



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE POETRY SOCIETIES, INC.

An educational and literary organization dedicated to the writing and appreciation of poetry in America.

Strophes

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April 2014

President's Message



Dear NFSPS Poets: Closing Time

*Calmly we walk through this April's day,
Metropolitan poetry here and there,
In the park sit pauper and rentier,
The screaming children, the motor-car
Fugitive about us, running away . . .*

As I begin my last small presidential column, I think much of time and its passing. Delmore Schwartz, in his elegiac "Calmly We Walk Through This April's Day," speaks of that ongoing collision in our lives between the well-loved, even "ravishing" details of our lives, and that growing knowledge of

time's devouring flame:

*The children shouting are bright as they run
(This is the school in which they learn . . .)
Ravished entirely in their passing play!
(. . . that time is the fire in which they burn.)*

Looking back over two years of leading one of the oldest national organizations devoted to poetry, I find I cannot think clearly of a legacy, or some new and brilliant thing I have accomplished. But I have met, year in and out (as this year in always-welcoming Utah!) with some of the most thoughtful and most dedicated of our poets; and I have seen young poets taking part in our conventions, and heard the energy with which our state presidents and our devoted board members explore the best ways forward; and I have heard the ah! that comes from the audience after a shimmering image or cadence, and seen the faces of our poets brighten when a just-right line is read aloud. We don't always agree. (For example, should we move forward digitally, with electronic submissions? Or should we stay in the past, with the stamps and envelopes that most of us grew up with? Must we be always taking one step forward and two steps back?) But is agreement the most important goal, or is it the discussion itself? And I think of time: *Avid its rush, that reeling blaze!*

*Each minute bursts in the burning room,
The great globe reels in the solar fire,
Spinning the trivial and unique away.*

Two years is not so long, and when the work must be confined to brief yearly meetings and snatched emails and telephone calls between the other pressing business of our lives, it feels far too short for all that we set out to do. Like every NFSPS president before me, I expect, I will leave as many problems as solutions, as many questions as new bequests for the organization. So I remind those of you engaged with leadership in your state society or chapter, and those of you on our new elective and appointive board, of Schwartz's line: *How all things flash! How all things flare!* The beauty of the work of short-term leadership, I think, lies in the doing, and not so much in having done. At the close, you are left less with a sense of legacy than of continuity. Not every problem is solved, but some are, and so we go on. As Schwartz's famous conclusion points out,

*Time is the school in which we learn,
Time is the fire in which we burn.*

But as you've realized by this point, reading Delmore Schwartz can be a bit depressing, too. So cheer up! Utah beckons, and I expect this issue is full of good news about poets to hear (and learn from), places to see (and write about). I look forward to seeing you all there! In closing, I want to thank our elective and our appointive boards for their hard work, their commitment, and their willingness to step up on those occasions when I could not. They have held things together, and done more for the organization than the rest of you will know until you take your own turn. Once again I also want to thank Russell Strauss, our immediate past president, for setting a good example, and I want to give a special thanks to Paul Ford, our *Strophes* Editor, who has nudged me to write these columns in a halfway timely fashion, and corrected me when I've gone wrong, and who even now is waiting for this final draft. Finally, I want to thank all of you, for reading to the end of these columns and responding, for offering your good ideas to the NFSPS, and for being the poets you are.

Jeremy M. Downes ~ 30th NFSPS President

NFSPS 2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION IN UTAH RENDEZVOUS OF POETS FOR ALL SEASONS

June 26-29 in Salt Lake City

Program

Thursday, June 26

10AM-3:30PM Salt Lake City Guided Tour
12-5PM Registration
4:30-6:30PM Board Meeting
7-9:30PM Opening Welcome and Entertainment
10PM-12 midnight Open Readings

Friday, June 27

7-8:30AM Open Readings
8:30AM-5PM Registration
8:30AM-5PM Book Room
9-10:30AM Plenary Session
10:45-11:45AM Lance Larson
12-2:15PM Luncheon, Manningham
Winners, Christensen, Socwell
2:30-3:55PM Elaine Christensen
4-5:30PM Clarence Socwell
7-9:30PM Dinner, College Winners, Contests
10PM-12 midnight Open Readings

Saturday, June 28

7-8:30AM Open Readings
8:30-9AM Registration
8:30AM-5PM Book Room
9-10:25AM Rob Carney
10:30-11:55AM Diane Glancy
12-2:15PM Luncheon, Manuscript
Winners, Carney, Rezmerski, Contests
2:30PM-3:55PM John Rezmerski
4PM-5:30PM Joel Long
7PM-9:30PM Dinner, Glancy, Contests
10PM-12 midnight Open Readings

Sunday, June 29

7-8:30 AM Open Readings
8:30-9PM Registration
8:30AM-5PM Book Room
8-11:45AM Tabernacle Choir Tour
Off-Site
12-2:15PM Luncheon, Long, Contests
2:30-3:30PM Lance Larson
3:30-4:30PM Plenary Session
4:30-5PM Autograph Party
4:30-5:00PM+ Board Meeting
6-7PM Reception, Open Bar, Sing-a-long
7-9:30PM Dinner, Larson, Contests
10PM-12 midnight Open Readings

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF
STATE POETRY SOCIETIES, INC.**

Organized October 17, 1959 ~ Mary B. Wall, Founder

Honorary Chancellor: Natasha Tretthewey
(Appointment made July, 2012)

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STROPHES

Strophes, the newsletter of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc., is published four times a year: August (*June 25th) ~ October (*August 25th) ~ January (*November 25th) ~ April (*February 25th). News items and information on contests may be sent via regular mail or e-mail, which is preferred, by authorized members of NFSPS member state societies to:

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Strophes is available without cost to all paid-up members of NFSPS member state societies when mailed/shipped in bulk to the president or other designated person, who is responsible for ordering the number needed by the submission deadline for each issue. Individual subscriptions are \$4.00 a year to cover handling costs. Special orders are mailed separately. To order a single issue: specify the issue ordered, include a #10 SASE and \$1.00 per copy.

