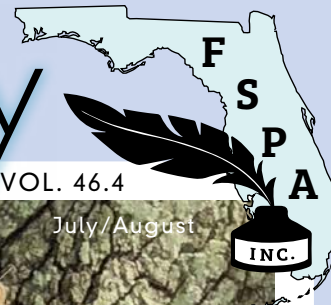


Of Poets & Poetry



A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA STATE POETS ASSOCIATION VOL. 46.4

July/August

Florida's Own
**BlackBerry Peach
Poetry Prize 2019
Winner**

See page 3

B.J. Alligood



Photograph by Mark Andrew James Terry



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Florida State Poets Association



45th Annual Convention

Oct. 25, 26 & 27, 2019

HOSTED BY

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

The Plaza Resort & Spa

600 N. Atlantic Ave., Daytona Beach
for reservations and booking information

FEATURING

Keynote Speech by
M.B. McLatchey on her
relationship with Seamus Heaney

"What Poet Am I?"
A Game Show Entertainment

W.S. Gilbert's Humorous Verse
A Presentation by Marc Davidson

"Midwifing Your Poem"
A Workshop by Ellen Nielsen

A One-Act Play
-- TBA --



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Florida State Poets Association

An affiliate of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies



Al Rocheleau

PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Al Rocheleau

WHAT IS, AND WHAT'S TO COME

At 2019's Spring Fling, we sought to combine new outside speakers with a mix of topics that could provide several opportunities to write-to-instruction and also to read aloud. On the reading end, we included not only an open reading, but a lively in-house slam on Friday moderated by **Peter Gordon**, plus, on Saturday, a lunch reading by authors who had books in the bookstore (a first), and an interactive reading that involved a reverse ekphrastic process with a fine young visual artist.

Our program attempted to combine tradition (the history of reverse ekphrasis, of poetry becoming visual art) with a little bit of "edge" (via **Summer Hill Seven** and improvisational sketch-artist Maya Durham), as well as practical know-how (**Terry Godbey** on narrative poetry) and larger ideas of creation (**Moe Methot's** open-ended views on songwriting). In sum, we covered a lot of ground in twelve hours, and were also treated to a great (and inexpensive) Saturday lunch. By really featuring our bookstore for the very first time, we sold lots of books for and to our members. For those who were there, we hope you enjoyed the event, and for those who couldn't attend, sorry you missed it. Thanks to all from the Orlando Area Poets and Osceola Poetry Society who helped out, and to **Leslie Halpern** for playing the role of emcee.

The FSPA Fall Convention, October 25-27 at the Plaza Resort and Spa in Daytona Beach is moving according to plan, with **Bob Blenheim's** Live Poets of Daytona Beach leading the way. (A full program agenda will be forthcoming by email blast and in OPAP.) Also, FSPA intends to install at least one new chancellor at the Saturday dinner (don't miss that!), and also be sure to send in your contest entries on time so you can be there on the edge of your seat awaiting the results at the event!

Beyond our ever-present focus on delivering quality programs at our conventions, the Executive Board is taking a hard look at all the benefits that we offer or could offer our members. We are open to your suggestions, as we wish to enhance our service to you, as well as use our unique services to attract new members and truly become a central representative for the power of poetry as it presents and exists in the state of Florida.

What might that array of services look like in the immediate or at least, not-too-distant future? Already, our members can place a book ad-link at our revamped website (much thanks to **Dina Tanner**, off the original idea by Leslie Halpern); they can find

their way to our state contests and also to national poetry contests, more than fifty total, and can take part in all of it at an FSPA member discount. Under editor **Mark Andrew James Terry**, our newsletter, *Of Poets and Poetry (OPAP)*, has become, volume-wise, the largest and certainly the most aesthetic newsletter / magazine of its kind in the United States, with an entry on Amazon. Our venerable anthology / journal *Cadence* gives our poet members and contest winners a professional writing credit in a beautiful book, with poems placed alongside those of grandmasters like State Poet Laureate **Peter Meinke**, **Lola Haskins**, and **Lee Bennett Hopkins**.

Our conventions have expanded to involve more outside speakers; to that end, our wishing aloud for our own audio-visual equipment has yielded a marvelous donation by Membership Chair **Jane Peterson**, so we now have excellent projection for every event. Our Speaker's Bureau, handing fine state speakers off to local chapter events without charge, has reached more than half our chapters, and we are adding several new in-house teachers (**Jesse Sam Owens**, **Nikki Fragala Barnes**) to the available list this year.

Imminently, FSPA members will have access to both the FSPA-accredited Twelve Chairs Advanced Course on flash drive (180 hours), and also the newly accredited Twelve Chairs Short Course on flash-drive (12 Hours), both available at vastly discounted rates with all revenues going back to FSPA. (More on the process of launch next issue.)

The Short Course will also be part of a project that will reach high school teachers in Florida, and make it available to them, without charge, accredited by FSPA and, when the project is completed, offering state CEU credits to them. This effort will bond us to the all-important strata of secondary educators in Florida who can reach our next generation of young poets.

FSPA will secure several more widely respected chancellors to its roster this year and over the next few years, adding, with our gratitude, to the high regard in which we are looked upon by poets and teachers all over Florida, and enhancing the prospects for increased membership. With our work behind the scenes in the current Florida Poet Laureate process, FSPA has become a go-to group, and when it comes to education and support of poetry, FSPA as an organization is second to none.

Where can all this go? It is our view that some group has to take over the education of poets and promotion of poetry in Florida. As members, you are not only a public we serve, but also represent part of the growth of our poetic art in this state. FSPA is currently putting together a tri-fold pamphlet to promote the group and poetry as an art to schools, local groups, and libraries across the state. It is our hope that this effort, along with our increased profile online, will expand the group's footprint, along with personal education and publishing opportunities for its growing membership statewide.



Profiles in Poetry

B.J. Alligood:

Focused on the positive

Long-time FSPA member B.J. Alligood is the recent recipient of the coveted BlackBerry Peach Poetry Prize. We thought you'd enjoy reading, in her own words, how she approaches writing poetry, and challenges that she seems to brush off like dust on a shelf. Al Rocheleau posed the questions.

