crane, flying squirrel, frog, singing frogs, gray fox, hilltopping, horsefly, hummingbird, lizard, nightingale, pheasant, robin, mud snail, returning gray whales, rookery/heronry, soaring skylark, snowy plover, stork, surfperch, swallow, tadpole, whitebait (a fish), wild birds' return (geese, etc.).

**Plants:** anemone, artichoke, asparagus sprouts, azalea, bracken, bramble, California lilac/ceanothus, camellia, cherry blossoms/tree, Chinese houses, crocus, dandelion, daphne, blossoms or leaf buds of trees & shrubs (almond, apple, apricot, maple, oak, pear, pine, wisteria, etc.), Douglas iris/mountain iris, field mustard/mustard, forget-me-not, globe lily/fairy lantern, goldfields, grass sprouts, hawthorn, hyacinth, Ithuriel's spear, lilac, lily of the valley, Madrone, manzanita, miner's lettuce, painted lady, pansy, parsley, plum blossoms/ tree, California poppy, primrose, redwood sorrel, seaweed/laver(nori), shooting star, sticky monkey flower, sweet pea, shepherd's-purse, thrift, tulip, violet, willow, pussy willows/willow catkins.

\* Includes kigo from *San Francisco Bay Area Nature Guide and Saijiki*

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**YTHS Spring Kigo\***

**Season:** spring months: late February, March, April, and May; beginning of spring, early spring, departing spring, late spring, lengthening days, long day, mid-spring, spring dream, spring dusk, spring evening, spring melancholy, tranquility, vernal equinox.

**Sky and Elements:** balmy breeze, bright, haze or thin mist, first spring storm, hazy moon, March wind, melting snow, lingering snow, spring breeze, spring cloud, spring frost, spring moon, spring rain, spring rainbow, spring sunbeam, spring snow, slush, warm (warmth).

**Landscape:** flooded river/stream/brook, muddy/miry fields, muddy road, spring fields, spring hills, spring mountain, spring river, spring sea, spring tide, red tide, first blossoming tree, vernal pool.





## Last Call for 2011 YTHS Anthology Haiku & Haibun

YTHS invites members to submit haiku and micro-haibun for this year's anthology. Send submissions by April 30th, 2011 via email with subject line "YT haiku" or "YT haibun" to J. Zimmerman with copy (cc) to Judith Schallberger at (or if no email, mail to GEPP0 editor.)

### Haiku criteria:

- Send 4 to 6 unpublished haiku not in submission elsewhere. (Printed in *GEPP0* is OK.) Haiku should contain one and only one *kigo*.
- Each haiku should be written in three lines.
- Overall length should be 17 syllables or less. Send text only; no file attachments. Include contact information: name, mailing address, telephone, and email address (if available).

### Micro-Haibun criteria:

- Submit 1 to 3 unpublished haibun not in submission elsewhere.
- Prose text can be 20 to no more than 180 words.
- The haiku qualities should match the haiku criteria above (including 3 lines and a *kigo*).

## Hayward Japanese Gardens Saturday, June 11th

This is a first time event. The Talk and Tour begin at the entrance to the gardens at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Kimura, the designer of the gardens, will lead the talk. Please be prompt and don't forget to bring a sack lunch.

Hayward Japanese Gardens, located at 22373 N. Third St. at Crescent, has a koi pond, tea-house and several viewing pavilions set along a ravine. More than three acres of Japanese and native California trees, rocks, and plants are arranged in traditional Japanese style.

### Directions from San Jose:

- Take 1-880 North. (28 mi.)
- Take exit 29 for "A" St) toward San Lorenzo (0.2 mi.)
- Keep right at the fork, follow signs for Hayward Adult School
- and merge onto W "A" ST. (2.0 mi.)
- Turn left at Ruby St. (0.2 mi.)
- Turn left at Crescent Ave. (0.2 mi.)
- Turn Left at N 3rd St.
- Destination will be on the right. (105 ft.)

