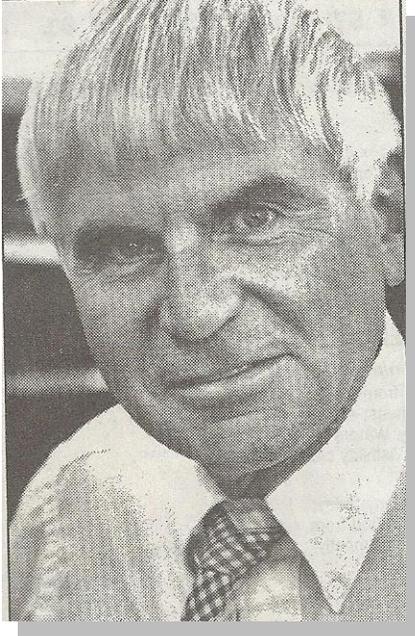


A sampling from the bard of Concord

By Monitor staff

June 28, 2011



Concord has never had its own poet laureate, but don't you think Michael Garrett, the longtime assistant principal at Concord High, would have been the obvious choice ?

The Monitor doesn't publish much poetry, but we often made an exception for the musings of Michael Garrett, the longtime Concord educator who died last week. What follows is a selection of Garrett's greatest hits, originally published as letters to the editor.

Some of his topics were big and memorable – the run-up to the Iraq war, for instance. Some were more obscure: Why the heck was Chuck Douglas suing the Concord School District back in 2002 ? And some – on Washington politics, New Hampshire school funding and even Newt Gingrich – seem perfectly timely all these years later. Enjoy.

On George W. Bush, Feb. 12, 2003

There once was a man from Texas with a Harvard MBA,
Who obsessed that war and tax cuts were the true American Way.
With intolerance for dissent,
he proceeded hell-bent,
To mortgage our kids' future away.

On the war in Iraq, Oct. 3, 2002

President George W. wants a war – a war he will likely get.
To avenge his Daddy and win at the polls, his mind on war is set.
Saddam no doubt will lose his clout: his days are numbered – and
yet,
I wonder if Dubya will claim the blame for the havoc his war will
beget.

On a now-forgotten lawsuit, April 7, 2002

Chuckie Douglas's new niche in life is suing Concord High.

Got a beef against the school ? Chuckie is your guy.

No matter the degree of frivolity, he will surely try,

Sump pumping taxes from Concordites until the sewer's dry.

On business and politics, Aug. 7, 2001

“What’s good for business is good for me”, I hear George W. shout.

“I’ll scratch their backs and they’ll scratch mine – that’s what it’s all about.

This governing stuff ain’t complicated; in fact, it's easy, by jove.

I've got my Harvard MBA and I’ve got my Karl Rove.

And I’m convinced what’s good for me is so good for the rest of y’all,

You’ll stand in line and dance my tune when next election I call.

Meanwhile I’ll work to satisfy every big business yen,

While sparing time for a round of golf and bedding each night at ten."

On WKXL radio, April 6, 2001

Fie upon Vox Radio for the dastardly deeds you've done.

Axing loyal employees with the ruthlessness of a Hun.

But the most dastardly deed you've done so far, and by

that I mean bar none, is axing Richard Osborne for which

tarred and feathered you ought to be run.

On former attorney general John Ashcroft, Jan. 28, 2001

John Ashcroft would have my morality governed by the law.

I don't mind telling you, John, that sits deep inside my craw.

For you see, dear John, your sanctimony harbors a fatal flaw.

From the fount of your Pentecostalism, a quaff I choose not to draw.

On unprincipled politics, Oct. 1, 1995

Billy Clinton and Bobby Dole are naught but podded peas,

Whose core beliefs are rooted in the next prevailing breeze.

“Lean to the Left ? Step to the Right ? Whatever you voters please.

We thrive upon the practice of unprincipled, pragmatic sleaze.”

On former congressman Bill Zeff, Aug. 6, 1995

Wee Willie Zeff needs to pay a stiff fine,

For crossing an ethical spending line.

With profusion he tells us he did no wrong.

Now ain't that a well-worn political song ?

On the federal budget, July 28, 1995

It's nice to see our Congress on a budget cutting spree,

(So long, of course, as what they cut has no impact on me.)

And to think that all the money saved before the session's through,

Will purchase (whether needed or not) at least one new B-2 !!!

