



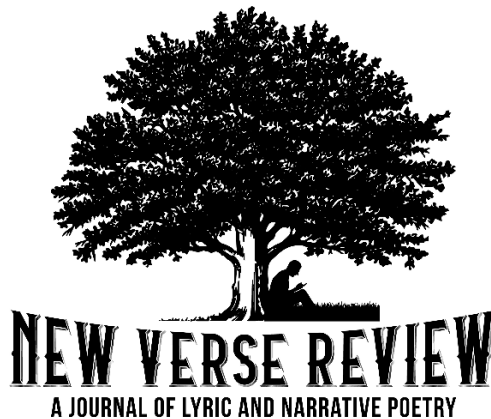
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Poets and Friends Remember Jane Greer (1953-2025)

Edited and Introduced by Zina Gomez-Liss

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New Verse Review: A Journal of Lyric and Narrative Poetry features work that renews the ancient affinities among poetry, song, and story.

Introduction: “In the language of the changing light”

*Here is a bitter yearly winnowing
of what's to come from what is in decline,
parsed in the language of the changing light*

The last time I heard these lines from “[The Last Warm Sunday](#)” was during an impromptu online gathering organized by the author Shemaiah Gonzalez, just days after the great American poet Jane Greer passed away. The poem was read aloud by Sally Thomas, a friend of Jane’s and a distinguished poet in her own right. In this mini-issue of *New Verse Review*, you will see an original poem from Sally and the reminiscences and poetry of other fine writers, some whom were longtime friends of Jane and others who knew her solely through social media where she had a talent for developing meaningful relationships with poets whom she would never meet in real life. Some of the work in this issue was featured in *Plains Poetry Journal*, the literary publication Jane founded and edited from 1981 to 1992. Other poems were ones she had loved and highlighted in her reviews. However, much of the verse you will see in this tribute is original work created in memory of Jane Greer.

I want to give my heartfelt thanks to Mike Aquilina, Maryann Corbett, Boris Dralyuk, Tony Esolen, Sam Hazo, Mike Juster, Angela Alaimo O'Donnell, Jane Scharl, Dan Sheehan, Sally Thomas, Norann Voll, Gail White, Ryan Wilson, and Marly Youmans for their thoughtful contributions. I also extend my gratitude to Steve Knepper, the editor-in-chief of *New Verse Review*, who readily and wholeheartedly agreed to this project when I proposed it on the day after Jane passed away.

Most of all, my deepest thanks goes to Jim Luptak, Jane’s husband, who provided his favorite picture of Jane to grace the last page of this issue. In creating this collection, I had the blessing of corresponding with him, and he is indeed, as Jane said, Mr. Wonderful.

Zina Gomez-Liss

Michael Aquilina

At the Corner of Business and Memory

You are city traffic in my day;
my mind, you know, a one-way street.
At nine o'clock you're fifteen feet
through intersections, blocking way
for what I was about to say.

This boardroom needs a traffic cop
to press you on — "Let's move it, doll" —
to blow his whistle, waving all
my thoughts of business to the top
of midday hills. Again they stop

for flashing lights and tracks and trains
of thought. A siren blares and wanes.
Then, speeding cross the passing lanes
come you! You wink at work, and then
it's back, sweet gridlock, once again.

Published in Plains Poetry Journal, November 1990

~

Jane savored life. She took in moments in all their intensity. She wrote of love, food, wine, sex, cities, art, conversation, and religious devotion in ways that made you wonder how she was able to bear so much reality, so much totality, so much fullness, all the time. She experienced inordinate delight in the most frivolous things — memes and awful puns. The worse the pun, the greater the fun. Yet high art dismembered her. Just read her poem on Rodin.

I knew Jane for decades before I recognized these qualities in her. A midwestern friend of mine described her as "exquisitely homegrown." And she was. She was an irrational patriot for North Dakota, composing hymns in praise of its wind-chill winters and broiler-oven summers. For years she wrote the monthly "Letter from the Heartland" for *Chronicles* magazine (and I have just discovered that these are [archived online](#)). For still more years she edited the highly regarded

formalist-regionalist litmag *Plains Poetry Journal*, which became famous for Jane's "Editorial Manifesto."

In all of those media — as later in her online posts — she appeared as a plainspoken, humble voice from flyover country who couldn't help but tell things like she saw them. And the voice could distract you from *the depths to which she saw things*, and heard them, and tasted them, and felt them.