## Members' Votes for January—February Haiku

Gloria Jaguden – 8376-2, 8377-4  
 Janis Lukstein – 8378-2, 8379-1  
 Beverly Acuff Momoi – 8380-4, 8381-5, 8382-2  
 Judith Morrison Schallberger – 8383-0, 8384-3, 8385-2  
 Betty Arnold – 8386-8, 8387-1, 8388-1  
 Michele Root-Bernstein – 8389-1, 8390-8, 8391-7  
 Gregory Longenecker – 8392-3, 8393-2, 8394-6  
 Zinovy Vayman – 8395-1, 8396-0, 8397-0  
 Marcia Behar – 8398-9, 8399-3, 8400-3  
 David D. Sheretz – 8401-0, 8402-4, 8403-0  
 Susanne Smith – 8404-1, 8405-0, 8406-0  
 Barbara Campitelli – 8407-0, 8408-1, 8409-5  
 Elinor Pihl Huggett – 8410-5, 8411-3, 8412-3  
 Edward Grastorf – 8413-0, 8414-1, 8415-0  
 Christine Doreian-Michaels – 8416-0, 8417-0, 8418-0  
 Majo Leavick – 8419-12, 8420-7, 8421-2  
 Mimi Ahern – 8422-2, 8423-9, 8424-5

Edward Grossmith – 8425-4, 8426-1, 8427-5  
 Alison Woolpert – 8428-2, 8429-2, 8430-1  
 Christopher Herold – 8431-4, 8432-3, 8433-3  
 Richard St. Clair – 8434-3, 8435-1, 8436-3  
 Genie Nakano – 8437-0, 8438-1, 8439-1  
 Dave Bachelor – 8440-0, 8441-0, 8442-8  
 Jean Hale – 8443-2, 8444-1  
 Patricia Prime – 8445-0, 8446-1, 8447-1  
 Neal Whitman – 8448-2, 8449-1, 8450-2  
 Joan Zimmerman – 8451-0, 8452-2, 8453-2  
 Ann Bendixen – 8454-1, 8455-3, 8456-2  
 Maurice H. Garnholz – 8457-2, 8458-2, 8459-2  
 Jeanne Cook – 8460-1, 8461-0, 8462-2  
 Joan C. Sauer – 8463-0, 8464-1, 8465-1  
 Desiree McMurry – 8466-2, 8467-1, 8468-2  
 Steven E. Cottingham – 8469-4, 8470-0, 8471-3  
 Joan H. Ward – 8472-3, 8474-0, 8475-0  
 Teruo Yamagata – 8476-0, 8477-3, 8478-1  
 June Hopper-Hymas – 8479-1, 8480-1, 8481-2  
 Frances Silva – 8482-2, 8483-0, 8484-1

**Challenge Kigo - Shepherd's Purse**  
*(nazuna: Capsella bursa-pastoris)*  
 by June Hopper Hymas

I first "saw" a shepherd's purse (a common plant belonging to the mustard family) although I must have passed this tiny plant many times before, on a wildflower walk in Almaden Quicksilver Park with the wonderful plant lady, Olive Zapacosta, who died just last year. She showed us the shape of the seedpod, which is so unusual, and characteristic, that it serves as an immediate reminder of the name. I made up my shepherd on the spot--in his medieval smock, with an oddly shaped leathern wallet hanging from his belt. Now, whenever I see this plant (and, being unfussy, it often grows in that bleak and weedy space between the sidewalk and the street) I not only remember its name, but I think of Olive Zapacosta, with repeated thanks for all the natural wonders she showed us. To me, this is another of the benefits of studying nature--the way, so often when attention is paid, splendid interconnections manifest themselves.

In Robert Aitken's *A Zen Wave*, the first three pages of Chapter 9 discuss Basho's haiku with this spring kigo from a spiritual perspective. Here is Aitken's rendition from page 49:

*Yoku mireba  
 nazuna hana saku  
 kakine kana*

Looking carefully when  
*nazuna* flowers bloom  
 hedge!

