



Of Poets & Poetry

Newsletter of Florida State Poets Association, Inc.

www.floridastatepoetsassociation.org



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hurricanes and Tropical Storms have blasted through the state and put the hot humid summer in its place. Do we now welcome a long? Cold? Winter? What would we do if that came to pass?

After you have snuggled in and read your favorite book for the 100th time, sit down with your favorite poet—YOU! Dip that quill pen in the ink pot and write. You have just received a brain-full of wonderful information from the Fall Convention; Peter's tales, Dylan's songs, and Lola's inspiration. Let your fingers fly over that keyboard. Float that pen over that clean white empty sheet of paper. I have read your poetry and it is great. So take all that excitement you received in Altamonte Springs and create.

Then take the next step. Remember all that information about publishing in journals? Go ahead. Do it! They are waiting for you. What a thrill it will be to see your words printed on that page with your name right there. There is also a plethora of contests to win. There is our own FSPA contest—a good place to start. Then take a crack at the NFSPS contest on the national level.

Like smaller ones? Okay. Many other states also have them. Look some up on the NFSPS website. Look some up on our own Facebook page. You know you can win one. I know you can. I've seen your work and I love showing you off. FSPA is here to help you get started. Then help you all the way through. Ideas, topics, forms, where, when and how to submit. And, of course, there are anthologies. The best one to start with is our own, *Cadence*. I really want to see you in that one! And I will, won't I?

*All the best,
Mary-Ann Westbrook*



November 23, 2017

Save the Date!

Spring Fling 2018

Friday & Saturday

April 20 –21, 2018

*Dust off your surf board,
along with your poetry—
we are going to*

Melbourne—Cocoa Beach!

*Look for all the specifics
in the Jan/Feb 2018
issue of OPAP.*

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Florida State Poets Association, Inc.

An affiliate of the National Federation
of State Poetry Societies
Organized October 1974
Henrietta Kroah, Founder

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Linda Eve Diamond, LindaEve@mac.com

Website: floridastatepoetsassociation.org

Robert DeWitt* 1978-1982
Harvey Winters* 1978-1978
Beatrice Branch* 1976-1978
Henrietta Kroah* 1974-1976
*Deceased

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Tomoka Poets

Mary-Ann Westbrook, 6 Juniper Drive, Ormond Beach, FL 32176; 386.441.1839; 1poetry.3@gmail.com

**A Chronology of FSPA Presidents:**

Mary-Ann Westbrook 2016
Joseph Cavanaugh 2012-2016
Cheri Neuman Herald 2010-2012
Betty Ann Whitney 2008-2010
Robert E. Blenheim 2004-2008
Caroline Walton 2002-2004
Coleen Ward 1998-2002
Gail Teachworth 1994-1998
Carolyn Walton 1992-1994
Virginia Martin* 1989-1992
Ruth Cunliffe* 1989-1989
Gwen Thomas 1988-1989
Madelyn Eastlund 1984-1988
Agnes Homan* 1982-1984

Of Poets & Poetry is published four times per year: July/August, October/November, January/February, and April/May. The **deadlines for submitting News and Reports can vary** so always check [here!](#) Send content prior to the deadline to: the OPAP editor, Patricia Stevenson-Gingrich, (addresses below).

ALL Chapter & Member News due by January 10, 2018, for the **Jan/February** issue. **All other reports, news & photos due by Jan. 20. MUST** submit via the Internet as an email **attachment**. Word (.doc or .docx), RTF, TXT, or PDF format files. News embedded in an email will not be accepted unless it has been okayed by me. Any photos should be high resolution in JPEG (jpg) format. If you are unable to do this, contact the Editor at 850.445.1302. or at: Email: patriciasg.bbp@gmail.com or Mail: Patricia Stevenson-Gingrich 184 McGowin Road Wilsonville, AL 35186-8033

This 'n That

Oral Nussbaum was elected president of Orlando Area Poets as of October 1.

Leslie Halpern was appointed to the position of Parliamentarian with FSPA and was elected Vice president of OAP.

