

Of Poets & Poetry



A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA STATE POETS ASSOCIATION VOL. 46.6

November/December

Carol Frost

See page 3

FSPA Chancellor



Photograph by Mark Andrew James Terry

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Florida State Poets Association

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Al Rocheleau

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

by Al Rocheleau

Well, I hope you enjoyed the October Convention! **Bob Blenheim** and his people at the **Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach** did a great job. If you had to miss it, you missed a good time. It's amazing really, the process for preparing one of these conventions, and essentially we are always preparing two at a time, as we are already well into the plans for the **Spring Fling 2020, to be held in Zephyrhills on April 18** of next year, sponsored by the **New River Poets and Sunshine Poets**. Yes, that one will be a one-day affair, at which we will install another new chancellor, **Silvia Curbelo**.

But first, let's talk about our just-installed chancellor, **Carol Frost**, and October's keynote speaker, **M. B. McLatchey**. As you can see from the cover of this issue of *Of Poets & Poetry*, the in-depth interview and poems included, as well as her brilliant acceptance speech upon her installation, we are fortunate that Carol agreed to join forces with us. Even as we had to say goodbye to the great **Lee Bennett Hopkins**, we yet hold close to us our other treasures: **Peter Meinke**, **Lola Haskins** (who was amazing as usual in her October workshop), and now **Carol Frost**. In upcoming conventions we will indeed add **Silvia Curbelo**, then **Denise Duhamel**, **David Kirby**, and **Virgil Suarez**. What a lineup! All are among the best poets not only in Florida, but in the entire country.

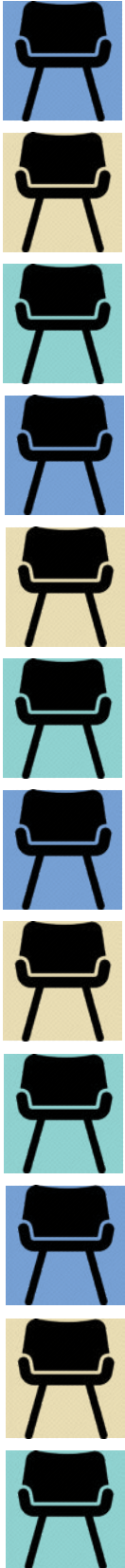
While we are at it, what a presentation by M.B. McLatchey! Last week I went to M.B.'s superb website at www.mbmclatchey.com to offer some commentary. I thought I'd share that with you:

M.B. McLatchey presents herself without fanfare, but certain of what she knows, where she has come from, and where she's going. As keynote speaker at the Florida State Poets Association's 2019 Fall Convention, M.B. shared, for the first time in public, her thoughts and feelings for Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney, her mentor and dear friend of her graduate days at Harvard. Mirroring the self-effacement and common sense that emanated from the icon with whom she not only studied in class and at his home, but also shared Guinness and Porter's Whiskey at a Harvard Square pub, the simple, elegant wisdom of Heaney's art and his humanity rung through her with our assembly of poets. Telling aspects of his and their story, along with the kind of seminal advice from a master that working poets yearn for, she managed to reach every heart and mind in the room.

A note: when reading M.B.'s own award-winning poetry, I find echoes of Heaney, his blood and his logic, combined with, for me, a kind of simply etched elegance that I once found in the pediments and friezes of Phidias in the British Museum. Even in her work that is contemporary, I get that feel, that clarity. There is timelessness to the work, as there is in that of Heaney, who can as easily reflect the paths of Beowulf as he can the ways of a child in County Derry, or the walks of a beautiful graduate student on the cobbles of Cambridge. M.B. McLatchey knows, and she connected us to Seamus Heaney, and to herself, and for both experiences, we are grateful. Just as you have come to know the poetry of Lee, Peter, and Lola, it's time set your sights on Carol and M.B.

~ Al Rocheleau, President, Florida State Poets Association





THE TWELVE CHAIRS NOW BELONGS TO FSPA

At the convention we announced all the graduates of the Twelve Chairs Short Course, accredited by FSPA, a distillation of the 180-Hour Advanced Course down to 12 Hours. Graduates who were in attendance received their diplomas, while others will have them shortly. To date, 28 FSPA members have completed the Short Course, to go along with 24 who have completed the big course. Both courses are now given to FSPA, and 100% of sales of the courses will create revenue for the organization. At the convention, it was announced that FSPA will make the course available on flash drive to its members for a 50% discount, \$50.00 for the entire course. (FSPA price for Advanced Course will be announced at a later date.)

