

GRAB BAG

BOOK SHELF // GLIMPSE // WILDLIFE // POP CULTURE // WORDS // Q&A // FOOD // FUN

BOOKMONGER

Celebrate summer with 'Ice Cream Poems'

Now that we're heading into July, summer's actually going to start acting like summer!

To celebrate, this week I'm taking everyone out to the literary version of the corner ice cream shop, where you get to choose your favorite flavors, up to 125 scoops!

That's because World Enough Writers, an imprint of Tillamook-based Concrete Wolf Press, has just

published an anthology titled "Ice Cream Poems." The 125 poems presented therein for your reading delight are as varied as the tubs of ice cream that entice you from behind the glass freezer case at Baskin-Robbins.

Editor Patricia Fagnoli has curated a selection of sonnets, sestinas, prose poems, free verse, and even a list poem with the title "Thirteen Ways to Lick an

"Ice Cream Poems"
Ed. Patricia Fagnoli
World Enough Writers
258 pp
\$5

Ice Cream Cone."

Yes, there is poetry in savoring ice cream — it's part technique, and part flair. This reader would have been just as happy without quite so many mentions of tongues in these pages, but in the end there's no denying the importance of what Julene Tripp Weaver identifies in her poem, "Ice Cream Cravings," as part of the ice cream-eating experience: "a tongue-feel, a throat index measure."

And it's true: How could one possibly avoid having a Pavlovian response to so many tantalizing references to butter pecan, spumoni, pineapple coconut, strawberry, licorice and chocolate chip mint?

In this book, homage

is paid to several favorite hometown ice cream parlors, from here in the Pacific Northwest (Mallard's in Bellingham, Elevated Ice Cream Co. in Port Townsend), to other emporiums of chilly delight from Akron to Paris to Malaysia.

But not all of the poets are ice cream snobs. Some are perfectly willing to give a tip of the hat to chains like Dairy Queen and Carvel, as well as to the Good Humor Man.

Some of the poems in this book associate ice cream with sorrow or grief, while others connect it with love. In her poem, "Understanding," Dana Beardsley Crotwell relates how, when their local grocery store discontinued carrying Tiramisu, her favorite flavor of ice cream, her devoted husband not only mailed corporate headquarters to demand answers, he also drove to all of the surrounding groceries to buy up the remaining cartons

for her. When she'd eaten her way through the final gallons, she realized, "I would find another flavor / but would definitely keep the husband."

There are many others in this anthology who confess the extent of their ice cream cravings. Bainbridge Island poet Carol Levin has a pair of such poems. One is a rejection of eating healthy vegetables ("Palatable as biting / into the twang / of a broken fiddle string") for the hedonistic pleasures of ice cream. And then there's "Bury Me," her hilarious-

ly brazen plea to Dreyers to offer its peppermint ice cream with candies throughout the year, not just at Christmastime. Sadly, she was unsuccessful.

The good news is that "Ice Cream Poems" is a zero-calorie treat that won't melt away — a great way to kick off summer!

The Bookmonger is Barbara Lloyd McMichael, who writes this weekly column focusing on the books, authors and publishers of the Pacific Northwest. Contact her at bkmonger@nwlinc.com

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Crossword Answer

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