

The Warrior Poet

VOL. 3 NO. 2

FALL 1994

Send "evoking"
to p2 *



Fellow Warrior Poets,

This issue I'd like to introduce you to Stump Creek Radio. We also have reviews of *The Earth First! Songbook* and a book of cowboy verse (really!), the report of our yearly meeting, and, of course, the usual fine selection of incredible warrior poetry. Enjoy!

For the Wild,
Dennis Fritzing



“Art plays an essential role in activism by intensifying feelings for a cause.”
Howard Zinn, *Resistance, Sabotage & Music*, from ¡Tchkung!

Copyright Notice

all rights reserved to the authors

STUMP CREEK RADIO

A few issues back you will recall, I wondered (more or less to myself) what we could do as artists to get the deep ecology/biocentric message out. Imagine my surprise then this summer when I found out about Stump Creek Radio!

Located just a few miles from where Ed Abbey grew up in the wilds of West Virginia, Stump Creek Radio is the brainchild of Dennis Hendricks, Producer/Host of what must be surely the most visionary, if not singular, radio program today. I've seen his “partial” inventory of deep ecology/biocentric songs, records and tapes, and it is impressive. Space does not permit me to reprint it here, but Dennis will be glad to send you a copy (I'm sure) if you just write and ask for one. (A buck or two for postage and copying costs would probably be appreciated.)

✦ *STUMP CREEK RADIO, P.O. Box 127, Cass, WV 24927. 304-456-3426*

THE JOB OF POETRY

Let me take you for a moment
from that frantic video you call “reality,”
a contemporary hit co-authored by fear.
Noise and commotion pulled up around you
like the false security
of an electric blanket;
encircling you like covered wagons
against the intense
uncertain potential of nightfall,
of our wild, unchained dreams.

Let me take you for a moment
to the shadow-lined corridors
between Tamarack and Aspen,
down those thorny, berry covered tunnels
that lead to your naked wild soul.
Silence will stalk you there,
coming closer even as you stop to listen.
Another step or two,
and it will reach out and touch you.

There is no winning without such struggle.
There is no freedom without such danger.
Shaggy hair hangs over your eyes here,
as even your tracks are transformed—
larger now, deeper,
with a hint of claws.
It is the job of my poetry
to take you there.

—Lone Wolf Circles
from *Full Circle*

4TH ANNUAL WARRIOR POETS SOCIETY MEETING

by Dennis Fritzinger

The 4th Annual Warrior Poets Society Meeting took place, as usual, at the Earth First! Round River Rendezvous, this year held in Katuah—Southern Appalachian Bioregion.

The site was at Whigg Meadow—actually in the midst of a mixed hardwood forest—Beech/Hemlock, I think. There were blueberry bushes if you knew where to look, and blackberries (unfortunately not ripe) grew along the trail. There were also supposed to be boar and bear in the vicinity.

One of the pleasant surprises of the summer for me was actually getting to see some real foxfire. It was down at the road when I pulled a shift at Security. There were also lots of fireflies hanging out in the area. The meadow was thick with them and I often stumbled my way back to camp without a flashlight just so I could see them—pale green living stars scattered through the grass.

Our 1994 meeting kicked off under the makeshift Katuah kitchen tent. It had been raining the day before, for quite awhile, and started again during the morning circle.

The meeting got started around One, right after Dwight's Ocean Defense workshop. I welcomed everyone who came, gave a short introduction to the Warrior Poets Society, and read Gary Snyder's poem "For All" from *No Nature*. Andy Caffrey mentioned the poetry video he'd shot in L.A. and video poetry in general. Then we did a round of introductions. There were 12 people present so far, including Chad, Mary Anne, Steve, Shorman, Olivia, Crystal, Andy, Emily, Phillip, Charlie, and Andy. More would join us later.

I passed *No Nature* and *Earth Prayers* around, and asked if anyone wanted to read a poem. Andy read an invocation by John Seed from *Earth Prayers*. Then I read "i stand for what i stand on" and made Asanté's suggestion about putting a poem on a flyer for a demonstration since "it'll be what gets read & remembered". I repeated Snyder's mountain-climbing metaphor to illustrate my point. This bothered Crystal, and we started getting into a discussion on the relative merits of prose and poetry.

