



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE POETRY SOCIETIES, INC.

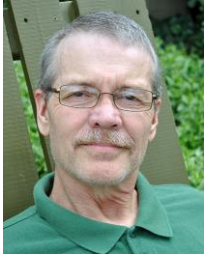
An educational and literary organization dedicated to the writing
and appreciation of poetry in America.

Strophes

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James (Jim) Barton
32nd NFSPS
President

Dear NFSPS Poets: **Help Wanted!**

The heart and soul of any organization, especially one such as NFSPS, is the willingness and availability of volunteers. Our local groups and branches, our State Societies, and our National Federation depend on them to survive and thrive. Over the years, we have been fortunate to have an abundance of willing workers to keep things moving along.

I am appealing to you, the members of NFSPS, to take the time now and consider stepping up to help. Currently, we have two very pressing needs: a host for the 2019 National Convention and a new Chairperson for the Stevens Manuscript Competition beginning with the 2018-2019 time period.

As of now, we have only Denver in 2018 booked as a Convention host. I know Polly and I, as well as others, have been urging, pleading, even begging for hosts. If you think your State Society could host a convention in the near future, 2019 or beyond, PLEASE consider this a call for volunteers now! Contact Polly Opsahl (pollyopsahl@gmail.com) or Jim Barton (jbob214@yahoo.com) as soon as possible with your commitment to host and the preferred year.

As to the Stevens Chair, Wilda Morris has and is doing a fantastic job with this prestigious award competition, and we thank her for her dedication. She has decided that this will be her final year to chair the contest, and we need someone to take the reins for this outstanding book competition.

Wilda will be glad to share her wisdom and tips for making the job run smoothly, and I know she will be there for whoever takes it over whenever questions arise. If you think you would be the person for this position, please contact me as soon as possible.

We all had a wonderful time at the annual NFSPS convention in Fort Worth this summer and look forward to a great gathering in Denver in 2018. The good folks of Colorado will welcome us with open arms, and I challenge you to attend. Whether it is your 30th convention, your 3rd convention, or your first, I know you will come away with a new perspective and a renewed sense of the family that NFSPS is.

Thanksgiving has come and gone, and once again, I have been faced with the realization that to truly be thankful, you must open your heart. Family gatherings are a time to reconnect, to strengthen bonds, to reflect on the past and take pride in a bright future. I have watched as my family has slowly transitioned over the years, until now I am second in seniority to only my older brother. I am blessed to have children and grandchildren who put up with me, and a wife who, unbelievably, sticks by me through good times and bad.

I think of our nation and how it has been blessed with the freedom to be ourselves and become the best that we can be. Nobody can take that from us except us. Please accept my grateful thanks to each of you for helping make this country just a little more friendly, a little more kind, and a little more beautiful by bonding together and spreading the joy and the wonder of poetry.

As this winter continues, let us remain glad of heart and be willing to lend a helping hand to all who need it. Let us give the gift that keeps on giving, the gift of ourselves and our service.

May you all receive the blessings of the season and pass them on, one smile, one hug, one poem at a time.

Live. Love. Write (and read) Poetry.

James (Jim) Barton ~ 32nd NFSPS President

NFSPS 2018 CONVENTION: EXPLORE COLORADO!

Dear Poets and Friends,

I want to personally extend a special invitation to you, to join us May 31 and June 1-3, 2018, in Denver for the annual NFSPS Convention. *Mountain High Poetry* just might be what you need to enrich your poetry life! Join us and see what we have to offer! This four-day event will be full of amazing poetry-focused events, workshops, performances, presentations, contest prizes and more! In addition, if you come early and stay late, you can enjoy some of Colorado and the Rocky Mountains or explore the Denver Metro areas fine restaurants, galleries and museums. Denver is one of the fastest growing cities in the country and we offer so many diverse opportunities to enrich your cultural experience! Early registration starts December 1st at ColumbinePoetsOfColorado.com. Take advantage of the opportunity to register on-line via our secured website, <https://goo.gl/N5tuHd> (note that this 'tiny' web address will take you to the columbinepoetsofcolorado.com site's convention registration page). You may also register by printing out a copy of the registration form and mailing it in to reserve your place at these limited-capacity events. Be sure to book your hotel room at the Renaissance Denver Stapleton Hotel (3801 Quebec St. in Denver). Online reservations can be made at <https://goo.gl/VALKH7> (this 'tiny' web address will take you to the marriott.com group reservation page for the NFSPS convention dates with room rates from \$119 to \$139; discounted rates only available through May 10th) or you can call 866-238-4218 but be sure to request the NFSPS discounted hotel group rate. Bring your friends, family and poetry lovers to our amazing state to experience *Mountain High Poetry*. We look forward to seeing you May 31-June 3, 2018.