On Monica Lewinsky, Feb. 5, 1998

Chef Kenneth Starr sits in the kitchen

Making Bill Clinton Stew.

Tripp and Lewinsky are the staples

Of his tasteless malevolent brew.

He adds to the pot a questionable lot

Of personal politics, too.

Desist, Chef Starr, you go too far

On the banquet assigned to you.

**On Republican gubernatorial candidate Jay Lucas,
March 3, 1998**

To get an amendment which he says we need to Save Our Schools,

Jay Lucas creates a climate in which passion o'er reason rules.

The wording of his solicitous polls is so evidently jaded,

By a professor of objectivity, he'd surely be failing graded.

If these are the tactics he would employ as governor of our state,

He'll make great fodder for my pen. Why – I can hardly wait !!!

On tax breaks for the rich, July 2, 1998

The Senate made a tax loophole,

admitting it was a “mistake”,

Giving sybaritic estate holders

a generous tax break.

They had a chance to rescind it –

the rational thing to do.

They chose instead to keep it,

we less affluent ones to screw.

If senators wonder why they are

held in a state of low esteem,

They need see themselves as we

see them – charlatans supreme.

On Newt Gingrich, Nov. 22, 1998

There once was a man named Newt,

Whose own horn he loved to toot.

He reached for high C;

it was not to be.

Newt's horn is now mercifully mute.

On former U.S. senator Bob Smith, Nov. 6, 1999

“The party’s a charade”, said Sen. Smith

as he bolted the GOP.

“It is so far removed from my principles

in it I can no longer be.”

But a funny thing happened

to this pompous prig in

his independent presidential quest.

A mighty few folks with enthusiasm

for him could he in them invest.

So this prodigal son, with tail between legs,

will skulk back to his political womb –

That haven from which fetuses he wags

to spare them premature doom.

Well I have to ask you, Senator Bob,

given the reasons why you left,

Does not your return prove

you to be a turncoat of principles bereft ?

On former U.S. senator Judd Gregg, Aug. 17, 1999

Judd Gregg, the GOP tax bill
is a consciously designed disgrace.

Deloitte & Touche accountants
show how tax fairness you debase.

The special interests you coddle
must be clapping with such glee,
Sore hands can't lift the third martini
which for them will be tax free.

The question that I pose for you
as the 2000 election we face

Is: How can you tout these tax cuts
without a smirk upon your face ?

On federal tax cuts, July 28, 1999

Five-and-a-half trillion dollars

is the size of the national debt,

A legacy of Reagan's tax cuts

which to us he did beget.

Now the dingbats in Washington vote

the biggest tax cut yet,

While their debt to special interests

is more than generously met.

I register here with Charlie Bass

the fact I am upset.

That politics so clouds your memory,

history you forget.

On the National Rifle Association, July 21, 1999

Congratulations, NRA,

you have won another round.

Mired in your sea of money

gun control has drowned.

I'm not surprised for in my eyes,

I have for a long time found

In the House of Representatives

legions of loose cannons abound.

On school funding, April 22, 1999

Let us solve the Claremont crisis

in New Hampshire's special way,

Making certain those least able

get the most for schools to pay.

Video gambling we should embrace

with other games of chance,

The better the poor's addiction

to a fantasy world enhance.

With a constitutional amendment

we can power from state courts wrest,

Secure in knowing existing inequities

serve our children best.

Better yet impeach state judges –

throw them all out of there.

Flush those black robed buggers

from their ivory-towered lair.

Above all else an income tax

to veto is a must.

Being the fairest of them all

for New Hampshire it's too just.

Besides the pledge is so sacrosanct,

we cannot cross that path.

For who among us wants to stir

Bill Loeb's reincarnated wrath ?

So here you have it laid out, folks,

there's little else to say.

Before you rests the essence of

New Hampshire's special way.

On then-Gov. Jeanne Shaheen, March 22, 1999

Governor Shaheen,

the luster is gone;

the blush is off the rose.

Your lack of leadership

adds measurably to

the pain of Claremont's woes.

Because of this void,

confusion reigns –

where it ends nobody knows.

But fair taxation surely appears

the visceral victim

of your throes.

On former senator Bob Smith, Feb. 26, 1999

Senator Bob, how can you have done such a preposterous thing,

As throwing your outsized ego into the presidential ring ?

Can you not see, by doing so, you've set the nation to joking,

About the substance of what it is you surely must be smoking ?
