



# THE DIPLOMAT

World's most unique Literary Society  
where we turn Scribblers into Scribes and Meeting the Muse is a Way of Life

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2014 Senior Poet Laureate Contest  
Contest Deadline Extended until 7/15/14  
Details appear below on Page 1--Printable Rules at

[www.amykitchenerfdn.org](http://www.amykitchenerfdn.org)

<http://www.greatspiritpublishing.yolasite.com/golden-words.php>



... FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

## Last Call for Senior Poets Laureate Contest Entries!!

When I retired from administering the national annual Senior Poets Laureate poetry competition for American poets age 50 and older as of 12/31/13, I suggested to interim administrator Barbara Callahan Quin that we convert from paper-via-snail-mail entries to all-electronic. Was I wise? Guess not, because entries are so far down that the contest we hoped to save is on the verge of vanishing. As of 6/18/14, Barb reports that entry fees will not cover the \$500 National SPL Award or \$100 National SPL Honor Scroll Award.

Barb invites those who prefer the old method of submitting to send hard copies to her at: B. Quin, SPL, 3651 W. Madison St., Springfield, MO 65802. Send two copies of each poem, one with ID and the other blank. Enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope. If necessary, winners may get less than promised, but they will get something! To try kickstarting **SPL, new deadline for entries to be in hand or online is 7/15/14**. For further details, contact Barb Quin at [bquin@ymail.com](mailto:bquin@ymail.com). Use SPL 2014 in your subject line for identification.

A copy of the original rules detailing how to submit electronically appears in this edition on page 2. To submit hard copy, just follow the rules, but send your paper poems to the address given above. If enough latecomers arrive, the original \$500 and \$100 awards will be given. Otherwise, winners will get surprises.

The Guns, Grenades & True Grit contest winners appear in this edition. Entries were light. Well, as a contest administrator, I guess I can't win them all. It seemed such a good idea to let people write about war, but very few did. To you who did, thanks. To the one who cursed me for the idea, sorry; to the poet who suggested rerunning it, thanks—I will consider it. What do you think? Think I am now going to turn from hosting contests to enter a few instead. Are these so-called Famous Last Words? Stay tuned!

May the muse be with you. *Wanda Sue Parrott, Editor*



## 2014 NATIONAL SENIOR POET LAUREATE POETRY COMPETITION

PUBLISHED & UNPUBLISHED Poems OK -- NO LIMIT to # of ENTRIES – DEADLINE ~~6/30/14~~ **EXTENDED TO 7/15/14**

A literary contest open to all American poets age 50 and older who are U.S. Citizens regardless of where they are in the world. The 2014 SPL Contest will reflect the SPL Contest of 1994 in which only two categories were featured. It is privately administered by BARBARA CALLAHAN QUIN, and sponsored by Great Spirit Publishing, of Springfield, Missouri. Judges will include former Senior Poet Laureate contest co-founder Wanda Sue Parrott and members of the panel of judges to be convened in 2014. Entries will be accepted between January 1 and June 30, 2014. All entries must be submitted ELECTRONICALLY according to instructions below.

### A W A R D S

Best Rhymed Poem and Best Unrhymed Poem will be chosen, one each to be named: These winners compete for:

- National Senior Poet Laureate (Best overall Poem: \$500 and Certificate)
- National Senior Poet Honor Scroll Award (Runner-Up: \$100 and Certificate)
- Other discretionary awards to be determined by the 2014 contest board.

ENTRY FEES; \$5 for first poem; \$3 each for second and all subsequent poems  
40-lines maximum per entry. E-MAIL by: ~~6/30/14~~ **7/15/14**.

### RULES

There are two categories: **RHYMED POEMS** and **UNRHYMED POEMS**. Subject matter and style are: **POET'S CHOICE**. An entry cannot exceed 40 lines plus title. Each entry must have a title, unless haiku or senryu. Single spaced; legible type, preferably 12 pt. size, black ink. No illustrations, fancy type, or shaped poems. If special formal format, include name of form such as “sonnet” or “triolet,” etc., in upper left corner. **Electronic submissions only.**

### HOW TO ENTER ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

**Electronic submissions should be sent to: [bquin@ymail.com](mailto:bquin@ymail.com).** We suggest you send yourself a copy in order to keep an entry record. No submissions will be returned. Send only one poem per e-mail entry. In the Subject Line state “2014 SPL (and your last name)” and in the upper right corner:

**Your Name**  
**Your Pen Name, if applicable**  
**E-mail address and Phone number**

Drop down 2 spaces and continue with

**TITLE OF THE POEM IN CAPITALS**  
**The poem, single-spaced.**

**Also include one electronic cover sheet by following the HOW TO SUBMIT COVER SHEET instructions below.**  
Please state in the subject line:  
2014 SPL BIO and your full name.