Diane Neff is the new secretary of OAP.

Member Poems accepted for the Jan/Feb issue of OPAP will be thematic: original poems must respond to and celebrate the work of poet, Amy Lowell. Lowell was a leader of the Imagist movement in the early 20th C. **Poems are due by January 5th, 2018.** Use any sources at hand to learn about Lowell and to read her work. Send completed poems to the Editor of OPAP at the email or snail mail address listed above. One entry per poet and the best three poems will be published. I hope you enjoy this challenge.

Officer & Committee Reports

2017 FSPA Contest Report

Amazing! From No. 10 to multiple Kraft size envelopes; from Utility and Cushion Mailers to Priority Mail, poems representing seventeen states traveled to my mailbox during the 2017 FSPA Contests submission period. Each piece of poetry mail was always meticulously placed inside my mailbox as if the letter carriers knew they were handling precious thoughts crafted with care – all 875 entries. This was an amazing contest year.

We appreciate the generosity of our new and loyal sponsors for your support of FSPA Annual Contests. We have twenty-seven (27) categories for the 2018 contest year. First place winners will be published in the 2018 edition of *Cadence*, our annual anthology.

We grow forward!

~Mary Rogers-Grantham, FSPA Contest Chair



Website & Social Media Report

Keep in touch and see what's happening at FSPA's website and social media pages:



GET SOCIAL WITH FSPA!

[Facebook.com/FloridaStatePoetsAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/FloridaStatePoetsAssociation)

[Twitter.com/FSPA_Poets](https://twitter.com/FSPA_Poets)

Website: www.floridastatepoetsassociation.org

We welcome your posts to the social media pages and appreciate your comments, likes, and shares.

Even if you're not on social media, those pages are available to anyone, so bookmark the pages for ongoing, up-to-date posts, opportunities, and information.

See you online! ☺

~Linda Eve Diamond, Webmaster



Membership Report

The 2017 FSPA membership numbers currently totals at 214 members. At present, we still have ten (10) authorized chapters spread over the state from the Panhandle and down both coasts. North Florida Poetry Hub in the Jacksonville area is still our youngest chapter. Check out page 2 for all of the FSPA chapters. If you live in Florida and are interested in organizing (its very easy) a new chapter, please contact Mary Marcelle: p. 407.832.8603 or email: marymarcelle@earthlink.net

~ Mary Marcelle, Membership Chair



Youth Report

The 2017-2018 FSPA Student Poetry Contest is underway! Letters and rules went out to all Florida middle and high school language arts supervisors as well as interested teachers and individuals. E-mails were also sent to all Florida school superintendents. The contest will be judged by Zachary Kluckman of New Mexico and Barbara Green Powell of Texas.

Beginning last year, first-place winners in each grade level received the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award for Young People, and each place winner received a monetary award as well, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Hopkins, a renowned anthologist of youth poetry and an honorary FSPA chancellor. These prizes will continue to be awarded in the 2017-2018 contest.

The contest deadline is December 1, 2017, and as always, we encourage Chapters and Members-at-Large to publicize the contest in your local areas. Announcements in local newspapers, church newsletters, library programs, etc. could help us spread the news. Contest rules are posted on the FSPA website and can be printed for distribution. We still appreciate donations, even though our award costs have been covered, because postage and other expenses tend to go up as entries increase. Promoting poetry among our young is such an important goal.

The 2016-2017 Student Contest will wrap up with the mailing of *Cadence*, our annual anthology, in which the winning poems are printed. The anthologies are mailed to all our winners, their teachers, and the judges of the contest.

Members and chapters: Please send me reports of any poetry activities you are doing with young people (workshops, open mic readings, competitions, etc.), since NFSPS regularly requests that information.

~Janet Watson, FSPA Youth Chair

Voices Carry with music and song at the 2017 Florida State Poets Convention



Hilton Orlando, Altamonte Springs, FL

Music and poetry filled the Hilton Orlando—Altamonte Springs, October 13th through the 15th at “Voices Carry,” the FSPA 2017 Convention. Keynoted by Florida State Poet Laureate and National and State Chancellor, **Peter Meinke**, along with other notable presenting poets, there were over fifty poets and guests attending the October convention.