Your Sister in Poetry,

Julie Cummings, President, Columbine Poets of Colorado

MORE ON THE NFSPS 2018 CONVENTION

We hope you spend a little more time in Denver than 4 days. The Renaissance Hotel at Stapleton easily accesses the Light Rail and thus the city! Be sure to devote some time to all that the Mile High City has to offer: Denver is home to numerous museums, galleries and restaurants. Downtown Denver and the 16th Street Mall are common tourist destinations. Experience a concert at Red Rocks! Sports fans are drawn to the lights of Coors Field and Sports Authority Field at Mile High. Major League Soccer is also big here. You can spend hours exploring the Denver Museum of Nature & Science or the Denver Zoo. For a taste of old-time Denver, spend some time in Larimer Square or downtown Golden— also a good place to sample some of the city's cuisine. If you are interested in a fishing excursion or a chance to experience river rafting, these opportunities abound. Denver makes a great starting place for poets venturing into the Rockies; those looking for a mountain experience can spend a day driving along the Mount Evans Scenic Byway or head to Rocky Mountain National Park. Any way you plan it, this will be a Mountain High Experience!

NFSPS MEMBER SOCIETY NEWS

POETS' ROUNDTABLE OF ARKANSAS recently held its yearly Poetry Day in Arkansas Celebration in Little Rock at the Butler Center. PRA President Dennis Patton presented Kate Lacy with the annual Merit Award for her leadership recruiting members and directing the online poetry group. The recipient of this award is voted on by the PRA board. The winner of the Sybil Nash Abrams Contest was Laura Trigg. Laura won \$1,000 for her work. The members of PRA are putting out the word to schools across Arkansas for their Sybil Nash Abrams Memorial Student Contest (both middle and high school) and the Jeanie Dolan Carter Memorial Collegiate Contest. The winners will be announced in April. See poetsroundtableofarkansas.org/contests/ for more information. ~ *Laura Loughridge, Secretary*

COLUMBINE POETS OF COLORADO

convened our annual Poets Fest this year on Sept. 9 at Arapahoe Community College; members attended from all over the state. First thing was to announce the winners of our Members Contest. Categories included Prose Poems, Free Verse, and Traditional Forms. Also present for the awards were our judges: Joseph Hutchison, Robert Cooperman and Lisa Zimmerman, who read their comments aloud and personally congratulated the winners they had chosen. After lunch Colorado Poet Laureate Joseph Hutchison introduced us to the theme of his workshop, "The Transformational Arc," by showing us a power point presentation on the large screen and providing handouts with famous poems for us to read and detect where the transformational arc occurred. Then we wrote for a while and tried our hands at trying to create a new direction in our poem toward the end. This workshop was well received by all. Hutchison followed up his workshop with a reading from his latest book, *The World As Is*. There was also time for our President Julie Cummings to talk about our hosting the 2018 NFSPS Convention, and now everyone is looking forward to our first national poetry convention in the Mile High City. ~ *Anita Jepson Gilbert, Reporter*

FLORIDA STATE POETS' members are happy to welcome two new chapters: the Osceola Chapter in the center of the State, and the Brevard Chapter on the east coast. We delight in the addition of youth participation, drawing from colleges and the arts magnet, Osceola School of the Arts. In October we celebrated the confluence of poetry and music at "Voices Carry," our annual convention. In addition to workshops on submitting to journals and publishing, the

convention featured a hootenanny or "be in" with poetry as well as music and dancing. Another highlight was an "in-house" poetry slam. Members slammed, timed and judged; all capably run by NSFPS Vice President Joe Cavanaugh. Chancellor Peter Meinke (Florida Poet Laureate) gave the keynote address and Lola Haskins read, sang and led a workshop on editing. Dr. Stephen Caldwell Wright presented a visit to Emily Dickinson's home and garden, followed by a workshop on narrative poetry with Webb Harris of Seminole State College. The city of Orlando named its first Poet Laureate, Susan Lilly, who teaches at Trinity Preparatory School and is an adjunct professor at Rollins College. She was the 2009 winner of the Rita Dove Poetry Award and a recipient of a Florida Individual Artist Fellowship. In April we will gather on the east coast for our Spring Fling. ~ *Alice R. Friedman, Secretary*

GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY was joined by the Western branch of the North Carolina Writers' Network for its October meeting near Blairsville, Georgia. GPS has met with other adjoining states in the past and has enjoyed their fellowship. The meeting was held in the historic one-room schoolhouse in the Choestoe area of north Georgia, the home of the poet Byron Herbert Reece (1917-1958). Brent Martin, the Gilbert-Chappell Distinguished Poet for the West region of the North Carolina Poetry Society, read. Workshops were led by Tina Barr who teaches at the University of North Carolina in Asheville, Katie Chaple who teaches at the University of West Georgia, and Travis Denton who is the McEver Chair in Poetry at Georgia Tech. New officers were elected at the meeting and will be installed at the January meeting. ~ *Ann Kuykendall Gillespie, Reporter*

IOWA POETRY ASSOCIATION's executive board lineup is as follows: President Jerrold Narland, First Vice-President Max Molleston, Second Vice-President and Historian Maxine Bulechek, Treasurer Linda Harris, Communications Shelly Thieman, Newsletter Editor Marilyn Baszczyński, and Margaret Westvold in the position of interim Secretary (in memory of Dorothy Fyfe). *Lyrical Iowa 2017* is now released and being distributed; information for ordering is available at iowapoetry.com. Our website also features winning poems from 2017 as well as rules for the 2018 contests. We have new email submission rules for the adult divisions (students will still mail in submissions as we transition); details available on our website. ~ *Marilyn Baszczyński, Reporter*

