

grabbed us like an undertow,  
dragging tired children

to their weary rest  
and back again,  
for another round  
of summer.

## *Tip Boxes*

*Karen Neuberg*

Betty taught me  
to open one more button and bend  
while serving men  
hot turkey dinners and foamy Coke floats.  
She had beautiful, pale breasts  
which she lifted and pressed  
with her upper arms  
as she leaned.

Elsie glided slowly in gum-soled shoes,  
plates above her head.  
She was a white-haired, red-lipped, powdered twig  
who belonged in a room with doilies.  
Annie, an apple-cheeked dumpling,  
had hands capable of serving  
a scoop of ice cream so perfectly placed  
it hid the moldy crust on the last piece of pie.

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*"Nature gives you the face you had at twenty; it is up to you to merit*

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They instructed me to clean the grill  
with seltzer and pumice stone;  
to shine the counter and chrome  
endlessly with a tired rag.  
I opened my second button and let my pale hair fall  
across my eye, Veronica Lake-ish.  
I put all my tips into the grey metal box with my name  
that took its place among the others under the counter.

That summer,  
between the end of high school  
and the beginning of college,  
I read my Suggested Reading,  
counted my change, and waited.

## *Happiness*

*SuzAnne C. Cole*

It didn't take much today  
to flood me with joy —  
succulent oranges glowing  
on a blue pottery plate,  
scarlet velvet tulips drooping  
over an alabaster vase,  
the busy beaks of robins poking  
through the debris of winter,  
an unsought smile brightening  
a familiar face —  
may it always be so.

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*the face you have at fifty." Coco Chanel ~\$~ "You're only young once,*

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## *Through Eyes of Love*

*Elizabeth Simpson*

I was nine years old and sweltering in the heat of a Canadian prairie summer when the postman came up our steps on Clifton Street. My father had replaced our storm doors and windows with screens, and I was inside looking out when the postman knocked. His face brightened as my mother moved toward us, and I assumed his smile was in response to her beauty. I'd not yet learned that love has ways of magnifying pleasure in a child's eyes.

My father, whom I looked up to in the physical and metaphorical sense, stood five foot ten, but seemed a giant to me with his curly silvering hair. Neighboring women whispered that he was handsome, but I'd learned to see through his eyes when he praised my mother's porcelain skin and her smiling eyes. As she came toward the door on that hot summer morning, the postman stooped down to tell me my freckles came from catching sunbeams through our screen door. *You've been sprayed with beauty marks*, he laughed, and I believed him.

I was the middle child, padded on each side by a sister who also had freckles, though our parents had none. My mother complained that all her daughters looked like our father. My older sister said it was proof that we were adopted. I told my mother to stand behind the screen door and let the sun freckle her face to match ours. My younger sister toddled away when we stared at her freckled nose and knees.

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*but you can be immature forever." John Greier ~S~ "An old young*

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Though our freckles made clear we were sisters, our coloring differed. My older sister's hair was auburn, and reddish-brown freckles speckled her nose. My hair was dark brown, my cheeks criss-crossed by light brown freckles. My blond younger sister wore pale orange freckles that encouraged the boys to tease her. In grade three she came home in tears. My older sister and I checked our knees before breathing a sigh of relief.

Mother caught rain water to wash the thick curls that rested on our shoulders and then trimmed the bangs over our three broad foreheads. I was in my teens by the time I realized that her complaint about caring for our hair was a mask she wore to cover her pride. *Except for your freckles, you're all like your father*, she would say, a touch of sadness in her voice. It was then I realized the hair surrounding her delicate face was thinner and less buoyant than ours.

Our mother took us to a photographer when each of us reached our ninth birthday. He turned out airbrushed pictures that modified a portion of our freckles. As young adults, we hung these photographs in our separate bedrooms and wondered why our mother allowed him to tamper with reality. By then we had lost our preoccupation with freckles and talked instead of dancing, swimming, and homework.

I was seventeen when I learned that not everyone was as forgiving about freckles as my boyfriend was, this boy I'd met at fifteen and would marry at nineteen. That summer I got a job as a typist for the Provincial Health Services. When a senior official expressed his pleasure in hiring me, I thought he was referring to my typing speed. Instead, he asked me to pose for a poster that would advertise the link between drinking milk and healthy teeth. I walked the hour to and from the office thinking perhaps I might become a Hollywood star. The morning the photographer arrived, I brushed my teeth twice and worked hard

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*man, will be a young old man." Benjamin Franklin ~§~ "There are*

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to keep my lips from trembling as I smiled into the bright lights from one angle and then another.