In addition to programs by **Dr. Stephen Caldwell Wright** and **Webb Harris**, State Chancellor **Lola Haskins** led us through the editing thicket during a special luncheon workshop.

Three new activities or programs were introduced to the FSPA convention this year; an in-house member poetry slam, a musical ensemble, and on Sunday morning, the hosting of a “deep critique” circle for the finale.

New to the convention was our own in-house poetry slam led by former president and current national Vice President, **Joe Cavanaugh**. The Friday evening event was filled with the enthusiasm of competitors from around the state. Winners were: **Jesse Sam Owens** (LPS), **Kyra Brokoph** (TOM), and **Peter Gordon** (OAP).

Also new to FSPA was the addition of music. **Lola Haskins**, **Al Rocheleau**, and **Nancy MacInnis** talked, sang, and played guitar and harmonica in a tribute to Nobel Laureate Bob Dylan on Friday Evening. Saturday night ended the formal programs with more poems and music... and even, dancing!

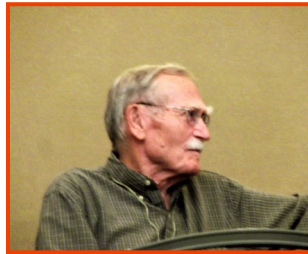
In keeping with the theme, “Voices Carry”, **Cheri Herald** led a panel discussion on strategies for publishing your book with panelists **Leslie Halpern**, **Peter Gordon**, and **Gary Broughman**.

Orlando Area Poets was the host chapter and many thanks go to sponsors **Joseph Cavanaugh**, **Jesse Sam Owens**, **The Orlando Area Poets**, **Al Rocheleau**, **Dennis Rhodes**, and **Jane Peterson** with ditty bags provided by Personal Mini Storage, Lake Fairview in Orlando.

~ information submitted by Alice Friedman

Photos from Convention 2017 ~ Friday Evening ~

Peter Mienke

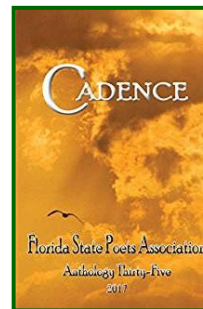


Jessie Sam Owens and Ben Atkinson.



*Nancy MacInnis, Al Rocheleau, & Lola Haskins.
Photos from C. Johnson, L. Haskins, & Sunshine Poets.*

First Edition of Cadence Makes Debut at 2017 FSPA Convention!



The first edition of *Cadence* and the Thirty-fifth edition of the Florida State Poets Association annual anthology was published in October and made its debut during the annual FSPA fall convention that was held in Altamonte Springs, Florida.

This year's book is 186 pages with poems from chapter members, members-at-large, FSPA contest winners, and FSPA student contest winners totaling 117 poems. Each year members also showcase their skill and talent behind the lens with a photo contest for the cover and other placement in the yearly poetry anthology.

This year's cover photograph titled, “Fly into a Fiery Sky” was taken by Fern Goodman from Orlando Area Poets. Eight other photographs were used throughout the book.

Cadence can be purchased online at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million and other major online booksellers. You may also purchase *Cadence* through a local book retailer as a special order. The retail cost of the book is \$12.00. [ISBN: 978-1-946088-96-3]



Chapter News

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

Meetings (Workshops): Due to the extensive damage done to our usual City Island Library venue by Hurricane Irma, **The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach** has had to move its workshop meetings to the third Thursday of each month at the Ormond Beach Regional Library. This will at least be its temporary home for the next six months. Meetings start at 4:00 p.m. and run to after 6 p.m. The group welcomes any and all to attend.