Q: Give us some background on your writing. When did you begin? Did you start as a poet and continue, or did you return to poetry later?

A: I never wrote poetry until I went through a divorce 20 years ago. I used it as an outlet to process the emotional upheaval I was going through, and afterward found I enjoyed the creative side of it.

Q: Are you predominantly a narrative poet (story teller), dramatic poet (creator of characters and personas) or a lyric poet (outlet for deep thought or emotion)?

A: I actually write all three but seem to lean more toward lyric and narrative poetry. I think that's due to the performer in me. I've always had a bit of an outgoing personality and enjoy interacting with people. Because of this I've never had a problem with stage fright and find that a good presentation makes a huge difference in how your poem is understood and received.

Q: Like many of us, you've dealt with physical and other challenges in recent years. Do those aspects of your life affect your work, or do you use some of it within the work?

A: I came down with pretty severe Rheumatoid Arthritis when in my thirties. Now, decades later, I've had both knees replaced, both ankles replaced, all ten toes fused, back surgery, etc. Thirteen operations in total. I have written a few poems about my R.A., a few dark, a few funny. But in general I refuse to let it dominate my thinking. When you are dealing with a life-long, chronic and very painful disease you can choose to go one of two ways. You can spend your time focusing on how much pain you're in (which only makes it worse) and feel sorry for yourself (and no one likes a whiner) or you can train your mind to focus on the positive things in life and enjoy what the world can offer. Besides, intense concentration on other things, i.e. writing, reading, movies, etc., helps to distract your brain from pain (uh-oh, there's a rhyme). I've always been a rebel and refuse to let obstacles overcome me. I've just learned how to either go around them, over them, or tunnel under. Doesn't mean they go away, it just means you have to adjust your life accordingly and live with them.

(Continued on next page)



Q: Who are some of your favorite poets and why?

A: This is a hard question. There's so many to choose from. I love the rhythm and cadence of Maya Angelou. I especially love her strength and defiance in "And Still I Rise". I am drawn to her message of owning who you are and being proud of it. Her body of work sings to the rebel in me to never let anything or anyone make you cower. She also had great command over her audience when reading her poems. She was a consummate deliverer of words.

Edgar Allen Poe and Sylvia Plath - He for his cadence and rhyme. Her imagery is so unique and you can feel her emotion. Both for their uniquely creative way of presenting the dark side of life.

If you love romance I recommend Rumi. His poems are ageless in the wooing category.

I really enjoy Robert Frost. His speech is plain and easy to understand yet many of his writings bare meaning on a deeper level. He provides a quick read, but then at the end, unsaid thoughts begin to form, and it beckons you to reread it slower and give more thought to what is laid out.

Q: Are your performance poems radically different from poems you write just for the page?

A: Yes. I try to make my performance poetry relatable to everyone and put it on an understandable level. Nothing loses an audience's interest faster than something that is written so esoterically that the majority of listeners don't have a clue of what it's about. I also find that audiences enjoy poetry that makes them laugh or grabs them emotionally. If they remember your performance then you know you've written a good poem.

Q: This is certainly not the first contest that you've won. Any advice for others to succeed in writing contests?

A: First and foremost, read the rules. Know what is expected of you. If it's written submissions only, be aware of the maximum number of lines allowed. What is the typeset style and size? Check for subject matter and format, etc. Secondly, if you have to include a voice recording or video be sure to include some drama or flair that sets you apart from the mainstream. And again, check the rules for formatting, time allowance, etc. Don't be discouraged if you don't win. I've lost tons contests but perseverance is key. Compare your poems that have won to those that haven't. Learn why they were better and every poet worth their salt will tell you to revise, revise, revise. Try crossing out every "and" "the" and "a" and see how few you really need to put back. Tighten up your work, use unusual imagery, try different perspectives, submerge yourself in other poetry. Improving your writing is a lifelong journey. The more you write and read, the better you will become.



Q: How many recordings of the four poems read in sequence for the Blackberry Peach did you have to do until you “nailed it”?

A: I actually did five or six practice runs with a watch in hand before I started recording. The poems could not run longer than three minutes each. This was no problem for three of them, but the one I thought was the best was a tight squeeze. And to complicate things further, I felt it needed a few pauses for dramatic effect. So that and trying to enunciate clearly when you’re talking fast was a challenge. Once I started recording I scrapped the first one and succeeded the second time.

Q: You are indeed a fine reader of your work. Any advice on how to develop oneself to read aloud?

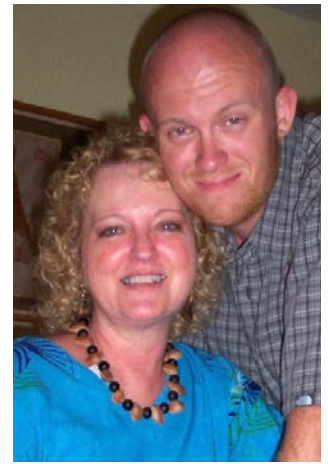
A: If you’re shy start speaking aloud at home then bite the bullet and hit some open mics. Practice makes perfect and the more often you do it the better you’ll become and the more relaxed. Don’t forget, everyone in the room had their first time at the mic at some point, so they understand nervousness and will encourage you. Poets are very welcoming and friendly people. One thing I can’t stress enough – SLOW DOWN. The faster you speak, the harder you are to understand. Also, it takes our brains a few moments to hear what is being said, process it and then understand it. When you step up to the mic, stand there a moment and don’t say anything. Just smile, take a leisurely breath and remind yourself to speak slowly, ENUNCIATE each word clearly and use some pauses (if warranted) for dramatic effect. If a crowd scares you, bring your spouse and/or friend and keep your eyes on them. Once you master these hurdles be sure to change up your rhythm, cadence, volume, tone of voice. Nothing lulls a crowd to sleep faster than a monotone, predictable pattern of speech. That’s good for putting a baby to sleep, but deadly for promoting riveted attention. Also move around. If space won’t permit it then at the very least be animated in your delivery. Move your hands and arms and make sure your facial expressions relay the message of the moment. Lastly, GET LOUD. Having run monthly open mics for ten years I’ve found one of the major problems is the soft speaker.