Right about then Matthew Haun walked up and joined us, and Andy asked him "How do you get anger and humor into your poetry?" (Matthew is known for his funny, angry poems and energetic style of delivery.) Matthew: "I have a keen sense of justice & give it to those who deserve it." Then he went on to say "There's no distinction between poetry & prose in my mind. My poetry hits me on the head like a ton of bricks. For me

the muse in poetry is like an unloading of something deep."

I talked a bit about economy in poetry and read a haiku. Then Crystal read the bear poem by Gary Lawless in *Earth Prayers*, and Andy (the other Andy) read a poem of his, "Light on the Water". Matthew recited "The Job of Poetry" by Lone Wolf Circles, and said "that's what it's all about". Then Shorman read Dickey's "The Heaven of Animals" from *Earth Prayers*.

At this point Aimée came in and began cooking.

Dwight, who joined us sometime back, read "Admit it" and "Am I to be Barren?" Chad read "We who prayed and wept" by Wendell Berry, and recited a poem about tomatoes that you could almost taste a tomato fresh from the garden just by hearing.

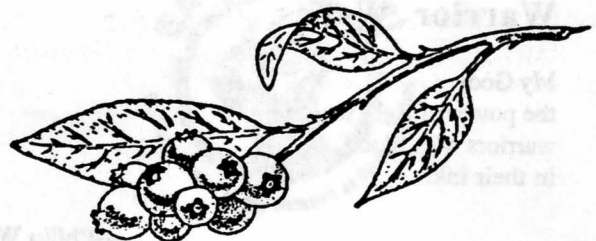
Matthew observed here "I see a lot more people here sharing poetry than around campfires," and Crystal responded "You might ask (at campfires) 'Are there any new poets or musicians who want to do something?'"

Dwight read "More" after prefacing it with the disclaimer, "I try to read short things generally because if things are bad they're only bad for a short time." I said some things about the act of reading and mentioned Bly's quote about its creating the community. Then Andy Caffrey read "Benedicto" by Ed Abbey, from *Earth Prayers*.

Jean Crawford walked up and joined us at this point, and suggested contacting the Taos Poetry Circus about doing a Warrior Poets workshop.

Crystal mentioned Annie Dillard as a prose writer "who could match any poet", yet later added that Earth First! song lyrics were what had attracted her to Earth First!

Then someone asked if I used the same poems in both *Armed With Visions* and *The Warrior Poet*, and I answered in the negative. I brought up Blank Wall Video and reading on street corners and asked if anyone had any other ideas.



Dwight said we should get kids to read poetry. Then he read a poem of his, "Take Coup" and I followed with one of mine, "tree". Dwight read "Sink It", and I read "the spear shine in the sun". By this time a crowd of hungry-looking Katuahns had gathered outside their tent, and one of them tactfully asked if we were going to be much longer.

Time flies when you're having fun. We had been so busy reading and talking that no one had noticed the rain had let up. So we said our thank-yous and goodbyes and headed on down the road to a spot by Andy's camp.

On the way we lost some people, but Steve showed up and read a few, including "A Dream From The Top Of Delaware Water Gap". I talked a little about my plans for a warrior poets roadshow (again!) and Chad volunteered his mechanical ability if we ever got one going. Crystal opined that we could "go to the environmental community *and* the literary community" in trying to set something up.

We talked a bit about EF! song lyrics as a powerful source of inspiration, and read some more poems. Then Crystal and Matthew left and I decided it might be time to wrap up. So I read "Prayer to the Great Family" by Gary Snyder from *No Nature*, and we adjourned. I passed my notebook around for addresses from those remaining. By the end of the Rendezvous the Warrior Poets Society would have 30 new members!



Warrior Words

My God!
the power of right words,
warriors with blood
in their ink.