My photograph was blown up the size of a kitchen table. Smiling back was the person I saw every morning in the mirror – a girl with perfect teeth. What I didn't know was that I was about to learn the truth in the expression that pride cometh before a fall. *Who would have guessed your freckles would stand out like that?* Mother asked, powdering my face before I left home. *I hadn't realized how many freckles you had,* the senior official confessed. *That's what you get for going to the beach with your boyfriend,* my older sister huffed. *The only beauty that counts is the one that comes from your heart,* my father said. *I love every freckle,* my boyfriend said, kissing my cheeks.

Having failed to be beautiful, I decided to make my mark saving lives. I applied to enter nursing in a city where no one knew me, and was accepted in Manitoba at the hospital where I'd been born before my father was transferred to Saskatchewan. A month before my eighteenth birthday, I arrived back at Misericordia, the hospital I'd left when I was five days old. There, I slept on a cot in a room I shared with two strangers. We each had a locker similar to the ones in high school and were expected to store all our belongings in it. The bathroom in the hall had no lock and was shared by all the girls on our second floor.

In two weeks I came to hear the word “misery” whenever anyone said the word Misericordia. In the late fifties, nursing students worked the wards immediately after their arrival, changing beds and bathing patients. I had no brothers and had never seen my parents or sisters naked. I ran away the morning I was scheduled to bathe a man, and returned to be reprimanded when darkness fell and I had nowhere else to go. The next day I was put on the terminal ward to bathe an old woman. She whimpered when I touched her with my soapy cloth. I promised

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*only three ages for women in Hollywood - Babe, District Attorney,*

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myself that I would not allow a stranger to bathe my grandma when she was dying.

On secret ballots, the girls in my class voted me their Freshie Queen. I was expected to compete with other girls from other careers for the crown awarded to the most beautiful student. I woke up from nightmares of bright lights shining on my freckled face. I felt ashamed for pretending to be someone I wasn't. I made an appointment with Mother Superior, the woman none of us had seen. In her dimly lit office, she reminded me that my classmates were depending on me to prove myself a worthy candidate. I phoned home to ask my mother why she had given birth in a Catholic hospital when we were Presbyterians. She said she trusted nuns not to think about their boyfriends while she was in labor, and remained deaf to my plea to return home.

In spite of her, I got on a train for the twelve hour ride back to Saskatchewan. My father and grandmother stood on the platform, their arms open to welcome me. Mother's absence was her way of saying she was ashamed of me. I steeled myself against her attempts to make me right my wrong by returning to the hospital.

Years later, living alone on my thirtieth birthday, I enrolled at university to finish the degree I'd been laboring over at night classes for years while I spent my daylight hours as a secretary. In autumn, I moved to Vancouver and at age thirty-five graduated with a Master's degree from the University of British Columbia. When I was given a sessional position at the university, my mother expressed her pride in my accomplishment. Just as my heart began to swell, she asked if I'd ever believed I'd graduate and teach at a big university with spectacular rose gardens. Her face crumpled when I told her my achievement had become possible only after I'd escaped her disappointment.

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*and Driving Miss Daisy." Goldie Hawn ~§~ "As you get older it is*

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Now, having reached my sixty-sixth birthday and retired from my career, I realize that only in the end do we see the beginning with clarity. Cancer has taken the lives of both my mother and sister. Later, I survived my own cancer and comforted my husband through his. I have seen what a difference devoted nurses make to our well-being. Still, I have not forgotten the disappointment on my mother's face when I came home. Nor have I forgiven myself for the harsh words I used to defend my decision.

As age spots multiply on the backs of my hands, I've come to realize we understand the workings of a mother's heart only after we mature. My mother had grown up on a Canadian homestead where medical help was too far away to contemplate. Now, I take flowers to her grave and whisper how grateful I am that she was finally proud of me. I have learned that affection within families surpasses understanding. I am reminded that I'm beautiful in the only way I can be – in the eyes of those who love themselves enough to love me too. Perhaps our sole responsibility to parents is to be grateful they blessed us with life in all its imperfections.

## *Vocations Club*

*Paula Sergi*

We met on Tuesdays, after school  
with Sister Mary Agnes,  
the two Mary Lous, Julie, Kay and me  
to learn about being nuns.