There was no affectation in any of this. It was all Jane, and it was beautiful. She often wrote of the eschaton — the final moment when we shall "see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things" (Ephesians 3:9). I wonder if for her it was just a slight turn of the dial.

Maryann Corbett

Sung Passion

Palm Sunday, 2015

It's different benched, anonymous in the pew.
Herded by ushers (a scourge in bright red ties)
and draped in Sunday-best civility,
you mumble 'Crucify' with lowered eyes.
Ecce! Deniability.
No one can pin this bloody death on you.
But when the text is written to be sung
by tenor, bass, and your own mezzo voice
and *Crucify him* is your line, a long melisma strung
across a shiver of neums, a poise
in arabesque, a steel point that will race
to ring the bonebound hollows of your face,
through all the shimmering pillar of air that's you
there is no way, no way, no bloody way
to know not what you do.

Published in The O in the Air, 2023

~

Unlike Jane's many friends who have known her since the days of *Plains Poetry Journal*, I am a relative newcomer to her work. I "met" her on Twitter (in the days when it had that name), where I was pleased to find I had a reader I hadn't already met. We were different in a number of ways that could have been uncomfortable: I'm a struggling and liberal Catholic, while she had a convert's zeal and a conservative bent. But unquestionably we have the same approach to poetry: we crave music and emotional reward. Which meant that when we finally did meet, early last year, we hit it off well. I've lost the long-term friendship I might have had.

Boris Dralyuk

I first joined Twitter, the site now known as X tells me, in August 2021. Little did I know that I had stumbled into the site's golden days. Golden days are only golden in hindsight. The algorithm, about which there were so many complaints, shuffled me deftly into a community of poets and readers friendly to the kinds of work I myself love — namely, poems that engage creatively with all the resources of the language, including meter and rhyme. It was A.M. Juster who initially welcomed me, as is his habit, and as I slowly began to share my poems, my warm circle of online friends grew. I don't quite recall when Jane entered that circle, but once she did, it was hard to imagine a day online without her sweet replies to my posts, her blush-inducing jokes, her prickly pronouncements — all of them delightful because, unlike so much of what I see online, they were unmistakably genuine, completely heartfelt, meant not to start a squabble or to persuade, but simply to express one woman's opinion. On the best days online, up would pop one of her poems, each more sonically sophisticated, more intricate in its emotional wiring than the last. She was two things at once: A sweet and prickly, highly opinionated lady from North Dakota and a poet of the highest lyrical grace. There's a lesson to be learned there: If the work is good, there's no need to pose, to fashion oneself into anything other than what one is. The poetry will speak for itself. And boy, did her poetry speak. I am honored beyond the telling to have endorsed her last full collection and to have published, just last month, one of her final poems, "[Packed Carefully Away](#)," in *Nimrod*.

In July 2022, Jane reviewed *My Hollywood* for [Angelus News](#), discussing a few of the poems in detail. One of those is a little tribute to the Russian émigré poet Georgy Ivanov (1894-1958):

Take a small table on the sidewalk,
the one that's farthest from the door,
in such a way that no one wonders
if you were here the day before.

It is as if you've signed a contract
to sit here like a statuette.
How well you know the terms that bind you:
boredom, and pity, and neglect.

She writes, “‘Boredom, and pity, and neglect’ are slow, sure killers of people and places no longer believed to be valuable.” Jane never let anyone of worth feel bored, pitied, or neglected. And I am certain that her own superb poems will never suffer from neglect.

Anthony Esolen

God blessed the seventh day, and made it holy

In the middle of the calendar of life
I went down to a city with no church.
If ceaseless motion is a sign of life
Its hectic citizens were alive; if church
Is where you stash the richest things in life,
Each park and mall and office was their church.
Let me rather find life

In some untrodden hollow of the wood
Where small wild roses bloom,
And the thorns in the bramble can draw blood;
Let me presume
Upon the plains, and draw the lightning down;
Sweat my way up high hills, or sit and brood
Upon an unconsidered stone,
Listening as the thrush's trills illumine
Infinite riches in a little room.