* Submission Deadlines

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	Russell H. Strauss

* Deceased



Keynote Speaker, Lance Larsen, has had a fourth collection of poems, *Genius Loci*, recently published by University of Tampa Press. His earlier collections include *Backyard Alchemy* (2009), *In All Their Animal Brilliance* (2005),

and *Erasable Walls* (1998). He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Houston. His work appears widely, in such venues as *Georgia Review*, *Southern Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Poetry*, *River Styx*, *Orion*, *The Pushcart Prize Anthology*, *Best American Poetry 2009*, *Poetry Daily*, and elsewhere. His nonfiction has twice made the Notable Essay list in *Best American Essays*. He is currently working on *Seventeen Ways to Float*, a collection of essays about place, family, and memory which won 1st place in the 2011 Utah Original Writing Competition. He grew up in Idaho and Colorado and lived in Chile for two years while serving an LDS mission. He collects antiques, plays basketball, occasionally walks on his hands, grows daylilies, hikes, and loves Indian and Thai food. He sometimes collaborates with his wife, Jacqui Biggs Larsen, a painter and multi-media artist. Since 1993 he has taught literature and creative writing at Brigham Young University, where he currently serves as associate chair. He and Jacqui recently directed a study abroad program in Madrid. In 2012, he was named to a five-year term as Utah Poet Laureate.



Clarence P. Socwell has won over 1,000 prizes in national contests. Named Utah State Poetry Society's Poet of the Year for *Intrinsic Tapestries*, he is also author of *Beads Along The String*, *All's Well That Pretends Well*, and *Reaching for Peaks*.

His poems have been published in numerous anthologies. He has been president of the Utah State Poetry Society, the League of Utah Writers, and the National Federation of State Poetry Societies.

Elaine Wright Christensen has two collections of poetry: *I Have Learned 5 Things* (NFSPS, 1996), and *At the Edges*, winner of UTSPS' Poet of the Year in 1990. Her poems have appeared in numerous journals, including *Weber Studies*, *Ellipsis*, *Dialogue*, *Petroglyph*, and *The Comstock*



Review, where she placed first in the Muriel Craft Bailey Memorial Award. Anthologies that have published her work include *The Cancer Poetry Project*, *Discoveries: Two Centuries of Poems by Mormon Women*, and recently, in *New Poets of the American West*. Elaine received a BA in German and English from Utah State University. Living in Sandy, UT, she is the mother of five, the grandmother of twelve.

Rob Carney is originally from Washington state. He is the author of *Story Problems* (Somondoco Press 2011), *Weather Report* (Somondoco, 2006), *Boasts, Toasts, and Ghosts* (Pinyon Press, 2003), as well as three poetry chapbooks:



Home Appraisals (Plan B Press, 2012), *This Is One Sexy Planet* (Frank Cat Press, 2005), and *New Fables, Old Songs* (Dream Horse Press, 2003). He is a two-time recipient of the Utah Book Award for Poetry, winner of the Pinyon Press National Poetry Book Award, winner of the Frank Cat Press and Dream Horse Press National Chapbook Competitions, and has been interviewed on National Public Radio's "The Poet and the Poem from the Library of Congress." His work has appeared in *Cave Wall*, *Mid-American Review*, *Quarterly West*, *Redactions*, *River Styx*, *Sugar House Review*, and dozens of other journals, as well as the Norton anthology *Flash Fiction Forward* (2006). He is a Professor of English at Utah Valley University and lives in Salt Lake City.

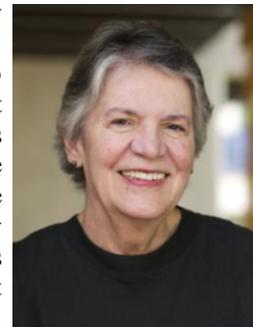
John Calvin Rezmerski ("Rez") grew up in Pennsylvania, and was educated there and in Ohio, Kansas, and Minnesota, where he taught writing, literature, and linguistics for 35 years before retiring. Published widely in



magazines, anthologies, chapbooks and full-length collections of poems (most recently *Breaking the Rules: Starting with Ghazals*, from Red Dragonfly Press), he has also participated in dramatic productions as playwright, director, actor, or magician.

Currently a member of the *Cabaret le Ruse* comedy company, and a long-time member of the science-fiction performance poetry group *Lady Poetesses from Hell*, he is also at work on a book of writing and reading lessons and exercises called *Building and Maintaining Poetry*. He counts as his three most treasured poetry experiences the publication of his first book, his appointment to a 5-year term as Poet Laureate of the League of Minnesota Poets, and being invited to join the Pine Nuts workshop.

Diane Glancy is a visiting professor at Azusa Pacific University near Los Angeles. She received two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships and the Juniper Poetry Prize from the University of Massachusetts Press. Her latest collections of poetry, *Stories of the Driven World* and *It Was Then*, were published by Mammoth Publishers, Lawrence, KS, 2010 and 2012. Her latest collection of essays, *The Dream of a Broken Field*, was published by the University of Nebraska Press in 2011. A new collection of nonfiction, *Fort Marion Prisoners and the Trauma of Native Education*, is forthcoming from Nebraska in 2014.