—Philip Wright

Environmentally Disturbed

I say to them, "How can you buy all this garbage?"
They say, "Please, just leave us alone"
I say, "But you don't need any of this crap
You know ecology begins at home"

They say, "Okay okay already
I guess you're probably right
But I still want it—so I'm gonna get it
—Now stop your goddamned preaching, Dwight"

I say, "That's why it's all breaking down
Cause no one makes any personal sacrifice"
She says, "I'll buy whatever I want
The only issue is 'Can I pay the price?'"
He says, "And that's it—no ifs, ands, or buts
And personally, Dwight, I do believe you've gone
completely nuts"

Nuts? Me? You're the third person who's said that today
So you really think I'm MAD?
But I just got my diagnosis, right here in front of me
And it's really not all that bad

It says I am agitated and perturbed
But that I am not mad at all
I'm just—very environmentally disturbed

—Dwight Worker

ECO-POETRY NETWORK

THE AMICUS JOURNAL

c/o Brian Swann, poetry editor
40 West 20th Street
New York, NY 10011

ORION

136 East 64th Street
New York, NY 10021

WILD EARTH

c/o Art Goodtimes
Box 1008
Telluride, CO 81435

or

c/o Gary Lawless
Gulf of Maine Books
61 Maine St.
Brunswick, ME 04011

WILDERNESS

c/o John Daniel
5118 N. Princeton Rd.
Portland, OR 97203

ALIVE AND WELL

Freddie Ranger blazed a road, unleashing sedimentation
Threw some straw bales down on top and called it
mitigation...

Welcome to the great land of Idaho
Where there's some long-time locals just dying to know
Where did the rights to their land and water go
That's what the Nez Perce were wondering not so long
ago

Well, we didn't want hostile Injuns around to bore us
So now we got the Nez Perce National Forest
Where there's a huge chunk of land sort of safe from
attack

But there is one living heart in there kinda slipped
through the cracks
And it isn't just the loggers who are feeling the lack
The grey wolf and salmon are dying to come back

They used to have this doctrine called "Multiple Use"
But in practice it turned out to be a little obtuse
'Cause while some dumb-ass nature lover might leave a
candy wrapper
Some dumb ass with a chainsaw sends the whole thing
down the crapper
So now they want to demonstrate a more environmental
bent
And the big buzzword now is "Ecosystem Management"

The word *management* has been theirs all along
But the word *ecosystem*, hey, that used to be our song
I've never doubted their devotion to management
But it's clear they don't know what ecosystem means yet

It doesn't mean wiping out virgin stands
So you can have virgin paper for your fucking forest
plans

Where you neutralize watershed, streams and lakes
With 'dozers, chainsaws and survey stakes
To manifest some vision of gouged and ugly
Export the logs and watch the locals go hungry

No, that's not what ecosystem means
Come down for a minute; come off of your machines
I don't care if you hate us or even ignore us
But come and take a look at what happens in the forest

Look at that huge old snag bereft of living crown
It's gonna take centuries to bring that mother down
And for the bugs that live there and the woodpeckers that
eat 'em
You take that wood away and that's a nasty way to cheat
'em

'Cause that tree has drawn its life from the soil rich and
black

Now it has given up its life and it's going to give it
back

And when some sweet little sapling comes popping
through the duff

And sees that great mother towering in the air
Then it knows where the sweetness at its roots came
from

It knows the legacy it will one day bear

Yeah, this is true climax forest here

I tell you this without a doubt

And things take a long long time in the forest

And that's what true climax is all about

So while you're taking off on your road-building tizzy

'Cause we've got to have jobs and be busy busy busy

And you rip those giving mothers right out of the
ground

And drag them off bleeding to the dead tree impound

Now haul them down the highway, stripped and dead

So they can see your cities sickening

No, that's not what ecosystem means

It means this land is alive and well and kicking

A man of authority once told me for sure

That I was being young and stupid and one day I would
mature

To accept the plunder of this living land

As long as I could pay off my condo and my van

My elders taught me to be a little more discreet

We may be young and stupid; but by goddess we're on
our feet

So load up on donuts boy, Mmm Mmm good

You're gonna need that sugar rush to run me down in
these woods

Now haul me down the highway mugged and cuffed

So I can see your system sickening

And I'll tell you what ecosystem means

This land is alive and well and kicking

—Matthew Haun



The Poet as Warrior

by Chuck Taylor

When there are so few who care, when the audience is so tiny, there comes a question to taunt us, yes to haunt us even in our dreams: why do we spin our mental wheels, why do we use up our life's hours, oh why oh why do we bother to write and publish poetry?

