

Some of the poems printed from book

Some of the pages of Memories and Musings, the book compiled of stories written by Good Samaritan Village residents, follow. As Lucille Rossbach, coordinator of the writing workshop, said, the “poetry” in the book is not the style of Walt Whitman and Mary Oliver but are music of ordinary language, everyday images and snapshots of life.

In addition, the poetic form serves well for spontaneous recalls because not all memories emerge chronologically: most surface piece-meal, she said, often coming forth in disjointed bits and pieces.

And, without even realizing it, these men and women filled their original compositions with personifications, comparisons, alliterations, universalities, beautifully turned phrases, and mini-plots that any poetry lover would appreciate.

Bob Morrell, who never read Whitman, used cataloging in his list

of images:

I remember
Grandma’s old rose bushes
across the front yard,
The old cottonwoods and willows
along the creek,
The neighbor’s old windmill
that made a weird sound at night,
Mom’s big vegetable garden
Bringing in the cows at night.

Each of the following, Mrs. Rossbach said, delivers a universal twist at the end of the poem, a technique used by poets for centuries:

Since my mother had delivered
a stillborn baby boy,
I was entirely anticipated.
I was born on a very special day:
on Valentine’s Day
I’m a real sweetheart.

—Linda Hilt

There were three of us
going to play hooky.
We were sitting in a bus
waiting to play hooky



DOROTHY SCHIELD, Village resident, is the keeper of the notebook and also is one of the writers. Photo by Janet Carman

when my Dad drove by.
That changed my mind fast.

—Owen Morrow

The most quiet time
is after the storm.

And sometimes, most quiet
after a storm in which
people were angry.

—Janetta Evins

I used to be in a country of peace.
But then my weapon and I were
crossing the Rhine River
under artificial moonlight.

—Bill Hilt

Most impressive in the following poem, Mrs. Rossbach said, is how Mr. Morrell uses sensory images and similes to describe an event during a dust storm of the Depression years:

I rode an old plow horse
to school, bare back.

And its hair used to stand up
from the static in the air.

It was like riding
a pin cushion

The old mule’s ears
would spark like a spark plug.
And barbed wire on the fence
would make sparks
when the wind would blow.

—Bob Morrell

MEMORIES

Continued from Page 1

specific details or prompt with questions such as “What else do you remember about that?” Mrs. Rossbach said. “Often we read what we have recorded and ask, ‘Did I write that down correctly?’ or ‘What do you want to say next?’ Even when they veer off the topic, we still record their words.

After about 40 minutes, Mrs. Rossbach would gather all the rough drafts and read them aloud, often to responses of approval, smiles of admiration, and even applause of delight. Later, she types the drafts into poetry-like formats, retaining original words and unique speech patterns, only correcting distracting errors and adding the date of the composition. She then slips them into a ring binder entitled *Poetry Book*, Available for residents, family members and visitors to read at leisure.

As a retired English teacher who leads poetry-writing workshops for schools and church camps, Mrs. Rossbach became interested in offering the workshops at the Village after reading *I Never Told Anybody: Teaching Poetry Writing to Old People* by Kenneth Koch.

As a result, the residents have now composed nearly 500 poems on various topics. Almost all made their way into a book produced by the Rough Writers entitled *Memories and Musings*. The printing was funded through a local grant and the sales used will be used as a fundraiser for the county historical society.

When called upon to record experiences, the “poets within” surface as the residents dug deeply into their memories, stretched their imaginations, applied creative thinking and pulled words from the heart, Mrs. Rossbach said. None have ever written professionally, but now all have experienced the joy of having their words made public.

Obviously, she said, their minds, memories and social connections were stimulated through the monthly writing activities.

During a December writing session, 90-year-old Irene Schiesler dictated:

I remember my Lord.

I can still recite my verses in German.

I was always the first to recite.

I was nine or 10 when I started.

I can still recite it.

Then, everyone sat in amazement as she proceeded to recite in German, without faltering even once, the many stanzas of her “verses,” which she had recited for Christmas programs as a child.

“After a few moments of stunned silence, we broke into spontaneous applause,” Mrs. Rossbach said.

The immediate effects of these writing workshops are apparent, she said, but more lasting effects also take hold. These writers came to realize the importance of their work: recorded their knowledge and stories for future generations.

“Often our society’s elderly feel as though they have little to offer, that their life is over,” she said, “but these individuals clearly grasp that their lives matter. They believe that younger generations really do want to hear their stories, their advice and their wisdom.”

We all hunger to know our heritage, Mrs. Rossbach said, but we also strive to inspire the future. When we reach our final years, we want assurance that our lives had meaning, that we have not lived in vain.

“The beautiful stories recorded in *Memories & Musing* do that,” she said, “They tell us who we are and where we come from, and they will continue to inspire and entertain us for generations.”

Club Clip

Ramblers met at the home of Nancy McCumber on Jan. 11 with 15 members and three guests in attendance.

The minutes of the November meeting were read and approved. The December meeting was a great soup supper held at the home of Patsy Rethke viewing the Christmas scenes and lights that Patsy and Kip create for all to enjoy!

Ilene O’Leary, treasurer, reported that they had a balance of \$409 but that the Christmas donation to the Salvation Army and the local food pantry had not been made. She would write those checks.