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*harder to have heroes, but it is sort of necessary." Ernest Hemingway*

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The convent sounded good to me —  
a room of my own, a single bed,  
time to think and pray, no arguments  
over what we'd watch – *Bonanza* versus *Dragnet*,  
or who would get the couch.  
I dug those crazy nun outfits, and hated hand-me-downs  
with too-long sleeves and too-tight waists.  
I'd take the smell of polished wood and incense  
over burnt grilled cheese and sour milk.  
I'd have a good job, teaching kids  
and all the chalk I'd want,  
long, unbroken pieces that echoed off the board,  
all eyes on me as I'd tap directions,  
conducting my classroom all day.  
People, I'd begin, today we're talking about. . .  
whatever I want to!  
Nuns got great rosaries with fancy beads  
and lots of gifts at Christmas.  
And the solitude of celibacy sounded pretty good,  
better than worrying about French kissing  
like my sister, better than pining for men,  
like Mom, whose men left anyway.

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~§~ *"The Sixties was the worst time in the world to try and bring up*

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## *Peek-a-Boo Freckles*

*Linda O'Connell*

Freckles, did you slide through my wrinkles and splatter in a  
splotch on my hand?  
Please, please, help me understand.

When I was young, I pancake-make-uped you away,  
but I wouldn't dare apply that stuff to my face today.

Facial sludge makes wrinkles more pronounced  
and so, heavy makeup I've denounced.

I smear slippery night-time cream onto my face and hands  
as though I am greasing crevices of crinkled Bundt cake pans.

I wonder freckles, yes I do,  
how on earth did you squeeze through?

I tug my face upwards at either side—  
Oh, that's where the rest of you freckles hide!

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*a child. They were exposed to all these crazy things going on." Nancy*

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## *As She Ages*

*Kerin Riley-Bishop*

Her skin is slightly weathered now  
leathered now  
I do not know when she got older  
I still see myself so young.

It is odd how time passes  
how age skips one while settling on another  
like a fickle tornado – this house, this house  
skip this one.

When lines show on my face  
I consider them treasures  
trophies of laughter and tears  
My years  
accumulated; good and bad.

Her skin is weathered now  
leathered now  
I do not ponder long on how  
but, when?

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*Reagan ~S~ "You know you're getting old when the candles cost more*

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## *Hold That Thought*

*Gail Denham*

There's a moment.  
It includes laughter.  
A dance anoints the time  
into a sponge that bounces  
and jiggles until tears of mirth  
make the occasion so juicy,  
it nearly slips away, but we  
clutch the event hard, close  
to our hearts, as if it were  
the keys to eternity,

which, of course, it is.

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*than the cake." Bob Hope ~§~ "Forty is the old age of youth, fifty is*

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*...To Wrinkles*

*Steve Cartwright*



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*the youth of old age." Victor Hugo ~§~ "A stockbroker urged me to buy*

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## *About the Authors*

**Carol Ayer** was born in Berkeley, California, in the early 1960s. She grew up in Orinda, California, and graduated from UC Berkeley. Her publication credits include *Woman's World* magazine, two Chicken Soup series books, *The Prairie Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *flashquake*. She has won awards from WOW-Women on Writing, *Artella Magazine*, and *Brady Magazine*.

**Roy A. Barnes** writes from southeastern Wyoming. His poetry and prose have appeared at *The Goblin Reader*, *Swimming Kangaroo*, *Heritage Writer*, *C/Oasis*, *Literary Liftoff*, *Poesia*, *The First Line*, and *Skive Magazine*. Roy's favorite baseball player is Hall of Famer Reggie Jackson, and his favorite team has always been the New York Yankees.

**Glenda Beall** reinvented herself in her late fifties, and followed her life-long passion. From writing as a child sitting high in a chinaberry tree, she came full circle and began publishing her work in 1995. She presently serves as Program Coordinator for the North Carolina Writers' Network West. Glenda is on faculty at the John C. Campbell Folk School. She also teaches at a junior college and in a church adult education program. Her classes are for senior adults who want to write about their lives for their children and grandchildren. She is a multi-genre writer, having published poetry in literary magazines, essays in anthologies and slick magazines. One of her stories will appear in *Cup of Comfort for Horse Lovers*. In her "spare" time, Glenda writes articles for the Valley River Humane Society

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*a stock that would triple its value every year. I told him, at my age, I*

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newsletter and for local newspapers. She also maintains a blog for her writers' group: [www.netwestwriters.blogspot.com](http://www.netwestwriters.blogspot.com).