Joel Long has had his most recent book, *Lessons in Disappearance*, published by Blaine Creek Press in 2012. *Knowing Time by Light*, a finalist for the Utah Book Award, was published by the same press in 2010. His *Winged Insects* won the White Pine Press Poetry Prize and was published in 1999. His chapbooks, *Chopin's Preludes* and *Saffron Beneath Every Frost*, were published from Elik Press. His poems have appeared in *Quarterly West*, *Gulf Coast*, *Rhino*, *Bitter Oleander*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Bellingham Review*, *Sou'wester*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Willow Springs*, *Poems and Plays*, and *Seattle Review*. His poems have also been anthologized in *American Poetry: The Next Generation*, *Essential Love*, *Fresh Water*, and *I Go to the Ruined Place*. He received the Mayor's Artist Award for Literary Arts at the Utah Arts Festival and the Writers Advocate Award from Writers at Work.



NFSPS CONVENTION BOOK ROOM

Each poet submitting books for sale should put a 3 by 5 card in every book with the following information: Name of the author, Book Title, Sale Price, and a Number Identifier for each book (e.g., 1 of 15, 2 of 15). If the poet is willing to accept checks from book purchasers, please indicate that checks are acceptable. Otherwise, sales of the poet's books will require cash.

If the poet is mailing books to the convention, please use the following address:

DoubleTree by Hilton
5151 Wiley Post Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Indicate on the parcel C/O NFSPS National Convention (Book Room).

All books must be picked up from the Book Room after lunch and before supper on the last day (Sunday) of the convention.

Only registered attendees, NFSPS, and State societies can sell their items.

STEVENS POETRY MANUSCRIPT AWARD 2014

We have a winner for the contest: She is Betsy M. Hughes of Dayton, OH, for her manuscript, *Breaking Weather*. The book will

be produced by NFSPS and will be available for sale at and after the June 2014 convention in Salt Lake City, UT.

The judge also named Ann Gasser of West

Reading, PA as runner-up, and three honorable mentions: Evan Walters of Lebanon, IN; Jim Barton of Huttig, AR; and Annie Neugebauer of Denton, TX. All manuscripts but Betsy's are now released for any other use the poets wish.

The judge of this contest was Glenna Holloway of Naperville, IL, published in many magazines and journals such as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *McCall's*, *The Lyric*, *The Cape Rock*, and *The Formalist*. She has twice won the Founder's (Grand Prize) award from NFSPS, and has recently been named Senior Poet Laureate of Illinois for the 4th year.

NFSPS MEMBER SOCIETY NEWS

ALABAMA STATE POETRY SOCIETY held its annual mid-winter meeting at the Huntsville Public Library Madison branch, featuring a presentation on publishing by Jennifer Horne and a round robin reading by members. Plans were announced for several

projects, including poetry presentations to the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, the creation of a state poetry library featuring members' works as well as books contributed by members and outreach to schools and community groups. The program for this year's spring meeting in Mobile was discussed. ~ *Barry Marks, President*

ARIZONA STATE POETRY SOCIETY'S Spring Festival will be hosted by The East Valley Poets at the Pyle Center in Tempe on April 26th. Chairpersons Jim Platt and Rhonda Brown are organizing the event. A full day of poetry will run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The theme of the festival is "The Arizona Trail." Information concerning our 2014 annual contest will be available the end of April on azpoetry.webs.com. Winning poems from the 2013 contest have been printed in a beautifully-bound anthology that is for sale at \$6.50 for ASPS members and \$8.50 for non-members. Both prices include mailing. See our website for ordering details or email carolhogan@cox.com. Over \$1500 was paid out for the included winning poems. The Tucson branch of ASPS has begun meeting at the UA Poetry Center. They will meet on the first Saturday of each month, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Visitors are always welcome. ~ *Molly Saty, Reporter*

POETS ROUNDTABLE OF ARKANSAS poets are busy writing and preparing for the Ms. Lily Peter Celebration of Poetry this year to be held by the Fayetteville branch on May 5th. The branch is holding the conference in nearby Springdale with two guest speakers. This is an annual event held every May and branches take turn hosting. The newest PRA branch, Free Verse Poets of Mountain Home, is working on its second compilation CD for which the money goes to fund scholarships for local students. Find out more by contacting Diane Stefan on poetsroundtable.webs.com. Poetry contest lineup for PRA's annual Poetry Day in October will be available to view on our website in April. Please check them out. This year's event will be held in beautiful Mountain Home. Many of our poets have new books. Check out more on our Facebook page! ~ *Laura Loughridge, Reporter*

COLUMBINE POETS OF COLORADO hosted its annual Poets Fest on Oct. 5, 2013, at Aurora Community College, featuring one of their own members, the prize-winning poet Veronica Patterson. Members from all over the state came to attend Patterson's workshop on the Prose Poem and to hear her read from her new collection of prose poems, & *it had rained*. The event was also the book launch of

the 35th anniversary anthology, *Poetry on Track*. Members shared poems from the anthology at the open reading and enjoyed getting to meet members for the first time. In November 2013, Columbine Poets President Julie Cummings was invited to be the featured poet at Morgan Community College's Open Mic Poetry Night. Local poets were inspired not only by her performance but also by the workshop she led the following day—"The Eight Room Poem." By the end of the workshop, the writers decided to start their own chapter of Columbine Poets with 8 members and have been meeting monthly ever since under the name, Tumbleweed Poets. They engage in generative writing exercises inspired by NFSPS contests and have also designed a private blog for members to post and critique each other's work. Tumbleweed Poets is now the fourth chapter of Columbine Poets. ~ *Rachel Kellum and Anita Jepson-Gilbert*

FLORIDA STATE POETS ASSOCIATION is working very hard with the state legislature to again have a Poet Laureate. The process has been a very long and interesting journey. It has had some bumps and detours but we will arrive eventually. Our Spring Conference in April will be held in Tallahassee, our state capital, where we will meet with our representatives and tour the Capital. A reception on our first night will honor those representatives who have been working to achieve this goal with us. We are very proud and excited to be hosting NFSPS National Convention in 2015. Check www.floridastatepoetsassociation.org for developing information. ~ *Mary-Ann Westbrook, Secretary*

GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY'S winter Quarterly Meeting was held at the Classic Center in Athens, GA. Morning and afternoon workshops were presented by Chad Davidson and Gregory Fraser, both professors of literature and creative writing at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, GA. The morning workshop was "Toggling & Juggling: Managing Multiple Subjects in a Single Poem." Davidson and Fraser led a lively discussion of a poem by Jack Gilbert, "Adulterated," explaining the way toggling can validate a difficult subject without resulting in clichés. The afternoon workshop was "That is not what I meant, at all—The Calculated Correction in Poetry." The discussion by Fraser and Davidson of Elizabeth Bishop's poetry demonstrated how the writer can draw readers into the unfolding progress of a poem. We enjoyed listening to members Clela Reed and Elizabeth Howells read their poems, interspersed with interesting anecdotes about life experiences

that inspired them. Contest winners were announced. Former GPS President Sandy Hokanson had her manuscript, "South of the Ordinary," win the 2013 Charles Dickson Memorial Chapbook Contest sponsored every other year by the GPS and will be published and debuted at the Spring Quarterly Meeting in Columbus, GA on April 26th. A line from the first poem in this collection asks, "isn't it children who move away?" At a time in life when she thought her moving days were over, Sandy is once again packing and asking many questions of life. In the process, she discovers herself moving not only south, but forward in her journey of healing that is inevitably part of living and growing, as well as giving us glimpses of some of her traveling companions. ~ *DuAnne Royall Kaiser, Reporter*

ILLINOIS STATE POETRY SOCIETY has several plans for Poetry Month in April and in some cases continuing into May. Members' work will be displayed in libraries throughout the state including: Carbondale, Glenview, Highland Park, Hinsdale, Indian Prairie, Pontiac, Westmont, Wilmette, and Winnetka. Besides our monthly featured reader and open mic at Brewed Awakening in Westmont, we shall have a juried reading of members' work at the Oak Brook library. On April 26, ISPS will join other poetry organizations and activities for the annual Poetry Fest at the Harold Washington Library in Chicago. A new open mic event will begin on March 8 at the Wicked Good Café in Naperville at 3 p.m. on the second Saturday of every month. ISPS will join the Naperville Writers Group and Poets and Patrons for sharing poetry, flash fiction, and excerpts from longer stories. ~ *Susan T. Moss, President*

INDIANA STATE FEDERATION OF POETRY CLUBS' Spring Convention will be Saturday, May 17, 2014, starting at 9:30 a.m. and is scheduled until 3:30 p.m. at Taylored Systems Inc., 14701 Cumberland Road Suite 100, Noblesville, IN 46060. Our Spring Convention, hosted by the Noble Poets, has registration forms available online at www.isfpc.org. Poet Laureate George Kalamaris will be our Keynote Speaker. Our new Premier Poet of Indiana, to be nominated (by ISFPC committee) at the Spring Convention, will be Mary Couch of Anderson, IN. ISFPC's Premier Poet holds a three-year reign. President, Manningham Chair, and Contest Director are to be installed at the Spring Convention too. Fall Rendezvous will be October 10-12, 2014, at the beautiful Clifty Falls State Park overlooking the scenic Ohio River. Registration forms and information are on the

ISFPC website. You are welcome to join us. Come be part of our workshops, fine speakers, Rendezvous poetry contest winners, round robin readings, and nature encounter opportunities. Meet poets who together share the talent and insight of your literary passion. ~ *Caroline Dewey, 1st Vice President*

MAINE POETS SOCIETY gathered in February at the Dyer Library in Saco for their all-day meeting. Poems on the subject of "Hibernation" were judged by Henry Braun. Villanelles were judged by Annie Finch. The next meeting will be Saturday, May 17, 2014, at the University of Maine at Augusta. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. There is a \$12 registration fee which includes lunch. Non-members are welcome and may stay to participate in a reading-in-the-round at about 3 p.m. Contests, open to members only, will be: 1) Form—Sonnet, to be judged by guest judge Marita O'Neill; 2) Subject—Mirrors, to be judged by member Sally Joy. The subject poem has a 24-line limit. New membership is encouraged. For more information and to learn about the Society, please visit our website: www.mainepoetsociety.com or contact MPS President Carol Bachofner at mainepoet@me.com or 207-594-8954. ~ *Sally Joy, Reporter*

MASSACHUSETTS STATE POETRY SOCIETY reports the year-end meeting was held in December at the Beverly Library. It was well attended by MSPS members; Waterfront CREW Poets who attended were Renee Pike and Denise Mahoney. There was a Yankee Swap, which consisted of each person bringing a grab-gift with a short poem pertaining to the gift attached. Copies of the *MSPS Anthology 2013* were sold. Also, there was a mini-fund raiser—a Silent Book Auction—where attendees donated poetry books they had read. It was a successful book recycling effort and proceeds were used to help defray postage expenses. On December 21, 2013, the Winthrop Cultural Council hosted a second Winter Solstice Celebration at the EB Newton School. It was a wonderful community gathering of over 30 guests featuring poetry readings, musicians on guitars and drums and a Native American Drum Circle. Four Waterfront CREW Poets, Renee Pike, Anthony Majahad, Esther Fich, and Timothy McCarthy, read a couple of winter and holiday poems. In 2013, Waterfront CREW Poets applied for a grant and in January 2014 the grant was approved by the Winthrop Cultural Council, Local Cultural Council Program. The Waterfront CREW Poets will be creating a book of their poetry and will present several local public readings. ~ *Patricia Bruen Tacelli, Reporter*

