



*Photo by tatonomusic on Unsplash*

# haiku

on the theme of

## SERENITY



Ellensburg Arts Commission  
National Poetry Month 2025

## **About the Contest**

To celebrate National Poetry Month 2025, local poets submitted 65 haiku to the contest, judged blind by EAC Chair Alex Eyre and Ellensburg's Inaugural Poet Laureate Marie Marchand. Thirty-one haiku, written by 19 local residents, were chosen. Special thanks to Arts & Economic Development Manager Kelle Vandenberg for assisting with this contest.

In addition to this pdf book, the poets were celebrated at a launch party and reading that took place at Valo in Ellensburg on April 21, 2025, when the selected poems were read by the poets.

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## GERARD HOGAN

un mundo bueno  
sin fuego y sin ICE es  
la serenidad

our valley inhales  
from the west, blows to the east,  
mindful of its breath

---

**Gerard Hogan** has been an Ellensburg for 37 years. For even longer, he has been a poetry appreciator and supporter. In 2021, he retired as a librarian from Central Washington University. In Ellensburg or traveling, a good coffee shop and a book of poems is pretty close to bliss.

## SARITA DASGUPTA

composure of mind  
serenity of spirit  
at peace with myself

the hush of nature  
in the heart of a forest  
tranquility reigns

---

***Sarita Dasgupta*** is a writer, playwright, editor, and poet. She is the published author of a book of fables and a series of English Literature textbooks for children, as well as a chapbook of poems. Her collection of short stories for adults is due to be published soon.

## RANDAL GILLEN

on this fine fall day  
from my neighbor's front porch steps  
I blew you bubbles

Did you not hear that  
raindrop tap the window pane  
on our night of love?

---

**Randall Gillen** has bachelor's degrees in psychology and sociology, a master's degree in spirituality, and an MDiv. He has two massage therapy certifications and took vows to the urban contemplative life and was ordained a priest in 1999. He enjoys paper crafting, fiber art, writing, yodeling, and walking. His chapbook is titled *Splinterings from the Uncarved Block*.

## DOLORES GONZALEZ

Y

Y tacocat Y

eat, nap, stretch, scratch, stretch, nap, eat

Y tacocat Y

---

***Dolores Gonzales** finds beauty and inspiration in nature. Earth school is her teacher. Her curiosity guides her to the next step on her journey.*

## NICOLE LAMARTINE

small seed underground  
curious in the darkness  
unfurls effulgence

*co-written with Jared Loveless:*

the vast emptiness  
came with absolute freedom  
turning inward, peace

---

**Nicole Lamartine** adores the wind, the people, the hay, and the ridges of Ellensburg. She watches the sunrise every morning from her living room window with her husband, Jeff, and dog, Boo. She spends her working time bringing joy to people's lives through music as Director of Choirs at CWU.



## HYLA BROOK CUNNINGHAM

the birds talk loudly

the wind rustles through the trees

yet I am silent

---

***Hyla Cunningham*** is a 5th grade student in Mr. Mahre's class, and she is actually named after a Robert Frost poem. She seems particularly drawn to the form and theme for this contest. Mrs. Messinger organized a poetry unit and encouraged students to enter.

## AMBERLY OPHEIM

flowers bloom in spring  
the sun finally comes out  
the bees fly around

the stars are shining  
the moon echoes through the trees  
the world is quiet

---

***Amberly Opheim*** is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student in Mr. Mahre's class. She also plays the violin in her free time.

## STEVE VAN AUDALL

moss creeps over stone

entanglement in action

recorded, enshrined

---

*Steve Van Audall is an accomplished systems architect pursuing artistic endeavors, leveraging the most powerful tools available. However, no assistance was utilized in constructing this haiku.*

## SAM LUDLOW

watching shooting stars  
around the campfire glow  
stories shared 'till dawn

under a pile of  
warm laundry, the puppy sleeps,  
smiling as she dreams

---

**Sam Ludlow** is a writer living in Ellensburg, Washington. Her work has appeared in *Expressionists Literary Magazine*, *Litbreak Magazine*, and is forthcoming in *Washington State's Queer Poetry Anthology*. She received her MA in English: Literary Studies and Teaching from Central Washington University.