Sherry Schultz then introduced the three Rough Writer’s club members. Janet Carmen gave a history of the organization. Louanne Isemhagen and Lucille Rossbach had

invited several ladies who wanted to share their writing skills. There were eight women who gathered together once a month at the home of Bonnie Cram. They wanted to encourage people to write. In a brainstorming session, it was desired that they involve the community and the residents of the Village.

Susan Griffin had taught several writing workshops and it was decided to go to the Village once a month and have the residents tell their stories with the Rough Writer’s writing it for them. They will be sold in conjunction with the Cheyenne County Historical Society. Several Rough Writers had participated in this venture. The Methodist Thrift Store had donated seed money for this project. Lucille Rossbach has done the lion’s share of the work

and the proof of the book was in her hand for a final review.

The Rough Writers are hoping to continue on with this project and possibly put together another book.

There is a Kansas Authors club which people can join as well.

Marie Holzwarth then read her writing “Thrift Shop,” which told that approximately \$249,000 has been given to various local charities as well as missions.

Mrs. Carmen told that the title of the book from the Village residents is, “Memories and Musings.” They are hoping that many people will enjoy the book and she read a few short stories that had been written. Lots of memory lane thoughts.

The meeting was then adjourned with Donna Zimbelman and Nancy McCumber serving a dessert.

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**Sponsored by the St. Francis
Community Church**

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	2010 BALANCE	EXPENDITURES	RECEIPTS	2011 BALANCE
CASH	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
PETTY CASH	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
FIRST NATIONAL BANK	\$6,627.43	\$0.00	\$7.52	\$6,634.95
FIRST NATIONAL BANK COLLECTIONS	\$838.45	\$0.00	\$131.68	\$970.13
FIRST NATIONAL BANK BANDSHELL	\$58,478.03	\$0.00	\$69.55	\$58,547.58
FIRST NATIONAL BANK BANDSHELL PRESERVATION	\$7,612.47	\$0.00	\$9.05	\$7,621.52
FIRST NATIONAL BANK SWIMMING POOL FUND	\$1,186.10	\$25,000.00	\$25,002.39	\$1,188.49
FIRST NATIONAL BANK	\$4,013.26	\$0.00	\$3.78	\$4,017.04
BANKWEST	\$197,833.74	\$3,498,810.96	\$3,541,160.27	\$239,983.05
BANKWEST HOLDING ACCOUNT	\$50,000.00	\$350,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$150,000.00
BANKWEST	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT	\$517,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$517,000.00
TOTAL	\$846,489.48			\$989,062.76
GENERAL	\$117,256.85	\$858,777.28	\$807,170.95	\$65,650.52
LIBRARY	\$0.00	\$31,091.63	\$31,091.63	\$0.00
TRANSIENT GUEST TAX	\$7,627.09	\$1,888.42	\$4,775.88	\$10,514.55
SPECIAL HIGHWAY	\$8,780.05	\$2,136.24	\$33,809.16	\$40,452.97
SPECIAL PARKS	\$2,092.54	\$704.11	\$274.28	\$1,662.71
BANDSHELL	\$58,478.03	\$0.00	\$69.55	\$58,547.58
BANDSHELL PRESERVATION	\$7,612.47	\$0.00	\$9.05	\$7,621.52
UTILITIES	\$172,083.31	\$1,536,361.09	\$1,613,682.49	\$249,404.71
REFUSE	\$14,429.51	\$153,821.34	\$165,519.20	\$26,127.37
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT	\$189,690.36	\$100,134.13	\$100,262.13	\$189,818.36
EQUIPMENT RESERVE	\$200,159.99	\$148,652.42	\$198,155.25	\$249,662.82
SEWER	\$3,129.47	\$135,576.13	\$147,181.20	\$14,734.54
WATER USE FEE	\$492.38	\$3,812.24	\$3,794.05	\$474.19
SALES TAX	\$3,832.94	\$50,013.28	\$50,092.02	\$3,911.68
TENANT DEPOSIT	\$59,277.07	\$7,700.00	\$10,600.00	\$62,177.07
THEATER	-\$79.18	\$18,142.65	\$18,221.83	\$0.00
NOW ACCOUNTS	\$440.50	\$473.76	\$253.80	\$220.54
NEW SWIMMING POOL FUND	\$1,186.10	\$25,000.00	\$25,002.39	\$1,188.49
DIGITAL SIGN FUND	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,893.14	\$6,893.14
TOTALS	\$846,489.48	\$3,074,284.72	\$3,216,858.00	\$989,062.76

I, JENNIFER HOFFMAN, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENT IS CORRECT.

SIGNED, Jennifer Hoffman CITY TREASURER, CITY OF ST. FRANCIS, STATE OF KANSAS, CHEYENNE COUNTY. BE IT HERE REMEMBERED THAT ON THE 30th DAY OF January, 2012, BEFORE ME, A NOTARY PUBLIC IN AND FOR THE ABOVE MENTIONED STATE AND COUNTY, CAME JENNIFER HOFFMAN, TREASURER OF THE CITY OF ST. FRANCIS, KS, WHO IS PERSONALLY KNOWN TO BE THE SAME PERSON WHO EXECUTED THE ABOVE INSTRUMENT OF WRITING THEREFORE IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE SAME, I HEREBY SET MY SEAL.

Karen Krien
NOTARY PUBLIC

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: 11/23/14