This is Makoto Ueda's translation from *Basho and his interpreters*, p. 139.

*closely/when look/shepherd's purse/  
 flower/bloom/hedge/kana*

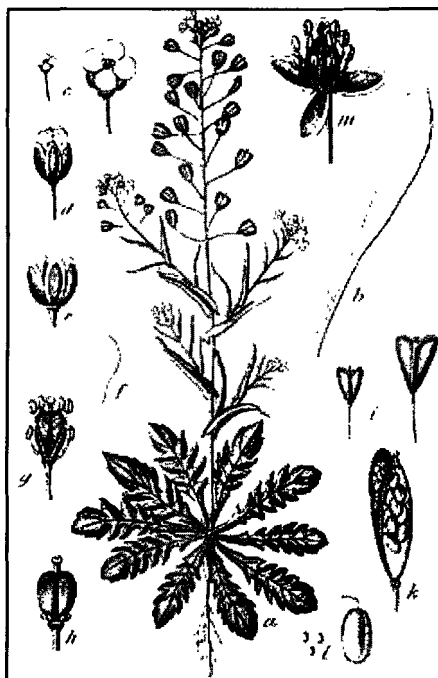
Looking closely I see  
 a shepherd's purse blooming  
 under the hedge

In her book, *Basho, the Complete Haiku*, Jane Reichhold offers this translation (#264).

if I look closely  
 shepherd's purse blooms  
 by the fence

Reichhold's annotation: "1686, spring. It is thought that this poem is based on a poem by Cheng Hao (1032-1085) that Basho quoted in his essay, "Postscript for the Essay on the Bagworm" (*Mimomushi no setsu Batsu.*) The idea is that if we observe closely enough, we will find everything we need."

In Robert Hass's version from *The Essential Haiku*, he identifies--and particularizes--the plant, which, though common, is not well known, as is, for instance, the dandelion,



When I looked under the hedge  
 the little grass called shepherd's purse  
 was flowering

Notice that sometimes *kakine* has been rendered as hedge and alternatively, as fence. In English, I think it is interesting to note the repeated sounds from "shepherd's" in hedge, leading me to prefer this as the translation. I was planning to offer you a summer kigo in this space, but I got distracted . . .

Look near your feet for this common plant. There is a rosette of leaves quite like rough-looking dandelion leaves; stalks of small white flowers arise from its center and leave the heart-shaped purse-pods along the stalk after they bloom. It has a peppery taste.

Quicksilver Park  
 modest among rioting grasses –  
 shepherd's purse

~ June Hopper Hymas

**Dojins' Corner**

January—February 2011

by Patricia Machmiller and Jerry Ball

First we'd like to print a comment from Joan Ward regarding her poem, # 8371 in the November-December *GEPPO*, and our commentary in the January-February *GEPPO*. Joan wrote: "regarding my haiku # 8371 . . .

invading my sleep  
the icy tree branch rapping  
at my window

"jb felt the 'icy' branch was artificial. Here in New England we have ice storms that coat every twig and branch in a glaze of ice, this is beautiful. But then we have the ice storms that uproot trees, down power lines and become a state of emergency."

Thank you, Joan, for writing. We hope that others will join the conversation. From this current issue of *GEPPO*:

pjm: My selections are: 8379, 8381\*, 8382, 8283, 8386\*, 8387, 8388, 8389, 8391, 8393, 8398, 8403, 8411\*, 8412, 8424, 8455

jb: My selections are: 8379, 8380, 8381, 8386\*, 8387, 8389, 8391, 8392, 8405, 8409, 8410\*, 8411, 8419, 8422, 8424, 8442, 8447, 8466\*  
An asterick (\*) indicates haiku chosen for comment.