**Betty Wilson Beamguard** writes full-time, specializing in magazine features, short fiction, and humorous essays. She has received over 30 honors for her writing, and her work has appeared in *Women in the Outdoors*, *South Carolina*, *Sasee*, *ByLine*, *The Writer* and more. In her humorous novel, *Weej and Johnnie Hit Florida*, two middle-age women spend a week in Florida trying to lose the jerk who is following them. Her most recent book is the biography of a woman who drives a draft horse with her feet – *How Many Angels Does It Take: The Remarkable Life of Heather Rose Brooks*. [www.home.earthlink.net/~bbeamguard](http://www.home.earthlink.net/~bbeamguard)

**Renie Burghardt**, who was born in Hungary, is a freelance writer with many credits. Her writing has appeared in 60 anthologies, like the Chicken Soup series, *Chocolate for Women*, Cup of Comfort series, Guideposts Books, *God Allows U-Turns*, God's Way Books, and many others. She has also been published in magazines like *Mature Living*, *Mature Years*, *Midwest Living*, *Missouri Life*, *Cat Fancy*, *Angels on Earth*, and others. She lives in a beautiful rural area and loves nature, animals, reading, writing, hiking, gardening, nature photography, and spending time with her friends and family, especially her three granddaughters. You can visit her blog here: [www.renieburghardtsworld.blogspot.com](http://www.renieburghardtsworld.blogspot.com).

**brenda wise byrd** is a grandmother who still lives in the Alabama town where she was born. She began journaling as a young teen and her joy in writing developed from that early beginning. Widowed at 26, she has seen life from a perspective none of us would choose, but one that has given her a greater appreciation of life and everyday pleasures. Much of her writing comes from observing the people and nature around her and transforming those "snapshots" into life lessons and inspirational moments. She has been locally published and is now seeking a broader audience.

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*don't even buy green bananas." Claude D. Pepper ~S~ "Live your life*

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**Steve Cartwright** is a cartoonist, illustrator, writer, and is kind to dogs. He works out of Atlanta and his art has appeared in several magazines, newspapers, books, various websites for commercial and governmental clients, and scribbling – but mostly drooling – on tavern napkins. He creates art pro bono for several animal rescue groups and was awarded the 2004 James Award for his cover art for *Champagne Shivers*. The *Cimarron Review* and *Stories for Children* covers display his illustrations. See his website [www.angelfire.com/sc2/cartoonsbycartwright](http://www.angelfire.com/sc2/cartoonsbycartwright) where no pixels were injured during the production.

**Al Carty** is a Californian retired to the high plains of New Mexico. He grows garlic and chilis and roams the piñon-juniper hills and writes about the thoughts he finds there. He has been romancing the Muse for a long time. Sometimes she dances for him and sometimes she hides among his thoughts. Since he discovered that re-writing makes her smile, his stories and poems have been accepted by *Menda City Review*, *5th Story Review*, *Written Word*, *Anthology Builder*, *Sage of Consciousness*, and *Cause and Effect Magazine*.

**Sally Clark** lives in Fredericksburg, Texas, with her husband, their children, and their grandchildren. Sally has practiced for retirement her entire life. When she finally achieved her goal in 2001, Sally began writing stories and poetry for children and adults. Her work has been published in the Chicken Soup series, the Cup of Comfort series, and several of June Cotner's gift books. Her poetry for children appears in Blooming Tree Press' *Summer Shorts* and *Sweet Dreams*. In the Christian field, Howard Books, Integrity Publishers, and Tyndale House have published her stories and poems.

**SuzAnne C. Cole** writes from a studio in the woods in the Texas Hill Country. She's published more than 350 poems, essays, short stories and articles in commercial and literary magazines, anthologies, and newspapers. She's been both a juried and featured poet at the Houston Poetry Fest and once won a haiku festival in Japan.

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*and forget your age." Norman Vincent Peale ~\$~ "My generation,*

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**TJ Coles** was raised and lived most of his life in the Pacific Northwest, in a large town that preferred to think of itself as a small town. He spent most of his summers on his grandmother's ranch and has worked as a logger, in mining, as a forest fire fighter, and as a security guard. TJ has been telling stories since he was eight years old. Some of them have even been true. A number of magazines and dozens of online publications have published Coles' work. His day job is in civil engineering.