Certain members have been very busy of late: **Jesse Sam Owens** has been appearing in several public venues (including Spotlight speaker at Barnes & Noble), **Cherelyn Bush** is running a poetry slam at the Palm Coast campus of Daytona State College, and **Bob Blenheim** recently won five awards at the Massachusetts State Poetry Contest (1-First, 3-Second & 1-Third place). **Bob** has also been involved on a project to write poems for a photographic book on the Holocaust. Unfortunately, however, he was recently booted off the project due to its publisher considering the book would be better without poetry. **Bob** licked his wounds, grieved for ten minutes, and is now back in high spirits.

Recently the Live Poets' monthly challenges have included writing Limericks, Villanelles and Song Parodies, and a few have produced marvelously work. At the risk of showing partiality, Vice President **Alice Norman** astonished everyone by writing a virtually perfect Villanelle, something the other members truly envied. Other themes explored in monthly challenges included poems on Summer/Heat, and on the subject of Violence. **Marc Davidson**, a master of Limericks as well as Gilbert and Sullivan song parodies, joined **Bob Blenheim** in a short program of Song Parodies at a recent meeting. And **Judith Lawrence** continues to publish her *River Poets Journal* while continuing to produce one Lune poem a day.

Anyone who attends should discover that **The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach** is one of the most vibrant and entertaining chapters of FSPA!

~Robert E. Blenheim

Miami Poets

Meetings: 1st Wednesday, Pinecrest Branch Library, 1-3 pm.

Miami Poets celebrated poetry throughout the summer during our monthly Miami Poets Soirées, moderated by **Tere Starr**. We gather each first Wednesday at the Pinecrest Branch Library from 1 to 3 to share poetry and inspiration. During September's soiree, poetry was a welcome break from Hurricane Irma preparations. On second Mondays from 1 to 3 pm, we join Group 10, the critique group founded by **Janita Wright**. Poetry continues to be our priority.

Achievements: Working with O Miami and the Knight Foundation, **Zoraida (Ziggy) Pastor's** chapbook was celebrated at a Chapbook Release Party on October 27th... **Ricki Dorn** displayed her poetry books, *Strands of Rhyme: Poems from the Real World* and *Joy of Jewish Holidays in Rhyme*, during South Florida Writers Association's 'Bookfest at Pinecrest' on October 28th at Evelyn Greer Park... **Patsy Asuncion** continues to be a leader in Virginia's poetry scene. Her fourth Wednesday open mics in Charlottesville can be viewed on YouTube's "Patricia Asuncion Channel"... **Connie Goodman-Milone's** letters to the editor, "Good Idea" and "Healthcare Vote" were published in the *Miami Herald*... Three of **Tere Starr's** poems were featured in South Florida Writer's Association's *Authors Voice*...

Our love of the written word is apparent as we share poetry throughout Miami and beyond.

~Tere Starr

New River Poets

Meetings: 3rd Saturday,* 1:00-4:30 pm, Atonement Lutheran, Wesley Chapel

Our September meeting was cancelled due to Hurricane Irma, but **New River** members agreed that there was enough drama, anxiety, generosity, and heroism

during that event to inspire dozens of poems. We sympathize with anyone who suffered during the storm and its aftermath.

As of this writing we are looking forward to the October FSPA Convention in Altamonte Springs and the publication of the anthology now being published under the name *Cadence*.

Members continue to meet and critique poetry. We find ourselves discussing, more and more, the actual process of writing poetry and individual approaches to our craft. Our recent "challenges" included writing epithalamions, dream-poetry, ninettes, and an exercise in "making sense out of nonsense." We also shared poems inspired by our individual experiences during Irma.

We appreciate the accomplishments of our members, including **John Foster**, who continues to head up the Shouthshore Poets of Sun City Center. The group has been asked by the Southshore Regional Library to do a reading for National Poetry Month in 2018. This past summer **John** and another local poet combined to offer a humorous-poetry PowerPoint program for a benefit that raised \$1500 for student scholarships. He composed and posted a tribute-poem after Hurricane Irma to those at Freedom Plaza who worked hard to keep residents safe during the storm. **Stephanie Andrews** has begun teaching an eight-week course in creative writing for seniors at the Beachside Shepherd's Center, and on the weekend of November 17th is taking a group to the Miami Book Fair. **Janet Watson** was awarded Second Place in the poetry division of the Romeo LeMay Writing Contest. Her winning poem will appear in *Odet*, an anthology published in Safety Harbor, Florida.

