

Poetry winner



Poetry winner

A POEM by Whitby's [REDACTED], 20, was recently published by the National Library of Poetry in a volume called 'Sparkles in the Sand.' [REDACTED]'s poem, *Death*, won an editor's choice award for outstanding achievement. [REDACTED] is enrolled in the honours psychology program at [REDACTED] University and hopes to participate in an international university student exchange program in her third year.

(I was 20)

In a local newspaper four years ago,[^]
I spied an ad similar to this one...



POETRY CONTEST!

\$48,000 Possible
in prizes Publication
awarded annually

Send only one original
poem 20 lines or less to:

The National Library of Poetry
Suite 10437
1 Poetry Plaza
Owings Mills, MD 21117
or enter online at:
www.poetry.com

... but different, because the ad I
spied was for "The North American Open
Poetry Contest", also held by the official-
sounding "National Library of Poetry",
but back then the address was
far more nondescript:
11419 Cronridge Drive.



I've never written much poetry.
In fact, I only have two poems
to my name ... but, "What the hey,"
I thought, and decided to enter one of them...

The North American
Open Poetry Contest
The National Library of Poetry
11419 Conridge Drive
P.O. Box 704-1983
OWINGS MILLS, MD.
21117
U.S.A.

March 26, 1995

To Whom it May Concern,

Please accept my entry, *Prophecy*, for your contest. Please
notice, also, that when *Prophecy* is turned on its side, the lines
form the shape of a one-legged cow, the subject of the poem.

I have also enclosed a self-addressed postcard with one
International Reply Coupon attached. Please mail it back to me
when you have received my poem.

Thank-you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Westhead



This is the poem I entered. I wrote
it in grade ten.

P R O P H E C Y

I see a calf born without hind legs
Rolled into a processing machine.
One last living sound and then
The grinding starts.
I see a motorized conveyor belt
(Supervised by the foreman--
A leper who needed a break)
Carrying bits of broken cow
Under glaring yellow heat lamps
To finally fall off the end *slop* into ornate boxes.
Efficient.
Good advertising.
Happy clown.
Happy people.
Over sixty
Zillion
Served.



The National Library of Poetry

11419-10 Crownridge Drive • Post Office Box 704 • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 • (410) 356-2000

June 5, 1994

Dear Jessica,

[Re: I see a calf born without hind legs . . .]

It is my pleasure to inform you that, after reading and discussing your poem, our Selection Committee has certified your poem as a semi-finalist in our 1995 North American Open Poetry Contest. Your poem will automatically be entered into the final competition, held in Winter 1995/1996. As a semi-finalist, you have an excellent chance of winning one of 70 cash or gift prizes--you may even win the \$1000.00 Grand Prize (a complete list of prizes can be found on one of the enclosures to this letter).

IMAGINE YOUR POEM . . . PUBLISHED IN A BEAUTIFUL ANTHOLOGY!

And Jessica, in view of your talent, we also wish to publish your poem in our forthcoming anthology Walk Through Paradise (Library of Congress ISBN 1-56167-285-8).

Walk Through Paradise

Library of Congress ISBN 1-56167-285-8

Walk Through Paradise, scheduled for publication in Winter 1995/1996 will be a classic, edition-quality hardbound volume--printed on fine milled paper to last for generations. It will make a handsome addition to any library, a treasured family keepsake, or a highly valued personal gift.

NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER

Before going any further, let me make one thing clear . . . your poem was selected for publication, and as a contest semi-finalist, solely on the basis of merit. You are under no obligation whatsoever to submit any entry fee, any subsidy payment, or to make any purchase of any kind. Of course, many people do wish to own a copy of the publication in which their artistry appears. If this is the case, we welcome your order--and guarantee your satisfaction. Please see the enclosed material for special discount information if you are interested in owning a copy of Walk Through Paradise.

SO, WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

As I mentioned above, your poem has automatically been entered in the final competition--so you need take no action on the contest at this time. However, regarding the publication of your poem, you must complete the enclosed Author's Release stating that the

Months later, I
received this letter in
the mail. At first I
was jubilant, but I
quickly became suspicious...

Cont. →



cont.

poem you submitted is your original work of art, and giving us permission to publish it . . . and let me assure you, your poem remains your property--Walk Through Paradise is copyrighted as a compilation. This means that you retain all rights to your own work of art.

You must also decide if you'd like to have some personal information about yourself included in the book. In this way, the media and public can gain a greater awareness about your personal and family history, pen names, occupation and education, memberships, awards, and other writings, as well as your own personal or philosophical statement. We have set aside a special biographical section in the anthology for this purpose. And although we must charge a nominal fee for this service, you are under no obligation to include this information. Your poem can be published without it if you wish. Please see the enclosed Biographical Data Form for further information.

In the meantime, our design department has already begun working on a distinctive layout for your poem. In a few months you will receive a typeset "publisher's proof" of your poem and layout for your own final review and proofreading before publication. But remember, you must complete the enclosed Author's Release form and return it to us as soon as possible. And, if you wish to own a copy of Walk Through Paradise, at our special pre-publication price, please also complete the enclosed order form.

Again, congratulations. We feel you have a rare talent, and look forward to the publication of your poem in Walk Through Paradise.

Sincerely,

Howard Ely

Howard Ely
Managing Editor

P.S. You should be genuinely proud of your accomplishment. We receive thousands of poems each year and we choose only a very few for publication. It is our pleasure to publish fine poems such as yours in our anthologies. We strive for the highest quality publications of their kind, both in terms of the literary talent presented, and in the artistry of the finished product. And, if you decide to order Walk Through Paradise, we are so confident that you will love the quality of the edition, and the way your poetry is presented, that we can proudly offer an unconditional money-back guarantee. If for any reason you are dissatisfied, your money will be promptly refunded.



... When I realized that this was a form ACCEPTANCE letter. The italicized Reader's Digest / Publisher's Clearing House format and the stamped / computer-generated signature of "Howard Ely" were offensive enough...

... but then I found THIS.

This
"Howard
Ely"
character
wanted
ME to
pay HIM
to publish
MY poem!
There was
more
material
in the
envelope
so I
read
on...