**Ginger B. Collins'** sailing tales have appeared in *Cruising World* and *Living Aboard Magazine*. Both *The Atlanta Journal Constitution* and *The Cincinnati Inquirer* have published her articles in their Sunday Travel Sections. She has two pieces of short fiction scheduled this summer in *Pig Iron Press*, a flash fiction story this winter in *LunchHour Stories*, and a story in "Voices of..." anthology, coming early in 2009 from LaChance Publishing. Recently retired from Atlanta to Canada's Cape Breton Island, Ginger and husband, Melvin, plan a retirement of sailing local and distant shorelines. Her web site is [www.GingerBCollins.com](http://www.GingerBCollins.com).

**R. Scott Comegys** lives in Shreveport, Louisiana, where she is a late-bloomer Boomer. Vintage 1952, she is a single mom with one daughter in college and a son in high school. She toils by day as a civil servant, fondly recollecting manual typewriters with tri-carbon inserts. And, although life is good with digital cable, she dearly misses the Indian Head TV test pattern.

**Carole Creekmore**, a Baby Boomer who grew up in rural eastern North Carolina, is a widow with two adult children, two lovely granddaughters, and an English Bulldog, Okie. With degrees in English from Wake Forest University, she teaches composition, literature, creative writing, and humanities at an Atlanta area college, writes prose and poetry whenever inspired, and enjoys traveling, genealogy, and photography. She has had several articles

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*faced as it grew with a choice between religious belief and existential*

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and poems published over the years, as well as the essay “Holiday Expectations – Then and Now” recently published in *Silver Boomers*.

**Barbara Crooker** has been writing poetry for more than 30 years, with credits in magazines such as *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Margie*, *Poetry East*, *Smartish Pace*, *Nimrod*, *River City*, *Yankee*, *The Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Poetry International*, *The Denver Quarterly*, *America*, *Highlights for Children*, and anthologies such as *Good Poems For Hard Times* (Viking, edited by Garrison Keillor), *Sweeping Beauty: Contemporary Women Poets Do Housework* (University of Iowa Press), and *Boomer Girls* (University of Iowa Press). She has two full-length books, *Radiance* and *Line Dance*, both from Word Press. She grew up in the mid-Hudson Valley in the fifties, went to college in New Jersey in the sixties, and now lives and writes in rural northeastern Pennsylvania.

**Barbara Darnall**, the daughter of a high school English teacher and a West Texas lawyer and rancher, has been surrounded by words all her life and grew up telling stories and writing scripts for her playmates to perform. She graduated from Baylor University with B.A. and M.A. degrees in drama, and taught at the college level for several years. She writes poetry, articles, and personal narratives, and has written and directed numerous short dramas for her church. She has copyedited one book and several manuscripts, and, as a tax consultant for more than thirty years, she particularly enjoys the letter-writing contests she occasionally gets into with the IRS!

**Mary Deal**, a native of Walnut Grove, California (in the Sacramento River Delta) has lived in England, the Caribbean, and now resides in Kapaa, Hawaii. She has published three novels: *The Tropics: Child of a Storm – Caught in a Rip – Hurricane Secret*, an adventure trilogy; *The Ka*, a paranormal Egyptian fantasy; and *River Bones*, her first thriller which is set in her childhood hometown area. *Down to the Needle* will be her next thriller due out early 2010 and set along the California coastline. Learn more about Mary, read short

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*déspair, chose marijuana. Now we are in our Cabernet stage.” Peggy*

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stories, novel excerpts, and writing tips on her web site: [www.writeanygenre.com](http://www.writeanygenre.com).

**Gail Denham**, a native Oregonian, has showcased her state with poetry, short stories, and photography for over 30 years. Her work has been published in national and international magazines. In addition, she enjoys leading writing workshops. Married, with four sons and (almost) 13 grandchildren, plus two great-grands, she and her husband now live in central Oregon where Denham was raised. Life was quieter and slower when Denham grew up in Redmond and even in the years they brought up their family. She definitely appreciates the simple life best.

**Terrí Kirby Erickson** of Lewisville, North Carolina, is the author of a book of poetry entitled, *Thread Count*. Her work has been published or accepted by *The Broad River Review*, *The Dead Mule*, *Pisgah Review*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Paris Voice*, *Old Mountain Press*, *Thieves Jargon*, *Forsyth Woman*, and the Hickory Women's Resource Center anthology *Voices and Vision: A Collection of Writings By and About Empowered Women*. The Northwest Cultural Council also selected her work in 2006 and 2007 for an international juried poetry exhibit.

