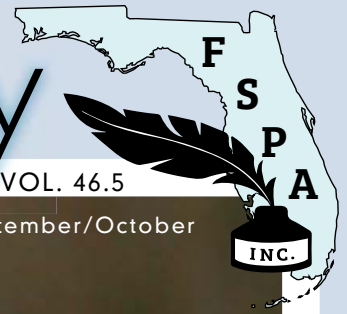


# Of Poets & Poetry

A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA STATE POETS ASSOCIATION VOL. 46.5

September/October



See page 3

Lola Haskins

**FSPA Chancellor**

Photograph by Albert Hall



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# Florida State Poets Association

An affiliate of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies



Al Rocheleau

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

by Al Rocheleau

### SOME SAD GOINGS

Heading from the heat of summer to autumn and our Fall Convention, there are lots of changes of season. We have lost a few people within various chapters—as we are aware of them, we will mention them in the chapter reports of this issue. We mourn the loss of our chancellor and benefactor, **Lee Bennett Hopkins** (see page 10). It's sad when we lose friends, and appended to that comes a different kind of sadness, when our friends are also poets. Poetry, "this thing of ours" bonds us, and the commonality, regardless of the level of experience or renown of the poet, is each poet's singular and astounding voice. Not everyone seeks the poet's craft or that voice, as either a regular maker or receiver, but in the end, everyone is affected somewhere and somehow. As poets, we hate to see another of our voices go silent, and part of what we pray for of that person, is that what they did as poets will not be forgotten, and that somewhere a voice, another individual voice, or voices, rises to take their place.

In the same week we lost Lee, in California I lost yet another poet, a great friend, **Maggie Pierce Secara**. She and I were once Community Leaders in the early days of AOL, and we were online poetry editors at a place called Writer's Block, part of a larger site, Amazing Instant Novelist AIN. AIN had been featured on The Today Show, and at the time Writer's Block was one of the largest of online writers' programs. Maggie was a great editor, a novelist, a former teacher and fine technical writer (how she made her living), and I always considered her one of the best poets in the country. So many great poets fly just under the lights of notoriety, and she was one.

### SOME COMINGS

We still await the announcement of the new Florida Poet Laureate! (Yes, the slow workings of government...) Last word was it will be at least November. The good news is that all of FSPA's new nominees have agreed to join **Lola Haskins** and **Peter Meinke**, the current Poet Laureate who calls himself "the Phantom" these days, as chancellors of FSPA! Even before the loss of Lee Bennett Hopkins, we needed more chancellors, and all of these poets rank among the finest in not only the state, but nationwide. **Carol Frost**, **Denise Duhamel**, **Silvia Curbelo**, **David Kirby**, and **Virgil Suarez** will be installed at various FSPA conventions over the next two years. It is my hope that by the end of my term, October, 2020, all will have appeared with us. (At least, we'll try...)



Please join us  
on Facebook

That lead-in begs mention of the upcoming **FSPA Fall Convention** at the **Plaza Resort in Daytona Beach, October 25-27**. (Registration Form on page 14 and Program Highlights on page 13 of this issue.) At the Chancellors Dinner, Saturday night October 26, from 5 pm to 7 pm, we will formally install the first of our new chancellors, **Carol Frost**. Carol, one of the best known poets in Florida, is the long-time host of the popular series **"Winter with the Writers"** at Rollins College. This time, Carol is the subject, and she will speak after her installation. Cost for the dinner, separate from registration, is \$35.00 per person, a flat rate for any dish you prefer (see the registration form). *Note also that FSPA is picking up the taxes for each meal.*

Should you be staying over (rooms start at \$103.00; see details on the form), **the deadline for reservations is September 25.**

The program for the convention is excellent; beyond Carol's segment, and some important remembrances of Lee Bennett Hopkins, speakers include our Saturday night feature, **M.B. McClatchey**; also, **Lola Haskins**; **Janet Watson**; **Marc Davidson**, **Ellen Nielsen**, a **Peter Gordon**-moderated game show, and **Bob Blenheim**. Of course, throughout there will be member readings, along with results of a record number of FSPA contests. **Plan on being there**, and order your meal early, as dinner orders will likely not be available for walk-ins.

## SOME OTHER GOOD THINGS

It appears FSPA did extremely well, perhaps the best ever, in contests for the **National Federation of State Poetry Societies** this year. We collected wins, placements and honorable mentions by the bunches, not to mention capturing the coveted **Blackberry Peach Award** (hooray, **B. J. Alligood**!). FSPA has advanced the publicizing of NFSPS events at our FSPA website, and NFSPS is exchanging the favor. This means more of our poets are engaging in more and more contests.

Speaking of the website, FSPA's board has expanded the number and type of books our member authors may publicize. When we got started, we limited the number to one book per member and it had to be a poetry book. We have now opened up the number to **three books per member**, and the books can be poetry or any other subject. The idea is to send in Amazon links of your books to Dina at [dinatanner.dt@gmail.com](mailto:dinatanner.dt@gmail.com), who will place them in a special section of the website for you. Dina asks that you check the website to get the specifics on what you must send.

Well. Enough of me for this issue. Let's hope we see more of you all in Daytona Beach.

Best,

Al

45th FSPA  
ANNUAL  
CONVENTION

we real cool.

**Convention Highlights  
and Registratiuon Form  
are on pages 13 and 14.**



# Profiles in Poetry

A dialog with FSPA Chancellor

**Lola HASKINS**

**Q:** Your books have won national awards and have been favorably reviewed across the country. What advice do you have for poets who may be reaching the point of putting together a collection of their own?

**A:** I hope the small successes I've had over the years have had something to do with how I put my books together, but since my luck has always been a mystery to me, I can't claim that's true. I will say, though, that when you put a book together, you shouldn't be thinking about awards, you should be thinking about what you owe your poems. They're a little like children in that you want to put them in an order that will allow each of them to shine. Here's one approach to assembling a manuscript (but it's not the only one – I have tried others). First, no matter what you do later, go through the candidates to be in it and set the poems aside that you don't adore (you may bring some back later, once you see what's needed to complete your sequence). Once you have the for-sures, you'll be in a position to start thinking about the whole. At this point, if you grant that poetry is music, then it would follow that a book of poems will be some specific kind of music, what kind is your choice. You could start, though, with a symphony or a concerto. Group your poems – each group will be one movement – then place them on the overall arc you've decided on. This arc will move the reader from the beginning to the end – let's say you start quietly, then crescendo then decrescendo then rest, then rise slowly towards a final sequence that may end rousing, like Beethoven, or quietly like Satie if his mode had been concerti. I devoted a whole chapter in my advice book, *Not Feathers Yet, a Beginner's Guide to the Poetic Life*, to this subject. So please, if you'd like to read more about approaches and the various ways you might realize them, look there.

**Q:** You have taken part in so many events for FSPA. While we know what our experience has been with your teaching, performing, and intimate sharing, what has your experience been with us?

**A:** I've loved getting to know the members – that there are so many kind and interesting people who love poetry too is a blessing. I've also appreciated their openness to me, both about poetry per se, as when I've read my own poems, as well as when I've gotten to share my enthusiasm for other poets' work – for example, the time I did a talk on poets of the Middle East; and for trying new things, as in the plein air class I once ran.

(Continued on next page)



On stage with Dance Alive! National Ballet



Homage to Baudelaire, photograph by Albert Hall

**Q:** We'll be installing one or two new FSPA Chancellors at the Fall Convention 2019, and one as well at Spring Fling 2020. When you accepted your own chancellorship, joining Peter Meinke and Lee Bennett Hopkins, what was your view of our organization, and what you might bring to it?