IOWA POETRY ASSOCIATION's "THANK-YOU LUCILLE CELEBRATION"

IPA's open house was held Sept. 16th in Windsor Heights. Several IPA members and fans of Lucille Morgan Wilson, including Lucille's family, traveled quite a distance to celebrate her 28 years as Editor of *Lyrical Iowa* and over four decades of service to the Iowa Poetry Association. Lucille entered the Lyrical Iowa contest in 1969, had her poem published, then joined the association, soon becoming involved in its administration. She was Treasurer 1973-1976, Acting Treasurer May – Oct 1977, President Oct 1976-Oct 1978, then took over as Editor 1989 until 2016, and has continued as acting Editor during the winter and early spring of 2017.



Lucille's contribution to the Iowa Poetry Association is significant. In addition to chairing the Lyrical Iowa annual contests, compiling and sending out the anthologies, she produced and distributed quarterly newsletters to connect with members, keep them updated of the contest, results, progress with anthology, news of workshops and of other members. As well, members benefited from her dedicated reading of thousands and thousands of poems throughout the years, taking time to offer helpful suggestions to improve the poems and give encouragement to keep writing with congratulatory notes tucked in with contest results. And she graciously gave of her time to respond to individual correspondence, answering questions about publishing, writing, and revising.

For all these reasons, in lieu of gifts/cards, we asked guests to write/bring a poem about/for Lucille, following her standard contest rules: any form, 20-line limit, subject—Lucille (or a favorite poem of Lucille's). The poems were compiled in a binder with photos of the event for Lucille, a gift in return for her many years of dedication. From all Iowa poets, "Thank you, Lucille, for teaching, leading and mentoring us. You are profoundly admired and cherished!" ~ *Marilyn Baszczyński, Lyrical Iowa Editor*

ILLINOIS STATE POETRY SOCIETY is happy to announce the start of a seventh chapter. This group will meet in Champaign on the first Sunday of every month with Kathleen Robinson as the facilitator. With our sixth chapter dedicated to the study and writing of haiku and its variations, our website has started to index haiku

submissions by the first line as the title, and offers a new haiga gallery page displaying this form of haiku. In early 2018 we will begin creating our fourth volume of *Distilled Lives*, our anthology of members' poetry. Our 2017 ISPS poetry contest was a success and efficiently chaired by Jim Lambert. We had 99 poets submit a total of 729 poems. The Brewed Awakening Coffee Shop monthly gathering will continue to meet on the last Sunday of each month. Featured readers, an open mic and occasionally music are popular for members and the general public to share at these get-togethers. Please check illinoispoets.org for ongoing information and membership guidelines. ~ *Susan T. Moss, President*

POETRY SOCIETY OF INDIANA hosted its 39th Annual Fall Rendezvous at Pokagon State Park. The weekend-long celebration was the time to share the winners of the State Poetry Contest, and included a humorous lesson, "How to Lose at Poetry Contests," by Indiana's Premiere Poet, Michael Erdelen, followed by a writing workshop on some of the 'obscure' poetry forms in a variety of state, local, and national contests. We were led in the step-by-step process of how to self-publish and then relaxed into an introduction to "Jazz Poetry" with a focus on the works of Langston Hughes. Our keynote speaker, Lauren Davis, walked the audience through "Poetry as Memoir" pointing out the ingredients of the genre. On our last morning, we participated in an 'En Pleine Air' presentation followed by a hike in the woods. The 2018 Fall Rendezvous will be held October 5-7 at Turkey Run State Park. Our poetry contest winning poems (the Winners' List is on our website) along with some of the winning Manningham poems for this year, will be published in our anthology, *Ink to Paper*, available for purchase through Amazon.com (great gift!). Keep up-to-date on all our state-wide activities, poets' presentations, publication releases, and other celebrations of our Word Artists at poetrysocietyofindiana.org. Our newsletters and other events are published on this site as well. ~ *Deborah Petersen, President*

LOUISIANA STATE POETRY SOCIETY held its Fall Festival/Business Meeting on October 15, 2017, in the home of Elizabeth Lee of the Founders' Chapter, Baton Rouge. Election of officers was held, and installation of the new officers brought to LSPS an enthusiastic board, especially with election of Kathleen Sims as president. Kathleen has only been a member since July 2017 and brings a refreshing outlook to LSPS. Kathleen has had the honor of

winning her first poetry contest in the 2nd grade by creating a rhyming Valentine's Day card and now LSPS is honored to have her as President. The newly elected officers beside Kathleen are: 1st VP Emma Pierson, 2nd VP Carolyn Files, 3rd VP Steve Scurlock, Treasurer Linda McCullough, Recording Secretary Sarah Johnson, and Corresponding Secretary Sandra Nantais. ~ *Sandra Nantais, Corresponding Secretary*

