

# THE INKWELL

By Lynn Berry  
Guest Contributor Chris Sedlmeyer

Only a few days before I wrote this, my driveway was covered in 4 inches of snow, and the schools in our area were closed or delayed. Today the sun shines across the tops of the long fir trees, and the wind carries a promise of spring whispered, as if a secret from a friend. This stark change always reminds me that spring, like most blessings, always comes unexpected, no matter how much we look for it. William Carlos Williams' poem, "Spring and All," challenges the stark images of winter's bleak, hopeless landscape with the subtle sign of hope, "grass" (20), and "the stiff curl of wildcarrot leaf" (21). The result is a quiet affirmation of new life and that the possibility of change always lies buried in the midst of even the most dire circumstances. It is the poet's job to show us that in life, as in nature, no season stays.

## Spring and All

By the road to the contagious hospital  
under the surge of the blue  
mottled clouds driven from the  
northeast-a cold wind. Beyond, the  
waste of broad, muddy fields  
brown with dried weeds, standing and fallen

patches of standing water  
the scattering of tall trees

All along the road the reddish  
purplish, forked, upstanding, twiggy  
stuff of bushes and small trees  
with dead, brown leaves under them  
leafless vines-

Lifeless in appearance, sluggish  
dazed spring approaches-

They enter the new world naked,  
cold, uncertain of all  
save that they enter. All about them  
the cold, familiar wind-

Now the grass, tomorrow  
the stiff curl of wildcarrot leaf  
One by one objects are defined-  
It quickens: clarity, outline of leaf

But now the stark dignity of  
entrance-Still, the profound change  
has come upon them: rooted, they  
grip down and begin to awaken

-----William Carlos Williams

---**Writer's Idea:** Use a particular natural cycle, such as metamorphosis of a caterpillar to a butterfly or the migration of birds to describe an emotional cycle, like grief.

---**Writer's Tip:** Approach your poem from its ugly side. Use contrasting images of beauty and ugliness to create tension and an unexpected perspective.

---**Writer's Idea:** Write a piece that describes your values--what makes you happy, what gives your life purpose.

---**Writer's Tip:** Try to change the look of your poem and emphasize critical images or statements by changing how the lines or words are arranged on the page. No one said a poem has to rhyme or be written in blocks of lines, so experiment.

---**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](mailto:InkwellVernonia@gmail.com) or by mail: PO Box 333 Vernonia, OR 97064. Please include your name and contact information. Write--Express--Expand.

*Chris Sedlmeyer holds an M.A. in English, specializing in archetypal criticism and medieval spirituality. He has published an article in the American Benedictine Review and is currently at work on a new article examining the practice of lectio divina in light of Carl Jung's structure of the psyche.*

## Impending Water Rate Decision

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consume the least amount of water are likely to pay less than 6% of the increase required to balance our budget. The rest of the cost of will unavoidably be borne by those of us who use more water.

To me, the line graph tells the whole story. Small users are clearly paying more than their fair share now, and will continue to do so no matter what. Any of the new base rates being considered by Council (\$35 to \$39) would incrementally improve this system, considering that we must raise more money. The base rates being considered will move us around within the 60-75% "sweet spot" recommended by OAWU, keeping us safe from a conservation "death spiral."

Each community eventually must come up with its own "philosophy" around rate setting. Currently, the Public Works Committee and the City Council are talking through these differences, looking for the right compromise philosophy for Vernonia. Feelings on both sides are heartfelt and well argued. For some, this process has been long, painful and frustrating. For others, me included, it has been an example of democracy in action. Mr. Weimier, my high school civics teacher used to say democracy was all about making sausage. By the time you get done compromising, it's hard to recognize what kind of meat you started with. I suspect the outcome of our rate setting will remind me of Mr. Weimier. To me that would be a good thing.

*"All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter." ~Edmund Burke*

Performed by the ladies and gentlemen of Vernonia Community Theater

# VAUDEVILLE'S HOME

my HOME

Written by Ken Bradbury

WASHINGTON GRADE SCHOOL GYM

ADMISSION

ADULTS \$5

STUDENTS \$3

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 2012 @ 7PM

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 2012 @ 7PM

Child care will be available in WGS library by VHS Leadership class (donations appreciated)

VCT operates under the auspices of Vernonia Hands-on-Art, a non-profit organization whose mission includes the performing arts.

Poster created by Steily Scott, VHS Digital Arts Student  
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