

# WestWard Quarterly

*The Magazine of Family Reading*



**Spring 2022**

# To our readers . . .

Well, as they say, “Spring has sprung.” And with it comes this issue of *WestWard Quarterly*, filled with high-quality and family-friendly poetry — much of which appropriately celebrates the season. Contributors to this issue hail from Brazil, the United Kingdom and India, as well as the United States and Canada.

The Featured Writer for this issue is frequent contributor Kiersta Recktenwald of Maine. You will find her “bio” and a selection of her poetry on pages 4-5.

We mention a special thanks to two of our regular feature contributors: Frances Leitch, who provides our “Quotations” page in each issue, and Esther Leiper-Estabrooks, who supplies her “North Country, New Hampshire” trilogy of sonnets each quarter.

Other features include our “Kids’ Korner” (pages 22-23) with poetry appealing to younger readers, and “The Lighter Side” (page 25) where we present more humorous contributions. Truthfully, though, a number of our writers submit humorous or tongue-in-cheek poetry, and it can be hard to decide whether their work goes in “The Lighter Side” or in the main body of the magazine!

Chester and Callie express their “Vantage Point” on page 17, as usual. And our Editor always has a special poem of her own on page 16. Then, our “Writer’s Workbench” feature (page 31) offers a helpful suggestion on “Building a Poem.”

Please pay special attention to the notice at the bottom of page 7, and we hope you will take appropriate action to keep this magazine available to writers just like you.

*Dr. Richard Leonard*, PUBLISHER

## WestWard Quarterly

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*WestWard Quarterly* showcases the best work of upbeat writers and poets. Our magazine’s philosophy is: “Adversity happens. Find the eternal purpose behind it.” Reflect an uplifting, positive or gently humorous attitude in your submissions. Send all letters, requests for guidelines, queries or submissions to the address above. Send SASE for response.

Maximum length for poems is 40 lines. Shorter submissions have a better likelihood of being published. The Editor reserves the right to edit material. For more information on guidelines and how to send your submission, visit our web site.

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Cover Image: *Forsythia Blossoms, Wheaton, Illinois, 2004*  
Photo by *Richard. Leonard*

**Teddy Bare**  
*Robert Black, United Kingdom*

It was so cold the bare bear  
could bear it no longer,  
and ducked into a hen house  
where he hoped for something warmer —  
but the reception for a hatless bear  
was nothing short of hostile,  
it did not fit on any perch  
and so was out of . . . pecking order . . .  
Well, I know that you're expecting:  
an ending to this story  
(and rest assured there is one)  
but *how* he persuaded her  
to roost upon his head  
still remains uncertain,  
but it might have something to do  
with his convincing her  
it was the latest in teddy boy fashion . . .  
or perhaps it may be just a way he has  
with red heads — *uh* — hens. The end  
(You see? Told you there was one).

**The Transformed Cub**  
*Douglas J. Lanzo, Maryland*

Through the brush and up a tree,  
a young cub scampers merrily;  
Curious, he explores the bark,  
then paws a toad and scares a lark.

A chiding squirrel does pass him near,  
before it passes out in fear.  
As Mamma gingerly alights,  
she whirls and snarls, then nearly bites.

The would-be-prankster scurries down,  
coily avoiding Mamma's frown,  
from having had to intervene,  
climbing his birch to rid the scene . . .

Of foolish capers, youngster's dare,  
to see whether the branch would bear,  
his weight combined with red squirrel prey,  
less midday meal and more shear play.

His paws now safely on the ground,  
his Mom descends in one quick bound,  
to lead him to a pristine brook,  
using her claw as one large hook.

She swipes and stuns a spotted trout,  
tossed on a rock to free all doubt,  
whether it shall elude her grip,  
or wriggle free from flop or flip.

She shares a tasty morsel of,  
its sweet meat with her son beloved.  
The cub appreciates the feast,  
his patience for a time increased.

In thanks rubbing against her fur,  
contented, gentle and demure,  
he follows Mom to nearby den,  
to nap and dream by forest glen.

**Hippopotamus**  
*Dr. Vladimir Tumanov, Ontario, Canada*

I'm a ponderous beast,  
and I live very slow,  
but my hopes and my dreams  
fly as high as a crow.

You might think me a dud —  
just a weight in the mud,  
mindless chewer of cud.  
Don't belittle me, bud.

In my mind, I am light.  
In my heart, I am free.  
I can dance, I can sing.  
I can jump like a flea.

And my spirit will roam  
far beyond my great bulk.  
Deep inside me is joy —  
like Bruce Banner in Hulk.

Look right into my eyes.  
See the yearning within.  
Underneath flesh and bones  
I feel airy and thin.

When I sleep in a pond,  
when I thud through the grass,  
when I bellow and yawn,  
I'm as fragile as glass.

To conclude, don't forget  
as you look at my skin:  
I am not just without.  
I am also within.

**The Way It Was**  
*Dr. C. David Hay, Florida*

Whatever happened from the way it was  
To the way it is today?  
The measure of one's worth, it seems,  
Is what we are able to pay.

Good manners are forgotten,  
Smiles replaced with pout.  
Somewhere along the way  
We forgot what respect is about.

Get all you can, while you can —  
Ignore the Golden Rule;  
The one who cares for others  
Is classified a fool.

So, reminisce the good old days,  
They may be gone for good —  
Unless we change our selfish ways  
And treat others the way we should.