If that could fill the human soul,
Let every temple fall;
If in the thunder's roll
I could hear seraphim
Roaring their praises to the All-in-All
And raise my language to their radiant hymn—
Or listen, when the breeze,
In a voice still and small,
Tells early secrets to the trees,

What need I then some sacred pile of stone
When I have God's own mountains? Windows red and gold
When the sun pours a glory upon the west?
Better to dwell alone,
I say, better to feel the honest cold
Of a sharp winter splintering through the chest,
Than to sit in a city that is none,

Where human warmth is but the friction of
Machines that never think or love—
Merciful Lord, let me not breathe the rest.
Forgive me, lest I die
Bandyng lie for lie,
Laying a pavement on the innocent hill,
Planting my private benches by the trees,
Sipping the sweetness of my will
And delicate intellectualities—
A poet with a papery butterfly

Pasted upon his finger for the pose.
Made in the image of the Elohim
Is man; wherever he goes
He must bring brothers; for there is no hymn
Where two or three are not, and heaven
Is where the river of alleluia flows.
Trembling upon the verge of six and seven

Man sings, or slouches back into the beast,
Sings with his fellows, or he is no man,
But in the trackless woods a sullen beast
Glaring upon his chosen quarry, man,
Set on by demons to supply the beast;
Or in a ruin once raised up by man
A foolish devil, or a clever beast;
Temples to God are where man is most man;
Alleys and caves and dens are for the beast.

Let us then go up to Jerusalem
With voices ringing like the bells of youth;
Let the six days of labor hold the gem
The seventh day unveils in grace and truth;
Lead all things into celebration, raise
Upon the terrace of the world a booth
Shaded with cedar and its fronds of praise;

Lurk in a glaring loneliness no more,
Ye sons of Adam; come

Brother and brother to the Temple door;
All the world is a tomb
Or a small threshing-floor for ceaseless strife;
Only within the Temple is there room
For the expanses of the heart, and life.

~

In honor of Jane Greer, devout Christian, and a brave defender of beauty and form in poetry, when almost no one else would take up that defense. To Jane, I owe a great debt of gratitude, as she and *Plains Poetry Journal* encouraged me not to give up hope when it seemed that a whole world of the kind of poetry I loved had passed away. It was a great happiness for me and my wife Debra to meet her many years later, online. *In Paradisum deducant eam angeli.*

Zina Gomez-Liss

In the Northern Kingdom

i.m. Jane Greer

The gold-trimmed thunder cracks the summer sky.
I miss the jagged streak but catch the flash
Glazing the glass of the farmhouse windowpane.

We're on vacation in the Northern Kingdom.
You would've loved to see the kids catch frogs,
No larger than a dime and dark as coal,

But now it's night and all the kids are curled
In beds that aren't their own. I pace the room
While dwelling on the news that you have died.

I see a flare again. The world appears:
The rolling mountains shouldering the sky
And all is green and gold as day—then gone.

~

As was the experience of many other people who knew Jane Greer, we communicated exclusively online. I was a big fan of her poetry, and I would always try to rejigger my busy schedule so I could attend her virtual readings. I'd have her books on my lap, ready to hold one of them up. This delighted her, and she was always surprised and grateful for any promotion.

She often liked what I wrote — with the notorious exception of a piece I published about Mary Oliver where we disagreed on whether or not Oliver even wrote poetry. Just to be cheeky, I borrowed a phrase from one of Oliver's early poems for the first line of "In the Northern Kingdom", as if to continue our friendly disagreement. However, in the end, it is the image of the world falling away that prevails, evoking Norann Voll's photo that Jane loved so much and which became the inspiration for the cover of Jane's last collection of poetry.

Samuel Hazo

Now Is Next

While most religions prophesy
what's next as paradise, eternity,
heaven and similar dreams,
I think what's next should be
a love that happens when chosen
and shared.

Based on what
I've seen and heard, all those
who love and are loved in return
rarely find ways to explain
just how that's so and why.
Love and love-in-waiting
rhyme daily and beyond
because each one reflects
the other.

Taken together,
they make a fool of time.

Published in But More So, 2025

A.M. Juster

In 1993, Jane Greer was the first editor to accept one of my poems, and she did me a huge favor by being so enthusiastic about it. Sadly, she closed down *Plains Poetry Journal* before it ran, but the important thing is she gave a thirty-six-year-old rookie poet a much-needed shot of confidence.

Jane had an infectious humor filled with joy; her ordinary conversations were funnier than most stand-up comedians' prepared jokes. I particularly loved the way she always referred to her husband as "Mr. Wonderful" or, once you got to know her, "Mr. W." I very subtly tried to persuade my bride to try Jane's nomenclature, but regrettably it did not take.

I don't know what Jane's earlier poetry looks like, but in the last decade she became a giant of formal religious poetry; her work had the intensity of Hopkins and the craft of Auden.

We have lost a great person and poet.