If this is you, be aware of the position of the microphone to your mouth and get close to it and stay there. Don’t drop your head to read your poem. Your voice projection follows the angle of your mouth. Hold your paper up next to the mic if needed. You can’t win an audience if they can’t hear you.

(Continued on next page)



Anchored at Night, Watercolor, B.J. Alligood, 2001



A selection of family photos of B.J. with her sister Chris Bonomi, elderly friend (deceased) Norma Merrell, daughter Amy Begley, son Brian Alligood, and Greyson Alligood, one of her five grandchildren.

Q: The winning poem is provided for our readers on the next page. Can you take us through the dynamics of this poem, how it came together, and how you approached the performance of it?

A: Actually, we were judged on all four poems but I'll answer this based on the poem titled "17 Years Later" as I think it's the best of the four. This is actually based on a real event that I witnessed when I was traveling out of town. I had stopped to get gas and went into a minute market to pay and what appeared to be a mentally unstable young mother and her little boy were in line in front of me. The little boy had asked for a candy bar and she said yes and handed it to him. You could see the happiness in his face but when they stepped up to pay she jerked it away from him and berated his existence. You could see from his outward appearance that he was neglected and then from her treatment of him he was obviously being mentally tormented as well. I was so upset that it still haunts me to this day. I used the imagery of birds to displace the softer human element of flesh and sharp claws and ripping beak to show the savagery of some people.

One of the BlackBerry Peach 2019 Prize Poems

by B.J. Alligood

Seventeen Years Later

All he wanted was a Snickers bar. Wasn't much. Not a lot to ask for.

Crazy. You could see it in her eyes. A young mother. Obviously made some bad decisions. The thin second-hand clothes spoke of a young lifetime of no money. But the lank greasy hair and wild eyes, they sang of asylums.

Those eyes.

They had conversations with legions of unseen persons. Naked men who whispered to her from behind pungent, putrid dumpsters in dark alleys. Her dead mother, always bitching, always complaining, a crow's beak, jabbing, jabbing over and over in the same place between her shoulder blades where she couldn't reach. Couldn't bandage the gouged flesh to keep the birds out and now they nested in there.

"Sure," she said, "you want that candy? You can have it."

Happiness suffused his little six year old face while he stood in the minute mart line. He clutched the candy bar against his boney chest. His legs mud caked and scabbed, his feet barefooted, nearly black.

When the teenager in front of them finished his transaction they moved forward.

"Get rid of that!" she shrieked wrenching the chocolate bar from his hands with claw-like nails. "You think you deserve that, you little jerk? Why would anyone buy anything for you? You're nothing!"

Her maniacal laughter flew around the store. Its talons puncturing the bread and crackers, swooping off the sports drinks and soda and perched on the counter over his head.

He looked up with six years of confusion and eighty years of despair, an empty cavernous soul.

She'd set him up for the fall and the anticipation made the execution all the more gleeful. The most fun she'd had in twenty minutes.

And I wonder, seventeen years later, what prison he's in now.

@B.J. Alligood

Two Poems that relate to illness

by B.J. Alligood

Walking Hurt

There are times
when she crab-walks

across the floor
on crippled feet

toes twisted under,
ankles without cartilage

bone crushing
upon bone

that she feels
like a privileged

Japanese geisha
whose feet

were bound
at birth

tiny, hurt
little sparrows

trod upon by
some invisible giant

The Watch

(dedicated to Amy)

She sat there
holding my hand
lightly stroking the fingers
as if they were made of china.
I don't remember if it was an
excruciating migraine or a
recuperation from one of
many surgeries
but she sat by my bed
in the darkened room
where only our breathing
could be heard.

In and out of my sleep states
she softly told me how
my face would alter expressions
while unconscious.
Lips curving, eyes roaming
under thin lids,
a ghost of a smile
vanishing as suddenly
as it appeared.

She mutely sat there for
time indeterminate
eyes memorizing my face
just watching
just stroking,
and I felt protected . . .
and held . . .
and safe.

Two Poems that relate to the sea

by B.J. Alligood

Eviction Notice*

Pockets of sea oats claw their
bony fingers at one another

and set their woven ecru heads
clattering to herald the beginning

of the storm.
Shrieking sea gulls,

reckless kamikazes,
fight and swoop

for the last bread bits
in outstretched hands.

Obsidian seas, angry with
cold currents bite at the shoreline

with foaming lips and regurgitate
the barnacled planks of swallowed

shipwrecks as Poseidon whips the
sand into thousand-needed blasts

driving bare-legged humans
off the beach

leaving the shoreline to lick its
winter wounds in solitude.

**Published in Revelry 2009
and FSPA's Anthology Twenty-Seven 2009*

Tropical Babies

(dedicated to Brian & Amy)

born of the azure seas
caressed by glossy magnolia leaves
shaded by the broad flat hands of green palms
sung to sleep by the sighs of Spanish moss

the blue in their eyes
reflected the rivers and waters
of the low lying land
Dixie in their blood

they rode the hurricanes and high seas
sliding over foamy crests
wild winds singing of their thrill
gritty sands swirling on the shore

years gone
their blood still longs for
hot sun and humid nights
tree frogs peeping in the darkness
jasmine and gardenia scenting humid air

their night dreams carry them home again
across the snows and heavy traffic of D.C.
weaving among the thorny cactus
and parched deserts of Arizona

back to where their hearts yearn
back to their beginnings.

NEWS CLIP:

Key West Names Arlo Haskell New Poet Laureate

Haskell vows to “raise consciousness” of island city

Key West, the southernmost city in the continental United States has named a new Poet Laureate. At a meeting of the city commission on Tuesday night, Mayor Teri Johnston acknowledged Key West’s long history as a home to poets including former United States Poets Laureate Elizabeth Bishop and Richard Wilbur, and delivered a proclamation naming 41-year-old Arlo Haskell the official poet of the island city.