Special Pre-publication Discount... *Walk Through Paradise*

☐ Yes, I wish to own *Walk Through Paradise* at the special pre-publication discount price. Please send me the copy or copies I have indicated below, immediately upon publication. I must be delighted or my money will be promptly refunded.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Poem's Author (if different) _____

Phone (in case of questions) _____

Please make checks payable to The National Library of Poetry or charge to:

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Account Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Please add \$4.00 per item postage and handling. U.S. funds only — outside U.S. add \$8.00 per item postage and handling
11419-10 Cronridge Drive • Post Office Box 704 • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 (MD res. please add 5% sales tax)

Please send me the following volumes at the *Special Pre-publication Discount* Price:

Deluxe Hardbound Edition
(Publisher's List Price, \$69.95)

☐ First copy.....\$49.95

_____ Additional copies.....\$35.00 each

☐ Please also include my biographical profile in a special section in the book.....\$20.00

The literature I perused assured me I was under no obligation to buy anything, but if I wanted to see my two-legged calf in print I'd have to cough up the cost.

Contest Rules

Eligibility: This contest is open to all poets whether published or not, and regardless of experience. Current and former employees of The National Library of Poetry, The International Society of Poets, or Watermark Press, and their relatives are not eligible. All poems must be 20 lines or less. Only one entry per contest.

Prizes: Complete sets of prizes are awarded at the end of each contest. All prizes are guaranteed to be awarded. Grand Prize is \$1000.00 in cash. There are 10 Second Prizes of \$50.00 cash each and 59 Third Prizes of Gifts with a retail value of \$28.00 each. Duplicate prizes are awarded in case of ties.

Decisions: Judges are members of the National Library of Poetry Selection Committee. Entries are judged on the basis of originality, creative imagination, characterization, artistic quality, and the adherence to line limits. All decisions of the judges are final.

Fees: There are no entry fees, no subsidy payments, and no purchase of any kind required to enter and win the contest.

Rights: All poems remain the property of the artist. By submitting a poem for this contest, the artist may also be eligible for the one time publication of the poem by The National Library of Poetry in a hardbound anthology. The artist however, is under no obligation whatsoever to purchase a copy of the anthology in which the poem may appear.

Notification: All prize winners will be notified by mail. For a complete list of prize winners, send a stamped, self-addressed business size envelope to: Prize Winners, National Library of Poetry Contest, PO Box 704, Owings Mills, MD 21117.

Questions: For further information, contact:

The National Library of Poetry
11419-10 Cronridge Drive, PO Box 704
Owings Mills, MD 21117
(410) 356-2000

© The National Library of Poetry, 1994

3 Questions We Are Most Often Asked

Q. How does the contest work?

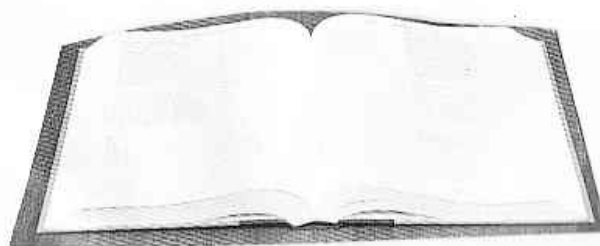
A. Each year, we sponsor the North American Open Poetry Contest to encourage new artists and undiscovered talent to submit their work for evaluation. We receive thousands of entries, each of which is evaluated by our selection committee. A number of entries are disqualified because the artistry does not meet our quality standards. However, some entries — those that our Selection Committee believes display considerable talent — are advanced to semi-finalists in the contest. Additionally, if we feel artists have particular merit, we will offer to publish their poem in one of our hardbound anthologies.

Q. What prizes am I eligible for?

A. For every contest, we award 70 prizes to deserving poets. Grand Prize is \$1000.00 in cash. There are also 10 Second Prizes of \$50.00 each, and 59 Third Prizes of gifts valued at \$28.00 each. We award additional prizes in case of ties.

Q. Am I under any obligation to purchase anything?

A. None whatsoever. We select poems for our contests based on their merits, without regard to any purchase. Of course, many people who do not win contest prizes also wish to guarantee publication by purchasing copies of the edition in which their poem will appear. We welcome these orders and can proudly offer an unconditional guarantee to our customers. Let's face it, all publishers must sell books in order to stay in business. We have been successful publishers since 1949, because of our outstanding reputation for quality craftsmanship. Our printing division has won the prestigious Maryland Print Quality Award for two years. We publish only hardbound volumes of heirloom quality, utilizing the finest milled paper and the highest quality bindery available. The reason we are able to profit from poetry publishing is because people who purchase our books are delighted with the quality and value. Our customers include libraries, bookstores, recording companies, magazines, newspapers, freelance reviewers, historical societies, foundations, and fine poets like you.



The National Library of Poetry

11419-10 Cronridge Drive • Post Office Box 704 • Owings Mills, Maryland 81117 • (410) 856-8000

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA FORM

We are glad to be able to make your biographical profile available to the public and media in a **special biographical section**. We must charge a nominal fee (\$20) for the added costs of preparing and printing your biographical profile. However, you are in no way obligated to include this information.

Instructions: Please **PRINT** or **TYPE**. Answer only those items that you wish to include in your profile. You may leave any item blank. Please include \$20 for the added cost of this service.

SAMPLE BIOGRAPHY

LIEBKNECHT, MICHELLE

Pen name: Pat Munter; *Born:* December 11, 1958; Baltimore, MD; *Parents:* David Gill, Dolores Gill; *Spouse:* Patrick Liebknecht; February 26, 1987; *Children:* Timothy Wayne, Jeffrey Scott; *Education:* Franklin High, Villa Julie College; *Occupation:* Math teacher, North Point Elementary School, Baltimore, MD; *Memberships:* American Heart Association, Trinity Lutheran Church Scholarship Committee; *Honors:* Delta Kappa Gamma, Dean's list; *Other writings:* Several poems published in local newspapers, article for *The Saturday Evening Post*; *Personal note:* I strive to reflect the goodness of mankind in my writing. I have been greatly influenced by the early romantic poets.; *Address:* Reisterstown, MD 21136

Name _____

Pen name(s) _____

Date of birth _____ Place _____

Parents _____

Spouse _____

Date of marriage _____

Children _____

Honors (cont.) _____

Education _____

Other writings _____

Current Occupation _____

Memberships _____

Personal note or philosophical statement _____

Honors and Awards _____

City _____ State _____

(Extensive material may be edited due to space limitations.)