## C.M. BECHARD

glorious mountains  
the whisper of wind gaining  
gaze upon the vale

---

*A member of planet Earth, **C. M. Bechard** is an ordained minister whose artistic skills vary. Having a strong love of words, he has been writing since his single digits. He has been part of a group chapbook, as well as his own, debuting as "Ellensburg's Love Poet."*

## COREY EBERHART

troubled night of dreams  
vast fields of running horses  
grass unbent at dawn

cartwheel moon tumbles  
lose oneself on its curved path  
softly burnished rim

---

**Cory Eberhart** is a Northwest poet, alumna of CWU and UofO with degrees in English, Education, and Writing. Inspired by Walt Whitman she urges others to be patient with contradictions, open to containing multitudes. Appreciates literary diversity from extravagant 19th century novels to the refreshing palate cleanse of classic haiku.

## CHARLOTTE CASLER

I give you myself  
petals scattered to the wind  
I long to be kept

---

**Charlotte Casler** has lived in Ellensburg since 2017 and is a graduate of Central Washington University's music department. A lifelong poetry enthusiast, she finds inspiration in reading, writing, and singing, where poetry and melody intertwine. For Charlotte, writing poetry has served as a path to self-discovery and artistic expression.

## JUDY SANDERS

hello dear at last  
so what does the doctor say  
what a relief, thank God

the meadowlark sings  
see the slim sliver of sun  
revealing new hope

her tense face has calmed  
a hand lifts from the bedspread  
small wave small smile peace

---

**Judy Sanders** has always played with words, starting with writing a neighborhood newspaper at age six. She's worked as an editor and writer and enjoys her involvement with Ellensburg Community Radio, where she reads children's books on Read Along With Grammy.



## STEPHEN GUTHRIE

snowfall in April  
cherry blossoms forsake branches  
turning black pavement pink

washing my grey hair  
in spring creek snowmelt  
my head goes numb

---

**Stephen Guthrie** learned the spirit of haiku from his master haikuist cousin, John Q. "No one can just sit down and write a haiku," he told Stephen. "Haiku moments" come bidden by a mind open to beauty. And yet, Kyoshi wrote, "for the poet, haiku everywhere!"

## VIVIAN DUNBAR

to quiet my mind

I sit alone as lotus

distant chimes wake me

---

**Vivian Dunbar** was raised in Kennewick. She has written verse since elementary school. She is part of a local writer's group. One poem received honorable mention in the 1990's at Ohio Poetry Day. Her work has appeared in a local chapbook. She is a true lover of words.

## JOSEPH POWELL

cleaning the hairbrush

beside the frosted garden

white strands of mom's hair

---

**Joseph Powell** has published seven books of poetry, and two more are scheduled to come out in July. He also edited Judith Kleck's collected poems, *The Shapes that Shelter Takes*, which is due out in July as well.

## LORI CHANDLER

a night of bright stars  
dancing in my cowboy boots  
while my partner sleeps

---

**Lori Chandler** has taught yoga classes in Ellensburg for about 30 years. This is her first poem submission, ever.

## KAREN GOOKIN

the honey locust  
heavy with buds and goldfinch  
quivers in yellow

waiting for warm sun  
its green leaves folded tightly  
the crocus pokes through

---

**Karen Gookin** has lived in Ellensburg for the past 44 years. Since her retirement from teaching, she has published several poems in regional journals as well as a chapbook of poetry depicting her childhood in Montana. Karen and her husband enjoy traveling, gardening, fly fishing, volunteering, and hanging out with family in the PNW.

## PYPER STEVER

a wild slip of wind  
fire-blackened spark on shrub steppe  
bristle cone pines wait

slightest color bent  
to cheek, lip, skin blanched, lithe &  
light suffused—spring bud

---

***Pyper Stever** graduated with an English degree from Central Washington University. She works among books, adores a frolicsome sentence, and is moved by humans being human together. On occasion, she writes.*