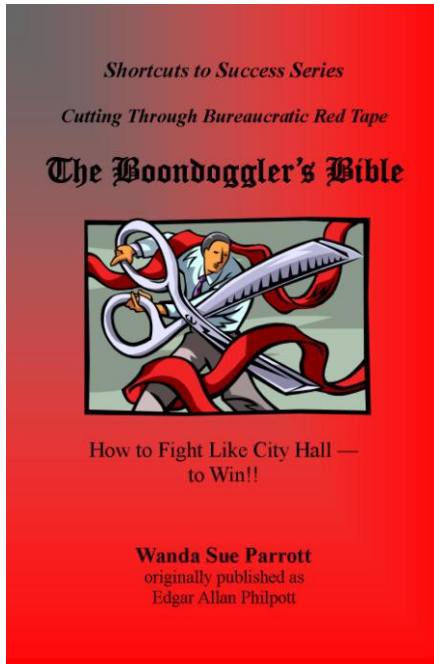
**HOW TO SUBMIT COVER SHEET :** (One page, not one page per poem, should include): **A.** Number of Poems submitted: \_\_\_; **B.** Are you a U. S. Citizen? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No; **C.** Personal information: **I.** Your LEGAL NAME; **II.** Your PEN NAME (by which you wish to be identified); **III.** Your current RESIDENTIAL and E- MAIL addresses; **IV.** Your DATE OF BIRTH (month, day and year); **V.** Gender; **VI.** OCCUPATION, including type of work done and your status as working or retired; **VII.** Personal data such as hobbies, publications, children, etc.

**HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY FEE:** Make your check payable to: **BARBARA QUIN** and write “SPL 2014” in the memo space. Upon receipt of payment, your entries will be activated. Send to: **SENIOR POET c/o Barbara Callahan Quin, Administrator, 3651 W. Madison St. Springfield, MO 65803.** Winners will be notified by 8/31/14. Winning poems may be published online and in the September edition of THE DIPLOMAT News Letter. All rights revert to the poets. To print a copy of the Rules go to

<http://www.greatspiritpublishing.yolasite.com/golden-words.php>  
or [www.amykitchenerfdn.org](http://www.amykitchenerfdn.org)



## THE POETS' PAGE



INTRODUCTORY OFFER

**\$12**

extended to 7/30/14

Cutting Through Bureaucratic Red Tape

### THE BOONDOGLER'S BIBLE

#### How to Fight Like City Hall-- to Win

By Wanda Sue Parrott

A boondoggle is a stall-and-delay tactic most government agencies, businesses and individuals use to postpone settlement of a problem or delay a project or deal. It is a waste of time, energy, money and often of mental and physical health and life.

This book shows how boondoggery works and suggests ways to protect yourself if you're the victim of a boondoggle. The author learned boondoggling and got \$91,000. She fought City Hall and won. Join her?

**TIP FROM AUTHOR** re how this book helped raise \$4100: If you have a book to promote, tie it in with a worthy cause. In my case, as an advocate for the elder homeless in Monterey, CA, on 6/10/14 I appeared before the Carmel City Council, introduced myself as a Boondogglers who came close to being homeless and dying, but boondoggled my way back. I donated this book to the council, which pledged \$4,100 to help with safe parking for women without homes, eldest being 94. Proceeds from this book's sales will benefit old gals living in cars!

To Order: Send check for \$12 to Wanda Sue Parrott, P. O. Box 1821, Monterey, CA 93942-1821.

**NEWS IN BRIEF . . .** All charges were dismissed against 2012 National Senior Poet Laureate, **John W. Crawford**, victim in a phoned-up case of academic revenge in Arkansas. Meanwhile, 2012 NY Senior Poet Laureate, **Vincent J. Tomeo**, reports the female perpetrator of his identity theft has been identified but not yet caught. Combined legal costs to two innocent retired educators to restore reputations of honor and integrity? Around \$40,000 — probably unrecoverable.