Signature _____

I'd also, apparently, ↑ have
to bare my soul to Howard.
"Thanks but no thanks,"
I thought.



The National Library of Poetry

11419-10 Cronridge Drive • Post Office Box 704
Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 • (410)356-2000

Author's Release Form

**Note: You must sign this form before
we can publish your poem.**

I hereby certify that my poem, which has been selected for publication by The National Library of Poetry, is my own original work and that it has never been published; or, if previously published, that I am the sole copyright owner. I hereby authorize its publication by The National Library of Poetry.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (in case of questions) _____

Title of Poem _____

Title of Book _____

Signature _____

© The National Library of Poetry, 1994



I made up my mind then
to decline the National Library
of Poetry's offer...

... so I wrote back to Howard,
sticking to the format he seemed
to prefer :

June 27, 1995

Howard Ely
Managing Editor
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF POETRY
11419-10 Cronridge Drive
P.O. Box 704
Owings Mills, MD
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
21117
(410) 356-2000

Dear Mr. Howard Ely,

[Re: Your interest in my calf born without hind legs ...]

I am writing to inform you that, after reading your letter dated June 5, 1994 [sic], I have decided not to proceed with your contest. Further, I want to retain all rights to my poem, "Prophecy", which you refer to as, "I see a calf born without hind legs ...", that I submitted to your 1995 North American Open Poetry Contest on March 26, 1995.

Naturally, as a semi-finalist, I was excited at the chance of winning one of 70 cash or gift prizes, and at the prospect of my poetry being published in your anthology. However, Howard, after some deliberation, I do not wish "Prophecy" to embark on a Walk Through Paradise at this time. Therefore, since you have assured me that I am under "no obligation whatsoever", I choose not to sign the Author's Release form, thus withholding permission for my poem to appear in your forthcoming anthology (Library of Congress ISBN 1-56167-285-8).

Thank-you so much for your enthusiastic endorsement of my poem. Kudos such as yours are a continuing source of inspiration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Westhead



The National Library of Poetry

11419-10 Cronridge Drive • Post Office Box 704 • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 • (410) 356-2000

Walk Through Paradise

Library of Congress ISBN 1-56167-285-8

I'm pleased to inform you that the initial typesetting of your poem for Walk Through Paradise has been completed. The enclosed publisher's proof represents your poem as it is now scheduled to appear in print. We're very excited to be able to bring your artistry to the attention of the media and the public through this hardbound edition.

And by the way, your poem is still in semi-final competition in our 1995 North American Open Poetry Competition—just imagine, you may be the winner of the \$1,000.00 Grand Prize or one of over 69 other cash or gift prizes. Our judges will not make a final determination until you return the enclosed proof with your corrections or approval. We want to make sure your poem is typeset exactly to your satisfaction before we forward it to the panel for final judging.

So please carefully review the publisher's proof . . . check carefully for typographical errors . . . indicate any changes directly on the proof, and return it to us in the enclosed envelope. If your poem is correct as is, please initial the proof and return it without changes. Please note that you must certify the accuracy of the proof either by making appropriate changes or initialing the proof.

Oh, and one final note. Many people have asked us if we can make available a commemorative plaque on which to present their poetry. We are glad to be able to do this. Your poem that has been selected for publication, or any other poem of your choice, can be beautifully laser printed on quality vellum within your choice of borders, then mounted on a walnut-finish plaque under lucite. These 10 1/2 by 13 inch plaques are truly impressive ways to exhibit your work in your home or office, and they make wonderful gifts, especially if the poem they contain has special meaning for someone. Please see the enclosed material for further information.

Walk Through Paradise promises to be one of the most widely read and highly acclaimed additions to the pool of poetic literature. I'm sure you'll value the opportunity to read the work of other fine poets from around the world—just as these other poets will appreciate the chance to read your artistry. Your contribution to this edition is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Howard Ely

Howard Ely
Managing Editor

P.S. If you have already ordered a copy of Walk Through Paradise, thank you. If you have not yet ordered a copy, and wish to do so, this will be your last opportunity to take advantage of the pre-publication discount. Our discount expires in four weeks.



Shortly thereafter, Howard responded. To my dismay, it appeared that he had disregarded my wishes entirely!

Indeed, it looked as if he and someone with the initials "C.S." had a grand scheme in mind for my artistry...

The National Library of Poetry

11419-10 Cronridge Drive • Post Office Box 704 • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 • (410) 356-8000

July 10, 1995

Wonderful
Select for "The Sound of Poetry"
CS

Re: Walk through Paradise

This publisher's proof represents your poem as it is now scheduled to appear in print. Please carefully review the publisher's proof. . . check carefully for typographical errors . . . indicate any changes directly on the proof, and return it to us in the enclosed envelope. If your poem is correct as is, please initial the proof, and return it without changes. Please note that you must certify the accuracy of this proof by making appropriate changes. ONLY INITIAL THE PROOF IF EVERYTHING IS CORRECT.

* NOTE: Poems must be 20 lines or less. Only one entry per contestant.

Prophecy

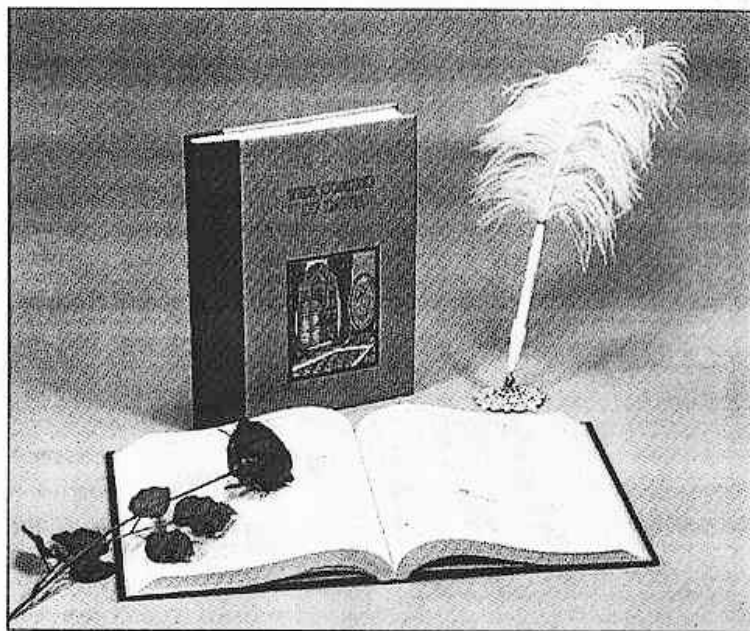
I see a calf born without hind legs
Rolled into a processing machine.
One last living sound and then
The grinding starts.
I see a motorized conveyor belt
(Supervised by the foreman--
A leper who needed a break)
Carrying bits of broken cow
Under glaring yellow heat lamps
To finally fall off the end slop into ornate boxes.
Efficient.
Good advertising.
Happy clown.
Happy people.
Over sixty
Zillion
Served.

