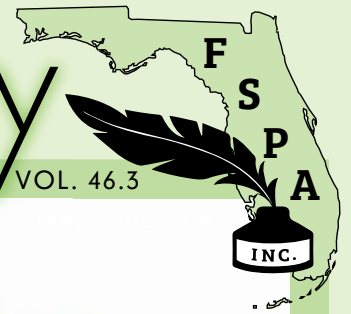


Of Poets & Poetry

A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA STATE POETS ASSOCIATION VOL. 46.3



See page 3

summer hill seven

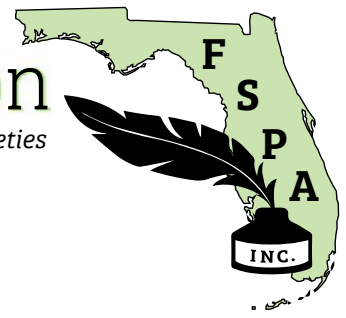
Photograph by Akil DuPont

www.FloridaStatePoetsAssociation.org



Florida State Poets Association

An affiliate of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies



Al Rocheleau

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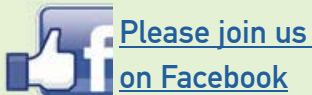
FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear poets,

OK, here are some odds and ends for departing April and burgeoning May (not to mention sunny June), which this issue of OPAP also covers. Yes, as always, April was and always is National Poetry Month, but I'm one of those who tries to look at poetry, with all the power and significance we know it should occupy as being a twelve-month affair. Yes, we have great members at chapters across our state who, as they always do, have tried to raise awareness of poets and poetry in the month of April. It is a time that also celebrates: cleaning out the medicine cabinet, the English language, hope, canine fitness, internship awareness, distracted driving, child abuse, life awareness, cannabis awareness, fair housing, military children, the guitar, keeping America beautiful, lawn and garden (perhaps the three could combine), autism awareness, couple appreciation, decorating, fresh celery, gardens (vegetable this time? Perhaps, with an accent on celery?), humor (okay, I'm celebrating as prescribed), jazz, soft pretzels, soy foods, straw hats, Parkinson's awareness, poetry (yes, I'm being redundant now about that), pecans, volunteers, welding, occupational therapy, records and information management, Scottish Americans, sexual assault, stress awareness, safe digging, and world landscape architecture.

Now, some of those subjects are vital and should be singled out. Others bear further explanation, and some are a little silly. Where should poetry stand? While we try to impress the public with acts of creative awareness, and we should, perhaps we should also reinvigorate the awareness of poetry in ourselves and our fellow poets. Have you been writing this past month? Have you submitted your work to a journal or a contest? Did you attend a poetry performance, or perhaps read at one? Other things failing (and this perhaps what fails the most), did you read any poetry out of a book, that of your colleagues or from the grandmaster poets, this past month? And as a member of the Florida State Poets Association, and representing your local society chapter, did you attend the FSPA Spring Fling? No? Well, good news—reprieve is on the way. Our Spring Fling convention normally takes place in April (yes, see above, we know why.) This year, it's on Friday, May 17, and Saturday, May 18, at the Comfort Inn and Suites-Downtown Orlando, across from Florida Hospital, where the Fling was held a few years ago. It's a great location, with inexpensive food, and we'll have great speakers. Why not come and celebrate, yes, in May, part of National Poetry Year, of which you and your own work play such an important part. While some will have good reasons why they can't attend (and we understand that) some won't; unexhausted from April, with all that celebrating of celery and welding behind us, comes a May (and June) full of promise, of great new poems to write, of contests to win and poems to place in magazines, not to mention on May 17-18, face-time with a microphone toward you and loudspeaker toward an audience of peers that will make your poems ring.

The Future of Poetry Comes Early: Join me, Shantih Press, Gary Broughman and CHB Media, as well as many private FSPA donors, in welcoming the arrival of what I feel will be two of the most important debut books by young American poets in the past decade. Gary and I combined our forces to produce, pro-bono, two sizable collections by poets you may already know, Sophia DuRose and Katie O'Malley. Sophia, 20, and Katie, 19, are long-time FSPA members, members also of the Osceola Poetry Society, graduates of both the Twelve Chairs Advanced Poetry Course and the Twelve Chairs Short Course, have been published in major literary magazines across the United States, and are now studying at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Florida, respectively.



EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

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Secretary: Leslie Halpern

Treasurer: Robyn Weinbaum

APPOINTED OFFICERS

Anthology Editors:

Gary Broughman

Elaine Person, JC Kato

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Jane Peterson

Contest Chair:

Mary Rogers-Grantham

Newsletter Editor:

Mark Andrew James Terry

Historian:

Elaine Person

National Poetry Day/ Month Chair:

TBD

Youth Chair and Student

Contest Chair:

Carolynn Scully

Slam Coordinator:

Kevin Campbell

Webmaster:

Dina Tanner

There will be a joint launch of Sophia's book, *Losing Teeth*, and Katie's book, *The Other Side of Moon*, on May 16, 6 PM - 8 PM, at the Osceola School for the Arts, 3151 N. Orange Blossom Trail, Kissimmee, FL 34744. All are invited to this great arts school and this momentous event. Books will be available at a discounted rate for the event, and will be likewise available in the bookstore at Spring Fling. Many of you watched these poets grow up. So many were able donate one way or another to their cause. You have supported them, and now, they pay you, their colleagues, back with work that will make them, soon enough, recognized masters of our art.

More on the Team Slam, Friday May 17, at Spring Fling: Teams consist of three people. (Each member should bring at least four poems.) We recognize that it could be difficult for some of the smaller or further-away chapters to field enough members for a single team. So at-large members can select a chapter team they wish to ally with for the competition. Remember that you can read from a sheet, and while a poem can't be more than three minutes, it can be less. (It's quite possible that a two minute or minute-and-a-half poem will score very well.) You can definitely use either published or unpublished poems. Scores for a team (reading in sequence in a round) will not be announced until an aggregated total is computed at the end of the team's round. It is hoped that all Central Florida chapters (which are among the largest in the state) will field at least one team. Osceola, one of the smallest chapters that includes high school students, is attempting to field two. So, chapters, there's your challenge. We are currently shopping around for a suitably gaudy trophy, a the plate naming the chapter team that wins each year. The winning team will split between them a sizable cash prize.

October Convention at Plaza Resort and Spa, Daytona Beach, October 25-27:

FSPA's Fall Convention, sponsored by the Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach, will take place at the Plaza Resort and Spa, Daytona Beach, from Friday, October 25, through Sunday, October 27. Bob Blenheim and the company at the Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach are already at work to assure a fine fall event. Circle your calendars now.

Speakers Bureau Update: I recently wrote to all chapter presidents, asking them to make use of the teachers through our Speakers Bureau that are available to their chapters without charge. Depending on need, they may be available to speak anywhere from an hour to five hours on one or more subjects. Several times we have also employed more than one speaker at the same event. For instance, Peter Gordon and Leslie Halpern just did separate programs for the North Florida Poetry Hub at the Jazz Poetry Fest in April. The Speakers Bureau service is available to each chapter twice a year. The idea is to bridge the times between Spring Fling and the Fall Convention, making education of poets year round. We recognize there are excellent teachers who are members of local chapters, and again we invited chapter members to send their specialty and availability in to me so that I may list them for future talks. Ask your presidents when your chapter will receive their next Speakers Bureau benefit. We're ready to serve.

FSPA Places Twelve Poets in Gwendolyn Brooks Journal: In an amazing show of expertise, twelve FSPA poets placed fourteen poems in the 2019 edition of *Revelry*, the venerable journal of the Gwendolyn Brooks Writers Association. Peter Gordon won the prestigious 2019 Thomas Burnett Swann Award and \$500.00 prize, and Robyn Weinbaum, Carlton Johnson, and Mark Terry won Honorable Mentions and \$100.00 prizes. Other FSPA members appearing in the issue were: Gary Broughman, Holly Mandelkern, Carolynn Scully, Diane Neff, Alice Friedman, Judith Krum, Janna Schledorn, and me. Well done, FSPA!

Nothing Yet on Florida Poet Laureate: The wheels of state administration turn slowly; as of this writing, the process for choosing finalists to go to the Secretary of State has not yet taken place. FSPA recommended the following poets: Silvia Curbelo, Denise Duhamel, Carol Frost, David Kirby, Lola Haskins, Lee Bennett Hopkins, and Victor Suarez. We are monitoring the process; we do expect further action soon and look forward to working with the new Poet Laureate, and the other recommended poets.

Al

Profiles in Poetry

summer hill seven:

Actor, Author, Director, Educator...

There is a very long string of nouns one would need to use to be fully informed as to the skills and identity of Summer Hill Seven, but one word might sum it up—accomplished. The following questions, composed by Al Rocheleau, with responses in Summer's own words, allow us to peek into his richly-textured life.