Where songs were once traded and shared freely, now we pay top dollar at concerts and record stores. What was once a gift now has been absorbed, made part of the competitive business system. The people's life, the people's culture, has been stolen.

In the time of our grandparents stories were told and songs were sung and games were played in the home. Now we have television and movies for our stories, video arcades for our games. Culture was once made by all people; now the job tends to be done by a few anointed professionals. Experts speak of a lack of connection in our mass society with relatives, with friends, with the place where we dwell. Art is supposed to build connections, but professionalized art, Hollywood art, is having the opposite effect. Why make up songs when you can play a record? Why do skits in the home when you can so easily rent a video?

First the land is taken and people end up in the cities. Then the houses are taken, the ethnic identities are lost in a melting pot, and people end up cramped in vast apartment complexes. Accompanying these thefts has been the theft of culture, the ability of people to celebrate and entertain themselves with song and games, dance and music and story telling.



I say the poet is at war with mass culture. That is the poets' way; that is one reason why the poet works in the medium of poetry instead of calling in on talk shows. The poet takes a certain stance—that of the warrior. The poems are a small tiny voice whispering in the dark, calling the people back to a rediscovery of themselves, to a recovery of the lost life, the stolen culture. The poet is a radical conservative, calling the people back to life in a society decidedly anti-life.

Society has killed the poet. You doubt it? Walk down any American street and ask twenty people to name two living poets. All poets are dead, banished by a silence that would have pleased fascist Plato in his Republic.

So the warrior poet, the outsider, comes carrying the torch of his poems, determined in the impossible task of restoring to people their life.

From *The Earth First! Songbook*

LISTEN!

The Great Silence sings
Its silent soothing song
But the cacaphony of commerce
Won't let it sing for long.

Deep in the roaring city
Sirens bellow and howl
One cannot hear the wolf
Nor heed the hooting owl.

Autos clank and rattle
Jackhammers pound
Boom-boxes blare
The assault of ultra-sound.

Listen, people, Listen!
We've forgotten how to listen.

Loon wails ancient messages
Into the liquid northland night
While we sit smug in soundproof rooms
With TeeVee's tiny light.

We bicker, moan and quarrel
Babble, gossip, spout,
Mutter, moan and grumble
To lock the silence out.

Our minds become unhinged
By the bedlam and din
We need to take the time
To let the silence in!

Listen, people, Listen!
We've forgotten how to listen.

Brilliant minstrels pour out
The passions of the age
The anguish and the glory
The fever and the rage

LISTEN...Listen...listen...

—Phil Knight
(Rowdy
Restless)

SEND POEMS!!

If money is the mother's milk of politics, poetry is the mother's milk of the Warrior Poets Society. I need a steady stream of eco-poems to feed the Warrior Poet and Armed With Visions, so send whatever you can. Thanks!!

ALL CLAIMS RE-ENTRY

WARRIOR POET'S BOOKSHELF

The Earth First! Songbook

The purpose of the Warrior Poet's Bookshelf is to suggest material appropriate for your next campaign, whether educational or confrontational.

It's my firm belief that song and poetry go hand in hand in this regard, so this issue I want to bring your attention to *The Earth First! Songbook*, and strongly recommend you acquire a copy.

Why are songs and poems so important? There are many reasons—as Howard Zinn points out, they intensify feelings, and hence commitment, for a cause; they allow you to say things that people otherwise might not listen to; and they're important because they're important.

Pick up a copy of *The Earth First! Songbook*. It's just 10 bucks—cheap, if you think of the hours of entertainment; even cheaper if you think of all the fog-cutting (as in rhetoric) verses.

Even though (or perhaps because) the book isn't a slick production. As befits its subject, it's printed on recycled paper. Available for \$10 ppd. from Earth First!, PO Box 1415, Eugene, OR 97440.



POSTCARD FROM W.S. MERWIN

"Thank you for sending Warrior Poets. Keep going. We all need each other."

With a Turn of the Wrench

John Svenson was a farmer, he grew the Minnesota wheat,
He rode there with his daughter, high upon the thresher's seat,

They broke down on the hillside, the radiator spitting steam,
Went back to get the toolbox so they could fix the old machine.