--Jessica Westhead

Please return this proof within ^{4 weeks} ~~one week~~ so we can make our scheduled publication date.



They
tantalized
me
with
the
trappings
of
fame...



This Poetry Anthology Will Showcase Today's Most Talented Poets And Songwriters

- An heirloom quality publication using the finest materials and craftsmanship; 8 1/2" x 11" hardbound, approximately 500 pages
- A literary resource for public and academic libraries, recording companies, worldwide news media
- A fully indexed sourcebook of poetic talent to be used by editors and publishers
- A truly enjoyable reading experience and guide to aspiring poets and songwriters

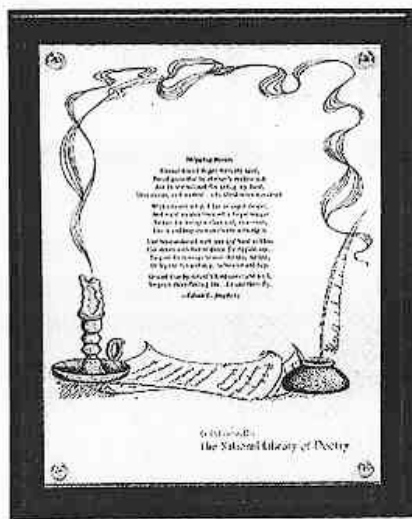
Book Titles:

Walk through Paradise
Mists of Enchantment
A Delicate Balance
Windows of the Soul
The Path Not Taken
A Voyage to Remember
The Rainbow's End
Shadows and Light
Tomorrow's Dream
The Voice Within

A superb collection
of over 3,000 poems
on every topic



THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF
POETRY



Your Poem Mounted On A Walnut Finish Plaque

Now you can commemorate the publication of your poem in this historic volume with a copy of your artistry laser printed on fine white vellum with gold leaf highlights mounted on a walnut finish plaque under lucite. Measures 10 1/2" x 13". Available with your choice of two borders (pictured at left).



... and
tempted
me
with
the
promise
of
immortality.



The Sound of Poetry Featuring Your Poem

- Full color dust jacket
- Hard clear plastic case
- High quality cassette tape
- Musical introduction by the English Chamber Orchestra
- Readings by nationally renowned speaker, Ira Westreich



The National Library of Poetry
11419 Cronridge Drive, PO Box 704
Owings Mills, MD 21117 Phone: (410) 356-2000





Howard
and
"C.S." even
took
pity on
me...
extending
me
one more
opportunity
to enjoy
my
published
poem
at a
generously
reduced
price.

I held

firm, though, and Howard, evidently sensing
my resolve, put an end to our correspondence.

Special Pre-publication Discount... Walk Through Paradise

FINAL CHANCE

☐ **Yes**, I wish to own *Walk Through Paradise* at the special pre-publication discount price. Please send me the copy or copies I have indicated below, immediately upon publication. I must be delighted or my money will be promptly refunded.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Poem's Author (if different) _____

Phone (in case of questions) _____

Please make checks payable to The National Library of Poetry or charge to:

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Account Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Please add \$4.00 per item postage and handling. **U.S. funds only** — outside U.S. add \$8.00 per item postage and handling
11419-10 Contridge Drive • Post Office Box 704 • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 (MD res. please add 5% sales tax)

Please send me the following volumes at the *Special Pre-publication Discount Price*:

Deluxe Hardbound Edition (Publisher's List Price, \$69.95)

☐ First copy.....\$49.95

_____ Additional copies.....\$35.00 each

☐ My poem mounted on a walnut-finish plaque.....\$38.00

Border:

☐ Flowers

☐ Candle/Quill

Only a few short years later,
though, I began to miss the
coily slanted, electronic calligraphy
of the National Library of
Poetry's front man, so I
decided to try my luck and submit
the only other poem I had ever written..



The National Library of Poetry
Suite 10437
1 Poetry Plaza
Owings Mills, MD
U.S.A.
21117

May 26, 1998

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept my submission, ODE TO SPARKY, for your poetry competition. This poem
numbers 16 lines.

I have enclosed a self-addressed envelope with sufficient IRC's (International Reply Coupons)
attached for the return of my poem. I have also enclosed a self-addressed postcard with sufficient
IRC's attached for your acknowledgement of the receipt of my submission.

Thank-you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jessica Westhead

By this time, "11419 Cronridge Drive"
had metamorphosed into "1 Poetry
Plaza".

This is the second poem I entered. I was pretty confident this time since "Ode to Sparky" had been previously published in a high school newspaper.

ODE TO SPARKY

by Jessica Westhead

My Sparky was alive and well,
But now he's just a furry shell.

I loved that canine long and hard.
I buried him in my backyard.

He ran across the street one day,
And never looked the other way.

He didn't see the danger there--
He didn't see, or didn't care.

But either way I'll never know;
He's helping make the daisies grow.

I should have tied old Sparky down
With all the monster trucks in town.

I never knew a dog or cat
Could make a mess as big as that.

The truck was big, and must have hurt,
But now my dog's as dead as dirt.



The National Library of Poetry

1 Poetry Plaza • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117-6282 • (410) 356-2000 • www.poetry.com

VIP # P1501454-165

November 23, 1998

Dear Jessica,

It is my pleasure to inform you that after carefully reading "Ode To Sparky" our Selection Committee has certified your poem as a semi-finalist in our North American Open Poetry Contest. Your poem will automatically be entered into the final competition held in Winter 1999. As a semi-finalist, you have a very real chance of winning one of 70 cash or gift prizes — you may even win the \$1,000.00 Grand Prize (a complete list of prizes can be found on one of the enclosures to this letter).

Imagine your poem, "Ode To Sparky," published in a beautiful anthology!