Q: The Summer Hill Seven name is a memorable one. The story?

A: My great grandmother, whom I never met, raised my mother, who was orphaned by her parents. My great grandmother's name is Cora Summerhill, and she is the seventh of 13 children fathered by Robert Summerhill. When my mother transitioned in 2004, I published my first book (*Notes of a Neurotic*) as Summer Hill Seven. When I completed my MFA in acting in 2007, I then chose Summer Hill Seven as my stage name. The idea is that when you see me (or read me), you see my mother, her mother and all the circumstances that lead to who and what I am.

Q: You've lived a long life, come a long way. What got you here?

A: I have come this far by faith, as the gospel song says. Nothing else. By faith, I am referring to the biblical definition—"the evidence of things unseen and the substance of things hoped for..."

Q: You're an attorney, an activist, an actor, a poet. How do those roles go together?

A: The common denominator is the persuasive use of language. From as long as I can remember, I chose to believe that the right word was the magic and often secret password to unlock the door to all of our desires.

Q: Is the actor a poet inside dramatic lines, the advocate a poet for his client and his cause?

A: That is a persuasive way to describe it, for sure; now that you put it like that, I will say, absolutely.

I never chose poetry as a path; poetry actually intimidates me in ways that few things have. Simon Callow, a British actor and writer, said that the theatre benefits most from "actor-poets," which to me meant actors who value above all the poetic possibilities of language. I relate to that and after I read that I began to explore it more deliberately in my own acting work. In fact, I intend my appearance at the Spring Fling to be my final public performance for my own poetry. I intend to confine my performance of poetry to film acting and the works of other poets. As far as the advocate being a poet for his cause and client, in my first book, *Notes of a Neurotic*, I did include a letter that I wrote on behalf of a legal aid client prior to retiring from the practice of law because the rhythm of the words felt artful, if not poetic.

(Continued on next page)

2006—In a professional theatre training program at the University of Delaware, Summer Hill Seven portrays Sir Anthony Absolute in the play "The Rivals" by Richard Sheridan. Photography by Paul Cerro

Q: Who were your personal life-models, beacons, famed and otherwise?

A: Naturally, my first super-hero was none other than Jesus Christ, the blue-eyed and blonde version, no less. After Jesus, I discovered the rock band—the Monkees—they were my first friends. I watched their tv show and sang and danced along with them. In puberty, I discovered what the idea of “Blackness” meant for a young man in America. It is important to add that by birth via Robert Summerhill and my Grandma the beliefs and traditions of the indigenous people of this land we call America were passed along to me in direct ways. Chiefly, I always understood that I was in “the world” but not “of the world”—that the material world was temporal, and of little consequence. So, by the time I encountered the story and legend of Malcolm X, I recognized my story in his. I also recognized the story of Jesus of Nazareth in Malcolm X’s story. I didn’t choose him as a life-model rather I saw Malcolm X as a beacon, as you say, a guide that could help me through the valley. In college, when some fraternities began to approach me about joining their organization, that is when I chose my first and perhaps last life-model, Paul Robeson. Now, I don’t see myself as anything more than a mere particle connected to all the other particles inside the ALL.

Q: Can you tell us about the Poemedy? One might assume the combination of “Comedy” and “Poetry,” but would that discount it? Is it more like Dante’s definition of Comedy, of our real Life Story?

A: Laurence Holder is one of America’s greatest writers and I enjoyed the distinct privilege of learning directly from him for several years. He wrote the play that brought Denzel Washington to the attention of New York theatre critics when Washington played the role of Malcolm X in Holder’s *When the Chickens Came Home to Roost*. I learned from him about the origin of the term Jazz. I had not yet written any books. I had started directing plays in New York City around the same time that I met Holder.

At the same time, Danny Hoch and his cohorts were starting to develop what they were calling “hip-hop theatre”—it was very exciting for young pigmented actors because theatre is very racially segregated and so, many of us felt like this new form would bring greater opportunities for us, the hip-hop generation, to express themselves on stage.

At the same time, David Lamb was writing novels in a new literary form that they were calling “hip-hop literature”—eventually after refusing many offers of other writers to adapt his novel for the stage, David decided to adapt it and produce it himself. Hoch, Holder and Lamb and I come from a philosophy that Elijah Muhammad, the teacher of Malcolm X, called Do For Self.

David Lamb happened to be my roommate at Princeton and NYU School of Law. Eventually, he and his wife chose me to adapt the play version of his novel, which he wrote, for the stage. It was the first play I directed. I had begun writing *Notes of a Neurotic*. I understood that we were way off the beaten path with our efforts, and if it was successful, we may want to retrace our steps to figure out how we arrived at this destination, and what would we call this destination. This is years before *In the Heights* would blow the world away. This is before Spoken Word would come to Broadway. We were out on a ledge poised to jump into an abyss. David and his wife asked me to direct the play. It was one of the greatest gambles that I had ever taken as an adult. I had no idea what I was doing, but I had absolute faith that it could be done and that we could do it together.

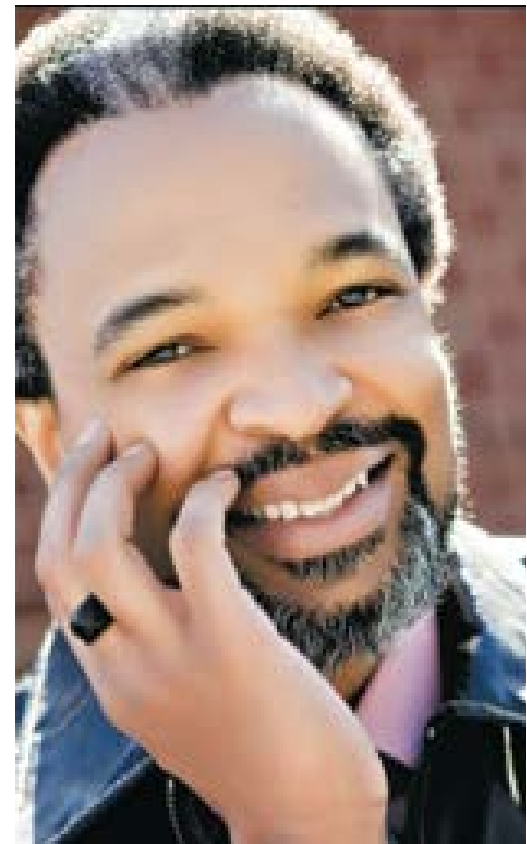
During that time, I wrote and directed my first film about Summer Hill Seven, a fictional Spoken Word artist. In the film, a mockumentary,

(Continued on next page)



Above: Image from a reading at Miami Dade College, 2009

Below: Photography by Paul Cerro





Performance of "Shakespeare N. Haarlem" in Miami/Project Hip-Hop—2010. Photography by Tony Mahammad

Summer Hill Seven is asked something like what would replace Hip-Hop after it is no longer popular and he responds: "Poemedy, or would you prefer, cometry?"

After the film, the term Poemedy stuck with me and we began to listen for the distinction. Someone else, whom I have yet to know had written a book titled: Poemedy. For me, it allowed me to create without regard to fitting into externally imposed descriptions. Eventually, I started seeing poemedy everywhere...in George Carlin and Richard Pryor. When I learned about Dick Gregory, I immediately cast him as the Godfather of Poemedy. Yet, Amiri Baraka's work was where I first saw an opportunity for poetry as advocacy. I started bundling it all under Poemedy. Poemedy eventually became my reason for being. Since money was never a motivator, the only reason I kept doing anything was because I felt like the world would benefit from Poemedy. My job was to persuade them that it would give them life more abundantly.

Q: Where did the seven-syllable structure of your poetic lines come from?

A: Do you remember when I mentioned that I discovered Blackness in puberty? Well by the time I was in middle school, I began to reject most of the academic curriculum as an affront to my blackness, preferring instead to learn on my own or from the words of black thinkers. It was the spirit of the times. I was always an honor student, which often meant I was the only or one of a few pigmented students in class. I started skipping class whenever anyone mentioned that we would study Shakespeare. White Jesus and Shakespeare were the chief tools of colonialism. Consequently, I was very ignorant, and in some ways, remain very ignorant of the the western canon.

So when I was given the opportunity to attend the University of Delaware's Professional Theatre Training Program (PTTP)—the only MFA program in America at the time dedicated to performing, almost exclusively, the works from the Western Canon—I jumped at the chance. Primarily, because I was working and creating in New York City, but I was without steady income and a place to live. But also because I saw Denzel Washington play Richard III and Jeffrey Wright play Mark Anthony in *Julius Caesar* and I had faith that I could stand on any stage in the world and perform any material like my personal life model—Paul Robeson—who played Othello.