Short Course graduates announced at the convention were: FSPA members **Stephanie Andrews, Tzimon Barto, Mary Marcelle, Joe Dunn, Sophia DuRose, Carolyn Freligh, Alice Friedman, Tisha Gentry, Carol Hagans, Terry Hagans, Leslie Halpern, Carlton Johnson, Linda Johnson, Ron Kenney, Judy Krum, Estelle Lipp, Nancy Hauptle MacInnis, Holly Mandelkern, Diane Neff, Katie O'Malley, Nancy Ortiz, Jane Peterson, Carolyn Scully, Shelley Stocksdale, Stan Sujka, Mark Terry, Ruth Titus and Robyn Weinbaum.**

The big Twelve Chairs Advanced Course took more than a year to put together, as I tried to deconstruct what I had learned, discovered, and used over forty years of writing poems, more than 200 of which have appeared in more than 100 journals in six countries. To do the job, I had to create analogies and applications for students, which resulted in more than 1500 pages of script and nearly 1000 handouts, plus examples taking up the work of 300 grandmasters of our art. Later, I felt a "short course" was necessary for those who were not equipped to take the larger course. To do this, I reduced all that material, rendered in sequence, to hundreds of individual short aphorisms and maxims, 180 hours down to just 12. That is the Twelve Chairs Short Course. Soon, we also hope to offer that course to Florida teachers, with continuing education credit from the state. First, however, we offer it to you.

Live recordings of the entire Advanced Course and the Short Course, including all the handouts for each, are now in the hands of FSPA to be offered on flash drive to all of our members. At the convention, I was heartened by how many Twelve Chairs students walked to the mic to read their contest winnings and placements, as well as how many graduates have routinely placed their poems in magazines, won awards, and produced collections of their work. Ask any of those Short Course grads how the instruction helped them. Perhaps a Twelve Chairs course can help you, too.

AD CAMPAIGN & FSPA PROMOTIONAL PAMPHLET PROJECT UNDERWAY

You may have noticed ads in OPAP, which are another revenue item and external outreach for FSPA. We are also at work on a multi-purpose pamphlet that can be distributed throughout the state to government entities, schools, libraries, local reading venues and other places to promote who FSPA is and what we do. The intent is to make FSPA the go-to organization for all things poetry in the State of Florida. More on this as the pamphlet itself and the strategy for its statewide distribution are further developed.

Best, *Al*



Profiles in Poetry

Reflecting on Pure and more...

Carol FROST FSPA's newest Chancellor

*Interview with FSPA President
Al Rocheleau; photography by
Mark Andrew James Terry*

Q. In your school years what grandmaster poets or poems first made you, as Sylvia Plath once called it, “mad for poetry?” For her, it was Auden; how about you? And if there were much older (or newer) guideposts for you in the history of our art, who would they be?

A. The first poems I loved were in Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King*—I can’t imagine we read the whole of it—and also “The Lady of Shalott.” I was in junior high school, and I think I can see in my mind’s eye where I sat as we read those lines, taking turns around the classroom. I see the corner windows and the wooden desk top underneath the books. I felt the magic of language that made it possible for me to imagine the lady “half sick of shadows,” Lancelot singing “Tirra-lirra, tirra lirra,” then the lady’s mirror cracking and she in her shallow boat, drifting into Camelot. I loved the images, words I’d not seen spelled before, and all the rhymes. I learned later that rhyming was tricky, as we all learn, but at the time, oh, rhymes at the end of lines amounted for me to true poetry. Tennyson wasn’t the last poet, though. Hopkins. Dickinson. Wallace Stevens. Whitman. John Donne. Hart Crane. Elizabeth Bishop. I could go on for hours, and already you can see that my tastes are pretty wide—Brigit Pegeen Kelly, Robin Coste Lewis, Ilya Kaminsky, etc.

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“...I am especially drawn to poetry that makes a ceremony of sound and form and image.”

— Carol Frost

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Q. Your work is sensitive to sound. Do you think poets often miss this aspect, the sheer sound of words to move a poem?

A. As opinionated as my answer may sound, I may just go ahead and say that sound is everything. Poets least of all can be insensible to sound in poetry, the sounds of words. I think of the foam, glitter, sharp stone, or oil in words and word combinations. They are a part of meaning. As much as anything, poetry is everything that can be found that isn't transient in air, ear, and mind. After what we knew is gone, the poet's lasting voice—noise, cry, or song—will give us back a world.