And, Jessica, in view of your unique talent, we also wish to publish "Ode To Sparky" in our forthcoming anthology. This outstanding poetry collection, scheduled for publication in Spring 1999, will be a classic, edition-quality hardbound volume — printed on fine-milled paper to last for generations. It will make a handsome addition to any library, a treasured family keepsake, or a highly valued personal gift.

No obligation whatsoever

Before going any further, Jessica, let me make one thing clear . . . "Ode To Sparky" was selected for possible publication, and as a contest semi-finalist, on the basis of your unique talent. You are under no obligation whatsoever to submit any entry fee, any subsidy payment, or to make any purchase of any kind. Of course, many people do wish to own a copy of the publication in which their artistry appears. If this is the case, we welcome your order — and guarantee your satisfaction. Please see the enclosed material for special discount information if you are interested in owning your own copies.

So what happens now?

As I mentioned above, "Ode To Sparky" has automatically been entered in the final competition — so you need take no action on the contest at this time. However, regarding the publication of your poem, you must complete the enclosed Author's Release Form stating that the poem you submitted is your original work of art, and that you give us permission to publish it . . . and let me assure you, your poem remains your property — each volume is copyrighted as a compilation. This means that you retain all rights to your own work of art.

cont. →

AND HURRAH!!

Howard replied soon after
with familiar words of
praise...



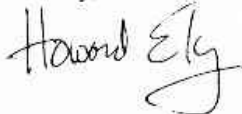
cont. ... VERY familiar, in fact.

You must also decide if you'd like to have some personal information about yourself included in the book. In this way, the media and public can gain a greater awareness about your personal and family history, pen names, occupation and education, memberships, awards, and other writings, as well as your own personal or philosophical statement. We have set aside a special biographical section in the anthology for this purpose. And although we must charge a nominal fee for this service, you are under no obligation to include this information. Your poem can be published without it if you wish. Please see the enclosed Personal Data Form for further information.

In the meantime, our design department has already begun working on a distinctive layout for "Ode To Sparky." In a few weeks you will receive a typeset Publisher's Proof of your poem and layout for your own final review and proofreading before publication. But remember, you must complete the enclosed Author's Release Form and return it to us as soon as possible. And, if you wish to own copies of this treasured anthology at our special pre-publication price, please also complete the enclosed order form.

Again, congratulations, Jessica. We feel you have a special talent and look forward to the publication of your poetic artistry.

Sincerely,



Howard Ely
Managing Editor

P.S. Jessica, you should be genuinely proud. We receive thousands of poems each year, and we have chosen your notable work for publication. It is our pleasure to publish fine poems such as "Ode To Sparky" in our anthologies. We strive for the highest quality publications of their kind, both in terms of the unique literary talent presented and in the artistry of the finished product. And, if you decide to order copies of the anthology, we are so confident that you will love the quality of the edition and the way your poetry is presented that we can proudly offer an unconditional money-back guarantee. If for any reason you are dissatisfied, your money will be promptly refunded.



This time, I decided
just to sit back and let
the process run its course.

Poetry Contest \$24,000 in Prizes

*The National Library
of Poetry to award
250 total prizes*

Owings Mills, MD – The National Library of Poetry has just announced that \$24,000 in prizes will be awarded over the next 12 months in the North American Open Amateur Poetry Contest. The deadline for entry into the contest is June 30, 1995. Another contest begins July 1, 1995. The contest is open to everyone and entry is free.

"We're especially looking for poems from new or unpublished poets," indicated Howard Ely, spokesperson for The National Library of Poetry. "we have a ten year history of awarding large prizes to talented poets who have never before won any type of writing competition."

How To Enter

Anyone may enter the competition simply by sending in one original poem, any subject, any style to:



The Coming of Dawn, featured above, is one of NLP's recent deluxe hardbound anthologies.

The National Library of Poetry
450 Tapscott Road
Unit #1, Dept. 4691
Scarborough, Ontario
M1B 5W1

The poem should be no more than 20 lines, and the poet's name and address must appear on the top of the page. Entries must be postmarked by June 30, 1995. "Each poem received will be acknowledged, usually within seven weeks," indicated Mr. Ely.

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF
POETRY



Sure enough, Howard wrote again.

The National Library of Poetry

1 Poetry Plaza • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117-6282 • (410) 356-2000 • www.poetry.com

I'm pleased to inform you that the initial typesetting of your poem scheduled for publication in our upcoming anthology has been completed. The enclosed publisher's proof represents your poem as it is now scheduled to appear in print. We're very excited to be able to bring your artistry to the attention of the media and the public through this hardbound edition.

And by the way, your poem is still in semi-final competition in our 1998 North American Open Poetry Competition--just imagine, you may be the winner of the \$1,000.00 Grand Prize or one of over 69 other cash or gift prizes. Our judges will not make a final determination until you return the enclosed proof with your corrections or approval. We want to make sure your poem is typeset exactly to your satisfaction before we forward it to the panel for final judging.

So please carefully review the publisher's proof . . . check carefully for typographical errors . . . indicate any changes directly on the proof, and return it to us in the enclosed envelope. If your poem is correct as is, please initial the proof and return it without changes. Please note that you must certify the accuracy of the proof either by making appropriate changes or initialing the proof.

Oh, and one final note. Many people have asked us if we can make available a commemorative plaque on which to present their poetry. We are glad to be able to do this. Your poem that has been selected for publication, or any other poem of your choice, can be beautifully laser printed on quality vellum within your choice of borders, then mounted on a walnut-finished plaque under lucite. These 10 1/2-by 13-inch plaques are truly impressive ways to exhibit your work in your home or office, and they make wonderful gifts, especially if the poem they contain has special meaning for someone. Please see the enclosed material for further information.