**A:** I'd spoken for FSPA two or three times before and the last time I did, I'd been sad to see how much the membership had declined since my last visit. Someone's done some great work since then because the group that invited me to join as chancellor was a vital one. As for what I thought I might bring to it—I just hoped I could be useful. Also, over the time I've been a chancellor, I've found role models for what's possible in that way, both among the officers and among others who don't have titles, people who've done selfless work for years and years for the betterment of not just the FSPA but for poetry in Florida in general.

**Q:** You have now been nominated twice for Florida State Poet Laureate. While each Laureate naturally proceeds in his or her own way, what are some aims or projects you would like to see pursued on the state and local levels to promote our art?

**A:** Oh, I love that question! Here are a few ideas I have:

1. Work with design students at UF to come up with posters to be put on dentists' ceilings and in counselors' offices (the second I added recently because a friend who counsels said she'd buy at least one, probably for the restroom but that's good.) Sell those for not too much at dental conventions and use the dollars to fund a course for high school students and maybe middle school too in looking at nature via poetry
2. A series of scenarios for silent walks for kids followed by writing + drawing sessions
3. Stacks of take-home poetry pamphlets (8.5 x 11, folded) for ERs and walk-in clinics and MD's offices and the family waiting room parts of hospitals
4. Talk airlines into putting poetry into their magazines—A Spanish version (chosen and introduced by native speaker poets) and an English version for the other (editors, TBD)
5. An annual reading in Tallahassee for the winners of poetry contests in each level of schools, public and private, and a national poetry month reading of adults, poets or not, reading their favorite poems
6. Also in April, "happenings" of street corner poems in some cities.

There may be more...My overall goal is to convince people who think they don't like it that poetry has nothing to do with school and is for everyone, regardless of background, and also show them that if they want to, they can write their own.

**Q:** Your academic background, both as student and teacher, is unique. Can you share just a bit of that story?

**A:** My academic background is a program called “Social Thought” which began at Stanford when I was an undergrad there – it involved one professor in each of eight disciplines in the liberal arts, including English, Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, etc. Following that, I did grad work in Anthropology. But, despite the fact I’d never had a single class in it, I taught Computer Science for 28 years at UF. How was that possible? Well, I can read. And also I found I could adapt what I taught to reflect one of three disciplines in which I do have some formal background – philosophical logic (programming), history (history of technology), and art history (web design). I loved teaching something other than what I really do – it expanded my mind. Same with some things I’ve studied as an adult – classical piano, north Indian classical singing, and insects.

**Q:** You are grounded in two places, North Central Florida, and in Yorkshire, England. Can you compare and contrast those two places, and what they have meant for your poetry?

**A:** Both of those places are vital to who I am. Both are deeply beautiful, but in very different ways. Florida’s is southern, Yorkshire’s is northern. Florida’s way is hot and lush, Yorkshire’s is cold and spare. Florida is mostly (not entirely) flat, my part of Yorkshire is steep (Yorkshire is the biggest shire in England and has a wide variety of landscapes.) Both Florida and Yorkshire have lakes and rivers; both have coasts but the aspects of them couldn’t be more different. And each has inspired my poetry in more ways than I can go into here.

**Q:** Your talks are always full of great advice, and are always unique in tenor. You’ll be speaking at our Fall Convention 2019 in October in Daytona Beach, and again at Spring Fling 2020. The October piece is entitled “How to Surprise Yourself.” In what direction might that take us?

**A:** The October piece comes out of the times when either I run out of gas completely or I keep puttering along, boring myself all the way. I’ll talk about how you can know you’re getting boring in the first place (other than sensing it yourself), and demonstrate some exercises that can’t be done with boilerplate approaches; in other words, they’ll force you out of your funk whether you like it (or them) or not. By the way, don’t get threatened – the exercises are designed to show you potentially new slants in yourself, not to generate finished work.

**Q:** You often write about family, and just as often, about nature. How are the two approaches different?

**A:** Fundamentally, they’re not. I feel a tenderness for each, and each in its way is family.

**Q:** You have never been afraid, in either your poems or your talks to poets, to open yourself up. Has poetry helped define aspects of your life in this way, or has the unfolding of your life demanded this kind of mirror from you, given your gifts?

**A:** I have an odd answer to this one. I had an emotionally difficult childhood and I strive to be the opposite of my abusive mother with every word I write and with every person I meet.



Photograph by Albert Hall





Images clockwise, from top: Son Django and his Silas (in plaid shirt), Lola in Fakahatchee Strand with a naturalist friend, Daughter-in-law Lauren with Silas and baby Arden, Lola in her living room

**Q:** Your international connections in poetry have grown with your career; can you share an impression or two of other great poets whom you know well?

**A:** The first clause in that sentence exaggerates my breadth of connections—not that I don’t appreciate it—to the point where I can’t usefully answer the question other than to say that I’ve known Ted Kooser quite well and he’s just like his poetry—highly sensitive to other people and absolutely unassuming. We spent 10 days together once on a small faculty in Arkansas and we discovered that we share the passionate conviction that poetry is—without exception—for everyone. I was thrilled when they appointed him US Poet Laureate. They couldn’t have chosen a more appropriate person. I can also tell you that Ted is such a fine watercolor painter that he could have made a career of that too.

**Q:** You have just released your latest book, *Asylum: Improvisations on John Clare* (Pitt Poetry Series), and you’ll be speaking about Clare himself in the spring, and how he came to be embedded with your collection. Have you begun to think about what you might share in that talk?

**A:** I have but it’s a secret! For now, I’ll tell you that Clare was a 19th century British romantic poet who lived all his adult life in an insane asylum, and that I admire his poetry so much that for the past 20 years at least, I’ve checked his collected poems out of my local Yorkshire library and kept it the whole time I’m there, AND that he has a good deal to do with why my book came out the way it did.



# From Desire Lines

by Lola Haskins

## For Someone Considering Death

I told you.  
Life is one big Hanon  
up and down the piano,  
ten fingers skipping over each other  
in every conceivable way,  
two hands getting stronger.

And sure,  
the notes are the same for everyone,  
but you can choose to whisper or shout,  
to fade or grow.  
And haven't you noticed that some people's hands sing,  
but others are midwestern on the keys,  
each crescendo a secretarial swell.

Think about this.  
How can you dream to play the Pathetique,  
how can the moment come for you  
to look into someone's eyes  
and say The Hell With Everything, I Love You,  
when you haven't done your time,  
hour after hour, year after year  
in that small closed room.

---

## Love

She tries it on, like a dress.  
She decides it doesn't fit  
and starts to take it off.  
Her skin comes, too.

## (in Spanish) El Amor y La Mujer

Se lo prueba, como si fuera un vestido.  
Decide que no le queda  
y empieza a quitárselo.  
Su piel se desprende, también.

# From Asylum: Improvisations on John Clare

## by Lola Haskins

---From section 1

### **Mortality**

Every thrown stone falls.  
But there is a moment first  
as it hangs in the air

that the blurred hand  
that tossed it will not come again,  
thinks the stone as it flies.

### **Down the Hall, A Bell**

I can't do it, said the coroner.  
I knew this man. Which was  
how my father came to lie  
on a cold steel table that night  
with no one to probe  
his nakedness for the gap  
through which his life  
had billowed like a curtain  
and then, like the scrim  
it was, disappeared.  
Down the hall, a bell rings.  
We hear it everywhere.