A native of the Florida Keys, Haskell is noted for his work as a poet, publisher, and literary organizer. The author of two poetry collections, *Fool Proof* and *Joker*, he is also the publisher of Sand Paper Press, where he has edited critically acclaimed editions by poets from North and South America. As executive director of Key West Literary Seminar, Haskell has championed public engagements with leading American poets and developed poetry-focused programs for high-school students including the Young Writers Studio. Haskell is also a Florida Book Award-winning historian and has appeared in film and television documentaries that explore the histories of poets in Key West.

The honorary two-year post comes with no official duties, but in remarks to city leaders, Haskell said he would work to “raise the consciousness” of Key West residents and visitors and “make the poetry of the island city a little easier to see.”



Photography by Nick Doll

Link to his book:





Mary Marcelle

Your Florida State Poets Association Membership, Explained

In the past, our membership by-laws stipulated that every member of FSPA had to renew in the same month – October. We’ve changed the rules and that is no longer true. Every member has a full 12-month membership starting the month dues are paid. If you paid membership dues in October, your membership expires in September. If you paid in February, your membership expires at the end of January. And so on.

When your membership expires, our Membership Chair, Jane Peterson, will alert you by email. That’s why it’s so important to keep your current, active email address on file with us. If you aren’t receiving notices for newsletters regularly, we may need an updated email for you. Without it, we cannot contact you: surface mail is expensive to produce and send.

Please send your dues to:

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

Stay current to get the most out of membership!

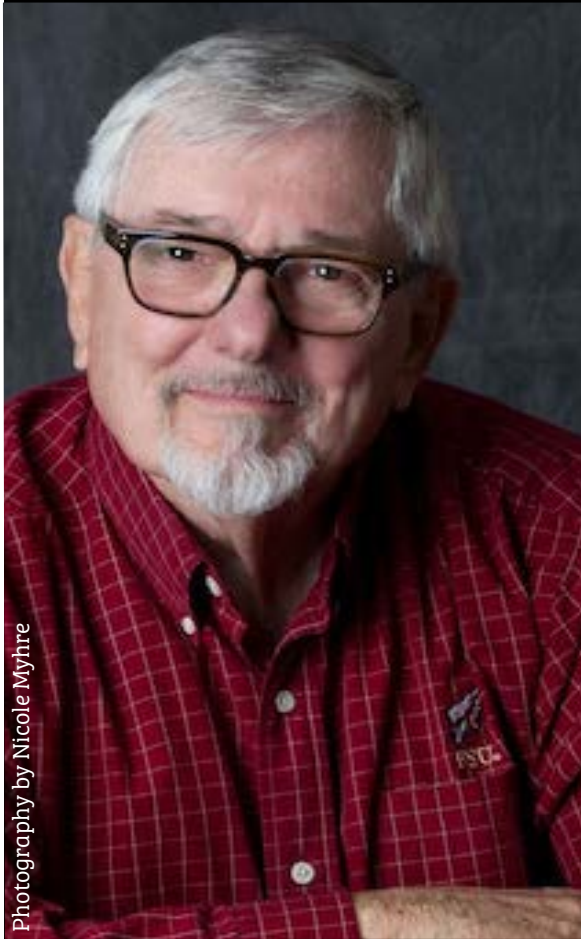
The benefits of FSPA membership run throughout the year, and it is important to know when your membership counts the most. Here are some important membership benefits and important dates to remember this year:

- Membership in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies. National poetry contests this year ran from January 15 to March 15, and an active membership during that time was required to enter many of those contests.
- Florida State Poetry Contests run this year from May 1 to July 13. An active membership during that time period is not required to enter contests, but does entitle members to a free contest entry.
- The FSPA yearly poetry anthology, *Cadence*, is published in October. An active membership during the submission period of May 15-July 26 is required for publication.
- Membership offers discounts to conventions, including Spring Fling and Fall state conventions and national poetry conventions, as well as opportunities for members to sell books at conventions.
- Of Poets and Poetry, our recently updated newsletter, brings information and updates as well as links to more poetry online right into your inbox. FSPA also promotes our active social media presence, including Facebook and Twitter.
- Local chapter membership brings poetry to your corner of the state, and each member has the ability to create a local chapter with only five current members who want to be a part of your group. Local chapter creation is encouraged, and can be facilitated by Jane Peterson, Membership Chair.

You can reach Membership Chair Jane Peterson here: jep@cfl.rr.com
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

Charles Hazelip



Photography by Nicole Myhre

Meet the poet and educator, Dr. Charles Hazelip, a long-time member of Poetry for the Love of It, and the FSPA.

Songs in the Mind

They come without warning, subtly there
Like friends dropping by with news to share
Old news, about particular times.
They arrive from, well - who really knows where?

They bring mem'ries with them, some quite sublime
Even albums of snapshots from this life of mine.
Previous places, precious faces connect to a tune,
Always a song, always in rhyme.

Like friendly visitors these mental tunes
Linger as well-known refrains in my room.
Over and over, like avoiding goodbyes,
Songs in my mind their lyrics resume.

They dig tableaux from my mental archives,
Pulling out files full of laughter or sighs
Taking me back to a handshake or kiss
With friends or loved ones who long ago died.

I can't help feeling a heartfelt miss
Recalling these old songs of youthful bliss.
Sometimes pesky, they play on and on
But when they drop by again I'll not resist.

I usually attempt to portray a light side of life somewhere in my poetry. Sometimes conditions in the country make it difficult to be too light-hearted. I truly believe beauty in the world and in the people of the world can illuminate life. The question I often ask of folks who seem interested in poetry is, "Poetry is a voice of the soul, have you found your voice?" Poetry can impact life in both positive and negative ways. I try for the former as much as I can.