~Janet Watson

Two New Societies In Early Stages

Two new poetry societies are in the early days of organizing into FSPA chapters. One chapter is in Osceola County, headed by Mackenzie Riley and the other is organizing in Brevard County, headed by Janna Schledorn. Both societies expect to have strong student participation among their membership. Look for details in the Jan/Feb issue of OPAP.

~Al Rocheleau, vice-president FSPA

(more on page 6)

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North Florida Poetry Hub

Meetings: 4th Thursday at 6:30-8 p.m.
3886 Atlantic Blvd., Jacksonville, FL.

The monthly meetings of **NFPH** meet at the Hope at Hand facility, 3886 Atlantic Boulevard in Jacksonville. All poetry enthusiasts ages 16+ are welcome to attend. For more information, contact Steffani Fletcher at: steffani@HopeAtHand.org.

Community Outreach Project: Hope at Hand is issuing a community-wide invitation to adults 18 and older in Northeast Florida for original **LOVE** poems. Tell us about love lost, love won, past love, love yet-to-come, or any facet of love that stirs your heart. The top ten poems, as judged by the North Florida Poetry Hub, will be printed and displayed beginning February 14, 2018. (Exhibit details TBA). Poems must be a maximum of 15 lines and family-friendly. Submit by email only to: HopeAtHand@HopeAtHand.org by December 1, 2017.

~Steffani Fletcher

Orlando Area Poets

Meetings: 3rd Thursday at 6:30pm
Maitland Public Library

The **Orlando Area Poets** participated in the Maitland Library's quarterly Poetry Coffeehouse in September, reading poems written to the prompt "Strike a Chord" as well as other original works. The Maitland Library continues to offer writing workshops the third Sunday of each month, with **Elaine Person** leading the group. The new prompt for these workshops is "Bearing the Torch." Also in September, The Winter Park Library's annual showcase of writers and musicians called "Sounds from the Heart" included readings by **Joe Dunn**, **Carlton T. Johnson**, **Frank T. Masi** and **Elaine Person**.

Fern Goodwin's stand-up comedy debut in August at the Stardust Café in Orlando featured "Make 'em Yearn"—her original poem about aspects of aging... **Leslie C. Halpern** had her fourth children's poetry book published. *Silly Sleepytime Poems* features sixteen fun rhyming poems about sleeping and dreaming. Illustrated with colorful paintings by **Oral Nussbaum**, the book also includes resource pages with additional information and vocabulary words... **Andrew Jarvis'** poetry collection

Landslide has added a Silver Medal in Poetry from the CIPA EVVY Book Awards to his earlier Silver Medal from the Nautilus Book Awards... **Elaine Person** began her new Writing to Art class, "Inspired Writing" through the Crealde School of Art, writing stories and poems to painting and photographs... **Carolynn Scully's** literary craft project, "A Corner Bookmark," was published in *Clubhouse Jr. Magazine* in September. **Carolynn** will also lead a poetry workshop at the Florida National League of American Pen Women Conference in December... **Shelley Stockdale's** pantoum "Lament to Once-Live Oaks" will be published in the fall 2017 issue of *Penwood Review*... The Orlando Area Poets has adopted a chapter logo created by member **Mark Terry**.

~Diane Neff, Secretary

Poetry for the Love of It

Meetings: 2nd and 4th Mondays, 2:45-4:45 pm, Tallahassee Senior Center, N. Monroe St, Tallahassee. Visitors are always welcome.

The first Senior Poetry Contest sponsored by PLOI was a success. The contest was open to seniors/staff, age 55+, who attend activities at the Tallahassee Senior Center (TSC). Twelve entries were received. Awards for first, second and third place were given at a recent art award event. All poems submitted are on display at TSC. Those participating in the art programs have accepted a challenge to create art to accompany each poem.