---From Section 2

### **In the Stark Lands**

there are no trees to slow the wind.  
Creatures underground come out only  
with the stars. There are no other lights.  
The distance to the horizon is a fierce  
happiness. This is a portrait of my heart.

---From Section 3

### **Twinkle Twinkle (selections)**

#### *Where Wolf*

Listen, friend. I know what is and isn't a pillow when  
I see one and I'm not taking a single clo off in this  
room let alone getting into bed. So give it up.

#### *Weird Wolf*

A Vietnamese lady is leaning intently over your paw,  
finishing your French nails. Little bits of fur are float-  
ing in the footbath.

#### *We're Wolf*

That's us, bad boy, silhouetted on the hill behind  
your house. Be nice, or else.

#### *Ward Wolf*

In the night-lit hospital a sister, black-and-grey hairs  
sticking through her wimple, clicks in to check on  
Granny. Check? Well, not exactly, *check*.

#### *Whirr Wolf*

A pest with wings who meets his petite amie at you  
and they suck your blood through a straw.

--From Section 4

### **The Night after the Total Eclipse**

we wanted to see stars so we drove past the  
villages with their closed pubs, past the odd house,  
past the darkened farms, past the walled monks'  
road, past Grassington, and after miles of dips and  
rises we turned into a field. But the moon was so  
huge, so swollen -- like lips after too much kissing--  
that it paled the sky, and, looking up, we could not  
be sure of anything and should we have been adrift  
at sea, no sextant ever made could have saved us.

# From How Small, Confronting Morning

by Lola Haskins

## **The Lake** (selections)

Wood Stork, Wading

an arched claw and  
its liquid twin  
pas de deux for one

\*

## **Mockingbird**

the silence between twigs  
songs asleep on  
their mats

\*

## **Cardinal Chick**

little fire  
little heart-in-hand  
what a lucky tree!

\*

## **Sunset**

the lake has  
eaten fire  
quietly  
the ibises roost

\*

## **Flight**

if i eat feathers asks the child  
will i be able to fly?

you already can says her mother  
any night  
the lightness in you may lift you  
from your cot  
that's why i close the windows

when i get old enough the child  
wonders

will you open them? oh yes  
comes the answer

(sorrowing) that's what  
mothers do

## **The Hawk on the Branch**

i like the cut of his speckled jib  
i like his throat in another dimension  
he would hoist me with his hooked beak  
and sail me to his nest which would be high  
and surrounded by needles

and that would be all i wanted everything





## FAREWELL, LEE BENNETT HOPKINS

by Al Rocheleau

On August 8, we lost Lee Bennett Hopkins, one of FSPA's first chancellors, and the world lost not only a poet of renown, but a true benefactor and promoter of poetry for children. He was 81, and leaves behind his husband of many years, Charles Egita, a loving family, and admirers around the world, including many who came to know him through our group.

Lee Bennett Hopkins's childhood was, as it may have been for many of us, far from idyllic. Lee came from the projects of Newark, New Jersey; his mother and grandmother struggled to keep the family together. These times were chronicled in several books (*Been to Yesterdays* and *City I Love*) that can be read with satisfaction by adults or teens alike, as they are written through the eyes of a young man having to grow up too fast. Robert Frost's words often echo in much of Lee's work: "A poem begins as a lump in the throat..."

Lee spoke of those times in a speech he gave to our members at the FSPA convention in Tampa a few years ago. There were many moist eyes, and not just Lee's. Many of FSPA's high school members had attended that convention and were able to read their work; Lee held court with them afterward.

From an extensive biographic tribute in the *Washington Post*: "If much poetry for adults seeks to resolve timeless questions of love, requited or otherwise, and mortality, Mr. Hopkins collected poems that addressed equally timeless quandaries bedeviling children." Always, however, there remained an appreciation of life, of small and interesting things, the love of learning, a child's desire for camaraderie, great humor, and a sense of wonder.

In 2011, Lee Bennett Hopkins was cited as the world's most prolific anthologist of poetry for children with, at the time, 113 titles. It earned him a place in *The Guinness Book of World Records*. In addition to his own work, Lee scoured the work of others across decades, making small, perfect collections on all kinds of subjects. At his passing, *The New York Times* cited him in its headline, a "Champion of Poetry for Children" and quoting him: "I've always maintained that more can be said or felt in eight or ten lines than sometimes in an entire novel."

Lee told NPR in 2018: "I began my career as an elementary school teacher in New Jersey, and my work in poetry was really influenced by children I was teaching. He never stopped teaching, children or adults. His way was simple, but never simplistic; it was subtle, colorful, image-laden. The objects of our common lives were the objects of his poems, and the subject-vehicles that carried his heartfelt ideas were numerous, even encyclopedic. His work was written for small children, older children, teens, adults.

In 2015, Lee became a finalist for Florida Poet Laureate, an honor repeated this year; both times, FSPA proudly offered his name. Soon after the first nomination, Lee was installed, along with Florida Poet Laureate Peter Meinke, as the first chancellors of the Florida State Poets Association (FSPA). Recalling Lee, Peter said: "I only met Lee a few times, but each occasion was delightful. In what could have been a slightly embarrassing evening, he and I sat together wearing our chancellors' laurel crowns, and he kept me laughing through the whole event. He was a great example, living a successful and productive writerly life, generous, modest, helpful, and funny in conversation. He'll be missed."

Lola Haskins, also a two-time Florida Laureate nominee, and herself installed the following year as an FSPA chancellor, gave tribute: "His lifelong dedication to children and to children's poetry was a wonderful thing. And long may his progeny—whether anthologies, collections of his own writings, or even a sly joke he once told a delighted audience—wave."

In 2017, Lee was elected into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame. Other accolades have come over the years from the National Council of Teachers of English, the Catholic Library Association, The Christophers, and The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

An astounding benefactor of poetry, Lee has founded numerous awards programs around the country. At FSPA, Lee founded the Lee Bennett Hopkins Awards, in contests for middle and high school grades offered to schools across Florida. Even with his passing, the endowment, according to Mr. Egita, will continue. He stated: "As you know, Lee was known as the 'Pied Piper of Poetry.' I truly want to carry on his legacy with the endowment." FSPA Youth Poetry chairman Carolyn Scully added, "Lee Bennett Hopkins has been an encourager to student poets in so many ways. The endowment was one; he generously provided prize funds for the FSPA Student Poetry Contest winners and sent winning students personal congratulatory letters. Most important, he looked beyond himself to see what the future could hold for poetry. It's great that his work will continue."

For any working poet, what we leave behind is important, not just in memories, but in deeds, for each other and for the public we reach. Our published writings allow us to live again any time a book is opened, new pages to new eyes, child or adult. His enormous body of work, of a hundred-plus titles in thousands and thousands of slim volumes, will never be wholly cast aside. Rather, they will reside on bookshelves somewhere to be picked up in other generations, as our friend Lee Bennett Hopkins becomes again, at once, that child of long ago, that man of substance, that squire of future children everywhere, enchanted by poetry.



Earlier in this issue we featured one of our guest speakers for the 45th Annual Convention, Lola Haskins. One of our other featured speakers is M.B. McLatchey. We thought you would like to know a little about her as well.