### "Guns, Grenades & True Grit" Contest Winners announced

There were only 20 entries in this contest for a total of \$100 in entry fees. One-quarter of total entry fees went to the Prose winner and one-quarter to the Poetry winners, with Honorable Mention winners receiving certificates only. This contest was experimental, to determine whether enough interest existed to publish a book containing the writings about the six major wars of our lifetimes as Americans, and any others from elsewhere in the world. Unfortunately, response was too low to consider such a book; however, we are pleased to share most of the winners in this edition of The Diplomat. Congratulations.

**PROSE:** 1<sup>st</sup> Place—\$25—**Arthur Weil**—Piedmont, CA—  
"Buzzbomb"—Essay—World War Two.

**POETRY:** 1<sup>st</sup> Place—\$13—**Tomas Heikkala**—Austin, TX—  
"They Will Tell You"—Free Verse—Vietnam.

2<sup>nd</sup> Place—\$7—**Sam Kler**, Ph.D.—Pacific Grove, CA –  
"Outpost Harry"—Traditional—Korea;

3<sup>rd</sup> Place—\$5—**Robert B. Robeson**—Lincoln, NE—  
"Remember Me"—Free Verse—Vietnam.

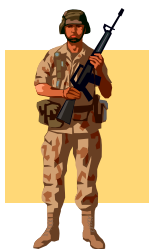
1<sup>st</sup> Honorable Mention—**Judy Davies**—Gautier, MS—  
"Day of Remembrance"—Free Verse—Vietnam;

2<sup>nd</sup> Honorable Mention—**Houstine Cooper**—Springdale, AR—  
"Old Sarge"—Free Verse—World War Two;

3<sup>rd</sup> Honorable Mention—**Nick Sweet**—Shepherd, TX—  
"Victory Dance, 1945"—Traditional—World War Two;

4<sup>th</sup> Honorable Mention—**Ellaraine Lockie**—Sunnyvale, CA—  
"Clean-Up in Rwanda"—Villanelle—Rwanda.

5<sup>th</sup> Honorable Mention—**Gail Denham**—Sunriver, OR—  
"Back into the Swamp"—Free Verse—Vietnam.



## 2014 CONTEST WINNERS

**GUNS, GRENADES & TRUE GRIT**  
War Memoirs by G.I. JOES AND JILLs



1<sup>st</sup> Place – Prose—Essay—World War Two  
“BUZZ-BOMB”  
by Arthur Weil

*(This was written in 1945 when 50,000 American prisoners of war were suddenly freed with the German collapse and flown to an obscure tent city of 20,000 called Lucky Strike [after the cigarette] near Rouens, France. I was shipped there from Liege, our Combat Engineer Base, as a temporary clerk helper, then recalled to my unit, which was ready to fight the Japanese who still engaged us in WWII. Buzz-Bomb was a fuzzy mutt, a terrier.)*

“Buzz-Bomb!” I yelled. Soon, before me stood the little creature with its wiggling long tail, and those gleaming eyes. Buzz-Bomb was the cute little brown pup we had picked up during the early stages of the V-I and V-II raids on London, while we were in the Midlands near Shrewsbury, building Bailie bridges. In the heart of London during the Buzz bomb raids, the dog had grown up, the pride of the company. He had gone with us during training, lived and slept in our tents, ate our chow, and only differed from a soldier in that he never barked back.

By the time we crossed the channel on the LST, Buzz-Bomb was considered a traveling dog. Buzz-Bomb had two exceptional qualities, one being that he would run away, but always return. The other occurred at night. He was watchful and would loudly bark at strangers coming nearby. It was during those wet, stalling days in December, near the German border, that Buzz-Bomb made a name for himself.

We had just arrived and our company split into three platoons. Our position was near a deserted shot-up village. Since there was not much activity, we only had two guards out, the front being several miles away. The time was just before the Battle of the Bulge when the Wermacht exerted their last effort and started their offensive.

German patrols and fifth-columnists, aided by paratroopers, infiltrated into our lines, caught many units off guard, and at the time captured many men, including valuable booty. We were weary from the day’s combat, and with the exception of the guards, everyone was fast asleep. All of a sudden, in the pitch dark, there was a bark. We all awoke and by natural instinct reached for our guns, while some of us held our pistols already. Under orders from the lieutenant, we quietly slipped away. It was useless to fight a foe that we could not see. One of our guards was missing, and the firing seemed to be much closer.

