

The Kumquat Challenge



49 poems by current and former WCC faculty,
staff, and students celebrating
National Poetry Month

April 2010

Whatcom Community College Library



**Intro to The Kumquat Challenge 2010, or
THE KUMQUAT BELONGS TO US ALL**

If you Google “Kumquat Challenge,” you’ll come up with a recipe for kumquat tiramisu, the rules for the “Kumquat Challenge Quilt Contest,” and the website of the Kumquat Festival in Dade City, FL, where you will learn that W. C. Fields referred to any woman friend as “my little kumquat.” You’ll also find the current online edition of the WCC student newspaper, *The Horizon*, where there is a clever interview by Alaysha Germaine using all the words in this year’s challenge. One of her questions gave me pause: “Who came up with the word ‘kumquat?’”

I wasn’t sure, but I thought it was Tami Garrard, a former WCC library employee, so I emailed her, along with the other members of the library marketing committee. Ara wrote back one word: “Tami.” Sally mused: “I think it may have been I who suggested Kumquat...I remember the line from *The Fantastics*: ‘You’re standing in my kumquats! Sorry!’” And Tami responded: “...I felt ownership over that word, but I can’t really recall why. Your guess is as good as mine.”

My guess is that Sally is responsible for “kumquat” being one of our words that first year. However, due to these inexact memories, I’ll have to say that all members of the marketing committee have ownership. In fact, there’s someone else who has ownership of this challenge: you.

What we like most about celebrating National Poetry Month is recognizing local poets. Our goal is to give unpublished poets a platform for their work. However, we are elated to have writers who are published elsewhere—notably Tim Pilgrim, Anita Boyle, and Kate Miller.

We require contributors to be a current or former student, faculty, or staff member, but our definition is relaxed. One of our first year winners was a 7th grader who qualified as a former student because she attended the college’s Child Development Center at age 4. In this issue, Tim Pilgrim qualifies because he’s taken Community Ed classes.

We offer enthusiastic thanks to:

Our judges, Ron Leatherbarrow, Jennifer Bullis, and Anne George
Pam Richardson for encouraging her art students to contribute illustrations
Samantha Meier, a graphics work study students who worked with Ara Taylor to prepare posters, plasma screens, and other publicity.
Heather Williams who did all of the layout.
Rosemary Sterling and her quick-turn-around team at the Copy Center
Jim Bertolino, nationally known poet and friend of Ara, who came to campus to help us celebrate, bringing excitement and anticipation.

Linda Lambert,
for the Library Marketing Committee
Ara Taylor, chair; Sally Sheedy; Heather Williams

This year's challenge words were:
Bind, change, resolve, kindle, shore, run, gathering, suspend, word, note.

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about her dog Mona Lisa, will appear in the May/June edition of *Bellowing Ark* followed soon by "Dry Creek Beds and Streams" about her relationship with her dad.

SALLY SHEEDY is systems librarian at WCC, writes zany lyrics for the Libretto singing group, is the mother of twins, and a native New Yorker.

KIM STRUIKSMA is a WCC employee who has taught third grade and has a bachelor's in mathematics, says she enjoys vanilla ice cream, long walks in the woods, and, occasionally, a fine limerick or two.

DAVID R. SUTTERFIELD says, "I wrote this poem because I found the flier in one of my classes, and instead of falling asleep like usual, I decided to give it a go right there. My other works include 100 Haikus, which is exactly what it sounds like. And that's it. I don't write anything else. Thank you for something."

ARA TAYLOR, a former book critic for *The Bellingham Herald*, is working on a novel, and occasionally teaches creative writing and poetry classes for Community Education. She works at the WCC Library.

RICHARD THACKER types grammatically correct sentences, perfectly punctuated, in the fluorescent-lit days, and swats at summer mosquitoes and winter spiders with his MLA Handbook in the star-lit nights. He lives in Yakima and formerly worked in WCC's IT department.

SARAH VANDERPOOL is 28, married and the mother of one infant son. She plans to transfer to Western as an English major and then become a librarian. Until taking Kate Miller's Creative Writing class, she describes herself as "a poetry skeptic. My inspiration for "The Life Cycle" struck as I was falling asleep. We had used the Kumquat words in a class group exercise that day and I found it very difficult. Kate Miller insisted that I submit the poem to the contest. Without her encouragement and support, I would still believe that poems either begin with "Roses are red, violets are blue" or are so complex and mystifying as to defy comprehension."

HEATHER WILLIAMS works in the WCC library. She lives in Lynden with her husband Paul and, of course, their cat Luna.

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Writers, Senior Center Writers, Roeder Home Writers, and the Academy of Lifelong Learning. "I rely upon my MUSE for terrestrial inspiration."

DOUG MOOERS has been a math teacher for 35 years and has taught at Whatcom for 24 of those years.

SPENCER PEDERSON is a student at WCC.

TIMOTHY PILGRIM, a native of Montana and associate professor of journalism at Western Washington University, has published over 70 poems in literary journals and anthologies, such as "Idaho's poets: A Centennial Anthology. (University of Idaho) and "Weathered Pages: The Poetry Pole" (Blue Begonia Press). You can see more of his work at <http://hope.journ.wwu.edu/tpilgrim>

CARLOS REYES is a student at WCC.

