

[Open in app or online](#)

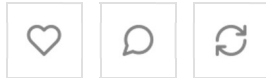
The Writer's Almanac®

with GARRISON KEILLOR

TWA for Tuesday, April 25, 2017

GARRISON KEILLOR

APR 25



SHARE

"The Necessary Brevity of Pleasures" by **Samuel Hazo** from *A Flight to Elsewhere*. © Autumn House Press, 2005.

ORIGINAL TEXT AND AUDIO - 2017

It's the birthday of American poet **Ted Kooser** (1939), best known for his homespun, conversational poetry that explores rural life. Kooser was born in Ames, Iowa, and when he graduated from high school, his guidance counselor, who was also the football coach, suggested he could be an architect after noticing Kooser had received all A's in art class. Kooser had initially hoped to be a painter, because he thought that might make him romantically interesting to girls, but he thought architecture might work, too, so off he went to Iowa State, intending to study architecture, but during his junior year, he had an epiphany, left his architecture class, walked down the road, and threw his slide rule into Lake Laverne. He dropped out of architecture school and devoted himself to writing.

Like Wallace Stevens, another famous American poet, Kooser worked in the insurance business, spending 35 years at a desk job. He rose early every morning so he could write poetry for an hour and a half before going to the office. By the time he retired, he'd

published seven books of poetry, including *Flying at Night* (2005) and *Valentines* (2008). His latest book is a children's story, *The Bell in the Bridge* (2016).

Kooser was the 30th poet laureate of the United States and won the Pulitzer Prize for his collection *Delights and Shadows* (2004).

About writing about everyday things, he says, "Behind the screen of the ordinary can be found unique and wonderful things."