## M.B. McLatchey, Volusia County's Poet Laureate



**M.B. McLatchey** is a widely published poet and writer with a lifelong passion for literature, philosophy, and ancient and modern languages. She is a Professor of Classics at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida, Poet Laureate of Florida's Volusia County, and Arts & Wellness Ambassador for the Atlantic Center for the Arts. She has received numerous awards, including the 2011 American Poet Prize by The American Poetry Journal and the 2012 Robert Frost Award. Promoted by the Atlantic Center for the Arts as offering "The best poetry course in Florida!" she is featured in the July 2017 issue of AWP.

A graduate of Harvard University with over 30 years of college teaching, M.B. has also worked as a speechwriter for a state senator, as a reporter for a daily newspaper, as a magazine editor for a major publisher, as a reader and book reviewer for poetry journals, and as a board of trustees member for a private college in Vermont. She has authored many literary reviews, compiled text books for humanities courses, conducted poetry and writing workshops throughout the country, mentored young poets, judged poetry contests, and is a frequent contributor to books on writing, poetry and teaching.

Her debut poetry collection *The Lame God* was awarded first place in the 16th Annual May Swenson Poetry Award by Utah State University Press in 2013. She was awarded the 2014 FLP Chapbook Prize by Finishing Line Press for her book *Advantages of Believing*. She has received numerous academic awards including the Harvard University Danforth Prize, the Harvard/Radcliffe Prize for Literary Scholarship, and the Brown University Elmer Smith Award. Her most recent poetry awards include the Annie Finch Prize for Poetry, the Spoon River Poetry Review's Editors' Prize, the Penelope Niven Creative Nonfiction Award, and the Vachel Lindsay Poetry Award.



# 45th FSPA ANNUAL CONVENTION

w e r e a l c o o l .

MCLATCHEY



HASKINS



DAVIDSON



WATSON



BLLENHEIM



GORDON



**Oct. 25, 26 & 27, 2019**

**Hosted by The Live Poets Society  
of Daytona Beach**

**This year's convention will be held at  
The Plaza Resort & Spa  
600 N. Atlantic Ave., Daytona Beach**

## HIGHLIGHTS:

### KEYNOTE SPEECH:

**M.B. McLatchey on  
Rhyming to Set the Darkness Echoing:  
Remembering Seamus Heaney**

### A WORLD PREMIERE PERFORMANCE:

**St. Valentine's Day Adventures by  
Wm. Shaksper- A One-Act Play  
transcribed & directed by Marc Davidson**

### WORKSHOPS:

**Brick by Brick – Building an Innovative  
Poem with Janet Watson**

**Persona Poems: Poetry, Drama, or Fiction?  
with Ellen Nielsen**

**How to Surprise Yourself: Some Examples  
& Exercises with Lola Haskins**

### PRESENTATIONS:

**W.S. Gilbert, Poet with Marc Davidson**

**Brand-New Selections from "The Poetry Parody Songbook"  
- A Performance by Bob Blenheim**

**What Poet Am I? - Game Show Entertainment  
Emceed by Peter M. Gordon**

# Florida State Poets Association



**October 2019 Annual Convention**  
**Oct. 25-27, 2019**

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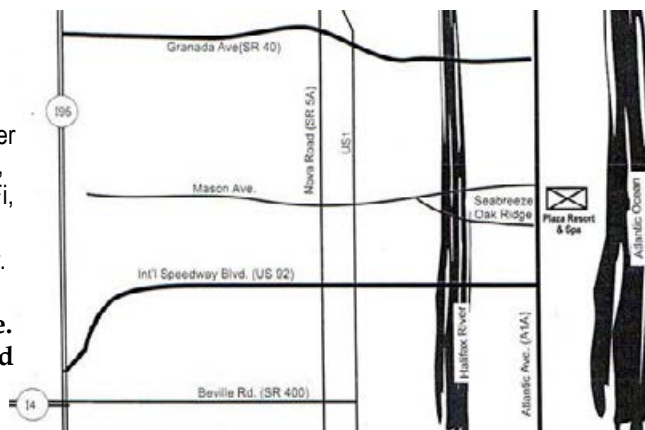
**Rates: \$103.00 + 12.5% tax (double room).**

Note: Basic room rate does NOT include Daily Resort Fee of \$22.00 per night that includes self-parking, 2-liter bottles of premium bottled water, and a one-time \$12 drink credit. Resort fee includes valet parking, Wi-Fi, local & 800 phone calls, access to fitness & business centers, pool towels & chairs, first hour of water sports' rentals, and daily newspaper.

Make reservations before Sept. 25, 2019 to guarantee rate.

Any reservations received after that date will be accepted on a space- or rate-available basis.

(Parking: Free for hotel guests, valet or self-park.)



**LOCATION:** Located on the "World's Most Famous Beach". From I-4 or I-95, take 92 East exit (past the Speedway) across the bridge until you reach the ocean. Turn left (North) on A1A (Atlantic Ave.) and the Plaza Resort is approx. a half mile on your right.

### REGISTRATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

### FSPA CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEES: (Please check your category designation):

\_\_\_\_ FSPA Member: \$35.00 Chapter Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_ or Member-at-Large: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ New Member: \$45.00 (includes 2020 \$35 membership fee & discounted convention registration)

\_\_\_\_ Member Vendor Display Table: \$50.00      \_\_\_\_ Non-Member Vendor Display Table: \$75.00

To order for the Chancellors' Dinner & New Chancellor Installation: Carol Frost (on Sat., Oct. 26, 5 – 7 p.m.):

\_\_\_\_ Lemon Rosemary Roasted Chicken: \$35.00      \_\_\_\_ Teriyaki Salmon: \$35.00      \_\_\_\_ Vegetarian: \$35.00

All include Red Roasted Potatoes, Fresh Seasonal Vegetables, House Salad (w/Ranch or Vinaigrette Dressing) and Dessert (Cheesecake with Raspberry Drizzle & Whipped Cream)

(Prices above include 6.5% sales tax & 21% gratuity.)

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please mail completed form with check or money order payable to FSPA by Oct. 7, 2019.*

### MAIL TO:

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



Mary Marcelle

**Please send your dues to:**

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

## Form a new FSPA Chapter in your area!

With 11 current chapters, the Florida State Poets Association is represented in most major metropolitan areas and many smaller locations. But if you don't live near an existing chapter or the local chapter is not working for you, think about forming your own chapter of the Florida State Poets Association. We encourage chapter formation – the more the merrier!

All it takes is you and four other like-minded poetry lovers who are current members of FSPA. With five dues-paying members who elect officers and a chapter name, you can form a local chapter and celebrate poetry in your own way at meetings that you organize yourself.

Your new chapter might host writing workshops for your members or form a serious critique circle for new poetry. You might want to study poets, poetry forms and components, styles and trends. Your chapter may want to organize community poetry events and take advantage of the FSPA Speakers Bureau, with knowledgeable guest speakers who come to your location free of charge. Your local FSPA chapter can enjoy poetry however you like, then you can post your members' successes in this newsletter.

It's a huge state and poets are everywhere. Poetry is something meant to be shared, and small, local FSPA Chapters are a great way to do that. Help us promote poetry with camaraderie and local flair. Consider forming a chapter in your area, and let us know if we can help.

You can reach Membership Chair Jane Peterson here: [jep@cfl.rr.com](mailto: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



The poet—  
in spirit of a troubadour-thief  
is paid for services at weddings  
or a far funeral, providing toast  
or elegy that sounds  
as Greek but is mellifluous  
in its sibilance and bell-like rings—  
everyone's Pindar of the fleeting hour,  
blacksheep  
with a laurel wreath.