BRITTON RICHARDSON writes: "I am 20 years old and have lived in Lynden my whole life. My favorite form of poetry is music. I am an aspiring musician myself, and would like to do some sort of musical project in the future. I also am a hardcore Mariners fan; I live and die with them. Also, I hate potatoes."

PAM RICHARDSON, adjunct faculty in Art at Whatcom since 2001, works primarily in fabric collage and mixed-media. She is also an honorary member of the "Librettos," a group of WCC library staff who perform at WCC's music concerts.

ALLISON RUIZ is a Whatcom-to-Western transfer student and a baker at the Colophon Cafe. She is an infrequent poet, but especially enjoys the challenge of the Kumquat. Her favorite flowers are almond blossoms and her favorite cats are polydactyls.

BORIS D. SCHLEINKOFER, a former WCC student, was born in San Francisco. He lives in Bellingham with his wife of 17 years and several cats. He has helped with several independent films, including Beat Angel, and is on the board of directors for poetrynight, "the longest running open mic reading."

BETTY SCOTT teaches Oral and Written Communication at Bellingham Technical College. She taught writing courses at Whatcom Community College from 1993 to 2006. "Savings," a poem

DAVID LAWS graduated in 2005 from Western with a degree in English and “has not yet recovered.” His work has appeared in *Cascadia Weekly*, *The Seattle Times*, *Pack and Paddle*, *Noisy Water Review* and *Jeopardy*. He lives in Bellingham with his wife Judith and Lucky the Wonder Dog.

BARBARA LEVEQUE currently calls Bellingham, WA home after spending most of her adult life in various communities in Eastern Washington. Working at Whatcom Community College since Fall Quarter 2002, Barbara manages the Work First program in addition to her role as adjunct instructor in Communication Studies. Her interests include genealogy, history, and *The Writer’s Almanac*.

BETTY LY writes: “I can’t say I like to write but this poem came out of my mind. I am neither a writer nor a poet, but those that can write, as I have found, are writers and can become poets.”

JOHN MALONE is a student at WCC.

MARY H. MELE began her unpublished poet’s career in the 6th grade, when her mother said that if she wrote a poem she would not have to eat her lima beans. (The result is available on request.) Inspired by Ogden Nash, it begins “This is an ode to a lima bean, the tale of a vegetable not serene.”

MEMBERS OF PAM RICHARDSON’S ART 115 CLASS contributed black-and-white illustrations. They include Trevor Hamilton, Grace (Sang Eun) Kim, Summer Langton, and Wendy Witsoe.

KATE BERNE MILLER has a B.A. in Multicultural Studies and Creative Writing from Fairhaven College and an M.A. in English/Creative Writing from Western Washington University. She teaches English composition and creative writing at WCC, and Women’s Studies and Race and Ethnicity at Western Washington University. In previous careers she was a childcare worker, a cook, a book seller and a book buyer—“all good prerequisites for writing and teaching,” she says.

JIM MILSTEAD has lived in Bellingham since 1992. He was formerly employed as a Staff Research Associate in the Entomology Department at the Multiversity of Uniformia in Berkeley. He is a member of the Storytellers, the Chuckanut Sandstone

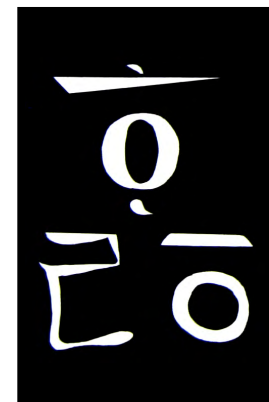
The Gathering by Linda Howson

The note was handwritten and left in plain sight on the park bench. My bench— perched on a picturesque bluff overlooking the lake shore, A favorite place to rest after my morning run. Only one word appeared on the outside of the folded note: *Gathering*. I felt in a bind. Do I open the note even if it is not meant for me? Do I change my mind, and leave it untouched for its rightful recipient? The longer I sat, the greater the note kindled my curiosity. Finally, I decided to suspend this conundrum. With resolve, I slowly unfolded the note and.... That is all I can share about that fateful morning.

The Word by John Malone

Kumquat Challenge Winner!

I hold in my throat the
word I cannot speak.
It binds my
breath and I find my
resolve cannot change the
letters into a
form that will run across my
tongue. I take
note of the
inflection surrounding the suspended
gap in my speech. The gathering
silence crowding around the
word like
fire on kindling or
the ocean around the
shore of a deserted
island that
is
this
word.



Grace Sang Eun Kim

Willing Captive

by April Hinkle-Johnson

Your fears kindle your actions
as you resolve to change yourself.
But we are all the children of our dreams,
and our wishes bind us wordlessly.

Standing alone on the shore,
you whisper the last note
of a song for freedom -
a song of fresh futures.

With a word I can free you;
with a gesture I dismiss you.
You suspend yourself
on my every breath.

Tear your heart from me;
I will calmly ruin you.
The storm clouds are gathering.
I will come for you soon.

Dream not with your thoughts,
but with your heart.
Find your wings, fly.
Find your legs, run.



Trevor Hamilton

PAMELA GREEN says she is “a new mom to a wonderful baby girl named Alexia Joy (7 months) and she is my inspiration. I am attending WCC to obtain my transfer degree to WWU, so I can continue my education and obtain a degree in Special Education.”