Members of PLOI will once again provide entertainment at TSC's annual reception for the Grand Relations Art Show in January 2018. The topic will be humor.

Several PLOI members are working on publishing selections of their poems. Linda Whitefeather recently published her first collection of cat poems entitled *Cats Speak*. She has held book signings and readings at independent bookstore My Favorite Books, and during the October meeting of Big Bend Poets (BBP) at Barnes & Nobles. Her book is a collaborative effort with renowned photographer Marian Brickner.

Linda and Marian have several more poetry books planned. *Cats Speak* can be purchased on Amazon. A signed copy may be obtained directly from Linda by e-mailing her at catfeather32301@gmail.com

~Linda Whitefeather, Secretary

Sunshine Poets

Meetings: 2nd Saturday at 10a.m.
Crystal River Public Library,
Crystal River, FL

Sunshine Poets continue to meet at the **Crystal River Public Library** on the **2nd Saturday** of each month at **10 a.m.** We welcome all ages and levels of poets. A new form or technique is described and offered as a homework assignment. Homework and critique are optional, followed by an open reading. Lunch and fellowship follow the meeting at one of our local restaurants.

Sunshine Poets donated a gift basket for the fall 2017 FSPA Convention and have also donated to the FSPA Youth Contest. Member **Joyce Shiver** has had wins in several contests. Members **Joan Clark** and **Natalie Warrick** continue to have their poetry published in their church newsletter. President, **Cheri Herald**, moderated the Book Publishing Panel at FSPA's fall convention in Altamonte Springs. Visit Sunshine Poets on their Facebook page to follow their activities.

SSP may also be contacted via email at: sunshinepoets@gmail.com.

~ Cheri Herald, President SSP

Tomoka Poets

Meetings: 2nd Wed @5-6:45pm,
Ormond Beach Library, Mtg. Rm.4

After Hurricane Irma paid us a visit, Tomoka poets couldn't wait to get back to work. Four of us waded through water and debris because the library was open and poetry was knocking at the door. Our open mic sessions held on the fourth Tuesday at 7:00pm have continued at Barnes & Noble bookstore. Featured poets Bob Blenheim and Jesse Owens filled our side of the store with adoring fans wanting more and more. Vicki Iorio from NYC and sometimes Florida weaved her tales of a bride's Mother that kept us all in laughter. We rarely get to see and hear Vicki and treasure every moment that she can join us.

We are making plans for our annual December celebration called Chriskwanzukkah. We work with two other organizations, Ormond Beach Main Street and Creative Happiness Institute, to produce this magical event. This year, it will be December 10, 12:00 noon to 5:00pm at The Case-ments in Ormond Beach for poetry, music, books, and some surprises. You are all invited.

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David Axelrod continues to conduct a young poets' workshop helping our future poets perfect their skills and to publish a first book. **Mary-Ann Westbrook** and **David Axelrod** have both individually done a poetry presentation at the Brookdale Assisted Living Residence. For each of us the room was filled with an appreciative audience. The invitation came from our poet friend Cliff Gold who has started the group there. A special treat was having long time Tomoka Poet **Heather Ragsdale** attend the group. She is a resident there and also read poetry with us.

~ Mary-Ann Westbrook



Members-at-Large News

TO ALL FSPA MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

This column is for you. Send in your poetry achievements. We will print as many as possible. Your contest winning poems may find a spot here as well!

Madelyn Eastlund, Beverly Hills, FL

Madelyn (Lyn) spends her time writing new poems and reviewing old ones when she is not entering and winning contests all over the country. She has a couple of poems for the poetry page in this issue.

Mary Rogers-Grantham, Palm Coast, FL

Two poems by Mary Rogers-Grantham, "ghost dreams" and "Half On, Half Off" are featured in the 2017 online fall issue of *Sky Island Journal*.

Evelyn Romano, Tampa, FL

Evelyn Ann Romano attended Saint Leo University's Sandhill Writers Retreat in May, at which this year's Sandhill Review made its debut. Evelyn Ann Romano had her poem "Sunday Morning Meditation" printed in the journal.