No sooner had we taken the first step back that the dog began to bark, warning us. This must have been only a hundred yards away. Then a loud BANG. A yelp. They had brutally shot the dog. We knew where their location was and when we reached our unit, informed our C.O. and soon came the orders for a temporary retreat. We had been saved by whatever the Gerries had planned for us.

Never shall I forget the warning bark of Buzz-Bomb, the hero who never returned.

*(Arthur Weil of Piedmont, California, was a Jewish rescued Holocaust child who escaped Nazi Germany at age 10 and arrived in the United States at 12. He served in the U.S. military, retired from a career as a teacher, and opened his own real estate office. He has more than 15 published books of poetry.)*

**1<sup>st</sup> Place – Poem--Vietnam**  
**“SUCK IT UP”**  
**by Tomas Heikkala**

Suck it up  
 They will tell you  
 Suck it up  
 if it hurts  
 if it's mean  
 if it kills you  
 or makes you scream

Suck it up  
 They will tell you  
 when you lose friends  
 in times of war  
 And it leaves you  
 wondering  
*what's it for?*

Suck it up  
 They will tell you  
 Suck it up!

*Tomas Heikkala of Austin, Texas was drafted into the army 1967 and says the Vietnam War caused him to lose self confidence and self esteem. "It took many years to recreate my sanity." This is his first contest award and publication.*

**2nd Place – Poem--Korea**  
**“OUTPOST HARRY”**  
**by Sam Kier, Ph.D**

The 5<sup>th</sup> RCT was near Songnae-dong in June of '53.  
 It was just our luck to get attached to the Fifteenth Infantry.  
 North of the line stood a tiny hill about 400 meters high.  
 I glanced at it, as mortar rounds hit, and figured that's where I'll die.

That's OP Harry, said Sergeant Brown, as wrinkles crossed his brow.  
 Our turn will come, I guarantee, B Company is up there now.  
 That's Star Hill to the right of it, the home of a Chinese division.  
 They'd like to take the outpost back and blow us to perdition.

At 0500, Brown shook me awake. "On your feet, lad," said he.  
 "Check your weapon, make your peace with God, and write your mom  
 and dad.  
 Fill your cartridge belt and two canteens.  
 We're going somewhere bad."

As the sun came up, Platoons 1 and 2 assembled at the wire.  
 I felt a tightness in my chest and started to perspire.  
 I peered at the top of big Star Hill, then turned away in dread.  
 Let's get under cover before old Joe Chink drops a mortar round on  
 my head.

We walked four hundred yards to the toe of the slope and entered an  
 upward trench.  
 When we got to the top, we suddenly stopped and were met by a terrible  
 stench.  
 Midst the caved-in bunkers and broken timbers lay dozens of dead Chinese.  
 Brown pitched a body over the side and said, "Let's get rid of these."

Each rifle squad was assigned a damaged bunker to restore.  
 We had nothing but entrenching tools to shovel the dirt and gore.  
 We salvaged the usable timbers and filled some bags with soil.  
 It was approaching 1500 when we rested from our toil.

While we took our break, some more G.I's came puffing up the hill,  
 With machine guns and recoilless rifles to make us stronger still.  
 Some engineers laid napalm mines out beyond the wire.  
 They did their job courageously in spite of sniper fire.

Third Platoon came to the rear of the hill and entered the  
 medical bunker.  
 Until we needed them on top, that is where they'd hunker.  
 The skipper came by to check our shelter, so I got off my butt.  
 He said "When I yell VT, that door's to be sand-bagged shut."

The Chinese got things rolling at 2145.  
 Their artillery and mortar rounds were the first things to arrive.  
 Then through the smoke and dust, we saw their infantry;  
 One group to the front and one on our flank. We were in deep  
 kim chee.

Their whistles blew and their burp guns burped as they scrambled  
 up the slope.  
 As our M-1's barked and our machine guns chattered, I nearly gave  
 up hope.  
 "Button up," came the call and we dove for cover, "VT is on its way."  
 A rain of shrapnel came plummeting down and ruined the enemy's day.

Then 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, as the skipper ordered, came charging up to the crest.  
 They swept forward, firing from the hip, and managed to kill the rest.  
 The trenches were impassable, so filled with dead Chinese.  
 We threw the bodies over the side so we could move with ease.