Shakespeare was the next big challenge, and to get paid to fail at it was an offer I simply would not refuse. And fail I did. It was painful for a nearly 40-year-old (and here I will use the term Black) man to humiliate himself daily in front of a bunch of white people. I was the worst student of Shakespeare, certainly in my class, maybe ever. Everyday I had to fight with myself and smoke a joint just to go back to class for more humiliation.

My classmates were either confused by my presence, or some were openly hostile to my presence. I think some of them felt that I was taking a spot that they knew other people would do anything to have, especially since the chance to study with the PTTP only came around once every four years.

Well, I had already published my first book, and since I did not know how long I would be there before they asked me to leave, I started thinking about what I was going to do next. Again, I was given the privilege of performing at the Tony Award-winning Utah Shakespearean festival because after a year of absolute humiliation I managed to create 90 seconds of Shakespearean acting in an audition monologue. Talk about going from the frying pan (of whiteness) into the fire of whiteness—if there is some place whiter than Cedar City, Utah, then I don't want to know about it.

(Continued on next page)



2003—Poster for "Shakespeare N. Haarlem" stage play, NYC



2009—Summer Hill Seven portraying Boye from “The Jesse B. Semple Suite,” Jazz at Lincoln Center.
Photography by Frank Stewart

I turned 40 years old that summer. For my own sanity, I decided to write a follow-up to *Notes of a Neurotic*, dedicated to “all the Black men in America who had not and would not reach the age of 40”—men like Dr. King, Malcolm X, Tupac, Biggie, Emmett Till, and too many to list. In this book I decided to organize them around these seven-syllable statements of my personal beliefs I call perfect poemedyz—the first of which is—Life is a game—play to win.

Q: You are deeply involved with the work of grandmaster poets of the African American experience such as Langston Hughes, for which you developed an entire show. Do you identify with or perceive you are carrying on the work of the Harlem Renaissance, or equally of poets such as Tolson, Baraka, or contemporaries like Patricia Smith?

A: I think of Langston Hughes as my poetry mentor. His sense of humor reads so beautifully to me. It is his poetry that I have performed more than the words of any one person including my own. I have never appeared in any of his plays. I have performed Boyd in his Jesse B. Semple stories with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. He is so loved that when you say those magic words the world falls to your feet—it is intoxicating. In some ways, I think I both avoided poetry and attempted to emulate it with poemedy because of my envy for Langston Hughes’ gift with words. If Langston was poetry, I did not imagine, nor did I believe, nor did I have faith that such purity, and beauty could come from me—but I could tell my story of isolation in a way someone coming after me might feel less alone. It is the telling of the story of isolation that connects me with the Harlem Renaissance. This period was when an intellectual elite came together and said let us make art on that great void that signals to all living and yet unborn that they are not alone.

Q: You are a champion of poetry education. What have you been doing in this regard, and what do you see happening with our young people?

A: This is what my documentary film, the *Poemedy Project*, is about, what works in education. The film led to the Poemedy Institute, where we offer private lessons, classes, workshops and events. We have taught the art of Poemedy to Alvin Ailey summer camp, Miami-Dade Public Schools, Leon County Schools—used the techniques to help executives become more persuasive leaders of their organizations. This past election cycle, the Big Bend Poets & Writers began engaging Leon County civic leaders in a dialogue about pragmatic uses of poetic rhetoric. The mission of the Poemedy Institute is to change the world by changing the words of the world; and to teach creativity and eloquence as an alternative to violence.

Q: What do you want to accomplish with your work moving into the future?

A: I’ll know it when I feel it. In this moment, I feel as if I have about a dozen film characters that I want to lend my voice to sharing, including Nate Love (also known as Deadwood Dick,) Othello, Lear, Malcolm X, Elijah Muhammad, Paul Robeson, Dick Gregory, Langston Hughes, Amiri Baraka, maybe even Summer Hill Seven ;-)

I want to publish all my writings into a single anthology.

I have more energy I want to give to the Poemedy Institute which is dedicated to teaching, investigating and advancing eloquence, especially as an alternative to violence. I hope a future generation will continue to believe what my first hero is quoted as saying: “these things and greater, shall you do...”

Links to videos of Summer we think you will enjoy: [Link](#). [Link](#).

Image from a reading at Miami Dade College, 2009



TWO POEMS BY summer hill seven

April 15, 2004

(Excerpt from Hang Time: A poetic memoir)

What happens the day your mother dies?

"It ain't no Sunshine when she's gone
And she's always gone too long."

I remember my fifth Christmas
Without you because some
Southern cracker locked you
And daddy up for driving while black.

Too young to be sad
Too naive to be mad
Seeing you eventually
Made me glad; cuz we
Celebrated when you came back.

After 35, 36, 37 and 38?
I needed you more with every
Rotation of the earth around the sun.

Yet seeing your face staring at me
in the mirror
And hearing your audio track in my mind
Is warmer than the sun:

It's heart warming being your son
Not your first but your last son
Not your only
Not your special
Not your favorite
But your son
I remain your son.

"It ain't no Sunshine when she's gone
And she's always gone too long."

©2005 Summer Hill Seven

Winter Water

Winter Water works its way down
my bedroom window.
The very same window - the only window
in the room where we first made love
For the very first time
On the first night
After that first kiss.

Winter Water waxes wondrously
About that first time.
Winter Water wonders when
Will be the next time.
You will baptize me again.

Wading Wallowing Wanting
Waiting for your Water
While you go away
Wet with possibility
Possibly wetter than ever
Possibly without you is the coldest
Winter whatever...

I don't want to think about
My reality without you
I'm staying here with
You in my imagination
While you spend the
Winter on the Water
While I wait here
by my bedroom window
Wondering about the
Winter Water
Wait, what, I'm not waiting
I'm foreseeing a
Moment when we will
Curl up together and
Listen together and
Love together the
Wonderful Waxing of Winter Water.

©2019 Summer Hill Seven

FSPA 2019

Spring Fling

Hosted by the
Orlando Area Poets
and
Osceola Poetry Society

FSPA POETS INVADDE O-TOWN

May 17 & 18 in Orlando

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday

3:00 to 5:00 pm — Registration
5:00 to 6:30 pm — Dinner on your own
6:30 to 7:30 pm — Program — Actor/poet
Summer Hill Seven to perform

Break

8:00 to 9:30 pm — Team Slam lead by Peter Gordon

Saturday

8:00 to 10:00 am — Registration
9:00 to 9:45 am — General Session

Break

10:00 to 10:45 am — Personal Narrative Poetry Workshop presented by Terry Godbey

Break

11:00 to 11:45 am — Inside Songwriting, and the Art of the Song presented by Maurice Methot
Associate Professor, Media Arts Emerson College, Boston, Massachusetts

11:45 to Noon — Announcements and 12 Chairs students' graduation

Noon to 1:30 pm — Lunch (box lunches will be available for purchase)
with our bookstore authors' display and readings

1:45 to 2:45 pm — Painted Word Workshop, presented by Osceola County School for the Arts

Break

3:00 to 4:15 pm — Open readings with a pastel artist responding to the poetry with visual art.
The session will close with an auction of the artwork created, proceeds benefiting the Osceola
County School for the Arts programs involving visual art and creative writing.

Registration Information

All-inclusive registration fee = \$35.00 to FSPA members,
The Registration Form and PayPal link is on the next page.
Non-members are welcome and that registration
fee = \$45 and includes a one-year membership to FSPA.

Accommodations

Comfort Inn and Suites Downtown — Orlando
(directly across Orange Avenue from Florida Hospital)
416 N. Orange Ave., Orlando, FL 32804
(480) 725-1679

If you are able, please book your room as soon as possible.
State you are from FSPA or Florida State Poets Association.
To receive the group rate, you must book by April 14, 2019.

[Click to book](#)



FSPA 2019

ABOUT OUR PRESENTORS

Spring Fling

Hosted by the
Orlando Area Poets
and
Osceola Poetry Society

Maurice Methot, Associate Professor,
Media Arts Emerson College, Boston, Massachusetts

Maurice Methot teaches courses in Audio for New Media, Studio Recording, and Media Production. He is a composer, songwriter, performer, and media artist whose work is devoted to the exploration of sound both as a physical phenomenon and as a metaphorical device. He has performed extensively in a variety of venues ranging from seventies rock mecca C.B.G.B.'s in New York, to the Moscow Conservatory of Music. His work in experimental video has been screened at numerous conferences and digital media festivals. His professional work includes freelance production for MTV. His projects are available on CD, cassette, vinyl, and on the WWW. He also taught at Brown University, Southern Illinois University, and Albright College.



