

NANCY ARBUTHNOT

---

## War Haiku

In memorium, LT Kylan Jones-Huffman (USN)

iridescent black crows  
satisfied, about to rise  
from the bright white bones

Seventeen syllables  
(more or less) startling the calm  
blankness of the page

haiku his wife finds  
on the floor of the closet  
crunched in pants pockets

dashed on scattered scraps  
tossed on the desk, tucked in books  
scratched on the phone pad

*a scurrying rat  
pauses to sip water pooled  
in hum-vee tire tracks*

*the young lieutenant*  
*missing his bride, watches girls*  
*giggling in Basra*

All you in power  
    who have authority  
who have our public trust

consider how you use  
    the young, so quick to follow  
Estimate the cost

---

**NANCY ARBUTHNOT**, author of *Guiding Lights: United States Naval Academy Monuments and Memorials* (Naval Institute Press, 2009), recently retired from a teaching career at the United States Naval Academy, where on occasion she conducted noontime haiku workshops with LT Jones-Huffman. The embedded haiku on the rat and the giggling girls are adapted from the poems that were found among Jones-Huffman's belongings after he was killed while on temporary duty with the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force in Iraq 2003. The last phrase in the poem, a rather common phrase in business language (*Estimate the cost*) also alludes to Luke 14:28.