MAINE POETS SOCIETY gathered at the Belfast Free Library in September. The meeting included an open mic, a mini workshop, and one contest. The contest, judged by Jeri Theriault, was a poem that referred to a fairy tale and used some recognizable aspect of pop culture. For the results of the contest and to learn more about the society, visit mainepoetssociety.com. Again in 2018, three regional gatherings will take place instead of a general meeting of the society during the winter months: one in Westbrook, one in Augusta, and one in Auburn. Details as they become available will be shared in the society's newsletter, *Stanza*, via the website, and on the society's Facebook page. Please note that an RSVP will be asked for prior to each meeting. The spring meeting is scheduled to take place on April 28 at the First Universalist Church in Auburn. For more information and to learn more about the society, please visit our website or contact MPS President Jenny Doughty at jmdought@maine.rr.com or 207-699-9243. ~ *Sally Joy, Reporter*

MASSACHUSETTS STATE POETRY SOCIETY had a good year in 2017. We have not had to raise our dues for the 2017-2018 season. We published an anthology of members' poems and conducted a National Poetry Day Contest with 26 categories. We also had six other annual poetry contests throughout the year. We have conducted a workshop with each of our 4 meetings, the host chapter presenting a program at the meeting held in their area. Our Poets Gallery continues to be on display at meetings with photographs of members. Round robins are flying with members' poems that receive feedback and criticism via mail. MSPS celebrated 2017 National Poetry Day with the reading of a proclamation by Governor Charles Baker, a morning workshop on "Because" by President Jeanette Maes, a program by the Waterfront Crew Poets on limericks, and a buffet lunch followed by an open mic in the afternoon with attendees reading their poems. The last meeting of 2017 was in Beverly with a holiday get-together, a workshop "The Eyes and Ears Remember" by president Jeanette Maes, a Yankee Swap, and a silent book auction. ~ *Jeanette C. Maes, President*

POETRY SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN'S fall meeting was held in Muskegon, hometown of longtime board member Julie George. She was honored with a proclamation and gave a short reading. In the afternoon, Laurence Thomas, well-known Michigan poet and Honorary Chancellor of PSM, urged us through his examples to focus on the concrete and images. He volunteered to review any poems we wrote to the assignment, and he has been true to his word via email. One PSM member hosts a website for poets in the disabled community. Biennial elections were held with the following elected: President Elizabeth Kerlikowske, Vice President Jennifer Clark, Treasurer Susan Anderson, Parliamentarian Jerry Lang, and Melanie Dunbar as both *Peninsula Poets* Editor and Contest Chairperson. The Kalamazoo area members are hosting an Author Hope to increase awareness of PSM and to survey members so that their needs can be met. Outreach is the theme for 2018. ~ *Elizabeth Kerlikowske, President*

OHIO POETRY ASSOCIATION is in planning mode for 2018 after release of our annual poetry journal, *Common Threads*. We have a great workshop entitled "Lights, Camera, Action... Poetry!" scheduled for our January quarterly meeting. Led by poet and film studies teacher Rikki Santer, the workshop will explore the connections between film and poetry and how those two art forms converse with one another. We also will begin compiling entries in our annual high school poetry contests with the deadline of January 25. As well, we will begin accepting entries for our annual Ides of March contest. For the spring, we have at least two events planned for National Poetry Month in April, one in Lancaster and another in Delaware, Ohio. Happy New Year to everyone. ~ *Chuck Salmons, President*

POETRY SOCIETY OF OKLAHOMA wishes everyone a "HAPPY NEW YEAR!" Wow, what a journey 2017 was for PSO. We had new members join and former members return. We are looking forward to another year of growth as we continue to get the word out about poetry and the Poetry Society of Oklahoma. Our Christmas Celebration was a time of joy and camaraderie. We encouraged each member who attended to bring a guest. Our Christmas festivities were a time of fun, food, fellowship and poetry. Everyone was asked to bring their favorite Christmas poem and share it with the other guests along with telling what it meant to them. We observed National Poetry Day on October 7th,

the theme was Freedom. PSO marked the day with our annual Poetry Day Contest results and awards, a luncheon and members sharing a favorite poem they have written and why it was their favorite, while others shared poems about Freedom. October was also our annual business meeting with the election of officers. We will hold our Spring Banquet at Twin Hills Country Club the 10th of March 2018. Winners from the Spring Contest will be announced, prizes awarded and poems read. Always check angelfire.com/poetry/psol/ for information about PSO. ~ *Patti Koch, President*

PENNSYLVANIA POETRY

SOCIETY's nfsp.com/pa/ website was recently redesigned as well as information updated. The PPS site is hosted on the NFSPS domain. On October 14, 2017, PPS celebrated National Poetry Day at their Fall Luncheon Meeting. In addition to a business meeting and luncheon, guests participated in a poetry workshop conducted by Barbara Dellinger as well as an open mic. On October 15, 2017, the annual PPS Poetry Contest opened. There are 15 open categories and entries may be submitted up to January 15, 2018 (postmark). The contest brochure is at nfsp.com/pa/2018-PPS-ContestBrochure.pdf.