MISSISSIPPI POETRY SOCIETY'S Spring Festival, hosted by the North Branch, will be held April 26-27, 2014, at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Starkville, MS. Call 662-324-9595 for hotel reservations. The guest speaker will be Abigail Voller of the English Dept. at Mississippi State University. The program will include a poetry workshop panel chaired by Dr. Emory D. Jones and a presentation on blending music and poetry by Ken and Judy Davies. Contest winners will be announced by Dierdre Payne, Contest Coordinator. MPS contest information can be found at misspoetry.net/contests.html. Entries are due by April 2. ~ *Wynne H. Alexander, Secretary*

MISSOURI STATE POETRY SOCIETY is made up of nine local chapters with over 130 members as well as 27 members-at-large. Some of the members live in other states as well. We held our 2013 annual convention at Boliver, MO on the campus of Southwest Baptist University on September 27-28, 2013. The convention speaker was award winning poet, writer, anthologist, and educator, Naomi Shihab Nye. The Saturday lecturer was Robert A. Fink, English Professor and Creative Writing director for Harding-Simmons University in Texas. This year's convention will be in Festus, MO the last Friday and Saturday of September. ~ *Dawn Stiller-Harmon, President*

NEW MEXICO STATE POETRY SOCIETY — on November 2nd, out-going President and now Chancellor Shirley Blackwell and I [Fil Peach] joined a small number of NMSPS members, state legislators, and other movers/shakers at the Santa Fe home of Devon Ross and Susan Gardner, owners of Red Mountain Press, to welcome, meet and enjoy getting to know Poets Laureate Denise Low (Kansas), Walter Bargaen (Missouri), Michael Glaser (Maryland), and Luci Tapahonso (Navajo Nation) over a dinner in their honor. The next day at I.A.I.A., there was a brunch, panel discussion, and readings by the Laureates to help NM legislators and the public learn some of the cultural benefits of having a post of State Poet Laureate. New Mexico is one of only three states in the U.S. that does not have such a state sponsored position. After the day's activities, we gathered at a downtown Santa Fe restaurant to enjoy a dinner to cap off to the day. I can tell you that during the legislative session that closed February 21st, Senator Bill O'Neill and Representative Brian Egoft sponsored bills in their respective legislative chambers that were passed that support the establishment of a New Mexico State Poet Laureate and, with the governor's support, we should have an

active Poet Laureate by 2016. In other news, our active out-reach engine is gaining momentum. In an attempt to engage poets from the less densely populated areas of the state that fall outside the Rio Grande Corridor, I contacted Luna Community College in Las Vegas, NM and worked with Professor (Leslie) Jae Dennis, the Director of Creative Writing for the college, to co-host an open mic on their campus on February 6th. There were 33 people in attendance and a lot of enthusiasm among those who read, including a playwright who presented a scene from her play that is being produced at a couple of New Mexico venues. They may have enough interest and new NMSPS members to form a chapter. Working with Rick and Toni Haymaker, who own Tapestry of Sound in Tucumcari, we co-hosted an open mic at Artspace on February 7. Rick arranged an on-air interview with Karen Alarcon on KQAY - FM radio at 9 a.m. in which he and Gregg Howard, the creative writing instructor at Mesalands Community College, as well as I participated. It was a great thirteen minute spot that highlighted the open mic that evening. There were 42 people who turned out from 6-8:30 p.m. to hear their excellent local poets and featured Albuquerque slam poet Zach Kluckman, with Jesus Lucero and me rounding out a wonderful evening of poetry. After the open mic, an "after-party" lasted until Rick turned out the Artspace lights about 10:25 p.m. Rick said, "That event may have helped sway the local board into re-opening and partially funding the non-profit youth arts program/school next door to Artspace. Now that's impact!" I am sure that an NMSPS chapter will be forming there soon. Sunday, I burned down the road to "T or C" to attend the Black Cat Sunday Poets at Rhonda Brittan's Black Cat Books & Coffee. Terry Blanchard directed the meeting of the 16 in attendance, including NMSPS member Stan Thompson; six non-members took hard-copy applications to NMSPS, so the chapter that once existed there may be revived. I'll be hosting an open mic at the Clovis-Carver Public Library on March 10th, 6-8 p.m. I'll be in Clovis on February 27th for a live radio interview and to tape a 30-second spot that will air on KTQM 22 times during the week before that event. Andi Penner will spearhead an effort to promote NMSPS in Farmington at a meeting and open mic. Gayle Lauradunn, of the Albuquerque Chapter, expressed an interest in being included in activities pending for Silver City. There is a Cowboy Poetry event held there that we might be able to dovetail with NMSPS co-hosting an open mic for other area poets. Chancellor Shirley Blackwell may be able to prompt those efforts since that is part of her old stomping grounds. Other targets on my

list for our open mic promotions of NMSPS include Hobbs, Artesia, Carlsbad, Ruidoso, Las Cruces, Deming, Grants, and Gallup (hopefully with the help of Navajo Poet Laureate Luci Tapahonso). ~ *Fil Peach, President*

OHIO POETRY ASSOCIATION, with the release of our 2013 poetry anthology (first since 1970's), has initiated a higher standard of publishing and professionalism. In January, our annual journal, *Common Threads*, was released and like our member's anthology, it too is now perfect bound with original watercolor art. These releases along with our newsletter are among our most visible efforts to serve our association. Also in January we initiated the "across Ohio" ekphrastic workshop series originating at the Columbus Museum of Art, later to include the Cleveland and Cincinnati art museums. An anthology of poems written on location will follow. We just finished writing a major grant and are currently planning our first quarterly workshop, "Wellness," and our first of two seasonal overnight workshops at Malabar Farm State Park. We raised our annual dues this year to \$20. And our association continues to invite poets worldwide to join us on this next great adventure. ~ *Mark Hersman, President*