Terry Godbey, Poet, Author, Communications Specialist (Lead Writer),
Darden Restaurants

Terry Godbey's presentation will be about **Strengthening Your Narrative Voice**. She will share her work and tips from what she's learned while publishing four books and more than 160 poems in literary magazines. She will also provide a prompt and writing time so everyone can leave with a draft of a new poem. Terry was featured in our March/April issue of *Of Poets & Poetry*. Here is a link to that article. [Link](#)



Summer Hill Seven, Actor, Author, Director, Educator, Poet...
Poemedy Institute

See pages 3-7 in this issue for an indepth article on Summer Hill Seven. He will be performing for us on Friday evening. He is an actor, director, and author. As an actor: *Death of a Salesman* (Charley); *Radio Golf* (Harmond); *A Soldier's Play* (Waters), *TopDog/UnderDog* (Lincoln); *Jitney* (Booster); and *Major Barbara* (Undershaft). As a director: *Platanos & Collard Greens*; *Auction Block* and *A Poet's Pilgrimage*. Finally, as an author, poet, playwright and featured speaker: *Notes of a Neurotic* (noteworthy for introducing the idea of Poemedy into the hip-hop theatre lexicon) and his latest work *SQUIRCULAR: An Actor's Tale!*, a poetic memoir about his journey to becoming an artist from his former career as a corporate attorney. Education: BA - Richard Stockton College, NJ; JD - New York University School of Law; MFA - University of Delaware (PTTP). He is also the founder of The Poemedy Institute and author of *The Poemedy Trilogy*. You can learn more at The Poemedy Institute [Link](#)



GO AHEAD, REGISTER TODAY

FSPA © 2019

Spring Fling

Hosted by the
Orlando Area Poets
and
Osceola Poetry Society

Team Slam

May 17, 8:00 to 9:30 pm

Summary of the Rules

1. Each team will consist of three poets.
2. Each bout of poetry will consist of 3 or 4 poems, number to be determined when we see how many teams have signed up.
3. Poems must be the original work of the reader.
4. Poets will be allowed to read their work off paper or an electronic device. Memorization is not required for our FSPA Team Slam.
5. Group performances are allowed, provided one of the poets performing is the original author of the piece.
6. Poems will be judged on a scale of 1-10; the score for each poem in a bout will be added up, and the highest scores will advance.
7. Exact number of bouts and rounds of poetry will be determined by the Slam Master.
8. Poets may not use props or costumes.
9. Following National Federation of State Poetry Societies rules, poets are allowed a maximum of three minutes, ten seconds per performance. Time starts when the performance starts, not with the first spoken word.
10. Decisions of the judges and Slam Host are final.



Orlando Area Poet Peter Gordon will officiate as Slam Host

TIME TO FORM YOUR TEAMS

FSPA © 2019

Spring Fling

Hosted by the
Orlando Area Poets
and
Osceola Poetry Society

GO AHEAD, REGISTER TODAY

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Chapter _____ Member at Large _____

Guest _____

Fees:

Members: \$35.00..... _____

Non-Members: \$45.00 (Includes a one-year membership to FSPA).... _____

Lunch: \$10 per person..... _____

TOTAL:..... _____

You may pay by check/money order or by PayPal.

1. Check/money order

Please send registration form and check/money order, made payable to FSPA, to:

FSPA

c/o Robyn Weinbaum FSPA Treasurer

2629 Whalebone Bay Dr

Kissimmee FL 34741

Mail NO LATER than **May 10, 2019.**

2. You may also pay online with PayPal.

Go to <https://www.PayPal.com/us/home>. We are listed as **FSPATreasurer@AOL.com**.

Forward e-mail receipt to FSPATreasurer@aol.com with registration form attached

or with the registration information in the body of the e-mail.

CONTESTS CORNER



Mary Rogers-Grantham

FSPA contests open May 1! [link](#)

Florida State Poets Association's 2019 Poetry Contests offer another exciting year of writing and winning in nineteen categories. Submission period begins May 1 and ends July 13, 2019. July 13 is the "Postmarked By" date. Our 2019 contest brochure can be accessed at www.floridastatepoetsassociation.org along with web links for additional specific information.

Happy Writing!
Mary Rogers-Grantham, FSPA Contest Chair



Dina Tanner

WEBPAGE NEWS Our website has a "Book Store" Feature! [Link](#)

Check it out! FSPA members can submit ONE book on this site at one time. Email request to: dinatanner.dt@gmail.com with the following information:

- Author name: Last Name, First Name
- Book title
- FSPA Chapter of member (or member at large)
- JPEG picture of the book cover: Size your eBook cover art to a height/width ratio of 1.6:1. This means that for every 1,000 pixels in width, the image should be 1,600 pixels in height. For the best image quality, the height of the image should be at least 2,500 pixels (2,560 x 1,600 pixels.)
- Working LINK to where your book is sold, or email address
- BRIEF (limit of 200 characters) description of your book

~ Dina Tanner, Webmaster and Social Media



Mary Marcelle

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We've changed the payment procedures for FSPA members

In order to streamline our membership payment procedures, we're making some changes. In the past, you have sent your yearly membership fee to our Membership Chair. But now, when it comes time to renew, you'll mail your check directly to Treasurer Robyn Weinbaum at the address noted below. The membership application is right on the website ([link](#)). Or, if you prefer, you can use PayPal, by clicking this [link](#).

~ Mary Marcelle, FSPA Vice President

Send your dues to:

Robyn Weinbaum, Treasurer, FSPA
2629 Whalebone Bay Drive
Kissimmee, FL 34741



Carolynn J. Scully

STUDENT POETRY CONTEST

Congratulations to our 2018-2019 winners of the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Contest for Young People. I am proud to announce this year's winners. The awards listed below were the top of our 435 entries for this year.

The key to a winning program is to engage teachers to pass on the information to their students. I, again, ask each of our members to ask those you know to submit their email addresses to receive the info for our upcoming contest. Please let them know that all email about the contest will use FSPA Student Poetry Contest in the Subject line. I will only send to those who are willing to receive the information. All other teachers will be notified through the County Superintendent, The Language Arts Supervisor, or the principal of the school. Not all of these avenues reach teachers, and so we must reach out to them personally. PLEASE NOTE: Teachers can just pass on the information to students. They do not need to take up class time. This seems to be their major concern.

The other resource may be home schoolers. If you know of groups or individuals, please share and get the contact email to me. Private or Charter schools are also welcome to join in. Let's work together to raise up the next generation of poetry writers and readers.

Thank you,
Carolynn J. Scully, Student Contest Chair

THE AWARDS

Junior Division

Judge: Barbara Blanks

Sixth Grade

- 1st Victoria Anon
- 2nd Rilyn Dick
- 3rd Chris Bieber
- 1st HM Mateo Soto
- 2nd HM Piper L. Corbin
- 3rd HM Ava Webster

Seventh Grade

- 1st Lidia Dawn Swain
- 2nd Hannah Coope
- 3rd Jessica Tita
- 1st HM Molly Patrick
- 2nd HM Brooke Barnett
- 3rd HM Sarah Mann

Eighth Grade

- 1st Anna Evers
- 2nd Catherine Gillette
- 3rd Imani Liburd
- 1st HM Caden Kubatzke
- 2nd HM Madeline Boss
- 3rd HM Rachell Small

Senior Division

Judge: Lynn Roberts Grice

Ninth Grade

- 1st Rachel Pladdys
- 2nd Cadence Lasher
- 3rd Brian Phan
- 1st HM Jessica Leavy
- 2nd River Janovsky
- 3rd Nathan Taylor

Tenth Grade

- 1st Kevin Kong
- 2nd Biana Pinchuk
- 3rd Giuseppe Fusca
- 1st HM Mia-Perez-Agramonte
- 2nd HM Katie Abrams
- 3rd HM Sofia Melina Arevalo

Eleventh Grade

- 1st Uma Menon
- 2nd Marcella Khaliq
- 3rd Rosie Vanyo
- 1st HM Cassandra Glover
- 2nd HM Hannah Rice
- 3rd HM Lila Goldstein

Twelfth Grade

- 1st Alexandra Monde
- 2nd Abigail Bouzianis
- 3rd Chris Johnson
- 1st HM Emily Lafferty
- 2nd HM Vanessa Vicarro
- 3rd HM Dayva Learned

The
Lee Bennett Hopkins
Poetry Contest
for Young People

MEMBERSPOTLIGHT

A charter member of New River Poets of Wesley Chapel, its president, and the past chair of FSPA's annual student contest, Janet Watson has been an integral part of our poetry community. We thought you would enjoy reading a couple of her award-winning poems. We have!

His Barn

Collections that might someday be of use
are stored in tumbled handiness on shelves
where Carolina wrens build nests among
the ropes and rusting cans of nuts and bolts.
His ancient sanctum fills with hallowed junk,
accumulated gizmos, gears and tools.
The rafters display ladders, chains and frames.
Not one to toss away a length of cord
or piece of plywood sheathing, he'll make room
beside the frozen treadmill or the files
which he once found in an abandoned store.
His workbench is confusion, cluttered much
with half-done projects waiting for his skill,
brought there by friends and kin who know so well
that this guy has, behind a box or tub,
the perfect part to fix a broken bike,
the goop to mend a leaking pipe, perhaps
a salve to soothe a tender hoof. Who else
could do what he does, using bits of this
and hunks of that— stuff hoarded in his barn,
returning all to wholeness once again?

