

# *The Roughneck Woes*

“It’s at night  
always at night

if you’re gonna  
have

trouble

that’s when it’s  
gonna happen

usually about three in the morning  
you’re seldom disappointed

especially if  
you’re

pullin  
pipe.”

## *Runnin Pipe*

“Now in runnin pipe  
you got three  
holes

you got the oil well itself

then you got your  
rat hole

and your  
mouse hole

the rat is  
where you  
keep your spare

pipe

the mouse is  
where you  
hook ‘em  
up

and the well is where you put ‘em.”

# *Dry Hole Blues*

it was a sure thing  
he said

the land lay real good

gentle rolling  
hills pricked  
with oil  
rigs

on every side

the geologist  
predicted  
production  
in the Mississippi Lime  
with an out  
side  
chance  
in the Lower Carmichael

then they sank the six thousand foot Wilcox Test

today they drop  
the cement  
plug

# *Wisteria*

lavender froth  
foams from  
the snaking vine

that has squeezed  
into the pecan  
tree trunk

in one strong constriction  
that left only  
dead wood

and crushing vine

corpulent  
with the scent

of wisteria

# *Pelican*

white wings  
stretched

she floats  
low

through the space between waves and clouds

black feathers  
at her wing  
tips

finger the air

hold momentarily  
before she  
drops

to the Gulf water below

where the fishing  
looks

best

# *South Going Geese*

The geese are flying over  
this morning

snows and blues  
down from  
the North

pushed out  
of the Dakotas  
Nebraska  
Kansas  
and Oklahoma  
by this frigid  
blast of Artic air

they've been  
coming through  
all morning

flocks and flocks and flocks

held low  
by thick  
grey clouds

loose V's  
pointing

South

# *Real Talent*

Dad had some  
talent

he could stand on  
his head

he would make  
that perfect tripod  
then slowly  
precisely  
raise  
his legs

and there he was

all six foot two  
of him  
upside down

smiling

# *Texas Rangers Baseball*

the screeching grey  
haired lady

in white tennis shoes  
tells them  
how to  
do it

a red-faced fat man  
yells the strikes  
before the  
umpire

the tan beauty  
in white shorts  
can't see the plate  
but doesn't complain

a pair of old men  
behind home  
make all  
batters  
swing

then chuckle to  
each other

## *Winter Words*

water splashes up

out of the crack  
in the creek's  
icy crust

shatters  
cold quiet

like crystal  
teeth

chattering

# *Texas Blue Norther*

the barometer drops  
fast

chubby grey clouds  
float down  
across the sky

pushed by a stiff northwest wind

then the snow  
starts

a few light flakes first

then more  
and more

until the air  
turns to

white grosgrain

# *West Texas Blizzard*

chived potato soup  
ladled into  
a hand-thrown pottery bowl

hot rye bread  
on a wooden  
cutting board

the drifting  
scent of fresh  
banana cake

the spatter of sparks  
shooting out  
against

the fireplace screen

a tall stack  
of library books

all tucked  
in

by driven  
white crystals

# *Texas Ice Storm*

fresh ice  
outlines the silver  
chain-link  
fence

like a transparent shadow

a northeast wind  
wiggles through  
the scrub oak grove

limbs rub and bump

sound gritches around  
like a hundred  
hands

squeezing cellophane

## *Remember Goliad*

trapped in a waterless  
depression on the Texas prairie

three hundred and forty-two men  
surrendered and were marched  
back to Presidio La Bahia  
the old fort at Goliad

they spent part  
of that March night  
singing "Home Sweet Home"  
believing after dawn's  
white flagged  
surrender

in English  
and in Spanish  
they would live

only to be duped  
on that Palm Sunday  
by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna  
the Prince of Butchers

into moving out in three divisions  
wounded and dying pulled from their beds  
Colonel James W. Fannin, Jr. and fellow officers last

into the fiery flintlock finale  
with any survivors sabered

then roasted in  
bonfire

that only twenty-seven men escaped  
by running to the river  
before the Mexicans  
were finished

with Fannin  
and his heroic

volunteers

# *Texas Trawl*

spiraling in a slow motion vortex

like dark  
leaves trapped  
in a dying  
tornado

seven  
buzzards weave  
concentric  
circles

over

the buffalo  
bones

below



# BIOGRAPHY

Sheryl is from Marysville, Kansas. She graduated from South Dakota State University with a B.S. in Family Relations and Child Development.

She has had over 4,500 poems, stories and articles published. Some of the magazines, anthologies and textbooks that have used her work are: READERS'S DIGEST, MODERN MATURITY, KALEIDOSCOPE, CAPPER'S, GRIT, COUNTRY WOMAN, POETRY NOW, CONFRONTATION, *Strings*, *This Delicious Day*, *The American Anthology* and *Men Freeing Men*.