OREGON POETRY ASSOCIATION has begun planning our Spring Conference, scheduled for April 25-27 to be held in Bend. As usual, our annual General Membership meeting is scheduled for Saturday. Members face a number of choices, among them, rewording of the Constitution and By-Laws to reflect that beginning in 2015, we will hold one Conference each year instead of the present two. Another change will be an increased emphasis on local units' programs around the state, with OPA assistance, if needed. We hope this will be a better way to focus our energies as we continue to try to serve and celebrate Oregon's diverse poets. Two other changes will reflect increased use of electronic payments, rather than paper checks; and an improved arrangement for OPA's administration of donated funds. The theme for this spring's Conference is "Humor in Poetry." One of the adult contest categories will be "Limericks," which will push contestants in directions perhaps less familiar than in previous years. Oregon has many intriguing place names such as Yoncalla, Boring, Drain, Trail, Coos Bay, Yachats, and Joseph to name only a few. We hope to harvest limericks about many such places. Overarching everything else poetic in Oregon this year is the centennial of William Stafford's birth. We are celebrating it with readings of his poems, of poems he inspired,

of poems by his former students and colleagues, and "poem-per-day" challenges commemorating his well-known discipline of beginning each day by composing a new poem. (Legend has it that someone asked him what he did when he couldn't come up with a "good" poem. He replied, "I lower my standards.") In January, Steve Williams and Constance Hall hosted a book launch for Ooligan Press' anthology, *We Belong in History*, which presents writings produced by Oregon's K-12 students in dialogue with William Stafford. Oregon's beloved laureate, Paulann Petersen, was in attendance, and several student poets read. ~ *Dave Harvey, Reporter*

PENNSYLVANIA POETRY SOCIETY'S chapters have been actively seeking new members, engaging youth, and increasing their involvement in the community as well as providing workshops for their members on a monthly basis. In October, Cadence Crafters gathered for a celebration of poetry at the Lansdowne Public Library where their guest, Poet Laureate of Montgomery County Grant Clauser, was the speaker. Carlisle Poets' Workshop hosted "An Evening of Poetry and Music" for First Night celebrations which included members as well as students and adults from the community at the Bosler Memorial Library. The Keysner Poets are working on their third anthology of poetry. They are available for poetry presentations to various organizations in their community. The Gettysburg Poetry Society's "GPS Celebrates Poetry Contest" for students and young people was a great success. They participate in many of Gettysburg's Civil War and historical activities. PPS has had excellent presenters at their biannual conferences, among them poets William (Kit) Hathaway and Zach Savich. PPS continues to publish *Prize Poems* and *Pegasus* books after our annual poetry contests. In addition to responding to the poetry challenge in our quarterly newsletter, *The Sylvan*, members can contribute each month to an online publication called *Pennessence* created and illustrated by Ann Gasser. We are looking forward to our Spring Conference where keynote speaker, Kristen Taylor, published author and poet, will present the workshop "Anchoring the Transcendent: Writing Faith and the Divine." ~ *Susan N. Vernon, President*

POETRY SOCIETY OF TENNESSEE'S Memphis chapter postponed their annual holiday party to January, due to inclement weather. Also in January we held an indoor poetry reading at the home of Jennine Mah. The annual critiquing meeting was held in February. We are preparing for another

successful reading in Overton Park in Memphis on April 12, 2014. Our two outdoor readings in 2013 were very successful and well attended. We are also looking forward to our April meeting when our student winners will have the opportunity to read their poems. Our work with students under the leadership of Frances Cowden has been very successful. Election of PST officers is also planned for April and we are already working on contest, speaker, and other details for our annual poetry festival in October. We hope several members will be attending the NFSPS convention in June. We are always interested in new programs and new members. Potential members should contact our President, JoAn Howerton. ~ *Russell Strauss, Reporter*

POETRY SOCIETY OF TEXAS' meetings are presently held September through May on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 2:30 p.m. at the Preston Royal Library in Dallas, TX (exception: the Annual Awards Banquet, held at a Dallas hotel, takes the place of a November meeting). In June, attendance at the NFSPS Convention is encouraged. In July, the PST Summer Conference is held at different sites around the state. The 2013-2014 Executive Board is comprised of: President, Jimmie Inez Sessions, Vice President, Catherine L'Herisson, Corresponding Secretary, Jessica Gonsoulin, Recording Secretary, Barbara Blanks, Treasurer, Aman Khan, and Directors, David Knape, Lynn Lewis and Beth Ayers. ~ *Nancy Baass*

WYOPOETS' preparation continues for the "Poetry Month Gala" in April in Casper, WY. WyoPoets' latest publication, *Weather Watch*, will be unveiled at a poetry reading and signing with an all-day workshop to follow. Wyoming State Poet Laureate, Echo Roy Kalproth, and immediate past Laureate, Patricia Frolander, will headline the panelists. Abbie Taylor, WyoPoets' President, announces the acceptance of her thirty-poem collection to be published by Finishing Line Press. Art Elser, another poet published by Finishing Line, just had two poems published in a recent issue of *The Weekly Avocet*. Poet Laureate Echo Roy Kalproth will be the poetry presenter at the Wyoming Writers, Inc. 40th annual workshop June 6-8 in Sheridan, WY. Echo now serves WyoPoets as editor of the quarterly newsletter. WyoPoets encourages all poets, nationwide, to join our organization. Contact us at www.wyopoets.com. ~ *Lee Ann Siebken, Reporter*

NFSPS ARTICLE FACING THE INEVITABLE: NUMBERS AND DEADLINES

Thank you to all the states whose membership chairs or treasurers have sent lists and dues promptly. As this is being written I am still collecting state membership lists, which have been exceptionally slow coming in. I regret to report the trend so far is that memberships are down. I hope that as additional names come in, this will indicate you have received late renewals and numbers will climb.