KATY HAMILTON writes: “I have enjoyed poetry for many years and was delighted to accept this year’s Kumquat Challenge. I’m not as prolific as Keats or Dickinson, but still.... Thanks to my mom for her love of poetry.”

JOHN HANSEN is most known at WCC for his flair for floral arrangements, seen at almost all important campus events. He has a degree in display design from Spokane Falls Community College, and works on the custodial staff at WCC.

TRACI HARPINE is an adjunct instruction/reference librarian at WCC who also graduated from WCC before obtaining her bachelors and MLS degrees. “I had so much fun with the Kumquat Challenge last year that I decided to challenge myself once again. I embrace challenges with open arms, or in this case pen and paper.”

MATIA HESLEP is a student at WCC.

APRIL HINKLE-JOHNSON is a current student of WCC and hopes to transfer to the University of Washington. She notes that she “always hated poetry until she started writing it, and would like to thank Donna Rushing, her high school honors English teacher, and e.e. Cummings.”

LINDA HOWSON has been at Whatcom for over 20 years, serving as a Program Coordinator in Community Education. She looks forward to this yearly event, enjoying the challenge of weaving a poetic tale with a hodgepodge of unrelated words as her writing prompt.

LINDA LAMBERT, WCC library director, has the enjoyable task of assembling and editing the bios for this compilation, but finds it awkward to write about herself in the 3rd person. Therefore: “I write poetry once a year for the Kumquat Challenge, which is a stretch, and probably enough.”

Contributors

Some contributors were unable to respond to our request for biographical information before we went to press, so we provide minimal information.

~C-NOTE~ is a student at WCC.

DENNIS BARNES says that he discovered the joy of writing poetry while attending WCC. He graduated from Fairhaven College and currently tutors adult students at BTC and WCC.

ALLISON BERG is a 17-year-old Running Start student who has attended WCC for the past three quarters. Besides writing, her hobbies include music, movies, and reading.

ANITA K. BOYLE's poem's have appeared in *Indiana Review*, *StringTown*, *The Raven Chronicles*, *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Crab Creek Review* and others, and are included in the anthology *Red Sky Morning*. She graduated, with honors, from WCC in 1995. She lives outside Bellingham on a small farm.

LINDA CONROY calls herself "an observer of people and finds that they offer a rich abundance for the creation of poetry. Words serve to recognize and record the complexity and simplicity of human nature. We are the same. We are different. We are ordinary and unique."

CARINA COZACZUK writes: "After ten years teaching kids in San Francisco, and another thirteen years spent with adults learning the English language...wow, how time flies past. I speak Spanish and English, have two beautiful children adopted from Russia and China, and my husband is Ukrainian."

MEGAN FORTIN is a student at WCC.

WAYNE GERNER is a former WCC business office employee whose poems reflect his personal experiences.

JENNY GREEN, a trained pre-school teacher, works at the circulation desk of the WCC Library. Her special project is coordinating a weekly read-to-kids program. She arranges for faculty, staff and students to read to children either at the library or at the Child Development Center on campus.

At Newhalem *by Wayne Gerner*

The stream runs by,
Ever changing, ever the same,
Gathering notes of water and shore
Suspend me, change me, bind me no more.

A resolve to kindle peace,
A feeling no words can describe.
I am truly, truly blessed
To be here this day, alive.

Was It Really What I Heard? *by Pamela Green*

A note to a word, lays suspended in my ear,
which kindles the love running through my heart.
The changes that came from a gathering of words,
binds me inside though I do not know why,
Was it really what I heard?

A stroll by the shore shall resolve this great bind,
as I remember the note that changed to a word,
For the suspending sound still runs through my head
as clear as the moment that is was said.
Was it really what I heard?

Having gathered my thoughts, I resolved to the love
and let go of the bind that held me inside.
For the kindles of love grew stronger within
for this word was repeated followed by a grin.
This was the day I heard her say "MAMA!"

Spring Coming 2010

by Mary H. Mele

The trees change first,
or is it the red-winged blackbird's note
in the air? Suspend

ed.. ..

Haven't you run along Cordata and felt the
resolve gathering in bud and branch
to burst and bind this change to blossom
to kindle love, to bring to shore along this wave
A word?

Too-lay, Too-lay

by Doug Mooers

Too-lay, too-lay.
The words gathering
with warm wisps of
fairy ways.
Delphic fairies run,
the shore of time
suspended 'tween
dimension and naught.

Too-lay, too-lay.
The cry. The call.
The fairy clans kindle
with passionate resolve,
To dance and play,
To sing and change
the sadness of the world;

Suspend the worldly ways,
but for a breath,
their soft notes
bind the joy,
The song,
The warm fairy day,
to ways the weary world
can save.

Luna

by Heather Williams

Burbling, you wind around my feet
Each morning, and I look down at
You. Your topaz gaze binds me,
And I am suspended as the last
Notes of a song on the air.
Gathering your charm, you project it
Upward, and it crashes against me,
Overwhelming my heart like water
Breaking over some distant shore.
It kindles strange words upon my
Tongue, like "kitty-witty pants"
And "you're a little idgy wudgy woo."
Look at you. You're fat like a
Little white pear and round
Like a dandelion puff. After
You've scratched in the litter box,
You explode back out, running
As fast as your legs can pump,
As though the poop will follow you.
I sigh with resolve, shake my head,
And go, scoop in hand, to conduct
Archaeological excavations--
Who knows what treasures I will
Find? You have changed me.