~ Charles Hazelip

Clarity of Spring

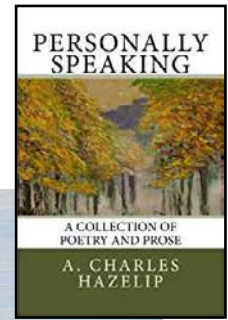
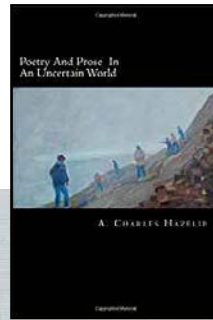
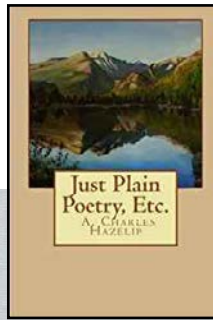
What can compare to a clear day in Spring?
One bursting free of winter's gray doldrums,
Drawing bright children to outdoor playing
Breathing fresh spring air deeply as they run.

Spring blossoms, beauteous as they are, float
Pollen on soft, shifting, fragrant breezes
To invade outdoor lovers' nose and throat
Mercilessly causing fits of sneezes.

But, giving a nod to springtime troubles,
Sunlit grass, softly tremb'ling green leaves,
Rippling water's rushing bubbles,
All encourage songs of uplifting release

When Spring drives off Winter's bitter chilling
A little sneeze seems worth tolerating.

Links to three of
his poetry books
available on
Amazon.com:



Also an accomplished artist, here are three of his paintings.
Top: Provincetown Relic, 11 x 14 oil on canvas
Lower left: Still Life with Fruit, 11 x 14 oil on canvas
Lower right: Life On The Rocks, 11 x 14 oil on canvas

FSPA 2019 Spring Highlights

Spring Fling

Hosted by the
Orlando Area Poets
and
Osceola Poetry Society





Mary Rogers-Grantham

FSPA CONTEST CLOSES SOON!

[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. Poems began to arrive in my mailbox prior to the opening submission date! Exciting!

~ Mary Rogers-Grantham, FSPA Contest Chair



Carolynn J. Scully

STUDENT POETRY CONTEST

I am honored to be trusted with the management of the FSPA Student Contest. Throughout this first year of my commitment, I have relied on the wisdom given to me by Janet Watson and admire her ability to keep everything organized for me to complete this assignment. The 2018-2019 Student Contest is complete except for the distribution of *Cadence* to the winners in the Fall. We had 435 entries, 132 were disqualified, and 303 qualified for the competition. Forty-two winners were named 1st, 2nd, 3rd place and 1st, 2nd, 3rd H.M. for each grade 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. (as reported in the last issue of this publication.) As of this time, there has been no communication about the Manningham Contest to report. Because I considered the disqualifications for our contest too high, I have gone over the rules to see if anything needed to be clarified. Finding little in that regard, I made a short list of common disqualifiers and put together samples of the submission pages to be included with the rules. I consider this an opportunity to teach the young people how important it is to follow contest guidelines. I hope that this instruction will result in fewer disqualifications for the coming year. Summer begins our new distribution of rules and letters to school districts. It is my hope that FSPA members will encourage their school districts to have students participate either under the guidance of a teacher or self-directed.

~ Carolynn J. Scully, Student Contest Chair



Dina Tanner

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

Members can now advertise ONE book for sale on our website. Instructions are located on the website under "Book Store" and in the current newsletter.

Chapters, please check the website information for accuracy. Contact Dina Tanner at dinatanner.dt@gmail.com with updates. Local upcoming events can be sent to Dina.

Our Facebook page is increasing in membership and activity. 558 people follow the page. We encourage members to post local event information, pictures of past events, etc., on Facebook. Twitter: our Facebook posts automatically copy to Twitter.

~ Dina Tanner, Webmaster and Social Media



Writers in Residence: The Kerouac Project

By Vanessa Blakeslee

On a unremarkable street in College Park—a quaint neighborhood near Downtown Orlando—beneath the outstretched limbs of a sprawling oak draped in tanglements of spanish moss, each year a few lucky writers spend several months writing in the small bower-like house where novelist and poet Jack Kerouac completed what many consider his greatest novel, *Dharma Bums*.

Kerouac came to Orlando in 1958, where his mother was renting a 1920s bungalow. No one at the time, including Jack himself, could have realized how this sleepy house would figure in his life: becoming not only his refuge as *On the Road* climbed the bestseller lists, but the site of his last, prolific outpouring.

The bungalow, where he spent so many contented working days, was left forgotten until the mid-1990s, when Bob Kealing, a reporter and freelance journalist, heard about Kerouac's rumored stay and got the address from Kerouac's relatives. A group formed to raise funds needed to purchase and remodel the property.

Today, the little house at 1418 Clouser Avenue hosts four writers a year and is known as the Jack Kerouac Writers-in-Residence Project. In 2012, the house was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

In the current and upcoming seasons, the Kerouac House will host writers from an array of places, from New York City to Ireland, as well as offer workshops, potlucks, and readings open to the community.

Visit their website and Facebook pages for details on events and how to donate.
www.kerouacproject.org



