

By Lynn Berry

Let's stay on the topic of risk. Why? Well, technically, it's still a New Year, and we can still ride on the tails of either the tradition or the anticipation of what the New Year will bring, and this may be a part of the motivation we need to help move us toward our aspirations. Hey, the sparkle and the glitter of the New Year still continues---just as it does in our lives, but we may just need to kick up some of that New Year dust and ask ourselves some fundamental questions to get us moving toward our creative and purposeful selves. The questions are different for all of us, and yet, the irony is that we already know the questions and the answers very well. You see, the ultimate risk is to be honest with ourselves—to have the courage to look at the grim as well as the magnificent. Layers of denial, justification, avoidance, and the inability to understand ourselves in an honest way is the cause of most harm and suffering. So, when we live under those layers, it is difficult to reach our full potential as artists and as humans. Taking this risk is a process, and it is not an easy task because risk usually leads to change, and change involves risk, and risk involves change, and that can get messy and uncomfortable; however, with those changes, we evolve.

Live life—get messy, dig deep—reach, love, stretch, risk, pull, push, relate, but do no harm.

# THE INKWELL

## Your Life

Squat on the floorboards  
And let your life surge out of you  
Hot, sticky, and waiting for attention  
Red fisted fingers raised with demands

Your life wants you undivided  
In treeforts and toeshoes  
Clarinet howling at the mounting moon  
Gyrating disgracefully to an untamed song

Be luminous, scraped and scarred  
In mud and blood and bright green glitter  
She wants shameless love to burn her  
Brand her with its valor

She will seethe and storm and slam doors  
Strand you with your reasons  
Forsake your obligations  
And fearsome responsibilities

Your life would rather be held against a raw heart  
With all the ache and passion and mess there  
Than sit cross-legged in some therapist's chair  
Wondering why her soul is barren  
Why she won't squat on the floorboards  
And bring her life to birth.

----- Diana Peach

---**Writer's Idea:** Looking at your life, what passion, dream, or deep whisper of truth keeps bubbling up from within that you are deferring or avoiding? Find time TODAY; sit down and write about your calling, even if it's one page. This simple action will help to shift directions, and you will experience how writing brings forth personal truth.

---**Writer's Tip:** Observe when and where your creative self flourishes and honor your muse. Does your writing flow when the sun first cracks the sky, or when the moon reflects the dark of night? Where do you enjoy writing; alone at your desk, or in a crowded area with background noise? What kind of mood works for your writing? Some writers pour out the pages when they feel the bluest, and others when they feel energized. Whatever your writing style, work with your creative self and write, and keep writing.

---**We would love to publish your poems!!!!** Please send your submissions to, (or if you would like a copy of any of the published poems), InkwellVernonia@gmail.com or by mail: PO Box 333 Vernonia, OR 97064. Please include your name and contact information. Write--Express--Expand.

Lynn Berry holds an M.A. in English, specializing in feminist literature and literary criticism. She has spent several years teaching Literature, Composition, Poetry, Creative Writing, and Critical Thinking at various school districts and colleges, and occasionally provides writing workshops.

## Readers Lend Their Voices... continued from page 4

Let us share some of the "secret" messages sent amongst the CHD and the commissioners. Oh, and by the way, it appears the City of St. Helens was also in on this back room maneuver.

3/17/11 from Karen Ladd (public health administrator) using public health computer to Jay Tappan "I spoke with Akin (one of their five attorneys) this morning. He said that the mayor, city admin, commissioner, you and Aki and I should meet to discuss the transfer of assets ..."

3/24/11 from Jay Tappan using the public owned computer at the fire department "Hi, Pam - Just a note...I left a message on Randy's (Peterson, St. Helens mayor) cell phone to call me about the CHD move to the PNP (private foundation) status." 4/4/11 from Karen

Ladd to Jay Tappan "Us sending a letter to say we are "outta here" by the health district is not a mutual dissolution..." "This is a one sided statement and really violates the terms of the IGA. (Intergovernmental Agreement)" "Would you be willing to talk to Earl (Commissioner Fisher) and ask him to go talk to Sara (Tyson - one of the county attorneys) and see if he can set something up with us and them to start mutual dissolution of the IGA talks."

4/4/11 from Jay Tappan using the public owned computer at the fire department "I just finished talking to Earl (Commissioner Fisher) and I think we have a good understanding of where we are going." "We will not reference any arrangement past 30 June so as to blunt the criticism of us doing a sleight


of hand..." "The commissioners need to have that impression of "selecting" a next provider of PH (public health) services past 30 June." "Is there any risk in this? - yes, but it's the only clean way to do the deal." "Let's not talk about the Foundation until much later in this I suspect we said too much at our last Board meeting..." "The goal is to get far enough along on the dissolution so that the angry folks who are going to take over as CHD Board members will not be able to un-do the process. Regardless, they will not have the PHA by that time anyway."

4/5/11 from Jay Tappan using the public owned computer at the fire department to Karen Ladd "I think we are on a good footing with the Commissioners in terms of them not

screwing us out of the deal after July 1. I may be wrong about all this, but I think what's driving them is a total fear of working with the crazy people. They also live in fear of the public perception that we are pulling a fast one on this." "The crazies will not have a district to inherit, or at least they will be stuck with one that is being erased." - Jay Tappan .


And on that note, we will leave you to your own research at nohospitaltax.info (available February 1). Please let us know if you find anything which we have missed. There is so much more to read through and we could use a thousand pair of eyes. This is up to all of us as taxpayers now.

Nancy Whitney, St. Helens  
Tammy Maygra, CHD Board Chair



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