With a turn of the wrench, with a twist of the screw,
We can fix the tractor, we can make it like new.

But that day they got a letter, that said the power lines would come

Right across their farm land, right across the setting sun.
So they gathered all the family and talked late into the night,
We cannot let them do this, we've got to put up one hell of a fight

With a turn of the wrench, and a twist of the screw,
We'll apply a little pressure, and we'll see what it will do.

So they phoned 100 farmers, and drove to the Twin Cities,
Met there with the Governor, and they sued the Utility,
But after writing all the letters and paying all the legal costs,
To the power of the city, once again the farmers lost.

*And in the still of the evening, the wind is all you hear
I watch the waves on the wheat fields alone
I walk the furrows of earth I plant year after year
This is our land, this is our home
This is our land, this is our home*

So they met there at the tavern but there wasn't much to say
The powerlines may come, but they will not stay
With a turn of the wrench, and a twist of the screw
What was once put together, we can easily undo

With bandannas on their faces, careful not to make a sound
They loosened all the bolts that held the towers to the ground
Several weeks later, with nobody around
The Minnesota wind blew tower after tower after tower down

With a turn of the wrench, and a twist of the screw,
What was once put together we can easily undo.
With a turn of the wrench, and a twist of the screw
What was once put together, we can easily undo.

(CHORUS)

—Dana Lyons
from *The Earth First! Songbook*



They pulled your name off of the list,
sort of randomly,
although you did have a file already,
(but, who doesn't?)
Then they tapped your phone and gave me the
job of listening
to you.

At first I was bored, you didn't say much
that mattered to us.
But sometimes you made me mad.
You called us names; pig-scum-filth-
rapists-terrorists-murderers,
I thought you were terribly uninformed.
And sometimes I felt sorry for you,
trying so hard,
floundering in confusion,
you were never organized.
I often doubted whether you were worth
wasting time on.
But as time went on, I found myself
interested in you—well,
in what you said, anyway.
You slowly became part of my life.
You stirred something in me that
I thought had been dead
for a very long time.

You spoke often of your love
for this grove or that,
or mountain or meadow or river.
Remember when you came home
from climbing that peak?
I've only done that in my dreams.
But on that day, a little part of me
had done it with you,
and on that day, some of my boyhood
returned.
and then was the time
you planned on and on
for that river trip.
Well, you tugged at my heart then too.
I was actually sad when you left without me.

I began to understand when you dreamed
with your friend
about blowing that dam to the sky.
For my heart had begun to long for
the freedom and joys
of your chaotic, confused,
wild and untamed,
activist's life.

Me...
just a nine-to-five spy,
I never have fun, go through traffic to work
and fill out forms all day long,
and can't ever be late with the alimony.

and can't ever be late with the alimony.
I'm dying...
And you made me see that
the natural wild world
is dying too.
Like me.

You were only trying to save Her,
for Her wildness was in you too.
You made me see that,
somehow.

Those long talks with your friends,
so full of passion and love,
I couldn't help but feel it too.

I felt also your pain
when you'd begin to despair.
You were always the underdog,
and you know, you never really had a chance,
so I hope you forgive me
someday.
There's nowhere left for people like you
not anymore.

So you're doing 15-20
inside the State Pen,
and sometimes I wish I could've
stopped you from talking
too much on the phone.
It was just once.
But it was enough.
I'm sorry,
But I was just doing my job.

—Chaco

“MY TURN IN THE CAGE”

(written while in prison)

When coyote runs
Coyote runs and runs and runs

When I sit down and think nothing
I think and think and think

When coyote stoops to eat the wild strawberry
When coyote follows the faint mousey trail
When coyote breaks deer bone in his jaws
When coyote sniffs the dog spoor

When coyote walks
Coyote walks and walks and walks

When I walk
I step and step... and step... and PIVOT—

—Em'rynn Artunian

I Am (Kakamega Rainforest)

Man...man..., you man, I am,
Yes you...you...you and of course you,
I'm the once beautiful Kakamega,
The green blanket that once covered,
The landscape and hill tops,
Look right, look left, fore and after
Mm.Hu, a real giant forest,
Kakamega Rainforest

But you know what?
A dying giant I am now,
Yes,
I am the dying Kakamega Forest.
Look up the hills, look down valleys,
Look here and there,
And fresh wounds you will see bleeding,
On my head, arms, feet and toes,
Blood gushing in rivers
Yes, gone shall I forever be,
Kakamega Rainforest.