FSPA CHAPTER NEWS & UPDATES



Tere Starr

Miami Poets

Miami Poets welcomed National Poetry Month during **Tere Starr's** *Miami Poets Soirée* where we meet each first Wednesday from 1 to 3 pm at the Pinecrest Branch Library. On second Mondays from 1 to 3 pm, we join Group 10, the critique group led by **Steven Liebowitz**. We're proud to welcome new members, **Rosa Douglass, Thomas Stevens and Zorina Frey**. Their poetry and insight add exciting dimensions to our group. **Achievements:** Our new member, Zorina Frey is the Editor of *45 Magazine Journal*, <https://45magazineiwa.com>, and owner of IWA Publications. She welcomes submissions to her on line publication. Zorina read her true story at Lip Service and participated in Lyric Live First Friday. One of her sketch scripts was performed at Artistic Vibes. Tere Starr was a featured poet during South Florida Writers Association's April meeting, and she invited the Miami Poets to share the podium with her. Spreading the love of poetry to the community, Tere led an April Poetry Soirée for the Brandeis Women's South Miami Group. Tere, Pat Bonner Milone and Rosa Douglass shared their poems during Books & Books at Suniland's Five Minute Pieces and at Miami Dade College's Poetry Delight Night led by Ricki Dorn. **Patsy Asuncion's** poem, "Lonely George is Dead," appears in the *May 2019 About Place Journal*. Her poems, "Big Boy Games" and "Fog-bound," were published in *The Author's Voice* along with **Jo Christiane's** poems, "Rebel Rose" and "What Isn't" and **Ricki Dorn's** poem, "Be The Artist of Your Life." **Connie Goodman-Milone's** letter, "O, Miami," appeared in *The Miami Herald*. On the last day of National Poetry Month, Tere Starr, Ricki Dorn, Zorina Frey and **William Lawlor** were featured at Beat Poetry Live at Le Chat Noir, Miami's premier jazz club. **Sheena Powell Szuri** organized and emceed this finger-snapping event, an exciting ending to a poetry filled month. Poetry continues to be our priority.

~ Tere Starr, President

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.



Norma Chew, Tere Starr, Sheena Szuri, Steve Liebowitz, Connie Goodman-Milone, Pat Bonner Milone. Seated: Ricki Dorn and Marina Stevens



Robert E. Blenheim

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

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 p.m. and end at 6:30 p.m., and the group welcomes all poets, and anybody interested in poetry, to attend.

Recently, The Live Poets Society had workshops (with handouts) on writing parodies of famous poems (using Garrison Keillor’s variations on “The Star-Spangled Banner” as a guide), as well as poetry on “Theme Parks and Attractions” and on the theme of “Answers.” They also studied prose poetry by Charles Baudelaire, Clark Ashton Smith and Rabindranath Tagore before working on writing their own prose poems.



Ellen Nielsen

As far as members’ accomplishments, **Llewellyn McKernan** had her poem, “Getting Up in the Morning” published in an anthology of feminist poetry, *Feminine Rising: Voices of Power and Invisibility*, edited by **Andrea Fekete & Lara Lillibridge**. And **Jesse Sam Owens** has been co-hosting **Dan Pels’** Poetry Show at the Hub in New Smyrna Beach while Dan recovers from his recent stroke. President **Bob Blenheim** was a featured poet at Dan’s May event, providing a few laughs by singing a few of his songs from his *Poetry Parody Songbook*.

And of course 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 delightful speakers and memorable workshops at the famous Plaza Resort & Spa next October 25th, 26th and 27th. Most excitedly, it has been announced that **M.B. McLatchey** will be the keynote speaker.

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



Cherelyn Bush taking notes during a workshop

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.



Leslie Halpern

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.

Orlando Area Poets

The Seminole County Public Library, Central Branch (Casselberry) hosted an open mic night on Wednesday, April 17. Participating poets from our chapter were **Alice Friedman**, **Fern Goodman**, **Leslie Halpern**, and **Diane Neff**. Alice Friedman won third place in the competition among the 20 speakers and musical performers.

The 2019 Winter Park Paint Out International Poetry Contest hosted on AllPoetry.com by Orlando Area Poet **Mark Andrew James Terry** benefiting the Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Gardens concluded with a record response for poets from around the globe. FSPA President **Al Rocheleau** was the guest judge. Over one-hundred poets entered with ekphrastic poems responding to paintings created during the paint out—representing eleven countries and twenty-two US states. To date, the contest has experienced nearly 70,000 views. Locally, members of Orlando Area Poets, including **Nikki Fragala Barnes**, **Peter Gordon**, **Leslie Halpern**, and **Elaine Person** read poetry at painting demonstrations that occurred every day of the event

The Maitland Public Library hosted its quarterly Poetry Coffeehouse on Friday, April 26, where the annual poetry contest awards were presented to **Diane Neff**, first place; **Estelle Lipp**, second place; **Alice Friedman**, third place, and **Peter Gordon**, honorable mention. The theme for the contest was “Tune In.” For the next Poetry Coffeehouse on June 28, the theme will be “A Star is Born.” **Elaine Person** will host several workshops at the library for those who want guidance on writing to the theme. All workshops are free and open to the public. Specific dates can be found on the Maitland Library calendar online.

Alice Friedman distributed poems on Poem-in-Your-Pocket Day, and during her school volunteer hours shared her love of poetry with first graders at English Estates Elementary School.

Peter Gordon won first prize in the Flagler County Art League Poetry Contest for his poem, “After Dog Sitting.” His poem, “To My Unborn Boy” won first place in the October Project Poetry Contest.

Leslie Halpern published her fifth book of poetry, *Poodles & Doodles: Poems about Dogs* and read a collection of her weather-related poems during the Winter Park Paint Out event at the Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens in conjunction with a painting demonstration by plein air painter, John Gilbert.

Elaine Person was a runner-up for both the November/December 2018 the January/February 2019 Saturday Evening Post Limerick Contest. She was the featured poet on *Haikuniverse* on May 21, and will have her poem “On Stronger Writing” published in the *2019 Florida Writers’ Association Collection*. She received an honorable mention in East Lake County Library’s poetry contest. She also performed her one-woman show “An Evening of Spoken Word with Elaine Person” at the Orlando Fringe Festival, was interviewed for an article in The Winter Park/Maitland Observer, and is the artist of the month at the Maitland Public Library.

Carolynn J. Scully was featured on AllPoetry.com for her ekphrastic poem, “Empty Nest.” The poem was inspired by artwork created at the Winter Park Paint Out.

Stan Sujka’s poem, “University of our Fathers,” was published in the Spring/Summer 2019 issue of the Youngstown State University alumni magazine.

Cheryl West won first place in the Seminole County Library East Branch (Oviedo) Bulwer-Lytton award contest for the worst opening sentence to a bad novel. The SCLEBBLY contest was based on the Bulwer-Lytton awards and adapted for the library’s Writer’s Block writing program by **Diane Neff**.