~ *Steven Concert, PPS Vice-President*

POETRY SOCIETY OF TEXAS' 61st

Annual Awards Banquet was held in Dallas on November 11. The theme was "The Magic of Words." Beth Turner Ayers was Chairman of the event and welcomed attendees. After the meal was served, President Budd Powell Mahan made introductions. Greetings from the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. were brought by Linda Banks, Chairman of the 2017 NFSPS Convention held this past summer in Fort Worth. President Mahan, Chairman of the Hilton Ross Greer Outstanding Service Award, announced that the 2017 recipient was Sharon Martin Turner. Past President Catherine L'Herisson and President Mahan announced the names of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place winners of the PST Annual Contests with 1st Place winners present reading their winning poems. Nancy Baass, Chairman of the PST Annual Contests, was unable to attend. Her Annual Contests Report statistics were published in the Winners List edition of *The Bulletin* given to members attending and mailed later to all the membership. President Mahan, Chairman of the 2017 Catherine Case Lubbe Manuscript Prize, announced that the winner was Charlotte Renk. Other entrants receiving recognition were: Terry Jude Miller, 2nd Place; George Fredric

Campbell, 3rd Place; and Christine H. Boldt, 4th Place. ~ *Nancy Baass reporting*

WYOPOETS held a members-only poetry contest for the 2018 Chapbook which will be available at the April workshop. Themes for the poems include hunger and yearning. The next major event is the April workshop at Cheyenne, Wyoming. The workshop will be held April 27-28 with a poetry reading on the 27th at 6:30 pm. The workshop will be Saturday 9-4 at the Lion's Park Kiwanis House. The fee is \$50 and lunch will be provided. Award winning Colorado poet Art Eisler Willie is hosting the workshop. He has a PhD in English and has taught writing for 30 years. His chapbook, *We leave the Safety of the Sea*, received the Colorado Author's League poetry award for 2014. His latest book is *A Death at Tollgate Creek*. If you want more information or have questions please contact Chere Hagopian at 307-287-6413 or chere@batteryship.com. New Years is a great time to join Wypoets. The membership is \$20 a year. In addition to writing contests and workshops, you will have access to a community of poets. Many of our members have years of experience and are happy to encourage fellow writers. Please check out wypoets.org for more information ~ *Angel Mizner, Strophes Correspondent*

NFSPS POETRY CONTESTS

Details for the following contests, including submission rules, can be found on nfsp.com by first selecting the Poetry Contests link, then on the Contests page select the appropriate contest.

NFSPS 2018 ANNUAL CONTESTS

There are 49 contests for adults and one for students grades 9-12. Contest start date is January 1, 2018, and the deadline (postmark date for mailed entries) is March 15, 2018. Contest #1 (NFSPS Founders Award: 1st Prize \$1,000, 2nd Prize \$500, and 3rd Prize \$250) and Contest #50 (Student Award) allow for, but do not require, electronic submission via submittable.com. (Note that setting up an account on submittable.com is free.) There is a fee to enter Contest #1 but not for students entering Contest #50. Of the 49 contests for adult poets, 29 of them are open to members and non-members alike. (Note: "Membership" is automatic to all whose dues to a state society are paid up and names appear on the list the state society sends to the NFSPS Treasurer. Such membership includes the privilege of entering the remaining 20 contests, all for a reduced entry fee.)

NFSPS 2018 BlackBerryPeach Prizes for Poetry: Spoken and Heard

Awards: 1st Prize \$1,000, 2nd Prize \$500, and 3rd Prize \$250. This innovative contest, new in 2017, has a starting date of January 1, 2018, and deadline of March 15, 2018. Submissions may only be made via submittable.com. This contest requires submission of four poems, each with a separate audio file, and a transcript of the four poems in a single electronic document in either Word or .pdf format.

NFSPS 2017 COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE POETRY COMPETITION

Two winners will be chosen for the College Undergraduate Poetry (CUP) Competition, one receiving the Edna Meudt Memorial Award (\$500), the other receiving the Florence Kahn Memorial Award (\$500). Undergraduates working toward a degree in an accredited U.S. college or university during the contest submission period are eligible to enter. The manuscript submission consists of 10 poems in a single Word or .pdf file. Submission via submittable.com is from December 1, 2017, to January 31, 2018. No fee is required to submit.

NFSPS MANNINGHAM TRUST STUDENT POETRY CONTEST

Rules: 2018 annual competition

- 1. There are two divisions: Grades 6-8 (Junior Division) and Grades 9-12 (Senior Division).** Each state may submit ten (10) poems in each division. Poems may have been printed and/or have won previous awards. Contests at state level may have occurred anytime in 2017 or 2018.
- 2. The competition is open to all USA students in grades 6 – 12.** Public, private, and homeschools are eligible for entry by individual NFSPS member states.
- 3. Submit two copies of each poem.** Put the division (Junior or Senior) in the upper left corner of both copies. One copy must have the student's ID in upper right corner. The ID information is student name, school name and address, student grade level, and the student's language arts/English teacher's name. The second copy must not have ID information. Do not send a copy with any other marking - there should be no indication of prior award granted by the state.
- 4. Each poem must be neatly typed or computer-generated, and have no more than 35 lines including space lines with no line having more than 60 characters including spaces and punctuation.** Every poem entered should appear on a single sheet. Do not staple the two copies of the poem together. It is suggested that each state

representative keep a copy of poems entered.

