



Penned by Lantern Light

This column will spotlight members of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter of the Western Music Association. It will highlight an invited poet guest with possible short biographical information of his/her works. If a member of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter and if interested in submitting one piece of original work for publication, please contact the Western Wordsmiths chapter president.

One To Ride The River With (For Trey Allen)

By Tom Swearingen

That cowboy on the paint horse
A pretty darn good pard
He's been there, seen it, done it
Through times both good and hard

He's been at it some time now
A good long stretch of years
Roundin' up calves and mommas
And turnin' bulls to steers

He's worked on some big outfits
Been boss on one or two
Taught a lot of other hands
A bunch of what he knew

And man, have we learned plenty
'Bout punchin', and much more
Get'n advice a wise man
Be best to not ignore

'Bout the things that make a man
A worthy friend and hand
'Bout love and work and honor
And how to treat the land

Told us, "Don't just do a job
But give it all you got
'Cause you only go round once
So life's worth your best shot"

He's shown us the importance
Of keeping our word true
That if we make a promise
Do what we say we'll do

We've watched him facing hardship
With determination
And no matter the outcome
Show appreciation



For the folks that stand by you
That come along aside
While you're riding through the humps
And cheer ya' through the ride

"One to ride the river with"
That's his reputation
The kind you want beside you
In that situation

I have had the good fortune
Of knowing some good men
The kind you can look up to
And hope to see again

Not just for their achievements
Although they're worth remark
But for how they live their lives
And how they give a spark

Kindling others around 'em
To glow and grow and give
Make the world a better place
And show us how to live

I ask please for more friends Lord
Like the one thought of now
Grant me Lord more just like him
And please if you'll allow

Many more years for my friend
So he can show us more
What it means to live with grace
Before the other shore



Tom Swearingen of Tualatin, Oregon is a popular performer at cowboy gatherings, horse camps, and wherever else you find folks who live and appreciate Western heritage and lifestyle. Two-time winner of the National Finals Rodeo Cowboy Poetry Week Contest, Tom's original poetry is often based on his own experiences, many of which occur as he and his wife Carla ride their horses in Oregon's backcountry. Tom's "Horses and Happiness" CD was a 2014 Western Music Association "Poetry CD of the Year" finalist, and he is a 2015 WMA "Male Poet of the Year" finalist.