**Joanne Faries**, originally from the Philadelphia area, lives in Texas with her husband Ray. She considers herself fortunate to be able to pursue a writing career after eons in the business world. Published previously in *Doorknobs & Bodypaint*, Joanne writes short stories, flash fiction, and poetry. She has works on ALongStory Short.com, Associatedcontent.com, in *Shine* magazine, *Chicken Soup for the Soul Kids in the Kitchen*, and has started a novel. Joanne enjoys reading and movies, and is the film critic for the *Little Paper of San Saba*. She is a member of Trinity Writer's Workshop in Bedford, Texas.

**Margaret Fieland**, born and raised in New York City, has been around art and music all her life. Her poems, articles

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*Noonan ~§~ "Middle age is when your age starts to show around your*

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and children's stories have appeared in, among others, *Main Channel Voices*, *Echolocation*, and *Stories for Children Magazine*. You may visit her web site, [www.margaretfieland.com](http://www.margaretfieland.com).

**Betty Jo Goddard** traveled a packed road since her birth in Windsor, Illinois. While on that road, she acquired a BS from Illinois State, an MA from University of Colorado, and twenty-five years of teaching's bruises, successes, smiles, and love. Betty Jo retired from teaching in 1983, and now lives on a ridge top in Alaska with her three errant huskies. Since retiring from teaching, she's taken up writing as a hobby. This hobby gives her fun, and, when she tosses her lines in the publishing world's waters, enough bites to keep her dogs well fed.

**Ginny Greene** likely arrived on Planet Earth with a bluepencil clutched in her fist. Past president of Abilene Writers Guild, her writing life includes years of newspaper lifestyle features, a newspaper column, and a handful of newsletters, including seven years editing the Guild's newsletter. For fun, Ginny writes poems and works crossword puzzles. She edits everything, even street signage, especially yard sale signs, even in her sleep. She's happiest seeing her love of words spilled over to her children and grandchildren, including daughter, Karen, also a Silver Boomer Books editor. While still loving her Northwest hometown, Ginny is at home with Larry near Abilene, Texas and her grown family. Ginny's book *Song of County Roads* is scheduled for publication in the fall of 2008.

**Rhoda Greenstone**, for the past two decades, has instructed Southern California college students in the joys of language arts and humanities. In a former life, she served as editor, feature writer, critic, and photo-journalist for many publications, including *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Malibu Times*, and *Classics West Magazine*. A chapter she wrote deconstructing her poem "A Letter From L.A." will appear in *Poem, Revised* (Marion Street Press) in 2008. Her poetry, short stories and essays have appeared in various journals. Currently she is arbitrating with a muse who insists

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*middle.*" Bob Hope ~\$~ "Few people know how to be old." Francois De

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on dictating – at the least convenient times – a novel about a family of artists set to self destruct, called *Lost Paradise*.

**Jane Gwaltney** was born on Travis Air Base near San Francisco, but has resided in St. Louis, Missouri, most of her life. A member of Midwestern Writers of Horror and Writers Under the Arch, she has twice received Honorable Mention in The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror. Her poetry, fiction, and art appear in *Dreams and Nightmares*, *Mothering Magazine*, *Yellow Bat Review*, *Spinning Whorl*, *Redsine*, *The Blue Lady*, *Breath and Shadow*, *Champagne Shivers*, *Simulacrum*, *Aoife's Kiss*, and more. Her novella *Darkness*, *Darkness* is available in trade paperback.

**Becky Haigler** is retired after 24 years of teaching Spanish and reading in Texas public secondary schools. Her poetry has appeared in national and regional periodicals. Her short stories for adolescents have been published by several denominational publishing houses. Two of her magic realism stories are included in the anthology *Able to...* (NeoNuma Arts Press, 2006.) Becky currently resides in Shreveport, Louisiana, with her husband Dave Haigler. She is the mother of two daughters and grandmother of three granddaughters. Becky is currently working on a collection of magic realism stories. More of her poetry appears on her family blog, [www.xanga.com/anchorpoet](http://www.xanga.com/anchorpoet).

**Heather Haldeman** lives in Pasadena, California and began writing nine years ago after her oldest son left for college. She has been married to her husband, Hank, for 29 years and has three children. She has published several personal essays and is currently writing a book.

**Joy Harold Helsing** is an ex-salesclerk, ex-secretary, ex-textbook editor, ex-psychologist, ex-college instructor, ex-New Englander, ex-San Franciscan who now lives in the Sierra Nevada foothills of Northern California. Her work has appeared in *Bellowing Ark*, *Brevities*, *Byline*, *California Quarterly*, *Centrifugal*

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*La Rochefoucauld* ~§~ "My only fear is that I may live too long. This

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