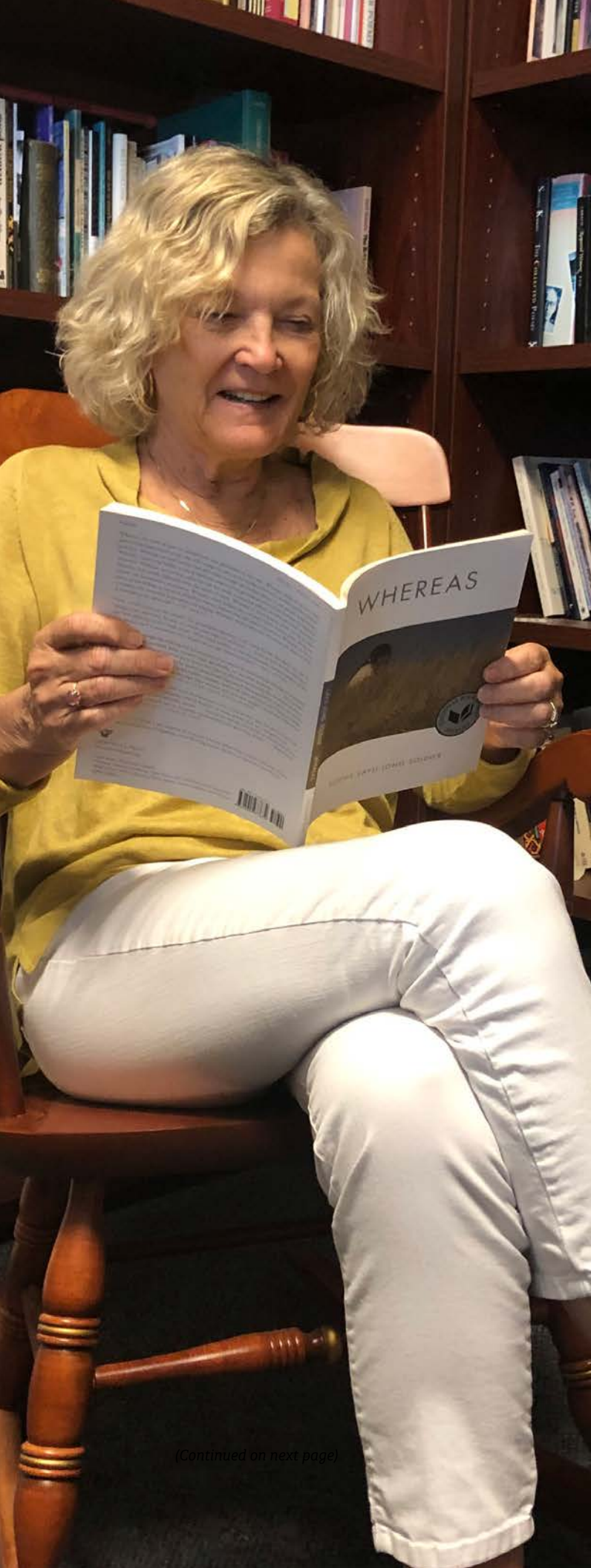
Q. You have written in various fixed forms and created new forms, and yet most of your work could be considered in some aspect of the free verse genre. Do you consider yourself primarily a free verse poet?

A. I am primarily a free verse poet, dedicated to what Yeats once told Berryman over tea was worth revising toward—“a more passionate syntax”—and unwilling to renounce the verse that has come before.

Q. For you, what is the main difference between prose and poetry?

A. At one time I would have said that the difference is line. That was the fairly standard answer before Charles Simic's book *The World Doesn't End*. It didn't matter that he won the Pulitzer for the book; many writers thought poetry could not be written in prose, and, if truth be told, many hadn't read much, if any, prose poetry. I had read Baudelaire's *Little Poems in Prose* and in some cases had read his prose poems and poems by the same title side by side. I can't say that I had preferred his prose poems overall to such poems of his as “The Swan” and “Voyage to Cythere,” but I had preferred the unlineated prose poem “Invitation to the Voyage” to his lineated version. I once probably thought image the difference. Or music. And while I am especially drawn to poetry that makes a ceremony of sound and form and image, I can think of poems that don't that still are wonderful.

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So the short answer is, I don't know what the difference between poetry and prose is. And I've changed my teaching in classes and workshops to reflect that—talking less about distinctions between genres than about hybrid forms. I like to talk about possibility. What is possible in poetry, I ask? And also, how is what we are reading now designed, and how well does it function in its design?

Maybe in a pinch I'd go back to sound, that in poetry there is an amplified sense of sound, except when there isn't. Now I'm thinking about little poems, Basho's haiku, even sounded in his native tongue—Creely, etc.