Starlings

They've turned the sky into a sea
above the hayfield.
Rolling waves we cannot hear
but softly name a murmuration,
lift and dip but never reach
a shore.
This gathering of black wings
against the blue
drifts east, then west,
depending not on wind
but on some whim
which we will never know,
the current
of a small thought
turning the tide
of many
into one.

Her book *Eyes Open, Listening*, is available at Barnes & Noble online, or it can be ordered directly from Janet with an autograph! Her email: jmpwat@aol.com

Janet Watson



Photography by Jeanne Meinke

Poetry conveys the poet's awareness to readers and listeners. I may write to sort out the clutter in my own mind, but good poems should not languish in a file that no one sees. They want to be shared.

— Janet Watson

Moving the Laura (Riding) Jackson House

by Mark Andrew James Terry

Recently, I journeyed south on the Florida Turnpike, cutting diagonally across the vast greenscape of our state to Vero Beach. I went to attend a Saturday night presentation by Montana Cowboy Poet Randy Reiman, and then to be there for the next day's 9th Annual Poetry and BBQ—a fund/friend raiser for The Laura (Riding) Jackson Foundation. Sean Sexton had asked three of his nationally-acclaimed cowboy poetry cohorts to be the main attraction for the event. I jumped at the chance to hear Joel Nelson, Andy Hedges and Randy Reiman perform their original poetry, and some of their favorite poems of other poets of that genre!

I was not familiar with Laura (Riding) Jackson, the foundation that continues her legacy as a Florida poet, or the historic house she called home for most of her life. Shame on me. I found the literary community that's grown around that organization to be vibrant, passionate about poetry, and growing. I thought you might enjoy reading about this experience.

Saturday Night: The Indian River Cattleman's Association sponsored a reception for the volunteers and sponsors of Poetry and BBQ at the Vero Beach Garden Club. Guests mingled and enjoyed an array of food and drinks and then settled into their seats for a presentation by the Poet Randy Reiman, who has done exhaustive research on the illustrated letters of the artist Charles Marion Russell. His presentation included reading from the letters Russell wrote to friends throughout his life. I loved this Russell quote, "I'd rather be a poor cow-puncher than a poor artist." Each letter contained original art illustrating its subject (exampled below). Reiman's research has given him a clear view of Russell, the artist and the man, and what Reiman shared was fascinating.



Detail from a letter by Charles Marion Russell

"I'd rather
be a poor
cow-puncher
than a poor
artist."

Charles Marion Russell



Cowboy poets Joel Nelson, Randy Reiman, Sean Sexton and Andy Hedges

Sunday Afternoon: The next day I found my way to The Vero Beach Heritage Center for the big barbecue. It was packed. The aroma of charred meat mingled with the laughter and chatter of hundreds of people, and smiles greeted me on every handshake. It's the kind of experience all fundraisers should strive for. I found a chair fairly close to the stage anticipating the poetry to come. Before the three cowboy poets performed, I got an

unexpected lagniappe. They call themselves The Porch Poets—a group (much like our FSPA chapters) of poets who gather on the front porch of the Laura (Riding) Jackson House (hence their name) to share and critique poetry. Each member read a piece prepared for the event and every poem was enjoyable. So much so, I bought their chapbook, *The Porch Poets*. Then, the three "amigos" came on stage and what followed was about an hour that trode

into the heart of cowboy poetry. I was taken by the ease of their presentation and the depth (and humor) of the content. Reflecting on these events, I can say one thing is certain—poetry has a long tradition of thriving in Vero Beach.

The Laura (Riding) Jackson House: The effort of volunteers and poets who created this marvelous event was given to support the daunting and expensive task of moving the historic Laura (Riding) Jackson home to a new location. The Foundation needs to raise approximately \$300,000 to cover the move's cost. Certainly more will be needed to reopen the house. I applaud the community of Vero Beach and Indian River County for preserving the legacy of Poet Laura (Riding) Jackson.

Related Links:

[The Laura \(Riding\) Jackson Foundation.](#)

[Charles Marion Russell, Poet Randy Reiman,](#)

[Poet Joel Jackson, Poet Sean Sexton, Poet Andy Hedges](#)

Chapter News & Updates



Robert E. Blenheim holding an image of "The Scream" by Edvard Munch



John McKernan giving analysis of William Carlos Williams' poem *The Red Wheelbarrow*



Cherelyn Bush taking notes during a workshop

Bob Blenheim at Dan Pels Show

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

Recently, The Live Poets Society had workshops (with handouts) on writing List poems and studied Voice and Style in poetry. They also analyzed William Shakespeare's Sonnet 129 and its sexual symbolism, as well as William Carlos Williams' poem entitled "XXII" on The Red Wheelbarrow which brought out the brilliant teaching skills of member **John McKernan**. As far as workshop challenges, members wrote ekphrastic poetry on Edvard's Munch's iconic painting, "The Scream" as well as writing parodies on their own poetic style. Members also wrote poems on the theme "Knitters from Hell" for reasons best unexplained.

As far as members' accomplishments, **Llewellyn McKernan** had her poem, "In My House" win the FWA writing contest for its online December 2018 issue. And Vicki Iorio was a featured poet at the Copperline Kettle at the Pavillion in Port Orange, while **Jesse Sam Owens** read his poetry and songs at the Southwest Writer's Conference in Charlotte Harbor. Jesse Sam Owens also co-hosted the Mary Barenbaum Poetry Show in place of **Dan Pels** who is recovering from a stroke. Speaking of Dan, all of the Live Poets wish him a speedy recovery, especially for his being a past member of The Live Poets Society in which he proved himself to be not only the most prolific poet in our chapter's history but one of the sweetest. In fact, I brag about being the first to welcome Dan and his wife when they moved into the area many years ago.

By now everyone probably knows The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach will be the host chapter for the upcoming 2019 October FSPA Convention. The chapter's planning committee has already held a few meetings, and promises exciting speakers and memorable workshops at the famous Plaza Resort & Spa next October 25th, 26th and 27th.

All are welcome to attend meetings of The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach and should find it to be one of the most creative and entertaining poetry groups in the State of Florida.

~ Robert E. Blenheim, Chapter President



When we meet:

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach holds its workshop meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at the Daytona Beach Regional Library at City Island. Meetings start at 4:00 pm and end at 6:30 pm and the group welcomes all poets, and anybody interested in poetry, to attend.

Chapter News & Updates



Tere Starr



Pictured below: Pat Milone, Steve Liebowitz, Connie Goodman-Milone, Tere Starr, Jay Cano, Nancy Ward, Sharaz Allahar, Holly White, Patrice Powe and Jonathan Rose

Miami Poets

Miami Poets welcomed National Poetry Month during April's Miami Poets Soirée. **Tere Starr** moderates the monthly gatherings each first Wednesday from 1 to 3 pm at the Pinecrest Branch Library. During April's soirée we paid tribute to W. S. Merwin, sharing his powerful poems, and our own. In March, representing Pinecrest Library, we hosted a discussion of Joy Harjo's *How We Became Human*. The event was part of the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read 2019, sponsored by the Miami Book Fair. We each received a copy of the book and had the opportunity to meet Joy Harjo the next night at Books & Books following her reading. On second Mondays we meet from 1 to 3 pm with Group 10, the critique group facilitated by **Steven Liebowitz**. We welcome our new member, **Pat Bonner Milone**. Her perception and poetry add an exciting dimension to our group.



Ricki and Jeffrey Dorn

When we meet:

The Miami Poets meet the first Wednesday each month from 1 to 3 pm during the Miami Poets Soirée at the Pinecrest Library, 5835 SW 111th Street, Pinecrest, FL

Bring poems to read, yours or those by favorite poets. We often get philosophical, discuss what poetry means, now and through the ages. And best of all, we share how poetry enhances our lives. Anything goes so long as poetry is in the equation. Each soirée is an act of creation.