5. There should be no large or unusual fonts or illustrations. Times New Roman is the suggested font. No font larger than 12 point should be used. Winning poems are scanned for the award anthology and large and/or unusual fonts impede the process. Larger fonts also make it impossible to confine the poem to one page, which is required.

6. Each entrant must make a declaration of originality. The statement should appear on the bottom of the ID copy only. The form below is acceptable:

I certify that this poem is my original work, and has not been copied in whole or part from any author's poems in print or posted on the Internet.

Signed:

7. Separate poems into respective divisions. Within each division separate the ID copy from the anonymous copy meant for judges. Include a cover letter identifying the Manningham (Youth) Chairperson to whom the report on the contests will be mailed.

8. Entries must be received by March 1, 2018.

Send entries to: Budd Mahan, 7059 Spring Valley Road, Dallas, TX 75254

Ten prizes will be awarded in each division: First Place - \$75, Second Place - \$50, Third Place - \$40, Fourth Place - \$35, Fifth Place - \$30, and five Honorable Mentions - \$10 each. All winning poems will be published in the Manningham Trust Poetry Student Award Anthology. Winners will receive complimentary copies. The schools of each winning student will receive a complimentary copy for the school library. Notice of winners report will be sent to each state's Manningham (Youth) Chair no later than May 20, 2018. Awards (certificates, checks, anthologies) will also be mailed to the state chairperson. Each state is responsible for distributing prizes to winners and winning schools. The top winning poems will be read to NFSPS members at the Convention held in June, 2018.

Entries by individual students are allowed. No individual entry will supersede a state's collective entries, but in cases in which a state has no NFSPS affiliation or sends no entries, an individual entry may qualify for judging.

NFSPS looks forward to each state's participation in the Manningham Poetry Trust's annual contests. Questions may be directed to the chairperson at the following addresses/numbers:

Budd Powell Mahan
Manningham Trust Student Poetry Awards Chair

7059 Spring Valley Road, Dallas, TX 75254
972-788-4944 ~ buddmahan@att.net

2018 POETS & PATRONS POETRY CONTESTS

Poets & Patrons, a poetry society based in Chicago, Illinois, currently has two contests: 1) Helen Schaible International Sonnet Contest, and 2) Chicagoland Poetry Contest. Both contests have a deadline of Sept. 1, 2018. For details, see the Contests page at poetsandpatrons.net.

POETRY ARTICLES

In Gratitude for the Fellowship of Verse

By Ron Weber, Poetry Society of Michigan

While digesting the recent Contest Edition of *Peninsula Poets* this Thanksgiving weekend, I found myself feeling profoundly grateful for the fellowship in verse we all share. I'm not normally one who waxes sentimental or emotional over things like this, but I felt compelled to acknowledge, if to only myself, how important you kindred spirits in verse have been to my enjoyment, fulfillment and self-improvement in turning knowledge into wisdom, which is exactly what literature and poetry do.

The following poem is my attempt to honor and commemorate the appreciation I hold for the Poetry Society of Michigan, those who personally serve to make it a reality, and all of you versifyin' amigos out there who, like me, are compelled to inexplicably provide glimpses into our hearts, heads, hopes, joys, sorrows, friendships, losses, etc., through this crazy craft called poetry. The poem is dedicated to PSM as well as to that strange and compelling brew that brings us back again and again to the blank page and demands that we concede to the essence of what it is that poets do. An essence I've tried to capture in some of the lines of this piece.

As poets, we all labor jointly over the realization that poetry is essentially figurative language, but it is focused in a way that is both expressive and evocative. We work at the challenge that poetry is about the broad range of life's realities, from the most intense to the subtlest of nuances.

We all know the burden, frustration and overwhelming need inherent in pursuing the art of using words that are charged with their highest, most poignant meaning in order to fulfill the context and message within in which they are placed. The best words in the best and most relevant order with the goal of evoking the feeling of an experience.

Thanks to all of you for letting me know those bits and pieces of your humanity that you've shown over the years in *Peninsula Poets* and in some of your own books that I've acquired. This poem is for you, for all

of us, as I've tried to capture what it is we do. For in many respects we are indeed a "Conspiracy of Poets."

Conspiracy of Poets

—Dedicated to the Poetry Society of Michigan and what it is that poets do.

They're out there!

They're among us,
hiding in plain sight,
eavesdropping to collect
the fragments of joy,
the shrapnel of sorrow
that bounce around like loose change,
issuing their subterranean reports.

The Phantom, The Shadow,
The Invisible Man; they play
shuffled bookings while
filtering between without being seen,
exposed to those stopping
to hear what they read;
lives captured by stanzas
in a time-flight filigree.

Flying high doesn't help,
nor the great olive chase
for those in the race
to the bottom of a glass –
languishing in a bardic trap.

Biographers to
the olive people,
the tightrope walkers.
They grab at chords
to play us all
in songs we never wrote.
To play us all
and find us there,
hiding between the notes.