Q. What kinds of poems don't you write?

A. I gave up writing didactic poetry when I was 19. I didn't write poems about cities until I wrote the ones for my newest collection on a dare by a poet-friend. Nothing, really, seems off limits. Oh, I can't write funny. I tried once but readers took it seriously. Only my husband found it funny. He fell off his chair laughing.

Q. Many poets seem to swim in concept words, often generic and easily carried along by cliché. You seem rather to adorn concepts with discrete objects that can show them. Is that a major part of your intent?

A. Avoiding literary abstractions had been the major part of my intent until it dawned on me that W. B. Yeats composed with them. Thereafter I thought it was important to learn how to abstract, how to earn the word or words that expressed an idea or an emotion outright, if vaguely. One way to do it is embody the abstraction with rhythm, meter, rhyme, and another is to pair the abstraction with an image that gives body or partial body to, say, death or, better, beautiful death beside a yellow forest of falling aspen leaves. Meter and rhyme are pretty much off the table in free verse, but rhythm isn't. That's what Blake and Whitman were doing in their verse – liberating meter with rhythmic combinations that hadn't names but a reader could sense. Giving body to their abstractions and concepts.

Q. For one book, you developed your own 11-line form. Can you describe it, and the specific aims you developed for it?

A. Funny you should mention those 11-line poems of mine. I called them my Abstractions. I was trying to learn about how to abstract and that seemed also to mean thinking more deeply about image and, then, of different ways to lineate a poem. I also wanted to see how little narrative I could get away with. There's always some narrative, there's nothing intrinsically wrong with it, but my project was to write "high lyric," or that's what the experiment evolved into.

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I started writing the poems before I knew the form; I only knew a poem I was trying to write about a sense of the past I sometimes felt when I was walking around the grounds of our old farmhouse wasn't working. I guessed that the line length I was working with was too tight for the experience I was trying to make for myself and any reader I might have and decided to try page-length lines. That was the very beginning of invention. I wondered how many lines I could write that were actually margin-to-margin long instead of being short lines strung together. I began fooling with syntax and while I was experimenting with that, I thought I'd experiment with image and metaphor. Much of this was subliminal thought. It was only after I'd finished the poem, then written another with similar attributes, that I became as fully conscious as any poet, likely, ought to be beforehand. I noticed that the two poems were written in 11 lines. Both had abstract titles and seem to function as extended metaphors for the title, as if I were beginning a sort of lexicon for abstractions. I had managed to keep from using well-worn images—my favorite in the two poems was and is this line: "Her beauty no longer catches glances like small animals in a gentle snare." That's one single line. Beauty isn't a rose or a sunset. And I can't say I can tell you what it is in so many words. That is when a new metaphor is necessary.

With the two poems as my guide I came up with the "rules" for the form, feeling free to break a rule or alter the form as the next poem demanded.

*Please join us as we welcome the poet
Carol Frost as Chancellor of the
Florida State Poets Association.
~ Al Rocheleau, FSPA President*

Carol Frost was born in 1948 in Lowell, Massachusetts. She studied at the Sorbonne and earned degrees from the State University of Oneonta and Syracuse University. She currently teaches poetry and directs Winter with the Writers at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. Frost is the author of numerous collections, including her newest book entitled *Alias City* (MadHat Press). Its signature poem appeared in the November 2015 issue of *Poetry*. Frost has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, won several Pushcart Prizes, and has been nominated for many more. This year, FSPA nominated her as one of its candidates for Florida Poet Laureate. As described at PoetryFoundation.org: "Frost's poems draw on sources from the Book of Genesis to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to the poetry of John Donne; she writes of the human body, and her poems are rich with the acutely imagined objects of the natural world—whether found off the coast of Florida or in a beehive. *Honeycomb*, which won the Gold Medal in Poetry from the Florida Book Awards, treats the subject of dementia through a sustained metaphor of the beehive. According to Amy Glynn Greacen in *New York Quarterly Reviews*, "the interweaving of lost and confabulated, confused knowledge is a running theme. In Frost's deft hands it resonates and echoes through various natural processes and phenomena." Frost has been praised for her "protean layers of observation," in the words of a reviewer for the *Women's Review of Books*, and for her inventive syntax; an interviewer at *Smartish Pace* described Frost's "encyclopedic approach to subject matter."

Poems

by Carol Frost

CITY NEAR PARADISE

1.

Long before you turned on the light, I heard hurricane fill the
oak.