8381 Buddha's birthday  
the cats look at the new food  
then at me

pjm: It was the wry, understated humor in this haiku that caught my attention. Cats do have a way of expressing themselves with their eyes. Sometimes you feel you are looking straight into their soul. Symbolically the cat is seen as a messenger between this world and the Other. So it is a particularly fitting subject on this day of Buddha's Birthday. In the haiku the cats' human has, as a way of honoring Buddha, set out a vegetarian dish. The cats (you can see it in their eyes) are a bit nonplussed. What happened to the chicken and liver? In this way—the serving of non-meat dish even to the cats—Buddha's teachings of compassion and love for all living things is brought home.

jb: For a cat owner this can be a common event. On Buddha's birthday it can have the significance of the transience of life. Are we "attached" to the old food? Will we become "attached" to the "new food"? This is the epitome of the human situation on Buddha's birthday.

8386 New Year's eve –  
tossing a crumpled intention  
into the fire

jb: This is symbolic for many "intentions" related to New Year's eve. We assess our intentions and try to decide on changes where we feel they are necessary. The New Year (with the two-faced god Janus dominating) is the time for decisions, as Eliot wrote in *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*:

...time yet for a hundred indecisions,  
And time for a hundred visions and revisions  
before the taking of a toast and tea.

Time to take a stand. I like it.

pjm: A New Year. That time in cultures across the world of reflection, of reassessment, of wiping the slate clean, of starting anew. With this one act, this one gesture, the poet has captured the entire process.

8410 departing winter  
the last chunk of river ice  
clings to its rock

jb: There is an action here, of clinging. This haiku shows the difference that the right verb makes. The verb "clings" is a personal verb, and so we have a personification of the ice. This relates a vision of a block of ice to human feeling. If the haiku were written with the verbal expression: "still attached to its rock", we would have a shasei (nature sketch.) I suggest the reader try reading the haiku using both verbs. Check it for both meaning and sound. See what you think. See what the verb does. Then try to write the verse without a verb and see what you uncover.

pjm: I particularly like the image of the river ice clinging to its rock. While the two kigo, "departing winter" and "river ice" work together as a uniform image, I do question the need for both of them. It seems to me that the phrase →

“departing winter” and “the last chunk of river ice” give redundant information. I would suggest that a new first line could be used to raise this haiku to another level.

8411 dusk ...  
smile of the Cheshire cat  
in the winter sky

pjm: A new moon is described as the “smile of a Cheshire cat.” What a unique and provocative expression! It gives this winter dusk a strange, Alice-in-Wonderland-like mood which appeals to me greatly. I never thought of a winter dusk as having this quality, but having discovered it through this poem, it feels exactly right to me.

jb: Well, recall that the smile of the Cheshire cat is all that's left of the cat in the story of Alice. Furthermore, it appears to be still around, this time in the winter sky. That's why we really live in a “Wonderland.”

8466 snowy barn  
a bird in the rafters  
finds something to talk about

jb: A common event in a world where there are barns. First, quiet, then the sound of a bird. “What's there to talk about?” I hear you ask. A not-so common answer is: Well, you heard the bird that makes sounds, but the bird heard (or saw) something, which in turn was generated by a predecessor . . . and we could go on. But the haiku says, the “bird *finds something* to talk about.” This is where we get our word “remarkable,” namely something worthy of making a remark. . . life is like that. OK, so go find something.

pjm: I am puzzled, mostly by my own reaction to this haiku. It has all the ingredients of being a good haiku—an clear image and a kigo that speaks to the image, that is, the cold and isolation of winter is reflected in the image of one bird in the rafters. And yet, for me the poem has not yet quite gelled. I feel that with a little nudge here or there, perhaps in the language or the music, it would lift off. Not knowing the author's intentions or actual experience (it feels authentic to me), makes me reluctant to give specific advice. But, a general thought would be to suggest revisiting the actual experience, reliving it, if you will, to discover spe-

cifically what small thing moved the writer. Perhaps it was the actual sound the bird made, or the silence before or after, or the emptiness of the barn or. . .? That's what needs to be in the writing so that it hits me in the heart, not in the intellect. And in this process of re-visioning the experience, rethink the word choices to enhance the sound in the language. Trust the sound; it will lead to the unconscious core of the experience.