Look back eh man
To those golden years,
Look back to those days,
The days when man knew know wealth,
Undisturbed, strong, and healthy, I was
Bride in a bridal dress,
Spread out with green palms
Kakamega Rainforest.

Fresh, clean, cool waters,
Trickle like beads,
At my feet, yes,
Adding man the very basic
Mmmm...the cool, clean water
Confidently flowing
Kakamega Rainforest.

Your animals drink of it,
Your plants and everything,
You hundreds and thousands
All use the clean water,
So long as I live, the rivers shall live,
Kakamega Rainforest.

But! but look you man...!
Thoughtlessly! Mercilessly and foolishly...
Kaak, Kong, Kaak,
The harsh sound of your panga
In my midst heard,
Mowing me down,
Kakamega Rainforest.

—Nixon K. Sajita

Nixon Sajita (p.o.b. 34, Kakamega National Reserve, Kakunga via Kakamega, Kenya), of the Luhya tribe of western Kenyan, is a free-lance guide in Kakamega rainforest. He is attempting to educate the Kenyan people and foreigners of the need to preserve the forest.



The Views of a Sentient Parasite

The jungle beat of a heart in love
The liquid cycle, flow and nourish
Return again
The blood of the earth mother
The life sustaining waters in my veins

Are my toes Alive?
Is my skin Alive?
My elbow? My teeth? My bones?
I AM ALIVE

What of our earth Mother?
Are her animals alive?
Are her mountains alive?
Her trees? Her sea? Her stone?
Why do we judge them each on their own?
GAIA IS ALIVE

—Troy Stone

Cowboy Curmudgeon and Other Poems

by Wallace McRae; Gibbs Smith, Publisher, P.O. Box 667, Layton, UT 84041. \$10.95

Reviewed by Dennis Fritzing

If I said Wallace McRae loves the land, I don't think he'd disagree. If I called him an environmentalist though, he probably would; you see, Wallace is a cowpoke—and cowfolk are notoriously sensitive about being called environmentalists.

Wallace is one of a new breed of American poet—the cowboy poet. Actually, cowboy poets aren't exactly new. Cowboys have been writing poetry for a long time, apparently. What's new is the amount of attention they're getting from other segments of society. Cowboy poetry's also undergoing what you might call a revival, due to the talent and energy of its participants, one of the best known being McRae.

Every phenomenon has its publicity including its "shot heard 'round the world"—in this case a short documentary called "Cowboy Poets" featuring McRae and two other poets. Publicity comes from the Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada each year, organized by the Western Folklife Center, and numerous copycat festivals that have sprung up.

Among cowboy poets, Wallace is typical from a technical point of view—he uses rhythms that were popular in turn-of-the-century cowboy verse, and he also writes *verse*, a type of poetry more people can get a handle on because of its similarity to song—yet a little atypical in his choice of subject matter, inasmuch as he spends some of his time extolling coyotes and excoriating stripmines. Even among the more accomplished of the other cowboy poets (and cowgirl poets) there's scarcely a mention of such things, though there is often a love of land present—of course from the cowboy's point of view.

Cowboy poetry is part of the oral tradition. It also seems to be part of the homelife—a position poetry held in America in general until the advent of television.

McRae is a good storyteller, and often very funny. But what keeps coming back to me is his savage turns of phrase when excoriating the coal companies, like their claim to be able to "improve what once was pristine" as McRae says icily. Often his jeremiads in verse form work really well. Even when they don't, there's a line or two you'll remember. And in any case, they allowed McRae to say what he wanted to say.

Cowboy Curmudgeon and Other Poems is drawn from his earlier books—*Up North is Down the Crick*, *It's Just Grass and Water*, and *Things of Intrinsic Worth*—small press books of limited run—along with more recent

poems. "Reincarnation" is here and other older favorites, and so is "Grandmother's French Hollyhocks", a touching and beautiful poem that appeared in *New Cowboy Poetry* ed. by Hal Cannon of the Western Folklife Center.