As morning flowers from hell, little hellish flames,
we are still here. Let's ask how dayfly makes its hours

and oak what it feels to be in the ground. Let's talk
to the devil himself, licking the tepid blooms
of the hibiscus like the venomous snake.

2.

Turpentine sweated us through summer
slaking our skin trees bled and burned
white faces in the forest a sea of pine stumps
the fire the spring that's to say
the ground water to drink when found
the hands the feet within the heart
an ailing bird over the sand how low
it flew a song blown through air

we want to remember song
we want to sing and dream sweet things.

3.

Sing as grandfather heron soars—
franhkh, franhkh—the first heart morning makes,
Sing fantasia, el largarto,
and the waters dance, all hours of the spring.

4.

Plovers huddle on the last piece of land.

I say, come onto the waters,
and when sunset embers,
we'll turn back
hours—evil and great—
and in Florida's most quiet,
sssssss, follow breathmaker
come short of paradise.

Poems by Carol Frost

ORNITHOLOGY

Who else has seen the moment parleying snipe on disappearing
shoals,
wind frothing at their feet, lift in one loud whirring of wings,
so the last
are first—a testament time illuminates?
How many years ago even as now
did another first see morning implement with gold the margins of
inlet
and marshland, carelessly as the wind blew? Winds, we can tell,
are jealous
winds and take away the shore, night steals away the gold cup
of day, stars to follow—like a serene flock of birds—and lives
are taken
in any order, till the last survivors are first, singing
themselves alone.
Haven't you heard shore birds sing this, in a few notes, and
known?

ALIAS CITY

They were travelers, plotting river courses,
writing the Genesis of unknown people,
fugitives with a revolver in one hand, reins in another,
merchants among the olive trees, euphorbias, mimosas,
emmisaries, deserters. Some knew the native tongues;
they called themselves by new names
in the eastern twilight, different parts of their soul
never having learned to live together.
Skies burned. Dust covered the palms
and minarets as they arrived by the incandescent shore
of our city, each with his own little dreams and disasters.
Some remained, never to be heard of again.
Some left with caravans, wearing native dress—ephemerids.
Where are they? What are they used to?
The only preserved interview—of an artist and explorer.
Did he ever speak of his friends in X?
Never. The only thing he liked in X was his sister.
But did you know that he painted?
Oh yes!—some fine things: stemware,
a series of watercolors of Shoebills and Abdim's
stork.

(from *Alias City*, Madhat Press, 2019.)



Mary Rogers-Grantham

2019 FSPA Annual Contest Winners!

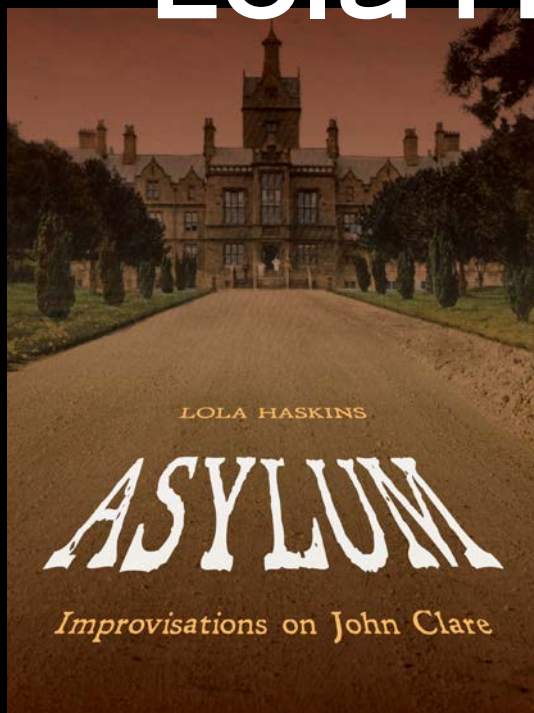
FSPA concludes another remarkable 2019 contest year. Like previous contest years, this one was just as energetic. We continue to average an excess of 800 entries. This year's total, 811.

We have nineteen categories for the 2020 contest year, the same number as 2019. We appreciate the generosity of our loyal sponsors for supporting our contests.

First place winners are always published in the current issue of our annual anthology, *Cadence*, and the following two pages list all the winners of the 2019 contest. Congratulations to all!