Please keep in mind that membership and its count determines two things:

#1 - The number of *Strophes* sent to your state. You can vary this number from quarter to quarter by letting the *Strophes* Editor, Paul Ford, know actual numbers well before *Strophes* is printed. See the little box in the right hand column of page two for information, or when the Editor sends out the reminder of deadlines for items for the next issue, let that be your nudge to let us know if you need an adjustment up or down. Printing a lot of extra copies is expensive and wasteful. Needing to re-print and make a second shipment is also expensive and causes a delay. Printing your additional copies locally is an option, but an inconvenience.

When making changes to the number of *Strophes* copies for your society, you may want to consider being prepared for small increases in your membership. Membership chairmen often send the most recent *Strophes* issue as part of a new member welcome mailing. If your society is growing slowly, you may want to order 2 or 3 extra copies. However if you are experiencing faster growth, perhaps a few more copies would be advisable.

If you make your mailings available to libraries, or other institutions from which you do not collect dues and need copies of *Strophes* beyond membership numbers for that, just let us know. Remember that honorary members and persons who also hold membership in other states should be included in your membership list.

#2 - MEMBERSHIP CHAIRS, please take note: While this reminder will come too late for the 2014 contest, regardless of what fiscal year your society is operating on, it is to everyone's advantage to be paid up by January 15th (as is shown on the contest folder) to qualify for the "member" rate when entering the NFSPS contest. Of course it is also important that current lists be filed with me, as Treasurer, by that date. As Contest Chair Mikki Pennington receives the packets of poems, she verifies claims of membership by those state lists. If your list is not in, some poems may be held back from the sorting and

judging processes. The March 15th date gives you an extra couple of months for additions and should not be used as your original deadline.

We respect the fact that all of you are busy people, as we are. So we continue trying to simplify our processes, improve the quality of our publication, and use the dues dollars judiciously. Let us hear from you with questions and/or comments. As one rather corny comedian says, "We're all in this together!"

Lucille Morgan Wilson, NFSPS Treasurer

CONTESTS

CONNECTICUT POETRY SOCIETY is accepting submissions for the Connecticut Poetry Award through May 31, 2014. There are prizes of \$400, \$100, and \$50 for the winners. Winning poems will be published in the *Connecticut River Review*. For a fee of \$15 made out to CPS, poets can enter up to three poems, with an 80-line limit for each poem. Writers should include two copies of each poem, one with complete contact information and the other with NO contact information. Send submissions to Connecticut Poetry Award, CPS, PO Box 270554, W. Hartford, CT 06127. Include SASE for results.

ILLINOIS STATE POETRY SOCIETY is sponsoring its 21st Annual Poetry Contest. Categories: 1-Free verse; 2-Formal poetry (classical or modern); 3-Haiku; 4-Poem on the theme of "journey" (literal or metaphoric); formal or free verse. Prizes: \$50, \$30, \$15, and 3 HM. Rules: (1) Contest is open to anyone. (2) All poems must be the original work of the contestant, unpublished in print or electronically. Poems that have won monetary awards are not eligible. (3) All poems except haiku must be titled. (4) Poems must be: in English; no longer than 40 lines; typed in 12- or 14-point type. No fancy fonts or illustrations. (5) One poem per 8½ x 11 page. (6) Simultaneous submissions are accepted. (7) Submit two copies of each poem: first copy with ID (name/address/e-mail/phone number) and category in upper left hand corner; second copy without ID but with category. (8) Entry fees: ISPS members: \$5 for up to 5 poems, \$1 each additional poem; non-ISPS members, \$8 up to 5 poems, \$1 each additional poem. (9) Make checks payable to: Illinois State Poetry Society. (10) Mail all submissions, together with your check to: Illinois State Poetry Society Contest, c/o Judith Tullis, 6455 Big Bear Drive, Indian Head Park, IL 60525. Deadline: Entries must be postmarked on or before October 15, 2014. Announcement of Winners: Winners' names to be posted at

www.illinoispoets.org. Include a SASE with your submission if you wish to receive a list of winners in the mail. If you would like your local newspapers notified if you are a winner, send contact information for the newspapers with your entry.

INDIANA STATE FEDERATION OF POETRY CLUBS' 36th Annual Fall Rendezvous Poetry Contest: Entries accepted July 1 – Sept 4, 2014. Winner's announced at Clifty Falls State Park on Rendezvous weekend Oct 10-12, 2014. Top prizes in Category 1 (on Friendship) are: First Place \$250, Second \$150, and Third \$100, with 31 categories in all. Rules must be followed per contest brochure, found online at www.isfpc.org under Annual Contests. For questions or paper/e-mailed copies of the brochure, contact ISFPC Contest Director Caroline Dewey at 260-484-6806 or CarolineDewey1@aol.com. Entries are by regular "postal mail" only. No e-mail entries. Questions only to e-mail address above. You're welcome to join us at this beautiful state park, whether or not a member of our state organization. The big event in October and awarding of poetry winners will be held at Clifty Falls, located in the southern edge of the state, overlooking the impressive Ohio River, on this peak Indiana autumn weekend. We would love to have you with us!

MISSISSIPPI POETRY SOCIETY holds two contests each year, Spring and Fall, in conjunction with our festivals. For rules and information, write to Jeanne S. Kelly, 315 Church St., Madison, MS 39110, or email jskelly04@gmail.com (put "Contest Information" in the subject line), or consult the MPS website, www.misspoetry.net.

MISSOURI STATE POETRY SOCIETY'S summer contest deadline is: Postmark September 1, 2014. Two copies of each entry, category number and category name in upper left corner of both copies, poet's name and address in upper right corner of one copy. If member, put "Missouri State Poetry Society" below your address, otherwise put "Non-member." 40 or fewer lines. May be previously published if poet retains the rights to the poem; may enter each category as many times as poet wishes. Categories: 1) rhymed verse or blank verse, 2) free verse, 3) humorous verse, 4) any form, summer subject, 5) poet's choice, members only, any form, any subject. Members pay \$1 per entry in categories 1-4 and \$2 per entry in category 5. Non-members pay \$2 per entry in categories 1-4. Payable to MSPS. SASE or email address on a 3x5 index card for list of winners. Send to Nancy LaChance, 14940 Hwy 64, Lebanon, MO 65536.