The People's Army made two more tries between then and 0200.  
 Throughout the night their howitzers and heavy mortars thundered.  
 Shortly before the morning light, they seemed to have had their fill.  
 The few surviving Chinese troops limped back to old Star Hill.

## OUTPOST HARRY (Continued from page 5)

I was one of the lucky few, just a mess of cuts and scratches.  
I helped carry my wounded brothers down the hill in stretchers.  
Seventeen of my buds were killed that night, defending OP  
Harry.  
I pray that they're in the loving care of Holy Mother Mary.

One hundred twenty five of us whipped hundreds of Chinese.  
I understand that 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion received a DUC\*.  
The skipper was given a Silver Star; a puny offering.  
His extraordinary leadership must not have meant a thing.

Sixty years have come and gone since the siege of OP Harry.  
Vivid scenes of violence elicit dreams so scary  
That I'm afraid to go to sleep at night even with a pill.  
I don't want to visit hell again, out there on that hill.

\*\*\*

*Sam Kier, Ph.D, Pacific Grove, California, was drafted into the army toward the end of the Korean war. He describes the engagement at Outpost Harry on June 12-13, 1953 from the perspective of a typical G.I. who survived. Retired from a 40-year career in public education, Sam serves as historian for the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment Assn. and 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. He is author of three military-based books.*

3rd Place – Poem--Vietnam  
"REMEMBER ME"  
by Robert B. Robeson

*Your urgent mission began like so many others, with  
a long white mission sheet denoting an  
eight-digit coordinate, the ground troop's radio frequency  
and the words "one U.S. WIA by a booby-trap."*

*We'd evacuated thousands of soldiers before you. Some of  
their wounds were so serious they didn't survive until our  
helicopter arrived. They succumbed to random and rapacious  
death that lurked ate every rice paddy and jungle trail.*

"DAY OF REMEMBRANCE"  
1<sup>st</sup> Honorable Mention--Vietnam  
by Judy Davies

Join me, if you will, this Veteran's Day  
as I take a journey, my respects to pay.  
I travel past the sea of crosses at  
Arlington,  
to the memorial called "The Wall" in  
Washington.  
Especially today the mood is hushed,  
serene.  
I observe as visitors walk the wall of  
58,195 names to find their particular one;

*Judy Davies, Gautier, Mississippi, is the widow of a serviceman who lost his life in Vietnam. She won the 2013 National Senior Poet Laureate Honor Scroll Award.*

touching it to help them recall  
a father, a son, a brother, a husband  
laid to rest and memorialized here.  
I look on as some lay paper over their  
name,  
tracing its outline to have something to  
keep forever as a remembrance. Others  
softly kiss  
their name or stand flowers or a flag against  
the wall.  
I watch as a uniformed officer steps back  
to pay his tribute, rendering a final salute to

*Death comes when it comes in combat and no one knows  
when that might be. War reinforces impermanence.  
No soldier lives forever. Nothing stays the same. Everyone's  
eligible for elimination. No exceptions.*

*And if we should die, the world won't stand at "attention."*

*But your medevac mission—due to that explosion—was  
different when our medic pulled you aboard, jungle  
fatigues sopped with blood and gore. This wasn't the  
movies. There weren't any make-believe wounds here.*

*At the battalion aid station landing pad, I watched our medic  
lean over your mutilated body. I saw your eyes open. I  
saw you grab his flight jacket with one bloody hand and  
pull him close. I saw your lips move, before you took a final  
breath.*

*Then I saw your fixed pupils gaze sightlessly into space.  
Nothing on earth mattered to you anymore. When I  
Asked our medic what you had said, he took a few moments to  
compose himself before replying. . . "Remember me."*

*You were another courageous soldier extinguished like the  
flame of a candle plunged into water, no longer  
mortal, just another combat statistic shocked and decimated  
by enemy action that had snuffed out your life's light.*

*Yes, I will continue to remember you. Over four decades later,  
your death replays in my mind, again and again, like an old film  
clip. What more could they have done to you?  
Ship you to Vietnam?*

\*\*\*

Robert B. Robeson, Lincoln, Nebraska, is a retired military officer/aviator who had seven helicopters shot up by enemy fire and was shot down twice in one year in Vietnam. Now a freelance writer, he is a retired newspaper managing editor and columnist, as well as poet. He specializes in military poetry and has won numerous awards in the National Annual Senior Poets Laureate (SPL) poetry competitions for American Poets age 50 and older.

the soldier who saved his life on  
the battlefield.  
And then I arrive at the place I  
have sought.  
Once again remembering, I retrace  
his name  
with a tear-stained hand, bowing  
my head this  
Veteran's Day to offer a prayer in  
homage to  
the man I laid to rest nearly a half  
century ago.