Take These Words

by Linda Lambert

Toss them in a tumbler,
watch them fly into the air,
gathering momentarily,
then falling, unable
to form the bones of poetry.

Scramble them in a flat iron pan,
a hash of diphthongs and fricatives
that will not bind together
into an omelet of meaning.

Suspend them, then, over fire,
consonants and vowels as kindling,
flames of language leaping
toward verse or villanelle,
sestina or sonnet, epic or ode.

Run with them along the shore.
Invite and expect the wind,
which has shaped landforms,
powered ships and dispersed seeds,
to claim, to change these words.

Search them out in unabridged dictionaries
finding esoteric variances such as
Kindle: a litter of kittens
Gathering: a section in a bound book
Bind: a tie, slur, or brace (music).

When playful gaming, the alchemy of cooking,
the artfulness of arson, mythic incantations to the wind,
and personal bonding via research,
yield only six stubborn stanzas,
take those words, forsake those words,
diminish poetic resolve, and make note to self:
I completed the Kumquat Challenge.

I Draw the Curtain

by Megan Fortin

With the light pushing against his eyelids
The morning tirelessly binds him to the
Syllables always gathering during darkness.
The jaw crooks open and heavy notes beg to burst.
With the permission of his tendons,
Each word casts his web of morning rhetoric.
And it suspends softly over my sleepy lap,
With the creeping kindle of daytime teasing out of me
What I always think I have forgotten.
And I—knowing that speed of tongue will not damp the
haste of morning
And that we cannot run faster than the sun –
Reveal the holes I have been digging since day one.
I say the promising shores of sentences resolve the
Silent distant dawn provides. And little more.
I describe the change of light as scientific and orbital
Unearthing only the hollows we permit.
And draw the curtain.



Wendy Witsoe

The Unimaginable

by Betty Ly

Behind me is a salutation waiting for you,
Never was a word shared as we frolicked through the sea
Looking up, seeing, believing, binding our feelings
With only the clear sky and white clouds
We sought a special goal, to resolve something so unpredictable
The sunset, with it behind us
Run the opposite way. Push through the wall.
Hurry on to the shore.

Our vision is scarce as our energy fell,
Gathering our transitions, a sound could be heard
A note never befell from our lips
Your mind suspended across the forest
I touched your fingers, reassuring my secret
Unfamiliar faces, kindle with lost allurements
Inquisitive we were, a change in inspiration
A heavenly light, a smile and that was all.

Together

by Jim Milstead

The running echo of rehearsed footsteps
lead us along narrow corridors,
past closed doors that never seem to open.

With each small step, gathering my small reserve, I try
to suspend anticipation, shore up my eroding spirits,
kindle my resolve, note, the cogent phrase,
the perfect word that change demands.

Always when you are near my voice falters.

Alone, I bind myself to these moments
of sweet illusion, appearing as bright
images in amber imprisoned forever
in this chaotic mansion of time.

To My Husband

by Allison Ruiz

we edge onward, each sunrise older
further from the night

late-April

on the shore at White Rock
swollen with noise and stars and
your dark eyes
run the length of me (my spine)

gathering the words i offered—
exposing my resolve to live alone
to let nothing change me,
least of all, men.

we wait in line at the club for hours
queue parallel to the whitewashed fence slats
the ocean, that deep ribcage of sensibility,
mourns the women in minis
with legs the width of my upper arm
note my hand-me-down sweater!
me, wishing hard i'd changed out of jeans!
me, longing to be in the company of a man less kind,
less mild and buttoned up in burgundy plaid,
less honey-brown skin and Los Angeles tongue

you

you, break? no, suspend my resolve
as we wait along the curb for hours
spend only minutes inside
because our friends slurring, fighting, apologized and
kindled fires under steadfast relationships
we watched them burn and we
went to breakfast
at the 24-hour joint down the street from my mom's house
over crepes i discovered
i'd forgotten to be coy and instead ate up everything
you said
i forgot, in a booth so narrow
that your eyes met mine, your night sky to my waters,
i forgot? and
discovered you were building something along side my heart;
your long hands tying string to my ribs
slowly tightening to bind

The Last Time

by John Hansen

The last time I saw him was at the Lucia Douglas Gallery
in Fairhaven.

It was early January at a great gathering of artists and friends
from the North Shore.

He had changed—was loud, obnoxious, and had drunk
too much wine.

He did a run before I picked him up. His words were somewhat
slurred and he was in a bind.

The Gallery knew he was out of control and couldn't resolve
his problem.

He was suspended from coming back to the Gallery after a piece
of sculpture was found missing.

It was a sad note to learn about this, and our friendship has not rekindled
even though it's almost 4/20.



Wendy Witsoe

Atlantic Northeast

by Sally Sheedy

I miss
 W N Y C
 That's: W New York City!
 My interest was kindled
 When they played New Sounds
 (I was hooked)
 That program changed
 Mere music into the
 Art of sound.
 Clicks and growls
 And tablas and chimes
 Live in Merkin Hall
 I saw a guy play shoes
 looping samples of cartoons
 Pow and Kazowie
 (Bluto and Popeye)
 With sticks on the soles
 All kinds of whack!
 Minimalism and maximalism
 No two notes the same
 Words separated from meaning
 Sounds gathering together
 then running
 Not a page to bind them
 Nor any adequate record
 of the dissonant notes
 suspended then resolving in the air
 To actually play in the air waves
 Like a child in waves along the shore.

and i discovered you are *not* a cathedral;
 not mighty and gilded
 you are not trade ships or math solutions,
 you are big eyes and dark eyelashes resting on the
 round part of your cheeks
 and you
 are just my home.