Our upcoming anthology promises to be one of the most widely read and highly acclaimed additions to the pool of poetic literature. I'm sure you'll value the opportunity to read the work of other fine poets from around the world--just as these other poets will appreciate the chance to read your artistry. Your contribution to this edition is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Howard Ely

Howard Ely
Managing Editor

P.S. *If you have already ordered a copy of the anthology in which your poem is scheduled to appear, thank you. If you have not yet ordered a copy, and wish to do so, this will be your last opportunity to take advantage of the pre-publication discount. Our discount expires in four weeks.*



The National Library of Poetry

1 Poetry Plaza • Owings Mills, Maryland 21117-6282 • (410) 356-2000 • www.poetry.com

VIP# P1501454-165

December 11, 1998

Wonderful verse!
Select for the "Sound of Poetry"
- PS



Re: Shelter in the Shade

This publisher's proof represents your poem as it is now scheduled to appear in print. Please carefully review the publisher's proof . . . check carefully for typographical errors . . . indicate any changes directly on the proof, and return it to us in the enclosed envelope. If your poem is correct as is, please initial the proof and return it without changes. Please note that you must certify the accuracy of this proof by making appropriate changes. Only initial the proof if everything is correct. By returning this proof, you authorize us to publish your poem with corrections, if necessary, as indicated below.

NOTE: This proof must be returned postmarked no later than **January 11, 1999**, so we can make our scheduled publication date. Poems must be 20 lines or less. Only one entry per contestant.

Ode To Sparky

My Sparky was alive and well,
But now he's just a furry shell.

I loved that canine long and hard.
I buried him in my backyard.

He ran across the street one day,
And never looked the other way.

He didn't see the danger there,
He didn't see, or didn't care.

But either way I'll never know;
He's helping make the daisies grow.

I should have tied old Sparky down
With all the monster trucks in town.

I never knew a dog or cat
Could make a mess as big as that.

The truck was big, and must have hurt,
But now my dog's as dead as dirt.

Jessica Westhead

© 1998 The National Library of Poetry; "Ode To Sparky" Copyright © Jessica Westhead

Once more, the mysterious
"C.S." heartily endorsed my
poetry as well. And again,
I resisted their charms.



I was curious to see, though, if I had truly missed my "final chance" so months after the deadline to return the proof of "Ode to Sparky" had passed, I conducted a telephonic experiment...



THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF POETRY (410) 356-2000
Office Hours: 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM (Eastern Time) Monday - Friday

Monday, June 7, 1999, 10 AM

I phone the main number listed on The National Library of Poetry literature, (410) 356-2000, and a mellifluous recorded baritone purrs, "Thank-you for calling our Editorial Offices." Strangely, no specific mention is made of the National Library of Poetry, but I figure I must be in the right place. Not knowing Howard Ely's three-digit extension, I dial 5 to speak with a Customer Service Representative. Another recording tells me the line is busy—evidently the Customer Service Reps are already swamped with calls at 10 in the morning from hordes of poets keen on joining the ranks. While I wait, I'm soothed by Baroque hold music. As I recall, music from the same period is the advertised accompaniment for "Sound of Poetry" selections. At last, a live human greets me with a whiny, nasal male voice, and I dive right in.

ME: Hi there, my name is Jessica Westhead and my poem, "Ode to Sparky," was certified as a semi-finalist in your North American Open Poetry Contest. I'd like speak with Mr. Howard Ely, please.

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE: Howard's not in right now.

ME: Oh, that's too bad. Could I please have your name then?

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP: Howie Lewis.

ME: Ok, Howie, I wonder if you could help me out.

HOWIE: Sure, what was your name again—Westbeck?

ME: Westhead.

HOWIE: And your first name?

ME: Jessica.

HOWIE (after making some typing noises that are much more discreet than the clacking racket I'm making on my IBM 486 keyboard throughout our exchange): Are you still at [Howie gives my parents' address]?

cont. →

cont.

ME: Yep. I'm still in your records then. Do you need my VIP number?

HOWIE: No, I've got it right here.

ME: Oh, great. Ok, Howie, I missed the January 11, 1999 deadline, by quite a stretch obviously (I chuckle wryly.), so my poem wasn't published in your Spring 1999 anthology, which is unfortunate, really, because I think the image of a dead dog finding *Shelter in the Shade* is actually poetry in itself, wouldn't you say?

(**HOWIE** chortles heartily in assent.)

ME: But would it still be possible to order "Ode to Sparky" laser printed on quality vellum with my choice of border, and mounted on a walnut-finished plaque under lucite? I'd like to order a lot of those, actually. Christmas is coming, and I just know my family and friends would all enjoy the gift of my artistry.

HOWIE: Do you have the form for that?

ME: Yes, I think I do.

HOWIE: Just send the forms in.

ME: Oh, ok. And my poem was also selected for "The Sound of Poetry"—which I was just tickled pink about, by the way—and I'd like to order a whole bunch of "Ode to Sparky" tapes, if that's possible.

HOWIE: As long as you send the forms in there'll be no problem with that.

ME: Do you offer CD's now as well?

HOWIE: No, just the tapes.

ME: Ok. And I have a question about that—do you get famous people to read the poems?

HOWIE: No, it's just one of our guys here.

cont. →



cont.

ME (making disappointed sound): Oh. Because I'd really love Ernest Borgnine to read mine.

HOWIE: Well, if we did that then everyone would want him.



ME: You're right about that! Ok, well, I could send a cheque off today. And if I'm not delighted I can get my money back, right?

HOWIE: That's right.

ME: What exactly is your policy on that—if I'm disgusted with the finished product I just send it back for a full refund? What if my family and friends are disgusted?

HOWIE: Whoever placed the order can get a full refund. Just send us a note and we'll refund your money in whatever form you gave it to us—if you sent us a cheque, we'll send you back a cheque, and so on.

ME: Great. Well, thanks for your help, Howie. I wonder if I could have Howard Ely's extension if that's possible.

HOWIE: Hold on—

I'm treated to more Baroque and then I'm transferred back to the recorded welcome from the Editorial Offices.



The National Library of Poetry, it seemed, would still welcome me and my money with open arms.

Also listed on the NLP stationary was -JOY!- a web site. My next destination, then, was www.poetry.com.

Howard on the Web!!!



✓ POETRY CONTEST \$48,000 IN PRIZES

■ ENTER THE CONTEST NOW

Enter your poetry
Thousands in prizes
given away every year
It's free!

■ POETRY HALL OF FAME

Look here to see many
poets who have put
their poetry on the web
for all of the world to
see.

■ GET PUBLISHED!

Your poetry may be
published in one of our
anthologies. Or you
can print your own
books. Imagine, a 60'
or 80 page book filled
with your own poetry.

■ ULTIMATE POETRY LINKS

Come look at our links
to great poetry all over
the web. Please let us
know what you think.
You can add if you
like.