**“OLD SARGE”**

**2nd Honorable Mention—World War Two  
by Houstine Cooper**

It lay on the bed flat and limp  
This old uniform could tell:  
Of standing straight and tall at roll call  
Of chest-swelling pride when marching in a parade  
Before cheering crowds and leaders of our nation  
Of peeking at pretty girls standing, waving  
Along the parade route.

He stood, staring at the uniform, remembering many bases  
And years they had served together—  
Panama, England, Guam, Newfoundland, Stateside.  
Long-ago dreams of youth slipped out of the pockets  
And danced on the bed.  
He grinned, toothless, recalling events and places.

As tears filled the old soldier’s eyes, he whispered,  
“We’ll be buried together, old friend.  
And maybe, just maybe, Saint Peter will approve  
And let us in.”  
The feeling of worthlessness again swept over him.

*Houstine Cooper, Springdale, Arkansas, writes in tribute to her husband of 54 years who was in the United States Air Force for 19 years of their marriage. She is currently writing a memoir of their two years in Guam, 1959-1961.*

**“VICTORY DANCE, 1945”**

**3rd Honorable Mention—World War Two  
by Nick Sweet**

On that night in San Diego  
When he danced with Betty Grable  
And with all his G. I. buddies  
Was invited to her table

At first his foxtrot faltered  
On legs a bit unstable  
By chorus he regained it  
They floated smooth and able

He danced as if before the war  
Before the occupation  
Before the barefoot orphans  
Waded through the devastation

Before he followed orders  
That nullified sensation  
And left him drained and broken  
No glimpse of restoration

While holding Betty closely  
He whispered, so he claims,  
“You just have to call me  
If you split with Harry James.”



He never really said it  
Wasn’t glib with the dames  
But this amended memory  
Helped erase the flames

Of many burning villages  
Ragged refugees  
Vacant stares of conquered men  
Sobbing mothers’ pleas

But he knew while guiding Betty  
With elegance and ease  
Some distant day he’d care again  
His haunted heart appeared

*Nick Sweet, Shepherd, Texas, has won many awards in the Senior Poets Laureate competitions. He is a playwright and theater director as well a prolific poet.*

**CLEAN-UP IN RWANDA”**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Honorable Mention--Rwanda**  
By Ellaraine Lockie. Sunnyvale, California  
Publication withheld at poet’s request

**“BACK INTO THE SWAMP”**

**5<sup>th</sup> Honorable Mention  
by Gail Denham**

*The break in the rude gunfire happened at the right time. Before it registered, we’d stopped the engines, shed the heavy backpacks to the hard terrain.*

*We breathed hard, but Mike, who had some kind of lung disease and still smoked three packs a day, wheezed so hard, he puked.*

*“Shut up Stovepipe,” Sid snarled a hushed command. “We’re surrounded by sniper-mean trigger fingers”. Cold crept between our toes. The snow blew barbed needles. Muscles tensed and cramped.*

*We made our legs inch backward into safety of snake and scorpion green cover. We had no choice. The road ahead was quiet now.*

*“Snake Kabobs,” Bret whispered in my ear. I snorted. We took the first squishy step into the swamp and gave thanks for dark, wet, cold, snakes and thick foliage.*

Gail Denham, Sunriver, Oregon, is not a veteran; however, she has such a prolific pen and active imagination that she exercised to put herself poetically into this jungle of war.

**THANKS TO HAROLD E. GRICE, JUDGE, FORMER MARINE**

HONORING  
ALBERT L. BAKER

February 11,1936 – June 20, 2014



Webmaster

Photographer – Philosopher - Poet - Friend

Online publisher of The Diploemat & Golden Words

Born: Cincinnati, Ohio

Died: Springfield, Missouri

I can make you happy  
I can make you cry  
I confuse an issue  
And make you wonder why

I am the lie that takes away  
Your trust and all that's dear  
I am the shout most loud  
That brings you dread and fear

I am the whisper softly  
In a lover's ear  
I can bring a fortune  
Or I can bring a tear

I am a careful thought  
A weapon used by man  
I am this thing called language  
You make me what I Am

*Signature Poem by Al Baker, 2005*