Achievements: Tere Starr was a featured reader during South Florida Writers Association's April meeting. The Miami Poets shared their poems as well. Tere also led a February *Poetry Soirée* for the Brandeis Women's South Miami Chapter. **Jo Christiane Ledakis** remains active in writing groups in Geneva, Switzerland. Also writing under the penname Jo C Ebell, she continues to share her eBook, *Wild Sea-Salt of Life, InNerviews with Soul, A Woman's Journey to Empowerment*. Her poem, "The Magi's Gifts To Writers," was published in *The Author's Voice* along with Tere's "Ode to an Eggplant" and Connie Goodman-Milone's "Tsunami Tree," which was awarded first place for Free Verse in South Florida Writers Association's monthly writing contests. **Connie Goodman-Milone's** poem, "Twin Hummingbirds," won first place for Haiku and **Mervyn Solomon's** poem, "Lotus," received a first place for Poetry. Connie served as a Creative Writing and Performing Arts judge for the Miami Veterans Creative Arts Festival at the Bruce W. Carter VA Medical Center in February and was the Creative Writing Director for the Junior Orange Bowl Creative Writing Contest. **Patsy Asuncion's** poems, "Big Boy Games" and "Fogbound," were published in *vox poetica*. Her recent poetry events can be found at <http://patasuncion.wixsite.com/patsy-asuncion>. **Pat Bonner Milone's** nonfiction selection, "To Dye For," appears in the online issue of *45 Mag*. **Ricki Dorn** and **Steven Liebowitz** were honored to be on *The Writer's Panel at the Café* in the Coral Gables Capital One Bank on Miracle Mile. ~ Tere Starr, President

Chapter News & Updates



Janet Watson

New River Poets

New River Poets continues to meet monthly at the Old Richland Schoolhouse. Along with our usual challenges—(shape poems, haiku, poems of imagery, etc.) we have been holding mini-workshops on various poets. In February, March and April we focused on the poetry of Mary Oliver, the Japanese poet Ishigaki Rin, and W.S. Merwin.

National Poetry Month activities included leaving “Poetry Rocks” and “Pocket Poems” around our communities and presenting a poetry reading at a local coffee house. Our member, **Ken Clanton**, year-after-year, challenges himself to send a different poem every day in April, to his entire email contact list. This year the number of recipients is over 172! As Stephanie Andrews says, receivers of the poems she distributes in April are “constantly thrilled” to receive poetry that is just for them.

A number of our members are looking forward to the FSPA Spring Fling in May and have entered poems in the NFSPS contests. This year New River Poets has sponsored two contests in the FSPA competition. Two members have also sponsored contests. Our chapter and two members also made donations to the book fund for 12-Chair graduates, **Sophia DuRose** and **Katie O’Malley**.

Individual members have been promoting poetry in their own ways. **John Foster** continues as custodian of the Poet-Tree at Freedom Plaza, which features a display of residents’ poetry. He also had a poem published in the humor magazine, *Light*, and read humorous poetry as an after-lunch speaker at an area Rotary Club meeting...**Cheryl Van Beek** and **Janet Watson** were invited to the book-opening when their work was published in the Safety Harbor Writers 2019 journal, *Odet*. Cheryl won first place in poetry in the Romeo Lemay Contest, which was featured in the book...**Gary Ketchum** has taken a brief hiatus from poetry to be a member of the cast in *Of Mice and Men* in a local theatrical group. We look forward to his return and some new poems!...**Stephanie Andrews** continues to facilitate a creative writing class at Shepherd Senior Center and loves to introduce poetry into the lesson plans.

~ Janet Watson, President

When we meet:

The New River Poets meet the third Saturday each month from 1 to 4 pm at The Old Schoolhouse at 8637 Richland School Rd Zephyrhills, FL 33540

Chapter News & Updates



Leslie Halpern

Orlando Area Poets

Nikki Fragala Barnes moderated a panel for young adult and middle grade authors, “Two Roads: Becoming an Author and Bringing a Story to Life” at the Winter Park Public Library Book Festival in March. She also coordinated activities, including a manual printing press demonstration, blackout poetry, interactive literary bulletin boards, mini-book making, and creating bookmarks.

Mary Flynn’s book, *As One Delighted* is scheduled for publication in May, 2019. The title poem is a Writers Digest Competition rhymed poetry winner.

The 2019 Thomas Burnett Swann Poetry Prize from the Gwendolyn Brooks Writers Association of Florida was awarded to **Peter Gordon** for three poems: “Home of the Brave,” “B & K Bungalow Colony, Summer of 1970,” and “Amateur Night.” These will also be published in *Revelry*. Three additional poems by Peter Gordon, “Deli,” “Lucky Piece,” and “Gravity” have been selected for publication in the Sandhill Review in April.

Carlton Johnson had three poems, “Ode to Coffee,” “Dear Coat,” and “Erna Park II 4/21/18,” selected for that issue. He also received an honorable mention from the Gwendolyn Brooks Writers Association of Florida for his poem “Fugue and Coda,” which will be published in *Revelry* in April.

Alice Friedman’s “At the Grand Canyon” was a March feature on Haikuniverse. Her poem, “Cell Tower,” was published in *Revelry*.

Leslie C. Halpern and **Peter Gordon** presented at the Jacksonville Poetry Fest 2019. Leslie presented “Writing Poetry for Children” and Peter presented “How to Market and Distribute Your Poetry.”

Carolynn Scully’s poem “Fences” was also selected for *Revelry*.

Barbara Hart’s poem “Moonchild’s Day” will accompany her daughter Jenifer Cline’s art exhibit “Tetralogy” opening at the Art Center of Estes Park April 26.

Diane Neff’s haiku “The pencil hovers” was selected for publication in *Revelry*. She also provided a learning activity for all ages on writing haiku and micro-poetry at the Winter Park Public Library Book Festival.

Shelley Stocksdale’s poem, “George Herbert’s Silhouettes” will appear in the Spring issue of *The Penwood Review*. She will present a poetry reading, “The Natural State of Florida – Views through Verse” at the March Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Conference in Tarpon Springs. Three of her “Florida Poems” were published in the 2018 volume of *The Journal of Florida Literature*.

Elaine Person’s poem was featured on Haikuniverse on February 14, as poem #7 of 25 Valentine’s Day poems. She was also a runner-up for the Saturday Evening Post’s limerick contest for November/December 2018. Elaine will be a presenter at the Florida Writer’s Association October Conference, and also has an Orlando Fringe Festival show in May at the Breakthrough Theatre of Winter Park titled “An Evening of Spoken Word with Elaine Person.” Two poems, “Tar Beach Vacation” and a haiku, as well as a photo, “Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic Park Tree Shadow” were recently published in the Sandhill Review.

Holly Mandelkern’s poem, “Observing Father’s Day,” was published in *Revelry*.

Mark Terry hosted an ekphrastic poetry reading at the Albin Polasek Museum. Participating were Nikki Fragala Barnes, Alice Friedman, Peter Gordon, Leslie Halpern, Diane Neff, Elaine Person, Carolynn Scully, and Mark Terry. His poem, “Marie” was selected for *Revelry* and won honorable mention in the 2019 Thomas Burnett Swann Poetry Prize.

~ Diane Neff, Secretary, for Leslie Halpern, President



Shelley Stocksdale



Peter Gordon

When we meet:

The Orlando Area Poets meet the third Thursday each month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Maitland Public Library, 501 South Maitland Ave, Maitland, FL 32751.

Chapter News & Updates



Mary-Ann Westbrook

Tomoka Poets

Tomoka Poets are writing, reading, and performing poetry as often as we can in as many places as we can find. Our open mics are always well attended even by the folks who only come for coffee and stay to hear the poetry. We try to feature a poet at each event and have been delighted with the words and wit of our favorite Canadian, **Al Hubbs**, who made it a point to entertain us the short time he was here. It is a long wait for next year. Very popular for her humor and ethnic New York thoughts, Vicki Iorio keeps us in stitches with her wonderful stories and images. We are thrilled to have such talent in our area.



Al Hubbs

For National Poetry month we have a display in one of the entrance hall windows of the Ormond Beach Library where we meet. We have tried to show that we are not just a small group of folks who love poetry but are part of a state wide organization by displaying the Florida State Poets Association banner. We will also be taking part in the Annual National Poetry Month Festival, April 7 at The Casements in Ormond Beach. This event is sponsored by and with the co-operation of Creative Happiness Institute, whose President is David Axelrod, Tomoka Poets, Ormond Main Street and Ormond Beach Arts District. Four different organizations coming together for an Arts event. We love it!!!

~ Mary-Ann Westbrook, President



Vicki Iorio at Dan Pels Show also was featured at Tomoka Poets open mike



B.J. Alligood, David Axelrod, Mary-Ann Westbrook



Tomoka Poets Open Mic

7:00-8:30 pm at the Copperline Coffee and Café,
South Williamson Blvd. in the Pavilion Shopping Center.

For more information email
Mary-Ann Westbrook, 1poetry.3@gmail.com

When we meet:

The Tomoka Poets meet every 2nd
Wednesday of every month at 5 pm at the
Ormond Beach Public Library, 30 South
Beach St, Ormond Beach, FL 32174.

Chapter News & Updates



Linda Whitefeather

Poetry for the Love of It

Poetry for the Love of It (PLOI) is pleased to announce that **Charles Hazelip**, the chapter founder, has recently resumed the duties of chapter president. **Norma Plumley** continues as Treasurer and Attendance Keeper, resident playwright, and blackboard monitor as needed. **Linda Whitefeather** continues as Recording Secretary, Chapter Reporter, and poetry exercise facilitator.