~ Al Rocheleau





## Empowering teens through writing

### “Every Teen is at risk” — Blu Bailey

~ Mark Andrew James Terry with Blu Bailey

I recently met with a young writer who has an inspired story. Her name is Blu Bailey. She is the spirited founder of [The Write](#) — a youth services organization with a mission to empower teens to become ambassadors for their communities through creative writing, arts education and civic engagement initiatives. The organization empowers the next generation of leaders, self-defined artists, and visionaries by challenging them to find, develop, publicly present, and apply their voices as creators of social change. Doing so fosters our commitment to making their social, educational and religious communities more socially aware.

Her vision is to reach youth across boundaries of age, race, class, genders and cultures through poetry, spoken word, storytelling and lyricism. The Write pushes to create safe spaces where young people are supported by the belief that self-expression improves self-confidence and strengthens educational achievement.

Recently, The Write finished its first youth poetry festival, [YELUSWAP](#) (Youth Expressing Life Using Spoken Word And Poetry), where 50 teens from around the state of Florida engaged in workshops across civic engagement, self-esteem and creative writing aspects from the art of freestyling and storytelling to honoring spaces that have impacted and changed pieces of their lives and vice versa. Through YELUSWAP, the participants were able to establish themselves as members of a diverse community of young creatives and explore and define braver and more compassionate versions of themselves.

The Write works alongside schools to create stronger communities of creative writers by offering free community based and in-school writing workshops, teen open mics, community service projects, youth leadership conferences and unique opportunities to share their stories across the city.

You can help Blu and The Write by donating your time, ideas, creative spaces, resources, and/or monetary gifts. She believes “the cure for cancer is in the mind of the kid in the back of the class who is too afraid to speak. Help us help the next generation of creatives and innovators.”

Contact: [thewrite.org](http://thewrite.org)

## Poet John Foster



*A poetry form virtuoso and bridge master, meet FSPA member/poet John Foster.*

"In my family there was always a poem to accompany a birthday or anniversary celebration, to mark a special event. Friends and relatives were there to read and recite ditties and tributes. Having grown up in this tradition, I later found myself writing poetic tributes each spring for departing faculty at the prep school where I taught. In retirement, I discovered a web site, World of Poets, where I could post my work and get feedback from fellow poets around the country. Through the site's many links, I learned a great deal about our craft and became a passionate devotee. One of my online "friends" soon urged me to publish. That was eleven years ago, at age 75. Today, I have four collections. It's never too late to discover one's passion, and to create a legacy."  
— John Foster

A member of FSPA's New River Poets chapter, John Foster resides in an independent-living community of 600 residents. While offering a poetry workshop there eight years ago, he asked if the authorities would permit him to create a bulletin board to display the work of his "students." The result (*pictured on the next page*) has spawned a tradition where the "Poet-Tree" now features poems each month by members of the community. John serves as its "custodian."

### **A few of John's awards include:**

Appointed national poetry judge – 2016

Vice-President of New River Poets chapter of the FSPA

President of Southshore Poets of Sun City Center

Winner of FSPA's performance poetry contest in 2018

Runner-up for "Bridge Teacher of the Year" in a national contest sponsored by the American Bridge Teachers Association.

## Books available on Amazon

[Discovery! - - A Wordcrafters's Journey](#)  
[Chuckles - - Verses to a-Muse](#)  
[Where There's A Quill](#)

[A Gesture of Words](#)—Poetry Forms and Formulas  
( a guide book endorsed by Peter Meinke,  
former Poet Laureate of Florida)

### The Rub

She worries her ring finger,  
brailling the haunting imprint  
of a circlet  
no longer there.

Beneath skin-deep depression,  
scar tissue.

Wincing back a tear,  
she presses at the cruel indented memory  
to smooth the tuck,  
erase the ache.

Some small success will come  
only as the skin draws taut  
upon the clenching of her fist.

### Ode to Grandpa

So what if you're crabby,  
a little bit flabby,  
or take an occasional snooze.

So what if you're gassy  
and prone to be sassy,  
or yell at some guy on the news.

So what if you're addled,  
your mem'ry's skedaddled,  
you struggle to get out of bed.

It's no bed of roses;  
what everyone knows is  
it sure as hell beats being dead!



John Foster's community poetry bulletin board — The Poet-Tree

### {haiku}

family dinner  
father's voice breaks during grace  
empty high chair





Mary Rogers-Grantham

## FSPA CONTEST JUDGING UNDERWAY!

Cheers! July 13, another annual submission end-date for Florida State Poets Association Contests. More than half of the judges have submitted their selected winning poems, many with interesting comments regarding their selection process, their joy of reading the poems, and their appreciation for being a judge for the 2019 contest year.

In the words of one of my favorite songs, soon I'll be able to "Breathe. Just breathe."

It is my pleasure to be Contest Chair for Florida State Poets Association.

~ Mary Rogers-Grantham, FSPA Contest Chair

### FSPA 2020 CONTEST

The FSPA 2020 Contest SPONSORSHIP FORM is now available on the FSPA website. **Deadline is Sept. 12.** Here is a link: [http://www.floridastatepoetsassociation.org/?page\\_id=1402](http://www.floridastatepoetsassociation.org/?page_id=1402)



Carolynn J. Scully


## STUDENT POETRY CONTEST

I am honored to be trusted with the management of the FSPA Student Poetry Contest. The 2019-2020 Contest is calling for all teachers, and anyone involved with young people to get on the mark and make themselves ready to go. Letters are going out and I am seeking new avenues to get the word out and information into the hands of leaders and teachers so our contest numbers will grow. One area we are trying is the Girl Scouts. It was suggested by a member and I sought out a contact. We will see if they will run with us. If anyone has other contacts they think might be a source of getting the info into the hands of young writers, please send me an email at [cscully27@gmail.com](mailto:cscully27@gmail.com).

One of the new things I am doing to help limit the number of disqualifications is adding one page to the info that gives a visual of what we need to see and a list of common mistakes made so that they can be avoided.

School will be in full swing this next few weeks. Our members need to encourage their contacts to participate. I am enclosing all info so you can pass it along as you see an opportunity.

~ Carolynn J. Scully, Student Contest Chair



# FSPA CHAPTER NEWS & UPDATES

## CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

### **Big Bend Poets & Writers**

Alex Kaelin  
BigBendPoetsandWriters@  
gmail.com

### **Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach**

Robert Blenheim  
rblenheim@aol.com

### **Miami Poets**

Tere Starr  
terestarr@mindspring.com

### **North Florida Poetry Hub**

Steffani Fletcher  
steffani@hopeathand.org

### **Orlando Area Poets**

Leslie Halpern  
lchwriter@cfl.rr.com

### **Osceola Poetry Society**

Mackenzie Riley

### **Poetry for the Love of It**

Charles Hazelip  
dochazelip@comcast.net

### **Space Coast Poets**

Janna Schledorn  
mschledorn@cfl.rr.com

### **Sunshine Poets**

Cheri Herald  
c\_herald@hotmail.com

### **Tomoka Poets**

Mary-Ann Westbrook  
1poetry.3@gmail.com

### **New River Poets**

Janet Watson  
JMPWAT@aol.com





Tere Starr

### 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.

## Miami Poets

Miami Poets escaped the heat and let their summer words sizzle during the monthly Miami Poets Soirée, moderated by **Tere Starr**. We gather each first Wednesday from 1 to 3 at the Pinecrest Branch Library to share poetry and inspiration. On second Mondays from 1 to 3 pm, we join Group 10, the critique group facilitated by **Steven Liebowitz**. Our love of the written word is apparent as we share our poetry in a variety of venues in Miami and across the miles.

