Walt Allan of Falmouth chose today’s favorite poem from a past column, writing that what’s important to him in a poem is “its ability to make a connection through surprise,” as happened when he was reading “The Silent Seers,” which, he says, “snuck up on me.”

The Silent Seers
by J. Barrie Shepherd

Of all the witnesses around that holy manger perhaps it was the animals who saw best what lay ahead, for they had paced the aching roads, slept in the wet and hungry fields, known the sharp sting of sticks and thorns and curses, endured the constant bruise of burdens not their own, the tendency of men to use and then discard rather than meet and pay the debt of gratitude. For them the future also held the knacker’s rope, the flayer’s blade, the tearing of their bodies for the sparing of a race. In the shadows of that stable might it be his warmest welcome lay within their quiet comprehending gaze?