Poetry Contests—Neatness Achieved With Text Boxes

By Jim Lambert, Illinois State Poetry Society

As contest chair/coordinator/manager for the Illinois State Poetry Society, whatever you want to call me, I have realized that many poets have yet to discover the most helpful tool a poet can have for entering contests: **Text Boxes**. By creating a text box with the required information in it (name, address, etc.) for the information copy, the poet is only about three mouse clicks away from having a poem ready to send to the contest chair person. I have received many poems with all this info handwritten so small and sloppily that it's barely legible. We are going to require that all info be printed next year. The classic this year was the anonymous copy that a poet had used the information copy and then scratched out all the information with a ball-point pen to

create the anonymous copy. It would have been easier just to print out another copy, but this was actually about a fourth generation copy of the poem—copied enough times that the print was gray. One would think that, if one is going to enter a contest, then one should do so in a sane, responsible, and legible manner. If you don't know how to use a text box, get someone to teach you. You can even email me and I'll set one up for you. Write on. Write on. jim@jimlambert.net.

284. Poet's Notebook - Rondeaux (revised)

By Peter Meinke, Florida State Poet

Laureate (article previously published in Tampa Bay's *Creative Loafing* newspaper)

*Prince, n'enquerez de sepmaine
Où ells ont, ne de cest an,
Qu'à ce refrain ne vous remaine:
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!*



Jeanne Meinke

—From *Des Dames du Temps Jadis* by François Villon (1431-1465): translation below.

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, but I forgot, so this will be about poetry, which is always on

my mind. At college, we had to learn a second language, resulting in my taking Professor Marcel Moraud's course in French Literature. Not having a clue (*trop stupide!*) that we'd eventually live for a time in France and Switzerland, I wasn't a conscientious student. Nevertheless, I still remember the first line of Albert Camus' *L'étranger* (*The Stranger*): "*Aujourd'hui, maman est morte*" (Today, mama died), and a few lines from François Villon's ballade, "*La Ballade de Dames du Temps Jadis*" ("The Ballade of Ladies Gone By", quoted above). We barely-hatched young goslings enjoyed going around campus reciting the last line, in French *naturellement*.

These maudlin reminiscences come about because a few alert readers of *Creative Loafing* asked me exactly what a rondeau is, having been subjected recently to this form. So Attention!, as we say in French and English: here it is. I'll bring you up to contemporary times, I promise:

The rondeau's a form that evolved from the ronde or rondel, a song style in medieval courts of France, featuring repeated lines and refrains. By the 15th century, writers—Villon being the best known—began to adopt the ronde to a more literary stable shape, called the rondeau. Though prolific, Villon's financial success with his verse was

zilch (*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*). Surprisingly, England's most popular medieval poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, fared much better, and is buried in Westminster Abbey. Villon died in poverty, "broken in health and spirit." No one knows where he's buried.

But his poetry had staying power, and slowly, the rondeau, which Villon popularized, took root in the literary canon, changing slightly over the years to the form favored today. (Rondeau, you've guessed, means "round," just as "sonnet" comes from "little song," and villanelle from "little country or village song.")

The rondeaux I've been writing—you'll see more in future columns [in *Creative Loafing*—consists of 15 lines made of 3 stanzas, 2 rhymes, and a short refrain. The refrain (R) is made from the first few words of the first line, so in last week's rondeau the refrain is "There stands the man," taken from "There stands the man who made the jump." (You may remember from school "In Flanders Fields the poppies blow.") The refrain then is used as the last line of the second stanza and the last line of the poem, giving it that rounded feeling. If "A" is the first rhyme and "B" the second, this is how the outline of the three stanzas would look:

(R)A, A, B, B, A
A, A, B, R
A, A, B, B, A, R

Fifteen lines, two rhymes, three refrains. It's a straight-jacket, all right, and takes a long time to write—weeks, generally, if not longer. But I'm in no rush: writing and rewriting are what I like to do. Generally speaking, in starting a rondeau, I find something I want to write about, and write down lines until one seems that it could be a refrain; and take it from there. A rondeau can keep me happily occupied for a long time. Feel free to read it in a minute.

Here's the translation of the end of Villon's ballade: you'll recognize that last line. And check the notes.

*Prince, do not ask me in the whole week
Where they are—or in this whole year,
Lest I bring you back to this refrain:
Oh, where are the snows of yesteryear!*

Notes: This famous last line is quoted in Joseph Heller's novel *Catch-22*, when Yossarian asks, "Where are the Snowdens of yesteryear?" referring to a character in the book, backward to Villon, and inadvertently forward to our famous whistle blower, at the same time: a trifecta! It was also quoted in Quentin Tarantino's movie, "Inglourious Basterds," by Lt. Archie Hicox (played by Michael Fassbinder). Etc. Poetry lives!

Editor's Note: Below is the rondeau that the Peter Meinke refers to in his **Poet's Notebook** article. This is Canadian army physician John McCrae's 1915 wartime poem, "In Flanders Fields":

In Flanders fields the poppies grow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky,
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead; short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Notes on writing Traditional Haiku

By Francine Banwarth

The art of haiku is a delicate art, not in regard to subject matter, but in the way that language and imagery are expressed. The challenge when writing in the traditional 5-7-5 syllabic line form is to keep the language focused on the imagery so that words are not added just to meet the requirement of form. Haiku, whether traditional or modern, should speak to the senses, to the suchness of the natural and human worlds. When a haiku engages the heart and mind through the juxtaposition of images that suggest meaning, rather than tell the reader what to think, that haiku is on the path to success.