~ Mary Rogers-Grantham,
FSPA Contest Chair

Lola Haskins Poetry



Published by University of Pittsburgh Press

Asylum presents the journey John Clare might have taken in 1841 if, when he escaped the madhouse, he'd been traveling in his head rather than on his feet. Ms. Haskins starts out with as little sense of direction as Clare had yet, after wandering all over the map, she too finally reaches home. The book's four sections are where she rests for the night. The first is a tender look at life and death. The second paints the world through which she walks. The third digresses to the supernatural and in the process is laugh-out-loud funny. In the fourth, she arrives in her dear north-west England, having learned from Clare that she too can be happy anywhere.

Now available on Amazon — [Click here.](#)

[Learn more at lolahaskins.com](http://lolahaskins.com)

Congratulations to the FSPA 2019 Annual Contests Winners

Cat. 1: FSPA Free Verse Award

Subject: Any Form: Free Verse

JUDGE: JOAN HOWERTON, TN

- 1st PL **Betty Ann Whitney**, FL "Modern Dance"
2nd PL Janet Watson, FL "She, Inside a Pitcher Plant"
3rd PL Rita Aiken Moritz, AL "A Heart in Conflict"
1st HM Barbara Blanks, TX "Battle of Verdun"
2nd HM Jeanette Willert, AL "Thinking of Patsy Cline"
3rd HM Norma Duncan, FL "The Blue Dress"

Cat. 2: FSPA Formal Verse Award

Subject: Any Form: Formal Verse

JUDGE: NANCY SUSANNA BREEN, OH

- 1st PL **John F. Foster**, FL "Without The Birds"
2nd PL Rita Aiken Moritz, AL "Come and Taste
the Seeds of New Creation"
3rd PL Judith Krum, FL "From Darkened Mills"
1st HM Susan Stahr, FL "Sonnet 43.5- A Chubby Parody"
2nd HM Joyce Shriver, FL "The Banjo Man"
3rd HM Mark Andrew James Terry, FL
"Beneath a Knowing Moon"

Cat. 3: The Crescendo Award

Subject: A response to hearing a musical performance

Form: Any

JUDGE: JON SEBBA, UT

- 1st PL **Carlton Johnson**, FL "The Mission"
2nd PL Susan Stahr, FL "Fire in the Strings"
3rd PL Diane Neff, FL "Overture to Tannhuser"
1st HM Andrea McBride, FL "Sonata"
2nd HM Cheryl A. Van Meek, FL "Sheet Music"
3rd HM Robert E. Blenheim, FL "Dancing with Elektra"

Cat. 4: Listening Award

Subject: Listening Form: Any

JUDGE: JEANETTE MAES, MA

- 1st PL **Elaine Person**, FL "My Father's Ears"
2nd PL Joyce Shiver, FL "Silence of the Night"
3rd PL Robert E. Blenheim, FL "Not With A Bang Or A
Whimper But A Song"
1st HM Beth Staas, IL "Winter's Hush"
2nd HM Beverly Stanislawski, IN "Just the Sound of It"
3rd HM B. Shawn Clark, FL "The Voice"

Cat. 5: Tomoka Poets Award

Subject: At the Beach Form: Any

JUDGE: VELVET FACKELDEY, NM

- 1st PL **Catherine Moran**, AR "Savoring the Sand"
2nd PL Pat Bonner Milone, FL "Storm Warning"
3rd PL Carolynn J. Scully, FL "Playing at the Beach"
1st HM Janet Watson, FL "As Our Beach Vacation Ends"
2nd HM John Foster, FL "Beach Ballet"
3rd HM Beverly Stanislawski, IN "Beach Buddies"

Cat. 6: Creative Happiness, Tomoka Poets Award

Subject: Creative Happiness Form: Any

JUDGE: JANET QUALLY, TN

- 1st PL **Cheryl A. Van Beek**, FL "Feat of Clay"
2nd PL Catherine Moran, AR "A Poetic Kind of Love"
3rd PL Sarah E. Morin, IN "Architect of the Bakery"
1st HM John F. Foster, FL "Rowboat"
2nd HM Barbara Blanks, TX "Imaginary State"
3rd HM Janet Watson, FL "To Mary Oliver"

Cat. 7: Willard B. Foster Memorial Award

Subject: Any Sport Form: Any

JUDGE: KEITH A.F. SKILLING, IL

- 1st PL **Alice R. Friedman**, FL "I Don't Do Sports"
2nd PL Sara Gipson, AR "Sudden Changes"
3rd PL Diane Neff, FL "Physical Education Class"
1st HM Leslie C. Halpern, FL "Match"
2nd HM Dr. Emory D. Jones, MS "Rounders"
3rd HM Beth Staas, IL "Playing Marbles"