■ WHAT'S NEW

See what's new in the
International Library of
Poetry. Don't forget
our convention in
August.

Previous Winners

Chat With Other Poets

Int'l Library of Poetry

Int'l Society of Poets

THE INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF

POETRY



Poetry Contest \$48,000 in Prizes

The International Library of Poetry to Award 250 Total Prizes to
Amateur Poets in Coming Months

Owings Mills, MD -The International Library of
Poetry has just announced that \$48,000.00 in prizes
will be awarded over the next 12 months in the Open
Amateur Poetry Contest. The contest is open to
everyone and entry is free.



"We're especially looking for poems from new or
unpublished poets," indicated Howard Ely, spokesperson for The
International Library of Poetry. "We have a ten year history of
awarding large prizes to talented poets who have never before won
any type of writing competition"

The World's Largest Poetry Organization

Having awarded over \$150,000 in prizes to poets worldwide in recent
years, The International Library of Poetry, founded in 1982 to
promote the artistic accomplishments of contemporary poets, is the
largest organization of its kind in the world. Anthologies published by
the organization have featured poems by more than 100,000 poets.

"We're always looking for new poetic talent," said spokesperson
Howard Ely. "I hope you urge your associates to enter the contest.
There is absolutely no obligation whatsoever, and they, or you, could
be our next big winner."

[Enter the Contest Now](#) | [Poetry Hall of Fame](#) | [Get Published!](#) |
[Ultimate Poetry Links](#)

[What's New](#) | [Previous Winners](#) | [Chat With Other Poets](#) |
[International Library of Poetry](#) | [International Society of Poets](#)

If you have any questions, please send a brief message to The International Library
of Poetry. Please be sure to include your name and full postal address, or you will
not receive a response. Thank you.

Howard on the Web!!



*

THE INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF FAME
POETRY HOME | ENTER THE CONTEST NOW | POETRY HALL OF
GET PUBLISHED! | ULTIMATE POETRY LINKS | WHAT'S NEW
Chat With Other Poets

We are in the process of setting up a chat area. Poets will be able to leave messages or questions and other poets or ILP staff can respond. All messages will be posted in this area for everyone to see.

Please bear with us while we set this up. Thank you for visiting The International Library of Poetry. We look forward to hearing from you and reading your poetry.

Thanks!

Home | Enter the Contest Now | Poetry Hall of Fame | Get Published! | Ultimate Poetry Links
What's New | Previous Winners | Chat With Other Poets | International Library of Poetry |
International Society of Poets

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* Now THIS was a disappointment. There I was, primed for a virtual-cyber-shmooze fest, and this was as far as I could get. QUITE a let-down, really...



POETRY
CONTEST

- HOME
- AUSTRALIA
- UNITED KINGDOM
- INT'L SOCIETY OF POETS
- POETRY HALL

- OF FAME
- ULTIMATE LINKS

AUSTRALIA | UNITED KINGDOM

On-Line Entry Form - United States and Canada

FREE entry form! No stamp needed!

[The Official Rules](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions](#) | [How to Enter by Mail](#)

The International Library of Poetry will award 250 prizes totaling \$48,000.00 to amateur poets in the coming months. Type your name, street address, and poem below and then click submit.

Anyone can enter the competition simply by submitting ONLY ONE original poem, 20 lines or less, any subject, any style. All poets who enter will receive a response concerning their artistry within seven weeks.



Poet's Name:

First:

Middle:

Last:

Pen Name:

Street Address: (Please make sure this is complete.)

Address:

Address:

City: State:

Zip:

Country: (If not U.S.)

Email

Address: (Optional)

Title of Your Poem:

Your poem:

(If your poem doesn't fit entirely in the box, it's over twenty lines and will be disqualified.)

How did you hear about our web page?

(You must select one to complete your entry)

- ☐ Parade Magazine ☐ The Comics ☐ A Daily Newspaper
☐ A Teen Magazine ☐ A Women's Magazine ☐ The Web ☐ Other

Submit Your Poem

Erase And Start Again

Please submit only one poem.

If you are having a problem submitting using this form, please e-mail your entry in by clicking here. Don't forget to include your name and full postal address.

If you have any customer service questions, please send a brief message to [Customer Service](#). Please be sure to include your name and address. Thank you.

POETRY CONTEST

HOME | AUSTRALIA | UNITED KINGDOM
INT'L SOCIETY OF POETS | POETRY HALL OF FAME | ULTIMATE
LINKS



<http://www.poetry.com>

↑↑
Howard on the web!!!

* Wow.
I really think this little survey speaks VOLUMES..

WHY THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF POETRY IRKS ME SO

Essentially, a vanity press charges its subscribers a fee to publish something of value to them. By its nature, then, **The National Library of Poetry is a vanity press.** For some official-sounding quotes, I looked up "vanity press" on Da Net, and found a nice explanation listed on the site for The Better Business Bureau Serving Massachusetts, Maine and Vermont (www.bosbbb.org):

The vanity or subsidy book publishing [business] . . . has been termed the "Vanity Press"; although vanity, as such, may not be the reason or motivation for utilizing the services of a vanity publisher . . . the author contemplating a vanity publishing venture should realize that the publisher can very well make its money from printing a book at the author's expense without the necessity of expert or aggressive promotion on the part of the publishing firm . . . the vanity book publisher requires the author to underwrite either a partial or a total amount of [the] cost of publishing and promoting the book.

For good measure, I visited The National Library of Poetry's home cyberturf and checked out The Better Business Bureau Serving Greater Maryland (www.baltimore.bbb.org). Lo and behold, I found a warning about a vanity press targeting the Suit Set:

"Dear Business Executive" begins the letter. "We would like to include your name and accomplishments in our next edition of "Who's Who in the Business World." All too frequently, pitches for "Who's Who" type publications, biographies, or nominations for awards or special memberships have a catch to them . . . The executive who is flattered into providing the details of his or

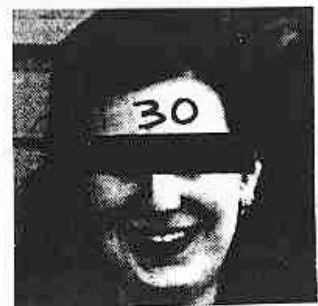


cont. →

cont.

her career may be stuck with a subscription fee, a membership fee, a charge for the listing, an inflated price for buying the publication, or a solicitation to purchase one or more copies of the publication. There is no guarantee that the advertised publication will be distributed beyond those persons purchasing copies for themselves or even that it will be published at all.