Achievements: **Tere Starr's** poems, "Cosmic Light" and "The Mystical Moon," were published in the anthology, *Lun'Allure... To the Moon and More*, a tribute to the fiftieth anniversary of Apollo 11. **Patsy Asuncion** received the 2019 Catherine Clarke Coiner Outstanding Literary Volunteer Award from Writer House in Charlottesville, VA. She continues to host open mics on fourth Wednesdays at Cville Coffee. Patsy's recent poetry publications and events can be found at <http://patasuncion.wixsite.com/patsy-asuncion>. **Jo Christiane Ledakis** remains active in writing groups in Geneva, Switzerland. Her poem, "Thank You, Brother" was published in South Florida Writers Association's *Author's Voice* along with "Vision" by **Marina Stevens**, "Happy Birthday America," and "The Rain and Me" by **Ricki Dorn** and "In This Garden" by **Connie Goodman-Milone**. Connie's poem, "Pink Ribbon," appears in *45 Magazine Women's Literary Journal*. **Zorina Frey** is the editor of this online magazine and welcomes submissions at <https://45magazineiwa.com>. Zorina performed during Lyric Live at the historic Lyric Theatre in Overtown. Connie's letters, "Question of Loyalty" and "Joy and Sorrow," were published in *The Miami Herald* along with **Pat Bonner Milone's** article, "Hold Back Development in the Redland." **Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk** was the featured poet during the June Authors Showcase Series at the Suniland Books & Books in Pinecrest, presenting her book, *In the Eyes of the Poet*. Poetry continues to be our priority.

~ Tere Starr, President



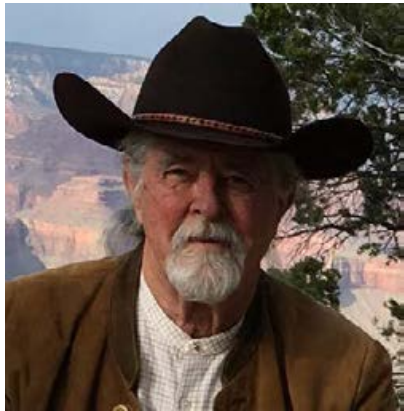
Norma Chew, Tere Starr, Sheena Szuri, Steve Liebowitz, Connie Goodman-Milone, Pat Bonner Milone. Seated: Ricki Dorn and Marina Stevens



Robert E. Blenheim

### 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.



## The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

The most interesting recent challenge The Live Poets Society had was to write variations on “Mary Had a Little Lamb” as if it were written by various famous poets, and the results were hilarious as well as creative. Members also wrote poems on the following subjects: “answers”, “theme parks”, and “a response to hearing a musical performance” as well as slam poems in which each poet dramatically performed their own work. Poems analyzed at the meetings were William Blake’s “The Tyger”, Gwendolyn Brooks’ “We Real Cool”, and Kathy Park Hong’s “Trouble in Mind,” the latter of which gave us another challenge: to write a poem using at least one nonsense or non-word.



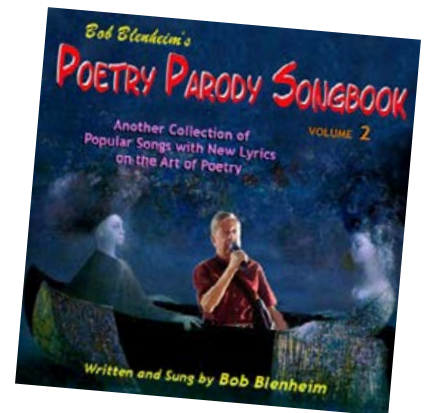
We welcome a new member who has recently joined: **Stan Drescher**—and, yes, he is related to a rather famous Drescher. He brings real enthusiasm as well as hilarity to the meetings.

The members have been busy on many projects. The Live Poets Society’s vice president **Vicki Iorio** has just published a poetry chapbook called, *Something Fishy* for Fishingline Press, another called *Send Me a Letter* is forthcoming; **Jesse Sam Owens** has been working on a project that draws a comparison between music and making love; **Llewellyn McKernan** has been involved in open poetry readings while vacationing in West Virginia; her husband John is still working on his 49 *Father Poems*; **Ellen Nielsen** is working on poetry on a Franciscan friar, Diego de Landa, which reflects her visits to Yucatan. And president **Bob Blenheim** racked in one First Place Award in the NFSPS 2019 national poetry contest along with four honorable mentions. Now Blenheim is hard at work writing and recording a new sequel to his 2016 hit CD, *Poetry Parody Songbook*, which will have all-new uproarious song parodies. It will go on sale at the 2019 FSPA Convention in October.

Speaking of that upcoming convention (to be held at the Plaza Resort & Spa in Daytona Beach on October 25th, 26th & 27th), the chapter’s planning committee completed its work on assembling the program. It is an event to be hosted by The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach, and promises to be spectacular. The theme of the convention will be “We Real Cool” (after the **Gwendolyn Brooks** poem), and **M.B. McLatchey** will be the exciting keynote speaker. More info on the other workshops and presentations to come!

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, President







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.



Andrew Jarvis



Elaine Person

## Orlando Area Poets

The Maitland Public Library held its quarterly poetry coffeehouse on June 28, emceed by **Elaine Person**. Many of the poets reading their work are members of Orlando Area Poets. They read poetry on the theme "A Star is Born." The next coffeehouse will be held on September 27 on the theme "Free Falling."

The National Federation of State Poetry Societies announced the winners of their annual contests at the convention in June. Orlando Area Poets who earned recognition were **Peter Gordon**, honorable mentions for his poems "B & K Bungalow Colony, Summer of 1970" and "Custer's Scouts," and **Diane Neff**, honorable mention for her poem "Bull Rider Prayer."

**Leslie Halpern** received a gold medal for humor from Florida Authors & Publishers Association for her nonfiction book, *Scantily Clad Truths*. She also appeared on "The Tiberius Show," (a radio program for children) to discuss her poetry books, *Poodles & Doodles: Poems About Dogs* and *Silly Sleepytime Poems*.

**Andrew Jarvis** received a silver medal for poetry from Florida Authors & Publishers Association for his book, *Blood Moon*.

**Elaine Person** was the featured poet on Haikuniverse on June 3. Her weekly writing workshop at Winter Park Library is highlighted in the annual show, Wednesday Night Writers and the Central Florida Acoustic Fingerstyle Guitar Group at the library on October 5. The show is free and open to the public. Elaine will facilitate youth and adult workshops at the Florida Writers Annual Conference (October 17-20), and continues her Inspired Words Workshops at the Crealde School of Art in Winter Park (October 12).

~ Diane Neff, Vice President/Secretary,  
for Leslie Halpern, President



The Orlando Area Poets are saddened to report that our member, **Laura Terrell Madison**, passed on August 12, 2019. We will miss her positivity and enthusiasm for poetry.