Jerry and Patricia invite your comments. We love having an interchange. Contact us at

through donnalynn chase in care of GEPP0.

### Kiyoshi and Kiyoko Tokutomi Biography Now On-Line

A biography of Kiyoshi and Kiyoko Tokutomi written by Patricia J. Machmiller and Yukiko Tokutomi is now available at <http://www.americanhaikuarchives.org/donors/Tokutomis.html>. Please check it out.

### Yuki Teikei Haiku Retreat 2011 September 8-11 (Thursday – Sunday)

Total cost for the annual Asilomar conference plus room and meals for 3 nights/ 4 days is \$450. A minimum of \$100 down payment is required to reserve your space by June 8. Mail your registration along with a deposit of \$100

Highlights include an opportunity to study and learn more about writing haiku from Christopher Herold. And, a kukai by our good friend and honored guest from Tokyo, Japan, Emiko Miyashita.

For further information, e-mail Carol Steele at [carol@yths.org](mailto:carol@yths.org) at [www.yths.org](http://www.yths.org) check out the YTHS web site at

**YTHS "Haiku-For-You" Booth  
June 18, 2011  
at the Santa Cruz Japanese Fair**

Participate as a Seller: For a donation of \$10 or more, we'll sell your books and art at our booth. Instead of the 40% of sales that bookstores charge, there will only be a 15% charge on sales (10% to Japan Fair and 5% to Yuki Teikei).

Or participate as a Sponsor: For a donation of \$25 or more, you'll be listed as a co-sponsor and have one of your haiku displayed in the booth.

To participate, mail your check to YTHS Treasurer Patricia Machmiller,

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**Annual Haiku in the Teahouse**

The annual Teahouse haiku reading will be held in the Japanese Friendship Garden in Kelley Park, San Jose on Saturday, May 14. The featured poets are: Patricia J. Machmiller, Carol Steele, Billie Dee, and Susanne Smith. See previous GEPPO for more details or contact

**Submission Guidelines  
for GEPPO**

**due date for next issue is June 10**

Email (preferred) your contact information, poems & votes to

OR mail your poems & votes with contact info to

**You can submit:**

- Up to three haiku appropriate to the season; poems must be in three lines. They will be printed without your name and identified with a number for appreciation and study.
- One Challenge Kigo Haiku which uses the current issue's Challenge Kigo. Poem will be printed with your name.
- Up to ten votes for haiku in current issue that you especially appreciate. Each poem you choose will receive a point (vote); submit the number of the haiku as the vote. Poems with top number of votes are reprinted with author's name in next issue.

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**Kiyoshi & Kiyoko Tokutomi  
Memorial Haiku Contest**

**In-hand Deadline: May 31, 2011  
Prizes: \$100 \$50 \$25**

**2011 Contest Kigo List**

New Year: New Year's confetti  
Spring: first crocus  
Summer: billowing cloud  
Autumn: persimmon  
Winter: winter solitude

**Contest Rules:**

- Haiku in English of 17 syllables in a 5-7-5 pattern.
- Each haiku must use one kigo, and only one kigo, taken from the contest list.
- Haiku with more than one recognized kigo will be disqualified.
- Entry fee \$7.00 per page of three haiku. No limit on entries. Entries will not be returned.

- Submit 4 copies of each page, with your name & address on only one copy, typed on 8½ x11 paper.
- Make checks or money orders payable to "Yuki Teikei Haiku Society". Overseas entrants please use International Postal Money Order, in U.S. currency only. For results send an SASE marked "Contest Winners."
- Entries must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration elsewhere. No previous winning haiku are eligible.
- This contest is open to anyone, except for the YT President and Contest Chair.
- Final selection will be made by a distinguished haiku poet. The Society may print winning poems and commentary in its newsletter, annual anthology, and current brochures.
- Send entries to:  
Deborah P Kolodji – Contest Chair

*Attn: Tokutomi Contest*