Now, to clarify my stance here, I have no grievance with the *idea* of a vanity press--when people enter knowingly and willingly into business with a subsidy publisher, who am I to complain? Heck, this zine you're grasping is the product of The Jessica Westhead Vanity Press of Self-Gratification™. What bothers me is that the National Library of Poetry *doesn't say* it's a vanity press. Consequently, unsuspecting writers end up submitting their work to what *appears to be* a legitimate writing contest that offers a cash reward for winning entries. However, it seems that *all* entrants are contacted--how else to explain the decision to reproduce my concrete poem about a two-legged cow in an anthology entitled Walk Through Paradise, or to print my ode to a road-killed canine in the whimsically named Shelter in the Shade, or the actual publication of a poem with the title, "Death", in a volume called Sparkles in the Sand? The National Library of Poetry's hope is that its "poetry winners" will be so elated at the prospect of being published that they won't think twice about mailing off a cheque to cover the publication costs for which they've been discreetly billed. This, I feel, is an underhanded way of preying not merely on a person's "vanity", but on her or his often very passionate, and certainly very personal, wish to be a "real writer".



***THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF POETRY:
REPRISE***

Monday, June 14, 1999, 3 PM

A week has passed since I chatted with Howie Lewis, and I find myself still plagued by unanswered questions. I also want to renew my efforts to have Howard Ely's voice caress my ear. So once more I phone (410) 356-2000. Again, I dial 5 to reach the Customer Service Department. A familiar recording tells me that someone will be with me in a moment if I stay on the line. This time, though, there is no hold music--only a silence so unnerving that after a while I begin to suspect a bad connection. Wincing at the spectre of my looming phone bill, I try the number again. And again the line is quiet. Too quiet. Denied the soothing Baroque muzak, I feel myself beginning to fray at the edges. At last, a young woman's bland, but distinctly human, voice rescues me.

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP: How can I help you?

ME: Hi there. This is Jessica Westhead. Is Howard Ely in, please?

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP: No, I'm sorry.

ME: Ok, then. Could I please have your name?

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP: Miriam.

cont. →



cont.

ME: Ok, Miriam, I have a few questions to ask. I was hoping Howard Ely could answer them, but maybe you can help me. First of all, I was wondering if you could tell me who "C.S." is--those initials are stamped onto the publisher's proof of my poem, "Ode to Sparky", and I just wanted to thank C.S. for endorsing my "wonderful verse" and recommending it for "The Sound of Poetry".

MIRIAM: Um, I'd have to check on that--I'm actually new here. You want to know what the initials C.S. stand for? Just the person's title?

ME: Well, the name and the title.

MIRIAM: Ok, hold on a second please.

(She puts me on hold and this time that eerie silence nearly drives me mad before she comes back on the line.)

MIRIAM (sounding far too chipper for my liking):
It's Cynthia Stephens, our Senior Editor.

ME: Ah. Good to know. Second of all, I'd really, really like to see my poem published. Now, I missed the January 11, 1999 deadline to appear in Shelter in the Shade, but I wonder, since Howard Ely seemed to like my poem so much, if I could get "Ode to Sparky" published in the current anthology if I send in a cheque and the proper forms?

MIRIAM: Yes you could. We could transfer you into a later publication.

ME: Could you tell me that publication's name?

cont. →



cont.

MIRIAM: Actually we only know that when we find out which one we can fit you into.

ME: Ok, well, actually my problem right now is that I'm really broke. What if I just send in the Author's Release Form so you can go ahead and publish "Ode to Sparky" in your current anthology, and then I just borrow a copy from my local library?

MIRIAM: Sure.

ME (failing to keep the shock out of my voice): Pardon?

MIRIAM: Your library can order a copy, and we do offer complimentary copies to the libraries.

ME: And my poem would be in there?

MIRIAM (rather smugly): That's right.

ME (resolutely): Alright, then, Miriam. I was also hoping I could speak to an editor there who could perhaps give me some constructive criticism of my poem. I really want to succeed in this business and if I could get some detailed feedback about how I could improve or even what I'm doing right I just know I'd be a step ahead.

MIRIAM (not sounding sorry at all): I'm sorry, I can't do that right now. We receive such a high volume it's impossible to critique each individual poem.

ME: Ok, then. Finally, I visited the web site for the International Library of Poetry--



cont. →

(MIRIAM makes a strangely delighted sound.)

Con t.

ME: --and I clicked on the heading for "Previous Winners", hoping I'd see a list of the winners of the 70 cash or gift prizes and the \$1,000.00 Grand Prize you advertise, but all I could find was a list of poem titles published in various anthologies. Do you actually announce the winners of the \$48,000 in prizes anywhere?

MIRIAM: Well, we've just moved offices so we're having some problems with updating our web site, but it should be up and running properly soon.

ME: Well, Miriam, thanks for your time. This has been really helpful.

MIRIAM: You're welcome.

We sever our connection and I'm left feeling hollow inside. The news that The National Library of Poetry gives complimentary copies of its anthologies to public libraries was unexpected, and at first seems to have blown my whole case against The NLP out of the water. But slowly it dawns on me that this discovery is in fact a boon--*I've found a loophole!* And my excitement builds as I realize that my new objectives are clear: I will write a thank-you letter to Senior Editor Cynthia Stephens for her endorsement of my art; I will continue my pursuit of the elusive Howard Ely, and I will diligently search the International Library of Poetry's web site for evidence of "real" poetry winners. **Finally, and most importantly, I will endeavour to get "Ode to Sparky" published, for free, in the venerated annals of The National Library of Poetry.**



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Poetry winner

A POEM by Whitby's [REDACTED], 20, was recently published by the National Library of Poetry in a volume called 'Sparkles in the Sand.' [REDACTED]'s poem, *Death*, won an editor's choice award for outstanding achievement. [REDACTED] is enrolled in the honours psychology program at [REDACTED] University and hopes to participate in an international university student exchange program in her third year.

Poetry winner is the first zine ever to be published by The Jessica Westhead Vanity Press of Self-Gratification™.

Comments and/or vanity press war stories would be gleefully received at:
jessw@interlog.com