On April 4, 2019, PLOI will attend an evening meeting of the Tallahassee Area Rose Society (TARS) for a rose poem reading. Many of the poems will be original poems by members.

A past president of TARS, **Pat Stanford**, is currently a member of PLOI. Her latest book –*Proverbs of My Seasons - Poetry of Transition*– is now available at www.patstanford.com/books.

For National Poetry Month, PLOI members have, once again, continued their annual challenge to write or read 30 poems in 30 days. In May, examination of the works and lives of selected notable poets will resume.

PLOI meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, 2:45 - 4:45 pm, in the 3rd floor conference room of the Tallahassee Senior Center. Visitors are welcome.

~ Linda Whitefeather, Secretary
on behalf of Charles Hazelip, PLOI President



Charles Hazelip

When we meet:

Poetry for the Love of It Poets meet the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, 2:45 to 4:45 pm in the 3rd floor conference room of the Tallahassee Senior Center, 1400 North Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32303.

Sunshine Poets

Sunshine Poets meets at the Central Ridge Public Library in Beverly Hills on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10 am. 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. We meet for lunch and fellowship after the meeting at one of our local restaurants.

Sunshine Poets is celebrating 30 years of membership with FSPA. Sunshine Poets will again sponsor a humor category in FSPA's annual contest, and also made a donation to the youth contest. Members **Joan Clark** and **Natalie Warrick** continue to have their poetry published in their church newsletter. **Joyce Shiver** judged for Utah. Welcome to new member **Peg Stone Snyder!** Sunshine Poets has a Facebook page. Contact: sunshinepoets@gmail.com

~ Cheri Herald, President



Cheri Herald

When we meet:

The Sunshine Poets meet the second Saturday each month at 10 am at the Coastal Region Library, located at 8619 W. Crystal St., Crystal River, FL 34428

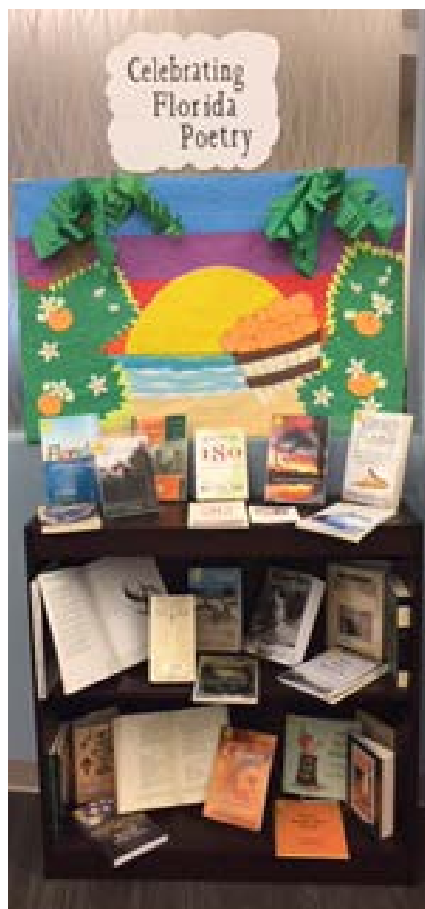
Chapter News & Updates



Space Coast Poets

Viera Poetry Slam: Space Coast Poets co-hosted a community poetry slam with the newspaper *Viera Voice* on April 5. About 20 people came out on a Friday night to celebrate this kick-off to National Poetry Month. Five contestants participated and the top three received prizes from Books A Million and publication in the May issue of the paper. Space Coast poets **Shirley Hill**, **Jim Peterson**, and **Anne Marie Simonton** served as judges. Eastern Florida State College English professor **C.J. Baker-Schverak** served as master of ceremonies and general organizer.

Revelry Reading: Space Coast Poets **Jim Peterson** and **Janna Schledorn** read their poems published in *Revelry 2019* at the April 6 event in Sanford.



Eastern Florida State College Library hosts a book display of state and local poets for National Poetry month.



Dr. Stephen Caldwell Wright with Jim Peterson at the Revelry event



EFSC student Martravian Carson shares his poem "Scorned Woman" at "A Celebration of Florida Poetry"

Poetry Month at EFSC: Eastern Florida State College Library has an ongoing display of books by state and local poets. The display features titles by **Holly Mandelkern** and **Al Rocheleau**, as well as *Cadence* and *Revelry* anthologies.

Lola Haskins and **C.M. Clark** graced the campus and shared the stage with more than a dozen student poets for "A Celebration of Florida Poetry" on April 11. The event opened with selected student readers and a brief open mic. Many professors offered extra credit for the event, which drew about 40 people. C.M. Clark shared some Florida history with poems written from the point of view of early Florida pioneers and settlers. Lola Haskins shared her magical reading celebrating the Florida landscape, as well as sharing her personal experience and musicality. Students, faculty and the broader community enjoyed a reception in the campus Writing Center following the event. Space Coast Poets members helped host the event, organized by member **Janna Schledorn**, an EFSC English professor.

~ Janna Schledorn, President

Lola Haskins talks with EFSC students before the reading at "A Celebration of Florida Poetry."



When we meet:

Space Coast Poets meet every second Monday from 4:30-6:30 pm in Building 10 on the Melbourne Eastern Florida State College campus. Bring a friend, and bring poems to share with the group.

Chapter News & Updates



Summer Hill Seven

When we meet:

The Big Bend Poets & Writers meet the second Tuesday of every month from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 2415 North Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32303

Big Bend Poets & Writers

The Big Bend Poets & Writers will host Yolanda J Franklin for National Poetry Month and Poemedy Awareness Month on April 9, 2019. Ms. Franklin will read from her latest work, which she will also sign and make available for purchase at Barnes & Noble bookstore on North Monroe in Tallahassee.

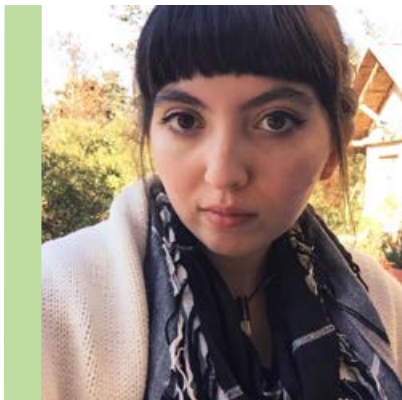
In March, more than seven poets read new works on the theme of “March”. The particular definition that we encouraged poets to focus on was “progress”—and the work was surprising and inspiring, according to everyone present.

During the March meeting we used the word “tired” as a prompt for a ten minute free verse poetry exercise.

The February theme for the meeting was “Romanticism, Eroticism & Afro-tism.”

We continue to meet every 2nd Tuesday of the month at Barnes & Noble bookstore on North Monroe in Tallahassee FL from 6:30 pm until 8:45 pm. We gather and sign in at the cafe in the bookstore. If you have any questions or concerns you may email summerhillseven@gmail.com subject: Big Bend Poets & Writers (BBP&W).

~ Summer Hill Seven, President



Dakota Boyer

When we meet:

The North Florida Poetry Hub Poets meet the third Thursday each month from 6:30 to 8 pm at Hope at Hand, 3886 Atlantic Blvd. in Jacksonville.

North Florida Poetry Hub

North Florida Poetry Hub chapter supports Hope at Hand, a North Florida nonprofit that brings positivity to at-risk youth through their unique poetry programming. The chapter was very involved with the 2019 Jax Poetry Fest, April 3rd at Art Walk. Throughout the month of April we presented free workshops on Thursdays and Saturdays. The event closed on Saturday, April 27th with a full day of poetry workshops and performances.

For more information contact Dakota Boyer at dakota@hopeathand.org.

~ Dakota Boyer on behalf of Steffani Fletcher, president.

Chapter News & Updates



Nancy Ortiz, Secretary

Osceola Poetry Society

FSPA Secretary and Osceola Poetry Society member **Robyn Weinbaum** was one of a dozen FSPA members who appeared in the 2019 issue of *Revelry*, the venerable journal of the Gwendolyn Brooks Writers Association, receiving a Honorable Mention prize.



Dr. Wright presenting award to Robyn Weinbaum at the Gwendolyn Brooks Writers Association awards ceremony.

Al Rocheleau, FSPA President and an Osceola Poetry Society member, also made the journal. It marked the 11th issue in which he has appeared.

After working at Valencia College, Osceola Secretary **Nancy Ortiz** has now become a student at the college taking courses in art and design with the east campus art department. She plans to use her enhanced art skill to complement the writing she does for children.

Osceola member at large, **Sophia DuRose** has been happily busy in cold Pennsylvania. She has been doing work at the University of Pennsylvania's Kelly Writers House, reading submissions for the Penn Review, content managing for a literary magazine, studying poetry anthologies for school, being a peer adviser for incoming first-years, and maintaining the role of Features Editor for a new experimental nonfiction journal.