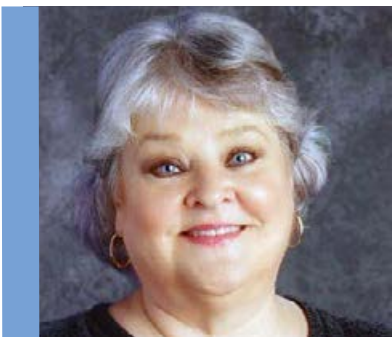
*Janet Watson*

### 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



*B.J. Alligood*



*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

## New River Poets

New River Poets continues to meet on the third Saturday of the month from 1-4:30 pm at the Old Richland Schoolhouse—the home of member **Meg Roman**. Recent challenges for our poets were the etheree form, a “mystery musical instrument” poem, and the haibun. It is always a treat to hear how different poetic voices handle those challenges and to participate in the productive discussion that follows the readings.

At our July meeting, **Janet Watson** reported on the NFSPS Convention in Santa Fe. She enjoyed the privilege of hearing poetry read in the capital rotunda, the presentation of the Blackberry Peach Award to FSPA member **BJ Alligood**, and other special experiences in a beautiful place where the arts reign supreme. Santa Fe is definitely “A City Different.” Janet was proud to hear the names of New River poets announced 18 times! That’s the number of awards our members won in the national contests. Congratulations to the winners: **John Foster, Beverly Joyce, Andrea McBride, Cheryl Van Beek, and Janet Watson**.

Our poets have sent in their submissions for the FSPA contests and for the *Cadence* anthology. How wonderful it is to have this opportunity to see our poems in print!

We were glad to welcome **Ken Clanton** and **Fred Wood** on their return to our meetings. Both of them had been away for awhile, recovering from health issues. Member **Dina Tanner**, who is also our very-capable FSPA webmaster, had a serious accident in July. We hope that by the time this newsletter is printed, she is doing much better.

~ Janet Watson, President

## 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. Member **Natalie Warrick** continues to have her poetry published in her church newsletter. **Joyce Shiver** took a 1st place and a Best in Show from Writers and Editors, as well as a 2nd place and an HM in NFSPS’s annual contest. Sunshine Poets has a Facebook page. Contact: [sunshinepoets@gmail.com](mailto:sunshinepoets@gmail.com)

~ Cheri Herald, President



Mary-Ann Westbrook

## Tomoka Poets

Tomoka Poets continue meeting through the hot summer months. The Ormond Beach Library, while undergoing some changes, still finds room for us and they, of course, have air conditioning.

Two of our members attended the NFSPS Convention in Santa Fe, New Mexico. **BJ Alligood**, after some travel problems, got there in time to perform her poetry and receive her much deserved award in the rotunda of the State Capital building. **Mary-Ann Westbrook** tagged along as the biggest smiling cheerleader and to assist in any way needed. What a great time we had. Wonderful hotel. Unique and memorable convention. Thank you New Mexico Poets. Thank you **Jesse Sam Owens** for emceeing Open mic night while we were gone.

Now back home to our beloved Tomoka Poets. Open mic night was very well attended. There being no featured poet this time, we were able to feature all the poets who attended. Between the great turn out, the coffee/tea, the baked treats and the variety of poets and poetry it was an amazing evening.

Now we look forward to FSPA's Fall Convention here in Daytona Beach. Hope to see you all in October.

~ Mary-Ann Westbrook, President



BJ Alligood received her Blackberry Peach Award in the Capital Rotunda in Santa Fe, NM during the NFSPS 2019 Convention.



### 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





*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 Room 1A on the main floor of the Tallahassee Senior Center, 1400 North Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32303.

Visitors are always welcome.

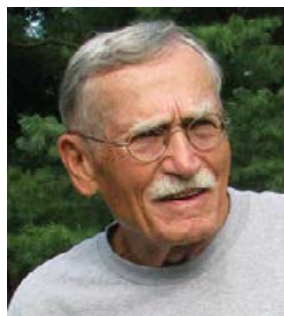
## Poetry for the Love of It

Poetry for the Love of It (PLOI) took a break this summer. Due to a lack of sufficient member availability, there were no meetings on July 22nd or in August. In addition, the Tallahassee Senior Center (TSC) has assigned PLOI to a different meeting room. We now meet in Room 1A in the back hallway of the main floor. No more elevator worries.

At the July 12th meeting, the notable poet was Florida's own poet laureate, **Peter Meinke**. A birthday party was also held to honor chapter President **Charles Hazelip** who reached 86 in July. There was a birthday cake, a card, party hats, beads, lots of glitter stars, and, as always, good poetry.

Although members did not meet for the latter half of summer, they were still honing their poetry skills. The summer assignment was to write a poem using the "Alliterisen" format. A link to it is at <http://www.shadowpoetry.com/resources/wip/alliterisen.html>

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



*Peter Meinke*



*Charles Hazelip*



*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 Society has been waiting for school to reconvene, as the group since its founding has been committed to having high school students among its officers. The Society lost two such college-bound officers through graduation last year. The Society's founding secretary, retired teacher **Nancy Ortiz**, may move to Vice President this year, depending on the outcome of elections, which should be held soon. FSPA President **Al Rocheleau** and Treasurer **Robyn Weinbaum** are also contributing members of the Society.

**Al Rocheleau** was recently interviewed by *Neon*, the London-based poetry journal. The article will appear in the journal's next issue. Al was nominated for a 2018 Forward Poetry Prize in the U.K. **Nancy Ortiz**, whose work partly focuses on children's poetry, recently completed an illustration course, the outcome of which she plans to apply to her writing of children's books.

~ *Nancy Ortiz, Secretary*  
for *Mackenzie Riley, President*



# □ Poetry Challenge

## Editor's Choice

### Home-less

Praedium urbanum has seen brighter, happier days.  
Shocks of disrepair and piles of rubble announce this.  
Within, ghosts of laughter and good times circle about  
holding fond memories hostage, keeping them safe.  
But they escape through broken windows  
and remind us of what was.  
Wild foliage climbs walls of brick  
strangling that which was so strong and beautiful.  
The poison of blight, neglect and troubled times  
pours out from vines that overtake everything.  
Each time I pass, the days are darker and sadder.  
The happiness has faded like color left in the sun.  
Time has stolen the laughter.  
The home's heart light extinguished;  
The good times are buried deep beneath the roots of overwhelming brush.  
So sad - once someone's home - now silent, dilapidated...and un-loved.

By Suzanne S. Austin-Hill

### JUST ANOTHER BUM

He returned from war fragile and broken.  
His wife and kids kept him anchored, gave him a reason to live.  
Then they were killed in a car crash - - he had been the driver.  
After they'd been buried he was unable to get out of bed,  
unable to eat, unable to shower, unable to work - - so he lost his job.  
Penniless he lost his house.  
He went to a homeless shelter, but they asked questions - -  
why, how, what happened ...  
he'd killed them all, lost his job, lost their house, totaled the car,  
  
.....all of it was his fault,  
.....he didn't want to talk about it  
so he moved to a homeless camp where no one asked questions.  
He was given distance - provided unspoken acceptance.  
Blankets and food were shared. Space was made around the campfire  
where the flames burned his retinas so he couldn't see the memories;  
crickets drowned out the screams in his ears; birds flew off with the splashes  
of blood; squirrels gathered nuggets of broken glass and buried them for winter.  
Here there was no why, how or what . . .  
just a place to survive each day.

By BJ Alligood

# Poetry Challenge

Two Blocks from Aulani, Disney Resort Hotel, Oahu

We turn left out of the shopping strip and there they are,  
huddled together like immigrants rounded up by ICE.  
We can't figure out which arm goes with which torso,  
there are so many sitting together. They have deep lines  
on their faces. The men have long beards, the women, ratty  
ponytails. All of them are darkly tanned, arms covered in tattoos.