Patricia Wentling, Deltona, FL

Patricia publishes as **Trish Wentling** and her poem "The Plant Lady" was accepted by the PKAs Advocate for their August/September 2017 issue, Volume 31, Number 4. The PKA Advocate is published in Prattsville, NY. Her poem is also in this issue.

Evening, Dec. 12—Evening, Dec. 20, 2017



From the Editor

This past month and more, my mind has been going in so many different directions. I became a grandmother for the first time to a beautiful little girl on October third. Camille Grace lives far from me in Buffalo, NY, but with lots of text photos and videos, I am keeping pace with her development during this first month. I am sure that in the days and months and years to come, I will write many a poem to my little Camille Grace.

But in the meantime, I have also been planning for this first intended-for-online newsletter and trying to decide what I might do to change things up just a bit since I could use more color and had more layout space in which to work. Well I have certainly revisited the old adage that more does not always mean better. It seemed like I never had the necessary space for prior issues of OPAP and now I am wondering how I will fill up the space I do have.

Then I began to think about 'time' and that over the next two months, I will get to a point where it seems I will never have enough time to get all the things done that need to be completed in order to get through the holidays that are heading our way. You may have noticed the little images for those major holidays beginning with Thanksgiving, then making way to Chanukah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, and then New Year's Eve as 2017 passes into 2018 and then we really do wonder where time went. May the images and holidays give you poetic inspiration.

While thinking toward the end of one year and the beginning of another, did you meet your poetry goals this past year? Or did you just procrastinate through 2017? Last December I published my first poetry collection and the feeling it gave me was one of triumph. It was like climbing the highest peak, running the fastest race, or some other awe inspiring task. And I did not stop there. I wrote and published a second book of poetry that was released this past June. Now, I have taken a break so that I can knit some baby things for my granddaughter and that has been a pleasure for me also.

I have added a very short column labeled **This 'n That** and the content will probably never be the same two issues in a row. The last item in the column is about a theme or challenge for member poetry submissions for the January/February issue of OPAP. A deadline date is given for January 5th. There is no prize that will be given other than the three best poems will be published in OPAP. The date is a postmark for snail mail or before midnight by email. I hope you will be interested in participating in this challenge. I am sure I will enjoy reading your original poems inspired by the work of Amy Lowell.

Until next time, may you have a wonderful holiday season!

~Patricia Stevenson Gingrich, editor

Member Poems



Tuesday, Dec. 26—the end of Monday, Jan.1, 2018

THE PLANT LADY

by Trish Wentling

Fragrant as a springtime lily,
she grabs her wheel barrel's handles
guiding it around the backyard.

She pulls gloves out of her pocket,
and her fingers stretch into those,
welcoming the feel of cotton.

Spades, shovels and hoes snooze in the shade
while the plant lady mixes her soil
with the cow manure and sand.

Her eyes estimate the distance
between each plant so they will grow,
and cover the ground with new shoots.

Small potted plants watch her dig holes,
drop two scoops of soil into each,
as they wait in line to be next.

Plant lady fills the sprinkling can
to the top with tepid water
plus a shot of plant vitamins.

She finds a grassy spot to rest,
and asks the Lord to keep them safe
from bugs, drought and every weed.

Her tools and soils, back in the shed.
The plant lady takes off her gloves
and celebrates with an iced tea.

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD

by Madelyn Eastlund

Our garden was beautiful with waterfalls
and flowers in more shades than there were names
and birds of so many species nesting
and a lake fully stocked with fish
where my husband enjoyed fishing
and swimming in the buff

I'm the one who cleaned the fish
cooked the fish
cleaned up after the meal

It was all vacation for him
but for me
it was planning the menu,
preparing the food—
our diet was mostly fish and rabbit
with plenty of salad

One day as I gathered walnuts
intending to add a few pears
he said, "pears, again?"

Then I thought of the apple tree...

It wasn't a serpent at all
but me trying to make a Waldorf salad
that got Adam and me kicked out of Eden.



