Did you know that the limerick was invented by the 19th-century poet and painter Edward Lear? He himself wrote dozens of limericks, along with numerous pieces of light verse (like “The Owl and the Pussycat” and “The Jumblies”) and nonsense stories.

The Presidents’ College plans to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Edward Lear’s birth with a reading of his work at Community Day on Saturday, April 28.

We are also sponsoring a LIMERICK CONTEST with prizes for the best original limericks. To enter the contest, send us up to five original limericks before the deadline, Wednesday, April 18. All limericks received will be placed anonymously in competition and a panel of judges will select the best. Send them as Word attachments, with your name and e-mail address on the attachment, to pcollege@hartford.edu. The competition is open to all. No University of Hartford affiliation is required.

We are looking for READERS for our program, which will run from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in front of Gengras Student Union. You can read your own or someone else’s (including Edward Lear’s!) limericks (at least five and no more than ten), or any of Lear’s works. Maximum duration: five minutes. To sign up to read, e-mail Nancy Mather at mather@hartford.edu, or just turn up on the day (we will have texts on hand).

Lear’s works are widely available on the web. We recommend http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/learwork.html.