Cat. 8: Orlando Area Poets Award

Subject: Theme Parks and Attractions Form: Any

JUDGE: JEREMY DOWNES, AL

- 1st PL **Suzanne S. Austin-Hill**, FL "First Time
I Set Foot In Florida Circa 1959"
2nd PL Nancy Simmonds, IN "Bedtime Prayers
After a First Kiss"
3rd PL Peter M. Gordon, FL "Bumper Cars"
1st HM Robyn Weinbaum, FL "Sept 13 2001"
2nd HM Janet Watson, FL "A Wild Time at Fort Wilderness"
3rd HM Tonya R. Whitney, LA "The Unhappiest Place"

Cat. 9: Jean Owens Memorial Award

Subject: "Tree Line" Form: Any

JUDGE: CHRISTY WHITE, AZ

- 1st PL **Nancy Simmonds**, IN "Bargaining
with the Rear View Mirror"
2nd PL JC Kato, FL "Grief"
3rd PL Van S. Bourland, TX "Markers"
1st HM Diane Neff, FL "Lessons from the Pando Clone"
2nd HM Connie Goodman-Milone, FL, A Haiku
3rd HM Frank Yanni, FL "Our Live Oak"

Cat. 10: The Poet's Vision Award

Subject: Any Form: Any

JUDGE: NANCY LA CHANCE, MO

- 1st PL **Barbara Blanks**, TX "Two Travelers"
2nd PL BJ Alligood, FL "Drought Relief"
3rd PL JC Kato, FL "Raise Eyes"
1st HM Joanne Vandegrift, FL "Kindred Hands"
2nd HM Sonja Jean Craig, FL "Airy Fairy"
3rd HM Beverly A. Joyce, FL "That Burst of Inspiration"

FSPA 2019 Annual Contests Winners *(continued)*

Cat. 11: New River Poets Award

(In Honor of Our Deceased Members)

Subject: Any Form: Any

JUDGE: IDA KOTYUK, IL

1st PL **Joanne Vandegrift**, FL "Daily Harvest"

2nd PL Cheryl A. Van Beek, FL "The Poet's Legacy"

3rd PL Mark Andrew James Terry, FL "Beneath a Buck-Eye's Bough"

1st HM Janet Watson, FL "Passing the Tree Farm"

2nd HM Carlton Johnson, FL "The Uncommon"

3rd HM Betty Ann Whitney, FL "Woman Writing a Letter"

Cat. 12: The Petrarchan Sonnet Award

Subject: Any Form: Petrarchan

JUDGE: JILL ANGEL LANGLOIS, IL

1st PL **Robyn Weinbaum**, FL "The Ice Floes"

2nd PL Janet Watson, FL "Neil Armstrong's Lunar Longing"

3rd PL Mark Andrew James Terry, FL "Plea to Petrarch"

1st HM Diane Neff, FL "Bull Rider Prayer"

2nd HM Catherine Moran, AR "Permission from the Rain"

3rd HM Joanne Vandegrift, FL "Soundscape"

Cat. 13: Humor Award

Subject: Humor Form: Rhymed and Metered

JUDGE: LENNART LUNDH, IL

1st PL **Marilyn Hayden**, FL "Seasodal Poeb"

2nd PL John F. Foster, FL "Bed Bath (and Beyond)"

3rd PL Holly Mandelkern, FL "Anesthetic Visions"

1st HM Joanne Vandegrift, FL "I Won't Ask Moses"

2nd HM Diane Neff, FL "Dear Student, From Your Gym Teacher"

3rd HM Joyce Shiver, FL "Who Stole the Peanuts?"

Cat. 14: The Live Poets Award

Subject: The Dark Side Form: Any

JUDGE: RAFAEL LANTIGUA MEDINA, IL

1st PL **Carlton Johnson**, FL "Darkness"

2nd PL Elaine Person, FL "Death Watch"

3rd PL Judith Krum, FL "Is the water safe?"