Merry Christmas

Miscellanea

NFSPS

2017 Stevens Manuscript Competition

Final Submission Date: Midnight, Nov. 15, 2017

NFSPS Poetry Contests begin January 1st 2018!

Complete Information on both competitions in *Strophes* and on the NFSPS website: nfsp.com

Orlando Names First Poet Laureate



The City of Orlando has just appointed Susan Lilley, age 64 as their first Poet Laureate.

Ms. Lilley is a teacher at Trinity Preparatory School and an adjunct professor at Rollins College. Lilley is a published poet and a past winner of the Rita Dove Poetry Award and a recipient of a Florida Individual Artist Fellowship. She attended Florida public schools and holds both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from University of Central Florida.

Creative Happiness Institute

In Volusia County and directed by Dr. David Axelrod CHI has lots of exciting events planned for the next couple of months. If you live or are visiting in the area, you need to check out their schedule. Email or call David at axelrod@creativehappiness.org or 386-337-4567

Poetry Night at the Hub

Dan Pels Presents

Poets the Third Saturday

Time: 5 p.m.

Place: The Hub, New Smyrna Beach

Convention Photos 2017

~ Saturday ~

(if you have photos, please post or tag to FSPA FB page)



Webb Harris



Dr. Stephen Caldwell Wright



Panelists & Moderator

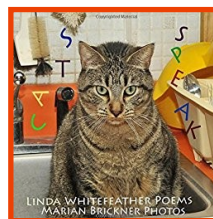


Natalie Warwick, contest winner



The "Be-In" Band

CATS SPEAK



Linda Whitefeather of PLOI has a new book of cat poems with photos by Marian Brickner. **Contact Linda:** catfeather32301@gmail.com **for a signed copy. Book price - \$10.** Book is also available on Amazon.





CHAPARRAL POETRY FORUM

Contest Chair: Marie Tollstrup
2280 South Bloomington Drive Unit 6
St. George, UT 84790-6803

ENTRY CATEGORIES

√ **Unlimited Entries Welcome: Postmarked through Dec. 1, 2017**

- **CHOLLA** Division: any subject, any form, 42 lines or fewer.
First prize \$200, Second Prize \$100, Third Prize \$50
- **CHAQUETA** Division: Southwest theme—nature, people, history, etc, any form 42 lines or fewer.
First Prize \$100, Second Prize \$100, Third Prize \$25
- **CHAPAREJOS** Division: Rhymed and metered poem, any subject, 42 lines or fewer.
First Prize \$100, Second Prize \$50, Third Prize \$25
- **CHIMERA** Division: Imaginative or absurd/humorous, any form, 42 lines or fewer.
First Prize \$100, Second Prize \$50, Third Prize \$25

GUIDELINES

√ **Each poem must:**

1. Be original, UNPUBLISHED, 42 lines or fewer
2. **Be entered in only one of the four categories**
3. Have line lengths to fit chapbook pages (4 inches across or shorter in length)
4. Be machine-printed neatly on white 8 ½ x 11 paper without art
5. Be in 12-point font in standard face such as Times New Roman
6. Be in GOOD TASTE (Student and Adult poems are published together)
7. **Have won no more than \$10 in any contest**

√ **SEND TWO UNFOLDED COPIES OF EACH POEM**, Division title at top left of each poem

- a. First Copy is only Division Title and no ID
- b. Second Copy has ID at the top right corner (name, address, phone, and email)
- c. **INCLUDE: entry fees: \$3 per poem (e.g., 6 poems for \$18.00)**

√ **CHECK** (no cash) payable to **Redrock Writers**. **MAIL** unfolded poems and check in on 9 x 12-in. or larger envelop to — Marie Tollstrup, 2280 South Bloomington Hills Drive, Unit 6, St. George, UT 84790-6803

CHAPARRAL AWARDS ARE GIVEN OUT ON MARCH 2, 2018, AT 8-9 P.M.

AT THE SOCIAL HALL IN THE OPERA HOUSE ANNEX IN ST. GEORGE, UTAH