Cowboy poetry represents a true renaissance of poetry in America, and Wallace McRae is one of its leaders.

TEN THOUSAND PLACES

Ten thousand places in The West
Where Nature reigned and Nature blessed
Her beasts. There they fed and rested
For generations uncontested
By hostile humans' holy war
And man was just a visitor.
But Nature's place was so serene,
There in the forest, by the stream,
That man decided he would share
His taming with the wildness there.
He thought "The wild is crude, chaotic,
My taming will be symbiotic."
He yearned to flee the teeming city,
Loathing it with fear and pity.
You know the rest before it's said,
Man brought with him what he fled,
To ten thousand havens in The West.
Man and Nature both oppressed,
In ten thousand places in The West.

—Wallace McRae



SUPPORT THE WARRIOR POETS SOCIETY—BUY A T-SHIRT

If you haven't gotten your very own Warrior Poets Society t-shirt yet, just send us a check & we'll send you one. They are tan, yellow, green, blue, and white, on a black background (see Wolf's design on the cover). T's are \$15 ppd. (S-XL) and Tanks are \$14 ppd. (M-XL only). Order from The Warrior Poets Society. Make checks payable to Dennis Fritzing.

GHOST OF THE RIVER

I gave much to life
I took a little away
nothing selective, you understand
only the careless ones
those who were not smart
besides that, were not strong

I can name a few
who **prefer** to die here
would rather leave their bodies
with me
to slip their flesh from bone,
cleanly
rather than lie moulder
in some earthen pit.

there is a certain grace
to dying in **moving** water

when I was drowned
stumbling clumsily upon myself
there was no grace
in such a massive alteration
of my Mother's plan
many years too many I have lain
stinking rotting in the earth
not the way I would have chosen
to die

perhaps some friend
will liberate me one day
how lavishly he will be paid,
with sights of power never dreamed

Meanwhile....

"I'll just sit here
and chew away
on this concrete
foundation"



—Katie Lee

The Next Warrior Poets Meeting

Reading over the minutes of this year's warrior poets society meeting, I realize that the most pertinent moment came when Andy asked Matt how he got the humor & rage into his poems.

In Vermont I was privileged to sit in at a deep ecology "workshop" (actually a circle) with Lone Wolf & about 40-50 other committed activists, including Dana Lyons.

Wolf "ran" the workshop by passing around a feather (or piece of wood or grass twig—whatever it was; I don't remember now)—the so-called "talking stick"—whoever has it, talks; whoever doesn't, doesn't—a native American parliamentary procedure.

Wolf called on us to surrender the deepest, most secret portion of ourselves—the reason we became environmental activists in the first place. Mostly he was looking for stories, and he got them. One I remember was by someone who recalled seeing his home change from being pretty wild (or rural) to suburban, and finally urban. Dana did a particularly touching reminiscence where he stood up and touched a tree trunk, and touched his face—making the connection.

What I'm thinking is, next warrior poets meeting we should go around in a circle, saying what it is that brought us to the warrior poets society, that makes us warrior poets. I think there'll be some surprises, and a good deal of learning as a result.

Accept the Responsibility

This is your World
This is your Life
Accept the Responsibility
to make a Difference
to be Informed
to be Involved
to be a Fighter
to be a Leader
One can Fret
and Despair
about the Power
of One
or one can Become
a powerful One
Accept the Responsibility
to be One of the Ones
who make a Difference

—Xingeela

Warrior Poets Society
Bancroft & Telegraph
ASUC Box 361
Berkeley, CA 94720-1111

BRON TAYLOR
990 BAVARIAN COURT
OSHKOSH, WI 54901



ANIMISM / MONISM / HARMONY

First thing I hear
Ravens (Old Grandfather)
sitka spruce, ancient cedar,
raven, duck, bald eagle.
I want to open myself to them all.
hear what they have to say.
Learning to speak with raven.
Learning to breathe with ducks.
"We don't say anything bad about the animals"
that bear had put her in a trance.
the shaman saw their tracks, followed them.

snowy mountain slopes in sunlight,
harbor under cloud.
sea lions and gulls
mark the passage of herring.
Raven calls from a nearby tree.

Things are done to keep the balance.

—Cary Lawless
from *Ice Tattoo*