Like feral chickens they perch on one triangular concrete median.  
We slow down. I try to make eye contact, but each is looking  
down as if hanging his head in shame, though they're  
probably just trying to avoid the sun. Only one little girl, maybe  
4 or 5, is looking up. Her Strawberry Shortcake T-shirt is too big  
for her. She clutches a piece of a cardboard box:

HUNGRY LOOSE CHANGE OKAY  
MAHALO

By Jill Jennings

## Going Nowhere

I do not have a bed with clean sheets that smell of lavender  
Or a quilt made by my grandmother.  
I do not have a roof over my head to keep out the pelting rain  
Or to shield me from the blazing sun.  
I do not have a stack of books next to an easy chair  
Or time for reading for pleasure.  
I do not have a sidewalk leading to my numbered front door  
Or a fenced back yard where my dog can roam freely.  
I do not have a daily shower or a toothbrush  
Or a clean towel and bar of soap.  
I do not have socks without holes  
Or shoes that have not walked in other people's footsteps.  
I do have a sign that says No Parking, Stopping Standing Any Time.  
I have a camouflage jacket and a cardboard pallet so I can sleep with fear  
On the street next to a shiny marble building.  
I do have a raggedy quilt to wrap around my loneliness  
So no one bothers me in my gray despair.  
The sidewalk rises up under me declaring its rough cruelty  
As feet hurry past with their places to go and things to accomplish.  
I, though, am going nowhere.

By Judith Krum

# □ Poetry Challenge

## Editor's Choice

Sad, Sad Place  
...Heartbreak Hotel

It's down by the river, this Inn  
where rooms are \$6.00 per night  
if you bring your own bedroll.

Scraggly bearded men wearing jeans  
that could stand alone, if the guys  
every took them off. The men carry  
their world on their backs.

Residents share bathrooms no one  
ever cleans. In water closets,  
everything's clogged. A lovely place.

Guess that's why they call  
the crumpling Inn, "Heartbreak Hotel".  
This sinkhole's not far from the bottom.

After that, a fellow might find  
shelter under a large crate. With any  
luck, he'll nab a spot by a steam vent.

Around the Inn, hoards of humanity  
struggle to live, on heartbreak streets.

By Gail Denham

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**Next Issue:**  
**Editor's Choice**  
**Poetry Challenge**

**Prompt:** The Holidays  
**Form:** Any  
**Line limit:** Up to 20 lines  
**Submit by:** October 1, 2019,  
to Mark@TKOrlando.com  
**The winning poem(s):**  
Will be featured in our  
November/December 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

### 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
- Editor's Choice Poetry Challenge Winner

# Time to order 2019 Cadence!

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I plan to pick up my anthologies at the October Convention

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_ (please √)

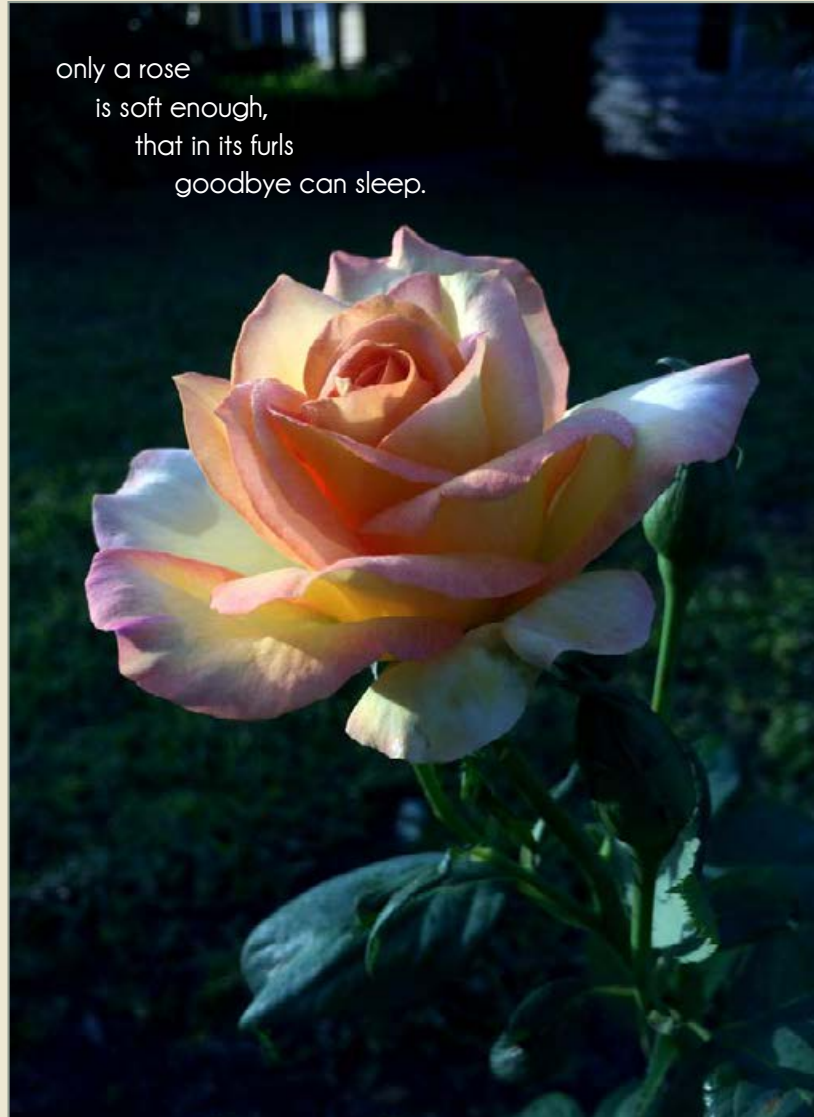
We hope you enjoyed this issue of FSPA's Of Poets & Poetry.

~ Mark Andrew James Terry, Editor





## *A Little Lagniappe:*



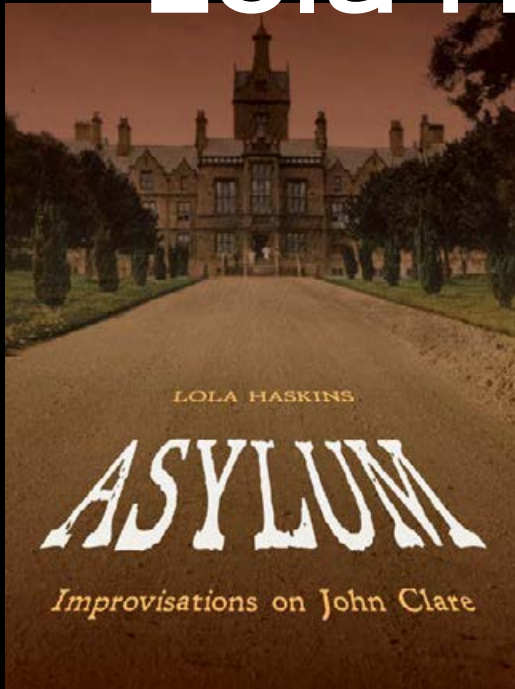
only a rose  
is soft enough,  
that in its furls  
goodbye can sleep.

Photography and poem by Mark Andrew James Terry

### **Do you have A Little Lagniappe?**

If you have a short poem associated with an image that you created, and would like them considered for publication in *Of Poets & Poetry*, please send the poem and image to me at [mark@TKOrlando.com](mailto:mark@TKOrlando.com).

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