Janet Watson

~ Vice President/Secretary
for Leslie Halpern, President

New River Poets

The New River Poets chapter meets every third Saturday of the month from 1-4:30 pm at the Old Richland Schoolhouse home of member **Meg Roman** in Zephyrhills. It is an absolutely perfect venue for inspiring poetry.

Our May meeting was canceled because the date coincided with the FSPA Spring Fling. Two of our officers—**John Foster** and **Janet Watson**, enjoyed the event hosted by the Orlando and Osceola chapters. At our June gathering we shared our etherees—a new form for many of us.

Several members submitted poems to the annual NFSPS contests. Our president will represent us at the national convention in Santa Fe and hopes to bring back some great information from that distinguished gathering of poets. When any New River poets are announced as winners, she promises to cheer like crazy! We have many talented writers in our chapter, so we are encouraging more members to enter the FSPA contests (New River sponsored two of them) and to submit poetry to *Cadence*, as well. We stress how important it is to share what we write.

John Foster tells us he organized a poetry reading at his senior-living community in April. Several residents offered morning and afternoon programs of readings in the atrium of the residence. John is also editing a poetry manuscript for an FSPA member-at-large.

We continue to talk to poets who are “going it alone” about what FSPA offers in the way of support, and we always look for opportunities to stress the need for poetry in our time and culture.

~ *Janet Watson, President*



John Foster

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



Linda Whitefeather

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.

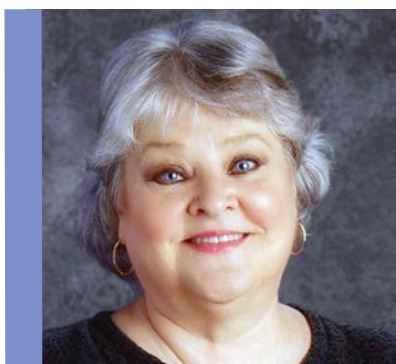
Poem:

The Box Fan

Just a square
Blowing air

In this heat
Can't be beat

© L. Whitefeather



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

Poetry for the Love of It

Members of Poetry for the Love of It (PLOI) provided a poetry reading about roses at the April meeting of the Tallahassee Area Rose Society (TARS). Many of the poems were original poems by members.

PLOI members continue to write and read poems at their meetings, and occasionally try new or different poetry formats in writing exercises. Notable poets are discussed at each meeting as well. Edgar A. Guest is June's notable poet.

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



Left to right: Charles Hazelip, Margaret Hamilton, Norma Plumley, Sue Hansen, Larry Amuso

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. Sunshine President, Cheri Herald, attended the Spring Fling in Orlando. Member Natalie Warrick continues to have her poetry published in her church newsletter. Sunshine Poets has a Facebook page. Contact: sunshinepoets@gmail.com

~ Cheri Herald, President



Mary-Ann Westbrook

Tomoka Poets

Poetry blooms like flowers here at Tomoka Poets meetings. We celebrated National Poetry month by partnering with Creative Happiness Institute, Ormond Beach Main Street and Ormond Art District to put on a Poetry Festival at the Casements in Ormond Beach. Attendance was about 75 and poetry ran rampant from poets of all ages and places. **Mary-Ann Westbrook** was very busy during the month. She and **Kira Von Brokoph** were invited to participate in the Flagler county Poetry Month Celebration. Mary-Ann also took part in readings with the SeaQuills, a writers group from The Hammock in their celebration at the Flagler Beach Library. Mary-Ann also was asked to write and read an original poem for the Halifax Historical Society and Museum for their 70th and 60th Anniversaries respectively. We proudly announce that Tomoka Poet **Dr. David Axelrod** along with **MB MacClatchey** have been reappointed to a four year term as Volusia County Poets Laureate. Our open mics continue to draw poets that we never knew were here.

Our last open mic featured a group of home schooled children ages 10 and under who as a group recited a poem they had memorized and then went on to read a poem or two out of a book given to them from one of our poets and then read a poem that they had written. This was a first for us and what a wonderful night. We loved showcasing them and hearing them read as much as they loved being there. This is an event we will definitely repeat. The best news of all is that Tomoka Poet **BJ Alligood** won first place in the NFSPS National Poetry BlackberryPeach competition. We are so incredibly proud of her. We are all busting the buttons from our shirts. She will receive her award and read her work at the NFSPS National Convention in Santa Fe, New Mexico at the end of June.

~ Mary-Ann Westbrook, President



Group of home schooled children performing poetry at Tomoka Poets open mic.

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.

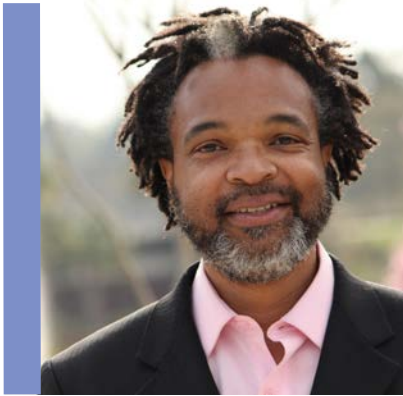


Held the 4th Tuesday,

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



Summer Hill Seven

Big Bend Poets & Writers

The public was invited to attend Big Bend Poets & Writers at Barnes & Noble Books, at the Centre of Tallahassee, 2415 N. Monroe St., to meet Mayor John Daily. The Mayor read from his favorite poetry, and spoke with the audience. We at Big Bend Poets & Writers were excited and honored to host the Mayor at our monthly meeting.

In July the featured guest reader will be 100 Thousand Poets for Change Michael Rothenberg. Look for more information on our [blog](#).

Summer Hill Seven presented his last public reading of his poetry at the 2019 FSPA Spring Fling, which was received with enthusiasm. Also attending that event was Cynthia Rose, who participated in the readings and her first ever poetry slam. She was great!

Did you recently publish or have an upcoming reading? Send your announcements to kmclarkphotography@gmail.com or text 850-980-0516 and they will be included in the next newsletter.

We gather and sign in at the cafe in the bookstore in Barnes & Noble. If you have any questions or concerns you may email me at summerhillseven@gmail.com subject: Big Bend Poets & Writers (BBP&W).

