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**SUNNY SOLOMON
 FOR THE BOOKS**

Well, it finally happened. The publishing business has done what the film industry has been doing for years – it's saved the best books for the end of the year.

If you are a parent and your child is introduced to poetry in school, you owe it to yourself (thus avoiding the expected groans) and your children to buy "The Poet's Corner: The One-And-Only Poetry Book for the Whole Family." John Lithgow has yanked the living world of poetry out of the death clutches of academia and returned it to the people for whom it was originally written. You might think about giving this book to your kids' favorite English teacher or donating a copy to the school library.

Lithgow, that skinny comedic actor who broke us up in "Third Rock From the Sun," has done what almost every high school English teacher failed to do. He has breathed life, and dare I say it, excitement, into the world of poetry.

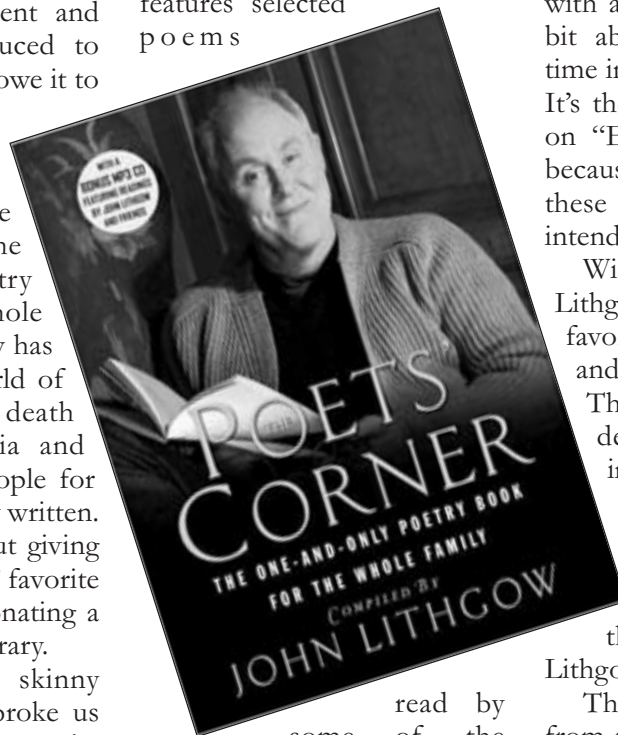
And what makes Lithgow such an expert? Well, his father produced Shakespearean festivals in Ohio and, to seal the deal, Lithgow has a poetry-reciting grandmother.

In his opening remarks, Lithgow reminds us that poet-

Poetry is not only good for you – it's downright fun

ry is and has always been a part of our lives. Every nursery rhyme, radio jingle, jump rope chant, limerick and rap is poetry. Those catchy lyrics? Yes, poetry.

The beauty of this book is that you get to move through hundreds of years of English verse at your own pace. As a reward for finishing the whole thing, an accompanying CD features selected poems



read by some of the finest actors around. It's a gas to go back and try reading along with the actor.

For every person who has no idea what Geoffrey Chaucer was saying in Middle English as his Canterbury pilgrims told their tales, wonder no more. Lithgow has happily explained enough about the raunchy and bawdy stories to entice even the timid and fearful reader. He assures us that some of the tales include jokes about farts.

Yes, dear readers, Chaucer was funny. He was also pithy, observant and groundbreaking in his use of the English language.

Lithgow's selections run the gamut, from Chaucer to Ginsberg, from Blake to Nash, and a host of others. You'll find more than a few happy surprises.

Each poet is introduced with a short bio, describing a bit about the poet and the time in which he or she wrote. It's the kind of info we'd see on "Entertainment Tonight," because, with few exceptions, these men and women fully intended to entertain.

With that taken care of, Lithgow inserts a few of his favorite titles from the poet and then presents a poem.

The poem is followed by a delightfully enlightening insight into what has just been read. Mind you,

Lithgow does not try to tell you exactly what you are to get from the poem. Hurrah, for Lithgow.

This is followed by a quote from the poet and sometimes a second poem (we can thus guess who are Lithgow's favorites).

What makes the book worthwhile is not only Lithgow's love of his subject, but his honesty in dealing with its difficulty as well as its beauty. For those of us who read and write poetry, "The Poets' Corner" has been a long time coming. I can't say when I've been so excited about a book.

Lithgow makes us see the strength of our English lan-

guage in all its shapes, colors, sounds and rhythms. And if he thinks what he has written might be insufficient, he often

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adds a Website where more of the poet's work can be found and often heard, sometimes in the poet's own voice.

The poems selected may be remembered by many with some distaste, but read anew, under the gentle prodding of Lithgow, you may read them as the poets intended – words meant to fire your imagination, tickle your funny bone, bend your heart, touch your soul.

As Lithgow says, "If the poems are new to you, grab on to them, wrestle with them, fall in love with them, make them a part of you."

Sunny Solomon is the BookLady and manager of Clayton Books in the Clayton Station. She holds an MA in English and Creative Writing from San Francisco State University. Sunny is a poet and loves to "talk books." Reach her with questions or comments at 673-3325.

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Remember to care for your skin during winter

Well, the winter season is upon us, and our skin is drying out more than ever. The cold weather makes us turn on the heaters and that warm, dry air sucks the moisture right out of us.

To minimize the loss of moisture, we must remember to drink fluids. In the winter, we tend to drink less because we don't seem to get as thirsty as in the summer. We don't perspire as much, so the moisture doesn't get to the top of the skin.

In winter, try using thicker moisturizing creams rather



**DAVID GODSOE
 LOOK GOOD,
 FEEL GOOD**

than lotions. The thicker creams stay put longer, but

the lotions also are effective.

Use hand lotion on a regular basis, selecting one that is more water-resistant. For the face, apply moisturizing lotions or creams at least twice a day and always wear sunscreen. Yes, sunscreen is necessary even in the winter. A good lip moisturizer also is important.

You should still follow the same cleansing routine as in the summer. A good body lotion applied after your shower or bath can be helpful. Try to use liquid soaps rather than bar soaps. If you are

using a deodorant/antiperspirant soap, switch to a shower gel or moisturizing soap for the body and use the deodorant/antiperspirant soap only on the underarms. Check your soaps for glycerin, avocado, shea butter and jojoba oil, because these are all good for moisturizing the skin.

Your moisturizer should go on over damp skin. This helps seal in even more moisture.

For more information, contact David Godsoe at 673-0686.

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