Summer Langston

Summer Vacation

by David Laws

Dad would tune the station wagon,
 making sure it would run like a top.
 Too much gear, so he'd bind the tent
 on top with rope run through rear windows,
 more *suspended* on top than *secured*.
 Rain meant my brother and I got wet.
 We'd take off somewhere, Rosebud Valley,
 Tetons, or the shore of the Oregon coast.

Every year Mom would resolve to remember
 everything. Every year, as we were gathering
 firewood, trying to kindle a fire, we'd get
 the word: she'd forgotten whatever: spatula,
 salt shaker, the novel she was reading.
 Just a note: we survived anyway.

I Resolve to Pay

by Sally Sheedy

I resolve to pay less attention
to the noise in my head
and more to the world.
I'll go to the lake's shore
for a change. For renewal.
Other senses delight
Eyes the slanting sunlight.
Nose the way to perceive
the organic smell of spring.
But the sounds!
Ears to hear
lapping waves.
Ducks gathering then
suspended overhead
What binds them in formation?
As one they note from above
The glinting ripples
and fly to the water
Quite near me
knowing I won't
Say a word,
I hear feathers!
Spring will kindle
chirring insects, and
peeping tree frogs.
I run with slapping feet doing
a happy-to-be-alive dance.

Casting Call

by Jim Milstead

Deciding to change,
ending the frigid, rigid
cameo attire, strutting
heroically upon the stage,
running the risk of ire,

I felt it only fair,
this, my desire:
pledging not to bind
allegiance to a so-called lord,
parroting his sacred word,
suspending judgment,
this was never my resolve.

No chance to air
my grievance, noting
my defection, he forthwith
exercised his predilection
cast me down,
forever exiled
from his golden shore.

Now I reside beside
the river Styx,
kindling my fire,
playing my tricks,
gathering followers
by the score.

How could I ask for more?

I Express

by ~C-note~

The thoughts I express
Are created to suspend emotion
In a place where the curious can explore.

Binded with work of the bees
And the dissolve of clouds
And the movements of Andromeda.
The most violent enemies are part of this gathering.

Powerless against the great resolve;
Nations' politics share an equal role in change
As these words.

All I ask is take your endeavors
And run with them.
Because you're right!
Because with every step you kindle the universe.

Sweet Breath

by Sally Sheedy

Suspended in the stars
the waves of ever-changing
constant love
flowing as
the milky way.
There are gathering arms
Run into them and be
Swept up with comet dust
Meanwhile
Hearth, stove and apron strings
Ties that bind
A full belly
Nurture, kindle
Kind words, and rebukes,
Not ever scoff or mock
Over the world
Shore up the coast of galaxies
note the resolve
for a safe launch.

When Music Starts to Play

by Matia Heslep

When music starts to play
What truly makes you sway
Is it the note or is it the word
Or is it the music that is left unheard

Why is there a gathering here
Why does silence bind with fear
You play the music to cover the song
You've run from life all along

I feel a problem kindle now
You look a life and question how
You look for resolve you need a change
It's time to turn the music books' page

Your music was just too quick
And your fast-paced life made you sick
Now you will suspend your song
On the shore where you belong

Deserted Advice

by Tim Pilgrim

Believe me, now is the best time
to hope. Forget your loneliness. Suspend
all gathering doubt, bind your wounds,

embrace change in its run to shore.
At dusk, gaze into a tidepool.
Find the resolve to search for purple.

Give yourself your word. Kindle seaweed
on the beach at midnight. Without warning,
send this note in a bottle to your lover.

A Threatening Monday Morning, Day 6

with thanks to Dorothy Wordsworth

by Anita K. Boyle

Honorable Mention

The runt and I set off after breakfast,
hungry. We only went a short way
before turning back. There is a boundary
out there that we must not cross. Because
we were starving, we rested

beside the lake. The wind blew
directly into our nostrils. There was
a lonely boat binding itself to the shore.
Alders nearby whacked at it with their branches.
Large drops of rain fell, a few at a time.

We sheltered under a downed cedar. Dankness.
The runt was thumbing her suspenders,
and smacking them onto her chest,
creating a musical rhythm backed
by the wind plowing waves.

As we gathered our strength, the clouds darkened
to a noteworthy gray. Then the wind changed direction,
and the boat leapt into the violent breakers. In moments,
it was lost. The runt and I trudged up the hill,
past a sickly white cow. Daffodils

were opening everywhere: out on the wide fields,
between mossy rocks, and even in the darkness
behind trees. We could hear the kindling
of rabbits coming from the earth. Small squeaks.
Rustlings. Rabbits and daffodils. It had turned into

one of those days where the rain shines through
sunlight, everything turning crystalline,
yet frightening. And the runt needed to rest again.
We lay our heads down upon the mossy rocks
and dreamed of ham with spuds. A goodish supper.