Thirteen collections of her poetry have been published. Some of them are: *Their Combs Turn Red In The Spring*, *The Oketo Yaboos*, *Strawberries and Rhubarb*, *Rural America*, *Land of the Blue Paloverde*, *Friday Night Desperate*, *Aunt Emma Collected Teeth*, *Secrets of the Wind*, *Howling At the Gibbous Moon* and *Greatest Hits 1978-2003*.

She has taught writing and poetry classes at conferences, colleges and schools in Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona and South Dakota. She recently taught workshops at Amarillo College, The University of Texas at Dallas, Abilene Christian University, Tarleton State University, the Society of Children's Book Writers Conference in Arlington, Texas and at the Tarrant County College. She was a Bread Loaf Contributor at the Bread Loaf Writer's Conference, Middlebury, Vermont.

She was the Editor of OAKWOOD, the SDSU literary magazine. She was a Contributing Editor to BYLINE, a national writers' magazine and to STREETS, a national literary magazine. She was the Editor of CRAWFORD'S

CHRONICLES, an insurance trade publication. She has been a Staff Writer for several newspapers and magazines. She is currently the Fiction/Non-Fiction Editor of THE PEN WOMAN MAGAZINE, the national magazine of the National League of American Pen Women.

She is a member of the National League of American Pen Women, The Society of Southwestern Authors and Trinity Writers Workshop.

She makes a living as an insurance adjuster. She is also a painter, a weaver and an old dirt biker.

# PUBLISHING CREDITS

## BLUEBONNETS

Texas Hill Country: HOT SPRINGS NEWS and RAM.  
fresh day: MY RESTLESS HEART, GRIT, POETRY  
FORUM, SISTERS TODAY, LYRICS OF SONG, THE  
BEST POETS OF 1999, PMS, HIRAM POETRY RE-  
VIEW, NETTLES & NUTMEG ANTHOLOGY,  
LUTHERAN WOMEN, THE GOOFUS OFFICE,  
AUDIO-VISUAL POETRY QUARTERLY, *Their Combs*  
*Turn Red in the Spring* and *Strawberries and*  
*Rhubarb.*

Altocumulus Clouds: SILVER WINGS.

Meditation: THE COURIER-INDEX, ...having writ...,  
PROGRESSIVE FARMER, SOUND AND WAVES AN-  
THOLOGY, KALEIDOSCOPE, VOICES FOR PEACE,  
AUDIO-VISUAL POETRY QUARTERLY, *Their Combs*  
*Turn Red in the Spring*, *Strawberries & Rhubarb*, BITTER-  
ROOT, EARTHWISE, LINCOLN LOG, THE BEEBE  
NEWS, JAPANESE MAIL ART, CAPPER'S, WRITERS  
VOICE, TIME OF SINGING, INTEGRAL YOGA  
MAGAZINE, PEGASUS, MOOSE BOUND PRESS,  
yefief, PURPOSE, WANDERING ANTHOLOGY and  
GIRLS NIGHT OUT ANTHOLOGY.

Wash Day on the Farm: THE SMALL POND and ELE-

MENTS MAGAZINE.

The Pharmacist's Daughter: TRINITY WRITER'S WORKSHOP NEWSLETTER.

Blue Ticks Eating Asparagus: Unpublished.

Spring Soundings: WINGS, POETPOURRI, PINCH-PENNY, RIVER CITY REVIEW, NEW ENGLAND SAMPLER, CHANNELS, *Their Combs Turn Red in the Spring* and *Strawberries & Rhubarb*.

Sunset at Eagle Mountain Lake: LAND OF THE FREE ANTHOLOGY, SKYLINE LITERARY MAGAZINE and SP QUILL MAGAZINE.

breathe deep: *If We'd Wanted Quiet, We Would Have Raised Goldfish*, THE GATEKEEPER, THE WATERWAYS PROJECT, WRITERS VOICE, IN MY SHOES, TIME OF SINGING, OUR BUNDLE OF JOY, MESSAGES FROM MOTHERS TO SONS, PURPOSE, KALEIDOSCOPE, SILVER WINGS, FARM WIFE NEWS, DIALOGUE, PROGRESSIVE FARMER, AZTEC PEAK, CAPPER'S, YESTERDAY'S MAGAZETTE, WE MAGAZINE, FEELINGS, ROCKHURST REVIEW, IDEALS, SILVER BOOMERS and VICTORY NEWS JOURNAL.

Downed Hawk: PROGRESSIVE FARMER and AUDIO-VISUAL POETRY QUARTERLY.

from April's palette: SILVER TREES AND WIND SONGS, PURPOSE, WANDERLUST NEW MIRAGE QUARTERLY, BIBLIOPHILOS, THE POET, MIDWEST POETRY REVIEW, CAPPER'S, CAPPER'S ANTHOLOGY, ROANOKE REVIEW, KALEIDOSCOPE and *Strawberries & Rhubarb*.

Their Combs Turn Red in the Spring: ZEN TATTOO, FLIMSIE EXCUSE, EARTHWISE, THE KINDRED SPIRIT, DEAD ANGEL MAGAZINE, THE MAINE