Sophia DuRose along with fellow member **Katie O' Malley** will launch their debut collections at the Osceola School for the Arts, Highway 441 3151 N Orange Blossom Trail, Kissimmee, FL 34744 on Thursday evening, May 16, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Shantih Press is publishing both books. Sophia's is called *Losing Teeth*; Katie's is called *The Other Side of the Moon*. All are welcome to attend this event (refreshments will be served.) Books will be available at a reduced launch price both at that event as well as at FSPA's Spring Fling Convention.

As Spring Fling co-sponsors, Osceola members will be helping to deliver the Spring Fling Convention. Osceola will also field at least one team for the Team Slam Competition on Friday evening, May 17, and we challenge other chapters (including many of those larger than itself) to take part in the fun.

When we meet:

The Osceola Poetry Society Poets meet at Perkins on Osceola parkway. Dates are flexible. Usually once a month.

~ Nancy Ortiz, Secretary
for Mackenzie Riley, President

Chapter News & Updates



Jill Jennings

Members at Large

Jill Jennings, Poet from Fort Myers, Launches Third Full-length Book.

On February 10, 2018, Poet at Large **Jill Jennings**, a recent addition to our membership, launched her new book, *Pineapple Wine: Poems of Maui*, in Fort Myers. The location was P.J. Boox, a local book store featuring only independent-published books. This is her third full-length book of poetry produced in the past ten years. *Pineapple Wine* chronicles the years she lived in Kihei, Maui, a small town on the island's west side where respect for the aina, the environment, is the most important thing. Learn about mixed plates, haoles, kama ainas, and pau hana Fridays in this unforgettable book. Jill has given another presentation of her new book on February 14, and has others scheduled for April and June. Her other two books are *Dead Man's Flower* and *The Poetry Alarm Clock*.



[\(Link to her new book\)](#)

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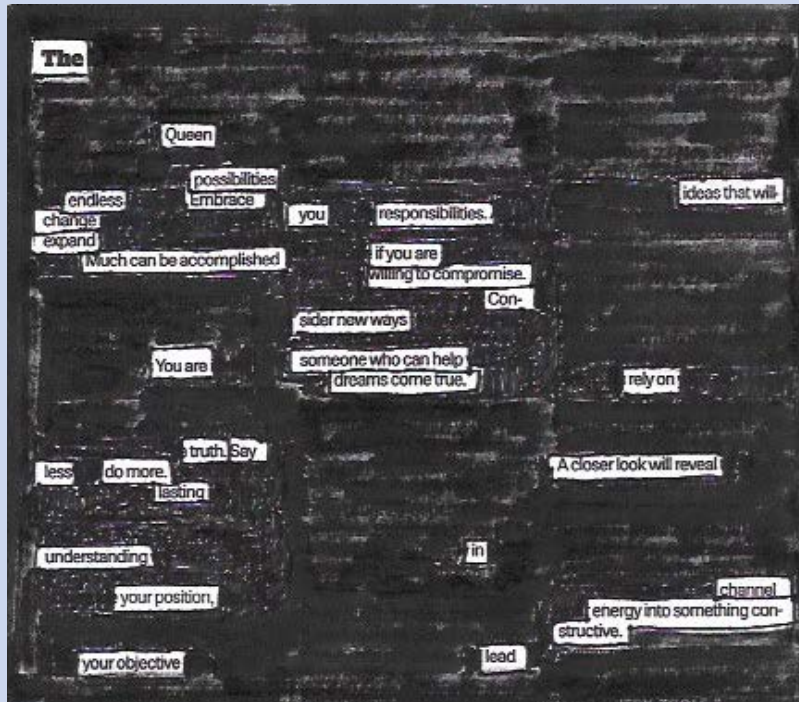
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■ Poetry Challenge

Editor's Choice

“The Queen” by Poet Suzanne S. Austin-Hill



and “in The Romanoffs” by Poet Diane Neff



May Editor's Choice Poetry Challenge

Prompt: Poet's choice
Form: Any
Line limit: Up to 20 lines
Submit by: June 1, 2019, to
Mark@TKOrlando.com
The winning poem(s):
Will be featured in our
July/August issue

Remembering the poet William Stanley Merwin



William Stanley (W. S.) Merwin

(September 30, 1927 – March 15, 2019)

was one of the finest poets of the past half-century. He wrote over fifty books of poetry and prose, and produced many works in translation. Merwin was raised in Union City, New Jersey, and Scranton, Pennsylvania; the son of a Presbyterian minister, he began writing hymns as a child. Merwin attended Princeton University on a scholarship, where he was a classmate of Galway Kinnell, and studied poetry with the critic R. P. Blackmur and his teaching assistant, John Berryman. After graduating, he spent a year at Princeton studying Romance languages, a pursuit that would later lead to his prolific work as a translator of Latin, Spanish, and French poetry. He traveled through Europe in the fifties and published his first book, praised by Auden for its technical virtuosity. He later returned to the U.S., settling in Boston on a fellowship, where he entered a circle of writers that surrounded Robert Lowell. At this point, Merwin sought a more American vernacular and a turning inward; he also experimented with form and irregular metrics. Merwin's new work met with acclaim; his collection *The Carrier of Ladders* won a Pulitzer Prize. In 1976, he moved to Hawaii to study with the Zen Buddhist master, Robert Aitken; the experience informed much of Merwin's later work. Merwin's landmark translation of Dante's *Purgatorio* in 2000 furthered his grandmaster legacy into the new millennium. In 2010, the Library of Congress named him the 17th United States Poet Laureate.

Of Poets & Poetry is published six times per year: January, March, May, July, September & November.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

Due Dates:

January: Due by December 1

March: Due by February 1

May: Due by April 1

July: Due by June 1

September: Due by August 1

November: Due by October 1

2019 Submittal Specifications:

Format for text:

Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx),

RTF, TXT, or PDF format files

Please do not embed your submission in an email

Format for images:

150 to 300 pixels/inch resolution but no larger than 3.5M in JPEG (.jpg) format. If you are unable to do this, contact the Editor at 407.620.0158.

Note: Please know that we will make every effort to include all qualified submissions, if space allows, and we may choose to edit your submission.

Email submissions to:

mark@TKOrlando.com

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

- Reports from FSPA Chapters
- Profiles in Poetry
- May Poetry Challenge Winner

Snippet *from our historian*

I attended FSPA events in 2012. Former FSPA state president Joseph Cavanaugh approached me at Bok Tower Spring Fling in April of 2013. "Can you get six people to attend an FSPA meeting? You can start an FSPA chapter in Orlando. The organization has been around since 1974, and there has never been a chapter in Orlando." As a former VP of marketing and sales, I replied, "You don't know me. I know way more than six people." I accepted the challenge.

The Maitland Public Library began their own writing workshops in early 2012, and the library's director asked me to facilitate them. One goal was to present poetry readings in four free coffeehouses a year. These events were/are themed and open to the public. The start of a new FSPA chapter at this location seemed right in line with the coffeehouses. I led and still conduct free writing workshops on Sunday afternoons with themes for each quarter of the year. For example, the April coffeehouse on 4-26-19 at 7 pm showcases the poems of the annual National Poetry Month contest.

In June 2013, I attended the NFSPS National Convention in Albuquerque, Taos, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Joe and Shirley Cavanaugh and I traveled in a rental car from Albuquerque to Taos. Joe drove, and I sat in the back seat behind him. Joe and I had planned an FSPA-related meeting for the journey. He could only make eye contact by glancing at me in the rearview mirror as he drove. To this day, I say, "It was a very moving meeting."

For me, one of the best parts of this convention was the greeting we received at an art museum in Taos. "The poets are here." We were advertised in the local paper, and we performed our poetry among art inside a great building. Joe, Shirley, and I went back down the mountain to Santa Fe. As Joe drove, we solidified plans for an Orlando area chapter meeting for August 2013. Upon initiating the group, I decided I didn't want to be the president. I pointed to Peter Gordon, who I knew from the Florida Writers Association, and said, "You be the president. I'll be the vice president." Peter agreed. I took the role of president after Peter. The rest is history, as our Orlando Area Poets Chapter of FSPA grew to become the largest one in Florida.

~ Elaine Person, FSPA Historian

Editor's Notes...I'll be brief.

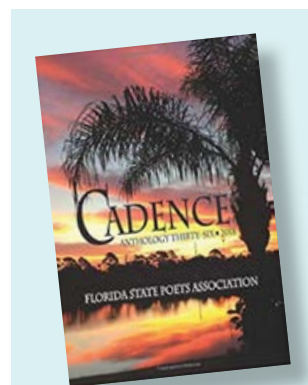
Sign up for Spring Fling!

...and keep writing!

~ Mark Andrew James Terry



Elaine Person



Purchase a copy of FSPA's 2018 anthology, *Cadence*. [\(link\)](#)