POETRY SOCIETY OF TEXAS' 2014 Annual Contests deadline: August 15, 2014 (Postmark). The brochure listing all contests, procedures and rules, can be obtained from

poetrysocietyoftexas.org or by mailing a SASE to: PST Annual Contests Chairman Nancy Baass, 408 E. Warren Ave., Victoria, TX 77901-4847.

POETRY ARTICLE TIPS FROM ONE EDITOR TO YOUTH CONTEST ENTRANTS

By Lucille Morgan Wilson, Editor

Give your poem a good title. Just as an interesting book title may invite us to open and read the book, so the title of a poem gets the attention of a reader. "The Dead Crab," "The Image of Delight," "The Day I Broke My Leg," or "Meeting a Stranger" are more likely to pull us in than "Springtime," "My Garden," or "Mother," all titles that have been used many times. The title should be appropriate, not misleading, and it is an opportunity to add something extra to the poem without "wasting" precious poem lines/words.

Consider punctuation your friend. Commas, periods, semicolons, and dashes give the reader clues that help him read the poem in the way you intended. Line breaks also may indicate a breath pause or give added emphasis. Lines should, therefore, end on significant words, not "and," "the," or "so."

Search for the "just right" words. Whether you are rhyming or writing free verse, be sure you know the meaning of a less familiar word. A dictionary—either a physical book or on-line—is a necessary tool for a writer and may save you from looking foolish if a word sounds good but your usage is wrong. Be on guard with to/too, bear/bare, there/their, are/our, peddle/pedal, shown/shone and lots of other tricky pairs. One of the most common errors is to confuse *lightening* (to make a burden lighter) with *lightning* (that accompanies a storm).

Be specific. It's better to use particular terms than general ones: *wren* or *hawk* or *eagle* will each convey a different tone in your poem than bird. The image is much stronger if instead of *tree*, the more exact *willow* or *pine* or *oak* is used.

Avoid over-used phrases. *Azure sky, hard as a rock, good as gold.* Often the first thing that comes to mind is a metaphor that has been used so frequently it no longer has a fresh message. Make every word count. Words like *so, very, that* used as fillers to pad out the meter, especially in a rhymed poem, usually do not earn their space.

Listen to your poem. Read it aloud. Check for awkward places that may be improved by rearrangement or substitution of a few words. Make good use of such poetic devices as alliteration – *In a summer season, when soft was the sun* – (hear the soothing sound of the repeated "s") --or consonance – *The moon, a pale balloon, loosed from moorings beyond the trees . . .* Consider how this repetition of sound can add to the mood of the poem. When does *stone* work better than *rock* or *pebble*? *halt* rather than *stop* or *quit* or *cease*?

Read, read, read to expand your word power. Observing how poets and prose writers use the "tools of the trade" will help you become a more appreciative reader and a better writer.

Test your work in contests. Be sure these are legitimate competitions, not those operating for profit that will issue "Honorable Mention" certificates to all entrants, with the aim of selling you their costly publications, your poem on mugs or plaques. When you do enter, be sure to read and follow rules carefully.

POETRY EVENTS & NOTES

INTERESTED IN SLAM POETRY?

Steven Concert, NFSPS Chancellor, is looking to form a NFSPS Slam Team. Want to join? Email Steven for details at: paperlesspoetsonline@hotmail.com.

Utah Rendezvous Of Poets For All Seasons
June 26-29, 2014 in Salt Lake City, UT
Annual Convention of the National Federation Of State Poetry Societies
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Salt Lake City Airport
5151 Wiley Post Road, Salt Lake City, UT 84116
800-445-8667 / 801-539-1515 / saltlakecityairport.doubletree.com

\$80.00 plus taxes per room (1, 2, 3, or 4 occupancy). Call the DoubleTree for room reservations and mention "National Federation Of State Poetry Societies" for the convention rate.

Registration Fees	How Many	Total
Participants	_____ @ \$75	_____
Participants under 18	_____ @ \$25	_____
Guests (will not attend workshops nor receive handouts or <i>Encore</i>)	_____ @ \$10	_____

Registration Total _____

Meals*	Number	Price	Total
Full Meal Package	_____	@ \$160	_____
Fri. Lunch, Smoked Turkey Sandwich	_____	@ \$20	_____
Fri. Dinner, Grilled Pork Chop	_____	@ \$30	_____
Sat. Lunch, Traditional Lasagna	_____	@ \$23	_____
Sat. Dinner, Chicken Piccata	_____	@ \$28	_____
Sun. Lunch, Grilled Shrimp Salad	_____	@ \$23	_____
Sun. Dinner, Prime Rib	_____	@ \$36	_____

* I will need a special diet (please list requirements): _____

Meals Total _____

Grand Total _____

Tours: All tours will be by public transportation (TRAX light rail and UTA Bus), pay as you go, which is \$2.50 per 2-hour trip in each direction. For Thursday lunch in downtown Salt Lake City, each tour participant will pay for her/his own meal. Please indicate your tour desires, so we can schedule guides and information.

	How Many
Thursday 9 AM: Salt Lake City, City Creek, and Pioneer Village	_____
Sunday 8 AM: Temple Square and Tabernacle Choir	_____
Monday (post-convention): Self-guided tours, including Park City (on your own)	_____

Deadline to register is May 20, 2014. Make checks to Utah State Poetry Society. Send check and registration form to:

Marney Zambrano NFSPS Convention Registrar, 772 N Main #164, Tooele, UT 84074
 mezbooker@yahoo.com 435-843-1215

NAME: _____

GUEST(S) _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL _____