“Fire”

By Judy Brown

What makes a fire burn

is space between the logs,

a breathing space.

Too much of a good thing,

too many logs

packed in too tight

can douse the flames

almost as surely

as a pail of water would.

So building fires

requires attention

to the spaces in between,

as much as the wood.

When we are able to build

open spaces

in the same way

we have learned

to pile on the logs,

then we can come to see how

it is fuel, and the absence of the fuel

together, that make fire possible.

We only need to lay a log

lightly from time to time.

A fire

grows

simply because the space is there,

with openings

in which the flame

that knows just how it wants to burn

can find its way.