(Francine Banwarth began studying and writing haiku and related forms in 1989. Her work is published in a variety of journals, anthologies, and contests. She served as second vice president for the Haiku Society of America for three years and from 2012 through 2015 was editor of *Frogpond*, the society's triannual journal. *The Haiku Life*, coauthored with associate editor Michele Root-Bernstein in 2017, details their editorial experiences and insights and is available from Modern Haiku Press.)

What Poetry Is

Some thoughts on the subject from Sir Andrew Motion, a knighted English poet and decade-long UK Poet Laureate. In a BBC interview, he suggested that poets "celebrate the ordinary." He went on to say [in British spelling]: "Honour the miraculousness of the ordinary. What we very badly need to remember is that the things right under our noses are (*continued on page 8*)

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extraordinary, fascinating, irreplaceable, profound and just kind of marvellous. Look at the things in the foreground and relish stuff that can lose its glow by being familiar. In fact, re-estranging ourselves to familiar things seems to be a very important part of what poetry can do.” (Adapted from an article written by Kathy Lohrum Cotton in the Illinois State Poetry Society’s newsletter, *Illinois Poets*.)

Submissions for Poetry Contests

By Jim Lambert, Illinois State Poetry Society

One of the best things about belonging to NFSPS is the poetry contests that it and its member states conduct. It seems that contests get the poetic juices moving in our versified brains. Themes help to broaden the scope of the poems we write. I recommend that poets participate in contests for many reasons, but the main one is *it will help you write better poems*.

As with any activity, there are certain requirements that must be followed. One of the best ways to better one’s chances of placing in a contest is to *follow the rules*. As a male, it is difficult for me to follow instructions or get directions or ask for help. That is a sign of weakness it seems in our maleness. So men, please pay attention. No one will know that you are getting help. This article is not specifically for men because some ladies appear to ignore them after they have read the instructions. Maybe it’s short term memory loss, disagreement with the instructions, or misalignment and/or planetary imbalance.

I find that the majority of poets who enter our contests are female, although it seems men are gaining ground. Speaking of whom, another interesting and informative thing about us is we don’t like to lose (probably in our DNA), so how can a guy lose if he doesn’t enter the contest? My excuse is that my entry got lost in the mail, turned into vapor in cyber space, and/or my dog/cat/hamster/guinea pig ate it.

NFSPS SPEAKER DATABASE

During the strategic planning meeting which followed the 2016 NFSPS Convention in Minnesota, it was concluded that NFSPS can and should find ways to add value to services offered to state societies and members. One such service will be a Speakers Database that can be utilized by states, chapters, or even individual members when developing programming to fit their needs.

The database will list individuals who are willing to give workshops and/or presentations and include details of their offerings. The database will be made available through the NFSPS website, and email when requested.

Members who have presentations and want to be listed in the database may contact Steven Concert, NFSPS Chancellor, via email or snail mail (see page 2 of *Strophes* for contact details). He will provide an information form to be completed and returned.

POETRY IN THE PARK & CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

Ninth annual Poetry in the Park workshop at Zion Park Lodge, in southern Utah, featuring award winning poet Jim Barton, NFSPS President, on Friday, March 2, 2018. Sponsored by Dixie Poets and Z-Arts. Details at poetry-in-the-park.com. Registration for the workshop in Zion Park is at <https://zionpark.org/program/poetry-in-the-park/>.

Following PIP on Saturday, March 3, 2018, Redrock Writers presents their Creative Writing Seminar at the Social Hall in St. George, Utah. Presenters include Jim Barton, Cindy King from Dixie State University, and another presenter TBA. Details at redrockwriters.org. Under the Annual Writing Seminar tab, look for the Seminar 2018 Registration link; print the registration form and mail in with your check.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT NATIONAL FEDERATION BOOK PUBLICATIONS

If you have purchased any NFSPS prize-winning books since 2016 and like what you read, please support the author(s) and NFSPS by writing a brief review for the book on amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com or other websites/publications accepting such reviews.

ENCORE COVER ART SUBMISSIONS OPEN

Editor Kathy Cotton announces a cover photo submission deadline of January 31, 2018, for the next *Encore Prize Poems*. Photos must be a minimum of 8”x10” at 300 dpi with background suitable for text layout (see 2016 and 2017 covers, nfsp.com). Email kalcotton@gmail.com with .jpg files or inquiries.



ENCORE 2017

The 2017 edition of *Encore Prize Poems*, including 18 poems by NFSPS board members and past president Clarence Socwell, is now available on amazon.com.

~ Kathy Cotton,
Encore Editor

NFSPS STATE SOCIETIES’ CONTEST CENTRAL

NFSPS is developing a contest exchange webpage. This will provide members with an easy access point to contest information of participating state societies.

Your contest must have categories that are open to all in order to be listed. Submit your contest brochure in pdf format, and send to Julie Cummings, NFSPS 1st Vice President, at julie@juliecummingspoetry.com.