We needed resolve to wake up, and go get it.
But the cold rain. Our soaking clothes.
The terrible wind.
The empty house.

Resolution*by Wayne Gerner*

I stand at the crossroad,
 Suspended in time.
 A change is coming,
 To cut ties that bind.

To re-kindle my spirit,
 A gathering of energy.
 I run along the shore of life,
 Facing my own humility.

I resolve to heal others,
 With a note or a word.
 To spread peace and kindness,
 For a better world.

Do Not Be Fooled*by Barbara Leveque*

Do not be fooled by silence;
 Nor let the argument exhaust or bind.
 Suspend the issue for a moment.
 In silence, look toward the distant shore for inspiration.

Consider the word resolve.
 Do not run, but amble slowly;
 Quiet the mind; allow awareness of the collective consciousness.
 Feel the rhythm of the universal heartbeat.

Contemplate the change.
 Peacefully bring the gathering into song,
 Singing the same note, on the same page, creating the promise
 That kindles the blaze racing across the horizon
 changing that which appears unchangeable.

Foolishness*by Kim Struiksma*

A wisely crafted word, a remarkable idea,
 tinkering on the brink of brilliance,
 understanding awaits,
 But alas, foolish dreams and shadows grow,
 Clipity clop, a well trained hand glides over the keyboard,
 a spark of genius, bangs and thunder,
 a semi-perfect harmony,
 the applause, the joy, the intensity.....
 A quiet, simple, pure note, is almost glimpsed.

Extraordinary!
 Perfect synchronous parts moving together; cohesion,
 But swift dedication, hardness of hearts,
 and a firm resolve shall run the race set before,
 It shall be our will, not His.
 Foolish pride, binding, but never necessary,

Fire sparks, kindled from small seeds,
 encouraging words, Divine guidance,
 But friends have gathered,
 together we embraced, we caused the change,
 On the shore we drafted a slight scheme,
 and it was our hope, our dream.

And so, quietly suspended, hovering,
 but never fully embraced,
 Pure, simple, truth eludes us.

Trevor Hamilton



Alert Red
by *Jim Milstead*

Tectonic aggression begins, fires
kindle, the brief spindle of planetary calm
unwinds. Shorewise, lava invades water.

Above, ash binds itself to air. A
cautionary change intrudes itself. Words
spiral out, gathering momentum, global

warnings sound alarm. Those on the
ground, the spiders, ants, and mice
suspend their everyday activities,

they must think twice about old
terra now infirma, as they now
run, hobble, crawl, slither hither

and yon upon the seething earth,
and in the sky mosquitoes, gnats
and bird soon note the dire pronouncement

sounded for this untoward occasion:
ALL FLIGHTS CANCELLED NOW
And for (we hope) a brief duration.

Dissolution
by *David Laws*

I want to run away: change is too hard.
Trying to suspend what I've been gathering
over a lifetime, that impairs, or at least kindle
a small flame of resistance, but the past
binds me like the notes on my analyst's pad:
words of imprisonment, the jail from my past.
Again I resolve to shore up my courage,
and finally remove myself from my self.

Blue Summer Rain
(Three)
Urban Blight
by *Dennis Barnes*

Sun wind and rain bind
plays tricks with mind
what appears can kindle
imagination with tears

White shore bird suspend
By limb in young tree
Keeps quick step of run new
resolve of runner true

Gathering clouds change
appearance of what words
can not denote

White plastic bag
red print label
caught in vine maple
Blue summer rain
Tragic

In A Moment

by Jenny Green

If time and space could be suspended
even for a moment,
I would stand on the shore of the universe
and shout out my gratitude
for the music that often surrounds me,
each note a vibration of loving energy, ever expanding.
I would run into the waves of all the words ever written,
diving deeply into their depths and flow,
and ebbing again slowly with their tides of rich meaning.
I would then bind the wounds of the world,
resolving to become a more conscious caretaker
of the hurting ones and diminishing places.
I would allow the small animals to rule, just briefly,
all of creation,
imbuing it with their special form of unconditional love,
so that we will not forget their quiet teachings.
Next I would heal the hearts of children,
kindling within them a precious peace
and knowledge of profound goodness.
Then, gathering all of these changes and gifts into my hands,
I would fly low over the earth,
criss-crossing the continents and waters,
releasing this goodness and love wherever it needed to go.
And in coming back to the time and space of my life,
here, now,
I feel that something has been accomplished
by that which I have envisioned
in a moment.



Trevor Hamilton

They Had Traveled to the Shore That Day

by Allison Berg

They had traveled to the shore that day,
to see if they could resolve their problems.
As they sat on the sand and listened to the surf,
her mind flew back in time,
to the gathering where everything began and the turmoil
that followed them to this day.
She had run into him at the grocery store,
but the only word that was said was sorry.
That word seems to have followed them through their relationship.
Many times they had fought about stupid things, ignoring the bigger things
like so many couples do.
Their relationship always held a note of bitterness,
no matter what they did to change it.
She had tried to suspend this time,
to put it off as long as possible,
but now it had to end.
Nothing he could do could kindle their love again.
She no longer felt a bind around her heart when he wasn't around.
So she brushed the sand off her legs,
and as the surf pounded in her ears
and her heart beat, slowly,
she looked into the eyes of the man she had loved for so long,
and walked away.

A Letter from Santa to the Children of the World

by David R. Sutterfield

Dear children of the world,
I am sending this note
To tell you of an important
Change of plans for next year.
I have decided to run away
From the regular holiday bind
To an exotic shore in the Bahamas.
Now you may ask, "Why, Santa?
What happened to your jolly resolve?"
My answer is this:
Each year I have only wanted
For a gathering of children
To say that one simple word: "Thanks."
Instead you say to me:
"I want an Amazon Kindle."
So there you have it, no more presents.
Suspend your belief in me
If you feel so inclined
And have a happy New Year.

In Blackest Night, Love Burns Bright!

by Carlos Reyes

In blackest night our fears come to light.
But with kindle hearts and burning
Will our souls begin to bind as one.
With a word of love the gathering
Of hope ignites.
As we run towards the light
We begin to change into a knight.
Suspend your mind, body and soul
To a celestial sight.
Look to the stars,
Search for it in the shore
Of your hearts.
As we begin to resolve ourselves into light,
The world will then resolve us.
That's when the world will take note
That love conquers all,
For love burns bright!

Restless

by Richard Thacker

Honorable Mention

From the surf he crawled, blathering,
to scuttling crabs gathering,
of his run of good fortune legged out

Winds' forces suspended,
fierce waters upended
his vessel, dislodged from its route

And now crimped in a bind,
he resolved in his mind
to kindle new changes on shore

Gulls cried to the sea
with no choice but to flee,
displaced from the beaches, and more

A man's word and his will
hold captive until
shrill nature sings out a sharp note;

Wings overhead flapping
dark clouds thunderclapping,
nothing at sea left afloat

Strangers from distances
crow their new instances
of conquest, pillage, and feast

No webs 'tween their toes,
weapon beaks, Roman nose,
distinguish the bird and the beast

Evolution has lost,
no one has listened;
wild journey, the flight
has been christened

To a Student

by Pam Richardson

Would that I could
kindle in you the curiosity of a cat,
the resolve of the hawk circling prey,
the urge for self-knowledge.

That you would risk suspending the habits
that bind you to technological distractions
and note instead the inner voice
whispering words of authentic passion.

Do you truly want to change your life?
Run to the shore of your understanding,
plunge into the unknown depths,
intent on gathering your treasure.

Release

by Linda Conroy

Sometimes when gathering resolve for change
I bind myself on the shore of timidity.
But lately I note that

if I suspend judgment
and kindle my spirit with a kind word
my soul will rise and run more freely.

Kumquat Challenge Winner!

At a Montecito, California, Cemetery

by Betty Scott

One Christmas, on a cliff above the shore
we gather beside grandma's grave.
We resolve to leave notes of love
beneath kumquats and stones.

But first, my brother conspires
with my son to race from cliff to cliff
as if their feet and seagull-spirits
could suspend us beyond the scarp

of space and time. They run until
the grounds-keeper whizzes up in a cart
and overtakes them. "Stop!" he shouts.
"No running here. We respect the dead."

Our spirits drop. He binds us
to our grief instead. Gathering again,
Dear Grandma, at your grave we kindle
dark embers—words we can not say or change.



Trevor Hamilton

Kindling

by Ara Taylor

It is possible to lay down kindling
in such a way, that flame will
lick through its symmetry like
the very breath of God.

The engineer of such fires must
always heed geometry, the inconstant
meter of wind, the murmur of
gathering elements, and
the inevitable shores of eternity.

Is the wood aged? or is it green?
What words or fates, suspended
in the gloam, will run or
rush to fill the
dread abyss?

Bind sinister with light or
dark with good—what blasts
apart the notes will change the world.

Who conjures fire beckons the divine,
accepts uncertainty—the un-resolved,

and summons God.

What will fire bring?

Rebirth? Destruction? Surcease? Illumination?

Blake burnt a tiger. Yeats caught a trout.

Enlightenment, really, is what fire is all about.

The Recess Bell

by Britton Richardson

Within the old, dreary walls of the school room,
Where I was expected to study
And resolve the conflict of the Civil War,
Or some other outlandish task for a 10 year old,
I would sit restlessly at my desk,
Energy gathering inside.

When the recess bell rang,
I would run for the door
Like a prisoner whose suspension from the outside
world
Has ended, kindling his passion for freedom.
With fresh air striking my lungs,
I was no longer trapped in that jailhouse of learning.
For those 15 minutes I was a policeman,
Capturing those damn crooks.
Or maybe I would be a pirate,
Swashbuckling along the shore of the Caribbean,
Playing by nobody's rules but mine.

Today I still hear that bell,
Chiming, urging me to answer its call.
But I have changed.
Now I bind to my studies,
I ignore that bell's seducing sound.
Instead I jostle through my notes,
Making sure all of the words on the pages
Follow each other in the correct order.

In Honor of *The Anthologist* by Nicholson Baker
by Mary H. Mele

I don't mind
If you bind
These words
To your hand.
If it will shore
Up some
Thing more
Than just this very moment.
Perhaps a note
Might emote
Even more than you expect.
How absurd
To force this word
Into rhyming, you say
But, hey,
It works.
When we suspend
What would bend

And resolve to change.
(I dare not kindle what I cannot control.)

This gathering of rosebuds is quite enough but
There's one last one run
until I'm done...
What fun!
The end.