Angela Alaimo O'Donnell

Sonnet for Jane Greer

*"It is a fearful thing to love
What death can touch."*

—Josephine Jacobsen, *"The Instant of Knowing"*

A truth you knew as well as Josephine,
a poet "dangerous and steep" whom we both loved.
You had clearly seen what she had seen,
the sad and sober facts we poets think of
even on the sunniest of afternoons.
We sing of December in the heat of June
because we are not fools. Even so,
your humor made life bearable, whistling
in the dark your art, a jaunty tune
that made us merry, kept us all laughing
at ourselves. All the world's woe
could be cured in a blink with one Jane Joke.
Everything you wrote was deadly true.
You missed Josephine, and now we miss you.

~

I had the pleasure of meeting Jane several years ago on Facebook, thanks to our (un)common friend, Mike Aquilina. Mike has the gift of being able to connect like-minded souls to one another, and Jane and I both immediately recognized he was right, as always — we needed to be Friends.

Though Jane and I never met in person, she was a nearly daily presence in my online life. We were both passionate about poetry, as well as about writing in form, and we loved many of the same poets, including Josephine Jacobsen, who is not exactly a household name — a situation Jane endeavored to correct in her fine essay in *Literary Matters* devoted to Jacobsen's work. Jane and I are also both Catholics, Jane a convert and me a cradle-Catholic — which also led to some interesting differences between us, Jane being more pure in her pursuit of the faith and me being less so, descended from superstitious, immigrant, DIY Italian-American Catholics as I am. We may have found ourselves occupying different

spaces along the political and religious spectrum, but those differences did not divide us.

I admired much about Jane. I admired her poems and, even more so, her poetic vision. Jane wrote in a prophetic mode, her concerns much larger than my own poems of dailyness. I admired her literary acumen. She could be generous in her assessment of the work of her contemporaries, but she could also be disarmingly direct, holding us all — and herself — to a high standard. Jane sugar-coated nothing. You never had to guess what she was thinking. Rare qualities which made her formidable as both a critic and a friend. But what I perhaps appreciated most about Jane was her humor — the hilarious puns, photos, memes and jokes she posted ranged from the goofy to the laugh-out-loud funny. These offerings served as a daily reminder of what fools we mortals be and how fortunate that the God of the universe loves idiots like ourselves.

The word “humor” derives from the same root as the words “humus,” “human,” and “humility.” Jane’s humor amused us all and also managed to bring us together as members of the human family. She knew life was a shared comic enterprise — one that ends not in death but resurrection.

I’ll close with one of my favorite Jane jokes. Her post on June 16th features a picture of a young person’s tattooed arm on which is written “Love yourself first,” using the archaic scripted “f” or “long s” instead of the modern “short s”. Here is Jane’s caption: “Love yourfelf firft.’ Know where that comes from? FATAN!”

Thank you, Jane. I am still laughing.

J.C. Scharl

Name's Sake

In memory of Jane Greer, d. 2025

One time, someone mixed us up online—
Attributed your bracing wit
To me, denounced me for your turpentine
Assessment of some errant line or misfit

Rhyme. I was confused; that definite
Opinion did not look like mine.
It was too fierce. I didn't like it.
But even so, I perceived something fine

In that cool Alpine clarity, and I
Defended it, a phony champion,
A counterfeit, a cut-rate Jane too shy
To disown your sharp, hard-won opinion.

I did not win. But how I prized that shame:
Through it, at last, we shared more than a name.

~

This is a true story, and it was not the only time I had the honor of being mixed up with Jane online. She was among the finest Catholic American poets of her time, and her intense, finely wrought poetry was only matched by her fierce love of the craft itself, which led her into viral (and often vicious, though not on her side) disagreements about the nature of poetry and language. Jane's example of relentless courage and her willingness to speak out against the silliness of some contemporary verse was nearly as formative to me as her verse. Her incisive wit and unflinching wisdom will be sorely missed.

Daniel Patrick Sheehan

Letter to Jane Greer

1953-2025

Jane, forgive the lateness of this letter,
Which will reach you somewhere in the ether
Among your antecedents in the arts
Of life and poetry. I presume too much
In writing it, and it will lack the touch
Of the skillful elegist—I avoid
The subject of death, unless it is mine.
And besides, you wrote your own elegy
Some time back, those lines about hibiscus
Staging in hours the three acts of our lives.
Amazing. You turned your gaze to flowers
In gardens spoiled by irregular feet,
And still found something worthy of saying
In language that sidled close to praying.

How limpid and flammable, your fleet art.
It's a gift of the craft, speaking of birds
In their own language, and that sort of thing,
Capturing life before winter's erasure,
Giving the turn of each season its form,
Crowning spring in roses, summer in flame.
How I wish we'd met. I wanted to see
The plains in your company, and be there
When tornadoes and blizzards lashed and bawled,
Drama so fierce only God could outdo it.
How steady your pen, Jane, in that thunder,
And how skillful your disappearing act.
I'll close by stealing from you, if I may.
The world as we know it has fallen away.

~

I met Jane through Twitter, as many of us did. It didn't take long to realize she was someone I wanted to get to know as best I could through that platform, with

the ambition of meeting her in person some day. Her poetry was extraordinary, and so, I learned, was her personality. She was funny, kind, devout and generous to other poets with her praise and encouragement. She stood firm against those who would call any old thing a sonnet as long as it had 14 lines, and we all know where she came down on erasure poetry. It is no accident I worked the word erasure into my poem, because I wanted to give her a good laugh.

Sally Thomas

Golden-Hour Light in Late July

—i.m. Jane Greer

This time of year, as evenings fall,
Tree-shadows on my kitchen wall
Are fossilized in molten gold.
The setting sun, not yet grown cold,
Has caught these leaves and holds them there,
A phantom wood, its light and air
Enambered. Just now, autumn seems
The stuff of my fantastic dreams.
If you, my friend, had chanced to say,
December's only weeks away—
You, who loved the golden hour,
Whose summer, like a prairie flower,
Opened in the face of frost,
Its glory all too swiftly lost—
I would have laughed, though you were right.
This hour will go. Then comes the night,
Inexorable, an axe to fall
And fell these shadows on the wall.

~

Two or three years ago, in the spring, I posted a photo online of the little shade garden outside my kitchen door in North Carolina, with hostas and ferns unfurling and a general atmosphere of *green* that was as much a function of the weeds as anything else. Happening on this photo, Jane — from her home in North Dakota, still in the clutches of winter — commented, “You live in paradise.” Yeah, get back to me in July, I said, or words to that effect.

Today I could remark, maybe a little too easily, that it's Jane who lives in paradise. Her poems, rooted in the world we know (which, as the title of her second collection tells us, is “falling away”), deal so often with the brutal brevity of its beauties. In this world, paradise is a place fallen from and not regained, except in glimpses: the vivid, short-lived Dakota summer, the lingering twilight

that lapses all too swiftly into night. Only in memory, as she notes in the opening poem of that second collection, is it “always summer, always the golden hour.” It occurs to me now that memory is a species of hope. Jane lived in “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” For her, now — this is my own hope — the longed-for golden hour never ends. For us, here, meanwhile, the night still falls and feels final.

Norann Voll

Since July 2025, when we heard of the unexpected passing of Jane Greer, I've been grieving the tremendous loss of such a dear friend.

I never met Jane in person, but she has cheered me on — publicly and privately — for over a decade. We “met” on Twitter (X) in 2015, and since then there was hardly a post she didn't comment on or consider.

In 2023 she messaged me: “Norann, this is just for you and Chris — not yet for sharing — and it might change, but this is what I have:

Four Perfect Figs

For Norann

Because she spies them on the tree,
because she knows he loves them,
she plucks and lays them on his desk
when he is out of the room.

The solid facts of the world are war,
pestilence, fear, and war,
yet no less solid is the fact
of perfect figs laid there.

I wrote her back saying that I loved it and that she had my permission to share it when she was ready.

She responded with, “Your tweets practically wrote it for me.”

After Jane died I looked through our direct messages, thinking them to be myriad. What I realized was that no, we hadn't messaged that much, but she had commented, sometimes extensively, and often with many additions to the conversation, on almost every single post of mine. This is what created the bond of friendship: her authentically showing up on a daily basis with humor and grace... and more humor!

A couple of years ago, after I'd been impersonated quite well online, Jane (along

with many other followers) noticed and notified me. Her final comment to that saga was “If only people would use their gifts for good instead of evil.”

That’s what you did for us, Jane, you brought goodness and beauty in detail and language, and reflected the glory of our God in the words you crafted, redrafted, and shared.

Gail White

At Katherine's Christening

Lengthened by lace, my cousin's baby daughter
appears surreal—
and I forget what hidden flaw this water
is supposed to heal.

St. Francis' Sister Water—useful, humble,
precious, and chaste—
at any rate, too honorable a symbol
for us to waste.

Symbols are part of the baggage of being human.
They are the jewels
Eve packed at the last minute, leaving Eden.
They are the tools

that bring the rocks and gods to the same level.
They are the quirks
we can't get rid of. Do you renounce the devil
and all his works?

Published in Plains Poetry Journal

~

I knew Jane primarily through the *Plains Poetry Journal*. I regarded the *PPJ* as one of the brightest spots in modern poetry and was always delighted to be included in it. I miss it to this day. Eventually, realizing that there was no one to inherit my vast collection of poetry magazines, I gave my complete *PPJ* file to Dana Gioia, who passed it on to a school library.

Ryan Wilson

The Word Comes to Fly-Over Country

i.m. Jane Greer

Nowhere: that's where folks say it is we live.
They get lost listening to GPS.
Fame will not visit. It's not lucrative.
Still in our fields we hear the blessedness
Of windtouched green beneath an ancient sky,
Breathe the glad fetor of life's rage for order,
Behold the mandala of a round bale's eye
Reflecting time and the eternal's border.

A Tuesday evening, and the windrows, soaked,
Smudge back into the fields, unbaled, untended
Even. The perfect verses of the swather
Fading, the pastures muck, the hollers choked,
Word comes: you're gone. Silence. Where are we headed?
Tell me, friend. Say the city of our Father.

~

A Mirror for Poets

"Josephine Jacobsen," I said, "You may not have heard of her, but I think you'll love her." I was looking at my reflection in the window of a bedroom in my mother's house, a ghost of myself looking in from the green summer night outside, while on the phone with Jane Greer, and we were discussing some piece of prose that she had written for *Literary Matters*. On its green tray, a magnolia extended its cup of icy sorbet, lambent in moonlight. I was, as editor of *LM*, fortunate enough to publish almost a dozen poems and essays and reviews by Jane. One of the great pleasures of editing a literary magazine was, for me, to connect people who might not otherwise have encountered each other. Jane was delighted to discover, for instance, the wonderful poems of Ned Balbo, Rachel Hadas, and Mary Jo Salter. (I think I may also have introduced Jane to Maryann Corbett's tremendous poems, but I can't be sure.)

Neither I nor my phantasmal likeness in the window could have foreseen that Jane would begin a sort of crusade to resurrect the memory of Josephine Jacobsen, culminating in a fine piece for *Literary Matters* and a number of guest-lectures at The University of Mary. For me, the suggestion was pure intuition, a guess based on my long admiration for Jacobsen and my knowledge of Jane's aesthetics. Call it fortuitous, or lucky, or providential: call it what you will. Jane, for reasons that remain mysterious, actually listened to me, and she discovered an abiding love.

Jacobsen is, herself, of course, a kind of object lesson for poets. Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress (a position now called Poet Laureate of the United States) from 1971-73, she won the Lenore Marshall Prize (1987), the Shelley Memorial Award (1993), The Poets' Prize (1997) and the Robert Frost Medal for Lifetime Achievement from the Poetry Society of America (1997). And yet, for all these laurels, fifteen years after her death in 2003, nobody was talking about her. Few, even among the cognoscenti, seemed even to have heard of her. Fame is fleeting. And Jacobsen wasn't even the kind of writer who was elevated by passing fads.

Jane wasn't either. She was hard-nosed, tough-minded. In St. François de Sales' *Introduction to the Devout Life*, the quondam Bishop of Geneva writes:

The work of the soul's purification neither may nor can end save with life itself; do not then let us be disheartened by our imperfections. Our very perfection lies in diligently contending against them, and it is impossible so to contend without seeing them, or to overcome without meeting them face-to-face. Our victory does not consist in being insensible to them, but in not consenting to them.

Almost Chestertonian, Jane was not insensible to her own imperfections, or to those of others, but, more importantly, she would not consent to them. If she could be demanding (and she could be, and was), she was demanding of no one more than herself. Among her many gifts were honesty and forthrightness.

And yet, in remembering my friend Jane Greer, I remember most not her toughness but her joy. St. François del Sales, in his wonderful book, also discusses the common misconception that those who are devoted to loving God and their fellow humans are dour, grumpy, unpleasant types. The Saint scoffs at this misconception, and rightly so. Joy is a proximity to God. And, as it happens, Jane

was hilariously joyful. I am not among those who spend a lot of time online, but, whenever I would drop into Facebook, I'd almost always see some funny 'meme' she'd shared, which would, tough crowd that I am, make me laugh.

Jane was a beautiful soul: devoted to loving God, devoted to loving her fellow humans (which is different from approving all human actions), joyful and even silly while being entirely serious. She was never, to my knowledge, cruel. She dedicated herself and her love to promoting the beautiful, the good, and the true, to the best of her ability. For this gift, she was, I understand, sometimes unpopular. Indeed, she had fallings-out with dear friends of mine, which saddens me. There was, apparently, a cantankerous side to her I never knew. But I knew she was a terrific reader and writer. The opening poem of her 2020 book, *Love Like a Conflagration*, is maybe the most successful English-language poem in Sapphics I've encountered. The pieces of hers I published in *LM* seem to me, in many respects exemplary. I will miss my friend, Jane Greer. It is my hope that many readers, fifteen years from now, will discover her and find abundant joy in her writing, celebrating her as she celebrated Joesphine Jacobsen.

Marly Youmans

The Maker in the Snows

Within a corner of a northern scene
Entirely white with cloud and whirl of flakes,
Someone's kneeling, bent to shield what she
Is shaping—light trembles against her hands.
Obscured by snow, she might as well be stone
Propped up to claim a place in wilderness
Where men met deities in ancient times
And marked the landscape for that memory.
All of her is focused on a realm
That's radiant and spirited like stars,
And on some barely glimpsed but precious force
That she's impelled to drag into this world,
To ground in ruin, shard of blue, or flame:
A mystery that seeks a body here...
No matter what she coaxes into form,
Her seen invisibles made visible,
Her heard inaudibles made audible,
She's stubbornly a handmaid to the work.
What will she make, forgetting all that's else?
Will she pin words on thorns of thistled ice,
Unstring her pearls for dunce-cap crowns of snow,
Sculpt chalices from rock that burns with rime?

All around the artist in her clearing
Bulks a forest—witness trees, invisible
And silent in their veils of cloud and snow.

In memoriam Jane Greer

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Five years ago, I was one of a somewhat mischievous trio — Sally Thomas, Jane Greer, me — determined to put out a pandemic-time reading. As we each had a new book, Sally and Jane contributed poems, and I read the opening of a novel. We three also enjoyed a jolly zoom-confab, not recorded for either posterity or

the nosey online realm. And that is how I met Jane! A bit later in the pandemic, I was asked to make a series of short recordings (including poems by both Jane and Sally and many others) for an arts group at The Cathedral of All Saints in Albany, New York, in lieu of a keynote appearance. (The Jane-Sally-Marly podcast and the poems-with-intros for the cathedral are still up on my tiny YouTube site.)

Just now, thinking of Jane's zingy red glasses, her spunky tweets, and her mad Lady Quixote twitter-tiltings with the free versers over things like erasure poems, I find myself smiling...

Jane Greer

In none of her other Ages

In none of her other ages had she noted
her age or its burden and bounty of expectations.
The future was as flexible as the past,
and, in between, moments like unstrung pearls
strewn across velvet grieved and gladdened her
and always astonished her with their perfection.
There was no nothingness: there was only being.

Slowly she wakes from what had seemed a dream
to realize that this is her final age—
of indeterminate length and quality.
Things are ending, or have ended, or will end.
The pearls are strung with care, it is quite clear.
There is no nothingness—but she can almost,
some days, picture the world without her in it.

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Jane Greer (1953–2025) was an American poet and critic known for her passionate love of poetry in meter. From 1981 until 1992 she served as founder and editor of the quarterly literary magazine, *Plains Poetry Journal*. Her collections include *Bathsheba on the Third Day* (1986), *Love like a Conflagration* (2020), and *The World as We Know It Is Falling Away* (2022). She was working on a fourth collection and planning a reading tour for 2026 when she became gravely ill. She passed away on July 22, 2025, at the age of 72.

Contributors

Mike Aquilina is an author and television host. With Dion DiMucci he writes music. Several of his poems appeared in Jane Greer's Plains Poetry Journal.

Maryann Corbett is the author of six books, most recently *The O in the Air* (Franciscan U. Press). Her poems have appeared in *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Image*, and *Rattle Poets Respond in the US and the New Statesman*, and *PN Review* in the UK. Her work was included in *The Best American Poetry* 2018.

Boris Dralyuk is the author of *My Hollywood and Other Poems* (Paul Dry Books, 2022) and the translator of Isaac Babel, Andrey Kurkov, Maxim Osipov, and other authors. His poems, translations, and criticism have appeared in the NYRB, the TLS, *The New Yorker*, *Best American Poetry* 2023, and elsewhere. Formerly editor-in-chief of the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, he is currently an Associate Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Tulsa, a Tulsa Artist Fellow, and the editor in chief of [Nimrod International Journal](#).

Anthony M. Esolen is a writer, social commentator, translator of classical poetry, and Distinguished Professor of Humanities at Thales College. He is the author of over 30 books and has published widely in places such as *The Modern Age*, *The Catholic World Report*, *Chronicles*, *The Claremont Review of Books*, *The Public Discourse*, *American Spectator*, *American Greatness*, *Crisis Magazine*, *The Catholic Thing*, and *Touchstone*, for which he serves as a senior editor. He and his wife Debra publish a Substack newsletter called [Word and Song](#), devoted to the good, the true, and the beautiful.

Zina Gomez-Liss is the deputy editor of *New Verse Review*. She writes on Substack at [The Beauty of Things](#) and attends the MFA program at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. She lives in Boston with her husband and five children.

Samuel Hazo is founder of the *International Poetry Forum*, past poet-laureate of Pennsylvania, and professor emeritus of English at Duquesne University. He has published more than thirty collections of poems, most recently *But More So* (Serif Press, 2025).

A.M. Juster is the author of twelve books of original and translated poetry, and is the former poetry editor for *Plough* and *First Things*.

Angela Alaimo O'Donnell, PhD, is a professor, poet, scholar, and writer at Fordham University, where she serves as Associate Director of the Curran Center for American Catholic Studies. Her publications include two chapbooks and nine full-length collections of poems. Her book *Holy Land* (2022) won the Paraclete Press Poetry Prize. O'Donnell's eleventh book of poems, *Dear Dante*, was published in Spring 2024. She is currently at work on the manuscripts of two new collections, one tentatively titled *Body Songs*, poems on embodiment, and *The View from Childhood*, poems about family, coming of age, and the place(s) we call home.

J.C. Scharl is a poet and critic. Her poetry has appeared internationally on the BBC and in some of the nation's top poetry journals, including *The New Ohio Review*, *The Hopkins Review*, and *The American Journal of Poetry*. Her criticism has appeared in many magazines and journals, including *Dappled Things*, *The Lamp*, *Fare Forward*, *Religion & Liberty*, and others. She is the author of the poetry collection *Ponds* (*Poiema Poetry Series*, 2024) and the verse plays *Sonnez Les Matines* (*Wiseblood*, 2023) and *The Death of Rabelais* (*Wiseblood*, 2025).

Daniel Patrick Sheehan is a poet and journalist in Pennsylvania. His work has previously appeared in *New Verse Review*, in addition to *Nimrod*, *Dappled Things*, *First Things*, and other journals.

Sally Thomas is an author of two poetry collections, a novel, and a book of short stories. She also co-writes the Substack newsletter [Poems Ancient and Modern](#), which features a classic poem with a short introductory essay every weekday.

Norann Voll is a farmer's daughter from New York and married to Chris. She has raised three sons in rural Australia and writes for *Plough*, *Christianity Today*, and *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on discipleship, motherhood, and hospitality.

Gail White, a contributing editor to *Light Poetry Magazine*, lives in the Louisiana bayou country with her husband and cats. Her latest chapbook, *Paper Cuts*, is available on Amazon, along with her books *Asperity Street* and *Catechism*. She appears in a number of anthologies, including *Purr & Yowl*, *Chance of a Ghost*, and *Nasty Women Poets*. *Unrealized Ambition: to live in Oxfordshire*.

Ryan Wilson was born in Griffin, GA, and raised in nearby Macon. His most recent books include: *In Ghostlight: Poems* (LSU, 2024), *Contemporary Catholic Poetry: An Anthology* (Paraclete, 2024), co-edited with April Lindner, and *Proteus Bound: Selected Translations* (Franciscan UP, 2021). His work appears widely in periodicals such as *32 Poems*, *First Things*, *Five Points*, *The Hopkins Review*,

Image, The New Criterion, The Sewanee Review, and The Yale Review, and has been anthologized by Best American Poetry, Christian Poetry in America Since 1940, Poetry Daily, Verse Daily, and others. He teaches in the M.F.A. program at The University of St. Thomas-Houston.

Marly Youmans is the author of sixteen books of poetry and fiction. Recent work includes: a long poem, *Seren of the Wildwood (Wiseblood)*; a novel, *Charis in the World of Wonders (Ignatius)*; and a poetry collection, *The Book of the Red King (Phoenicia)*.