~ Summer Hill Seven, President



*Dr. Andrew Mannheimer,
Summer Hill Seven and
Cynthia Rose*



Nancy Ortiz, Secretary

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

Osceola Poetry Society

The Osceola Poetry Society was happy to see off to college several of its young members (**Gerald Salcedo** to Yale, **Mackenzie Riley** to American University), both of whom also graduated from the FSPA-accredited Twelve Chairs Advanced Course at the 2019 Spring Fling Convention. As Mackenzie was the outgoing Osceola chapter president, and Gerald outgoing Vice President, we plan a new officers' election soon. Two other members, **Katie O'Malley** and **Sophia DuRose**, had successful launches of their first books at the Osceola County School of the Arts (OCSA), and then at Spring Fling. (OCSA continues to be a great working partner of FSPA, and provided an student artist to respond in charcoal to our poet-readers for our interactive, reverse ekphrastic experiment at Spring Fling.) Sophia and Katie will be busy during the summer, Katie at an engineering internship in Houston before she returns to the University of Florida in the fall, and Sophia working in Philadelphia before her new school year begins at the University of Pennsylvania. Our chapter members **Robyn Weinbaum** and **Nancy Ortiz** provided remarkable service at the Fling, running both bookstore and registration at various times, with Robyn also playing a major role at the luncheon. The society intends to continue its outreach to students this year, and to put them in positions of prominent service when possible. FSPA President and Osceola member **Al Rocheleau** presented the first segment of the Saturday ekphrasis program, and closed the convention with a quiz/contest, reading work by mystery celebrities (both recent and from centuries' past) who have, without fanfare, counted themselves as part of our greater poetry community.

~ Nancy Ortiz, Secretary
for Mackenzie Riley, President

Space Coast Poets

Space Coast Poets will not be meeting over the summer months. We will resume August 12, at which time we will elect new officers.

~ Janna Schledorn, President



Members at Large



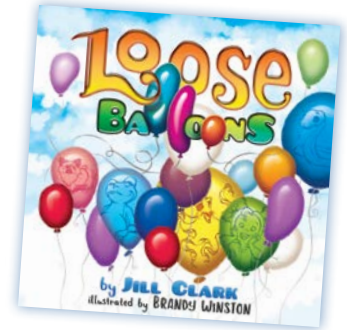
Evelyn Ann Romano

Evelyn Ann had her poem, *La Mer*, published in the 2019 *Sandhill Review*, Many Loves issue. *The Review* is a yearly publication by St. Leo's University. Evelyn Ann was also invited in April to read her poetry during an event at the New Tampa Library as part of National Poetry Month. Her debut chapbook, *Ripe* was published recently by Finishing Line Press and is available at Amazon.com and by the author for signature. She is a former member of New River Poets.



Jill Clark

Jill Clark's children's poetry book *Loose Balloons* will be published in June through Taylor and Seale Publishing. Two of the poems placed in past FSPA contests. You can purchase the book via Amazon, Books-a-Million and her website: www.jillswriterscafe.com (for pre-orders and a discount).



CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

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□ Poetry Challenge

Editor's Choice

People

by *Dennis Rhodes*

People are endlessly
fascinating relentlessly
resilient amazingly
amusing frequently
confusing People are
nothing you'd expect
everything you'd desire
generous to a fault
dangerous as fire
Some people are
no damn good
Some are like saints
Some people are
full of compliments
others, complaints,
Some people are
warm and tender
some tough as leather—
somehow we must all
get along together.

Midnight Stroll

on a Low Country Beach

by *Jill Jennings*

Tonight the moon is going blind,
darkness tips the waves with shine.

The tide of love has slipped away
with all that we have said and made.

A lighthouse signals to the sea.
Does he ever think of me?

Broken shells beneath my feet
jolt me from my reverie.

Night sounds fill my soul with wonder:
if it's not one bastard, it's another.

Next Issue:

Editor's Choice

Poetry Challenge

Prompt: Homelessness (*see inside back cover*)

Form: Any

Line limit: Up to 20 lines

Submit by: August 1, 2019,
to Mark@TKOrlando.com

The winning poem(s):

Will be featured in our
Sept/October issue

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
- July Editor's Choice Poetry Challenge Winner

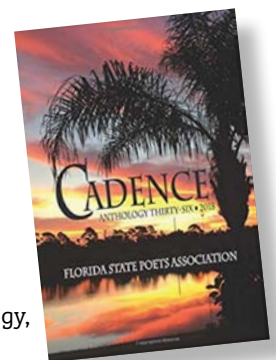
Editor's Notes.

Seeking Contributing Writers

Since the first of the year, we have produced and sent to members four volumes of our newly formatted newsletter (including this issue), seeking to lift its presence and readability. We have featured articles on **Sean Sexton**, **Terry Godbey**, and **Summer Hill Seven**, giving our members an in depth portrayal of these poets in their own words through questions and answers and their poetry. We have begun spotlighting a member poet in each issue, publishing several of their poems. And in an effort to add more member poetry to the publication, we have conducted an Editor's Choice contest in each issue as well. Our goals for *Of Poets and Poetry* is to bring to our members a content-rich representation of poetry in Florida. We will continue to publish Chapter reports and other committee news and look to expand to other kinds of feature articles like the one on the **Lara "Riding" Jackson House**. We are grateful for the content our chapters and members at large are providing, and for the expert proofing done each issue by **Mary Marcelle** and **Diane Neff**. As the editor, I am now seeking volunteers to join the team as contributing writers. If you are interested, please send me an email: mark@TKOrlando.com

Stay on the poet's path,

~ Mark Andrew James Terry, Editor



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

Editor's Choice Poetry Challenge:
Homelessness image prompts



*It's No Fairytale, mixed-media on cardboard,
Mark Andrew James Terry*



*Emerge, black and white photograph,
Mark Andrew James Terry*

Florida State Poets Association

An affiliate of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies

 of Poets & Poetry

www.FloridaStatePoetsAssociation.org