Change
by Traci Harpine

Change was what she feared—yet desired
Running along the shore
Thought suspended in time and space
She resolved to take note
Of every breath - every word
To free her kindled spirit
Gathering courage
Binding—embracing
Change.

Absconded
by Spencer Pederson

I knew nobody was home
so I took full advantage of the situation;
I climbed through the unlocked window,
killed the dog,
and ran towards the shore.
My eyes kindled upon seeing my resolve—
what had been taken from me so many loner nights ago;
the golden casket gleamed and blinded as I encroached.
I exposed what was inside,
and there lay
my broken heart,
bound by hope.
I gathered the pieces and left a note
with just one word:
hope.

Years later I thought that might make a difference,
but it hasn't;
there's no hope and things will never change.
You're absconded—
all that remains are the pieces of my broken heart,
and the powerless memories that remain suspended in my mind.

The Seeds of Change
by Carina Cozaczuk

The seeds of change have been sown
The gathering of clouds will bring rain thundering down
The sparks of excitement have kindled an unstoppable flame.

A word of caution
 A note of warning:
 Run with it.
 Suspend all judgment and run with it.
 Shore up your strength and run with the shifting of the masses.

I am resolved to run
And I am bound to grow along sides the seeds of change.

Once There Was a Little Boy

by Katy Hamilton

Once there was a little boy
Whose clothes were tattered and unkempt
In gathering up the dusty folds
Exposed are dirty little feet
And yet they're strong with joy to run
Driven by a man's resolve
So Kindle! kindle inspiration!
He parts not from determination

*Come wait upon the shore
He could not mend them more.
His steps they seek to bind
The worst that you will find.
A natural strength, you'll note
Swelling from a boyish throat.
Let this sight that word suspend;
And not change can make him bend.*

The Life Cycle

by Sarah Vanderpool

Naive youth resolves to
Change The World!
They have no doubt
it can be done.

Then,
they change from thinking about
The World to thinking about
themselves.

High priorities are passing notes in class,
kindling new romances, the latest fads and fashions.

Then,
they change to focusing on
running to class, college graduation,
getting to work, paying the bills.
Life Happens!

Binding agreements, gathering families,
the latest technology, retirement plans.

They retire to the sunny shores of Florida.
Then one day their own youthful words are
echoed back to them from the mouths of their grandchildren.
Time is suspended for that moment when they hear,
"I can change the world."



Summer Langton



Grace Sang Eun Kim

Migration

by Wayne Gerner

Instinctive is the gathering
On this shore, it has begun.
We prepare to make
Our migration run.

With kindled spirit,
We resolve to find
An eternal freedom
That does not bind.

A word unspoken,
A note is sung.
Our annual trek
Has now begun.

So we take to the air
Aloft, we suspend.
Always a beginning,
Always an end.

Incendiarieness

by Jim Milstead

They blamed it on the earthquake.
In a bind they bound themselves
to the obvious, chose not to note
more subtle evidence, refused to change
their opinion, to suspend judgment,
their foolish resolve never questioned.
No word ever emerged concerning
the real culprit. The conflagration was indeed
exciting. A great gathering of spectators.
Firemen on the run, buildings too far from shore.

She licked her withered mandibles
with glee as she planned to kindle
only a tiny blaze, pay her relatives back
for their ill will. The dishonor of it all.

The first arsonist in our family.
Fire Aunt.

Son of the Articulated Finger-Person
by Boris D. Schleinkofer

Honorable Mention

Kumquat Challenge Winner!

Following your Grandmother's recuperation from her bout with madness,
she would resolve to bind the remaining fragments of her sanity &
kindle anew the strained relationship with her little finger.
These filaments were never to manifest.

The finger had undergone radical transformative processes, first as an
appendage & then later as an independent agent, as both son &
Father; the change was a gathering of arterials, an accumulation of
word, image & sensation bundled into tiny fibers sprouting from the
cracks in his cuticle, a suitable replacement for the contractions of
reason she so desperately needed.

She collected & spun those fibers into a short, strong string, which she then
tied around his midsection, between his second & third knuckles, to
'remember him by'—

Not a string long enough to suspend a sword above the hapless eater's
head, but stout enough to face the advancing armies of
Time & Decay & never run.

That string was his legacy & his inheritance, at least until *you* came along.
Looking into your eyes, she knew the word that would bring them both their
freedom, if she could but sing the one pure note & speak the
unspeakable...

She could not bring herself to speak the word.
Instead, she strung you along to shore up her principles—that string, the
cord made of your Father's memories, fit perfectly around your
waist
—you've got all the face of a finger, his perfect image raised to the
sky; you are your father's child, with a string to pull that will unravel
everything—

In you, the knuckle bends.

On the Anniversary of Our Hand-fasting
by Kate Berne Miller

This photograph holds us suspended
in that bright place
where we became husband
and husband,
wife and wife. Our hands are clasped
together, the scarlet sash winds up our arms,
a silken snake binding us close. We cannot run
from this resolve, to speak aloud vows we have
lived but never voiced, each word
a new green shoot entwining us,
each note echoing
across the wide blue expanse, from my shore
to your shore.
Afterwards, at home in our own bed in the gathering
dark, we kindled the early spring night
and were changed.



Grace Sung Eun Kim