1st HM Cheryl A. Van Beek, FL "Crochet"

2nd HM Janet Watson, FL "Dark Night of a Soul"

3rd HM Mary Ellen Orvis, FL "Poets of Suicide"

Cat. 15: Miami Poets Award

Subject: Our Environment Form: Any

JUDGE: GAIL DENHAM, OR

1st PL **Betty Ann Whitney**, FL "The Nature of Things"

2nd PL Patricia Barnes, MI "Flow"

3rd PL Meg Roman, FL "Spring Sound"

1st HM Janet Watson, FL "Blessed Are the Meek"

2nd HM Connie Goodman-Malone, FL, A Haiku

3rd HM Nancy Cook, MN "Fragments of a Writer's Retreat in the Woods"

Cat. 16: Kate Kennedy Memorial Award

Subject: Moving On Form: Any

JUDGE: LYNDA LA ROCCA, CO

1st PL **LaVern Spencer McCarthy**, OK

"Grandpa's New Life"

2nd PL Rita Aiken Moritz, AL "Enjoying This One Life I Have to Live"

3rd PL Patricia Barnes, MI "Going Home"

1st HM Barbara Blanks, TX "A Fool and Her Honey Are Soon Parted"

2nd HM Diane Neff, FL "Leaving Home"

3rd HM Janet Watson, FL "Metamorphosis"

Cat. 17: Weinbaum/Glidden Award

Subject: Issues and Concerns Faced by the LGBTQ Community and Those Who Love Them

Form: Any

JUDGE: DAVID RUTIEZER, OR

1st PL **Peter M. Gordon**, FL "I Learned in College My Best Friend was Gay"

2nd PL John F. Foster, FL Haiku

3rd PL Leslie C. Halpern, FL "Layers"

1st HM Nancy Cook, MN "Forbearance"

2nd HM Patricia Barnes, MI "The Gift of Patience with One's Self"

3rd HM Barbara Blanks, TX "Wedding Bell Triumph"

Cat. 18: Henrietta & Mark Kroah Founders Award

Subject: Wedding Form: Any

JUDGE: JENENE RAVESLOOT, IL

1st PL **Mark Andrew James Terry**, FL "The Metal of Rings"

2nd PL Judith Krum, FL "To Have and to Hold"

3rd PL Robert E. Blenheim, FL "The Reward of Obstinacy"

1st HM Mark Hudson, IL "The Wedding of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert"

2nd HM Joyce Shiver, FL "The Rainbow"

3rd HM Beverly Stanislawski, IN "Something Blue"

Cat. 19: Past Presidents Award

Subject: Answers Form: Any, 48 Entries

JUDGE: DEBORAH PETERSON, IN

1st PL **Cyndee Levy**, FL "The Easy Way"

2nd PL Teresa TL Bruce, FL "Please..."

3rd PL Cheryl A. Van Beek, FL "Found in Translation"

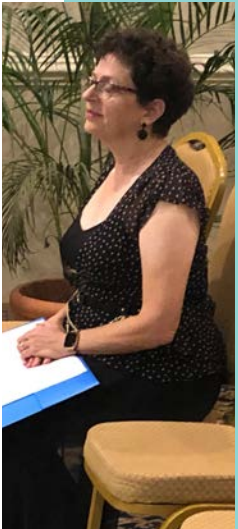
1st HM Betty Ann Whitney, FL "The Woodcarver's Reply"

2nd HM Lorraine Jeffery, UT "Uncurtained"

3rd HM Jeanette Willert, AL "Changing the Ending"

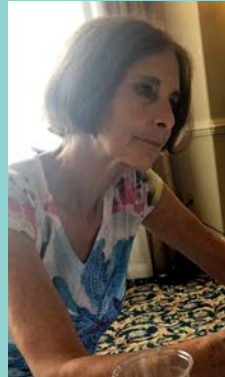
45th FSPA ANNUAL CONVENTION

we real cool. HIGHLIGHTS



45th FSPA ANNUAL CONVENTION

we real cool. HIGHLIGHTS



45th FSPA ANNUAL CONVENTION



HIGHLIGHTS

Convention's challenge contest winning poem by Carlton Johnson



Why I write poetry?

Because the earth remains unequivocal in its demonstrations
of life tinged with love,

Because the air we breathe brings wealth of breath and a breadth of wealth,

Because we, the indeterminate we, create the whole apostolic life,
the life resplendent and, yet still, gruesomely capricious.

Because to write poetry is to take the gondola cable car to the top
of a peak and survey the miles cartographers missed in the mapping
and the idle trance-like state elevation brings.

Because the highs of happiness and the depths of despair spare us not the
paring knife that, while whetted and honed, cleans the gristle from the bone
and then we, as poets, write the wrongs.

Because, like the cowbells tinkering on the psyche of the afternoon's
meadows, the tone lifts echoing off the crests and peaks of the forgotten
mountain range.

Because, in the end, poetry gives me life, a life now restored and
dynamically transfigured.

~ by Carlton Johnson



COMMENT FROM THE JUDGE:

This poem gives us a gorgeous meditation on why we make art. We make art, the poem proposes in one of its most captivating verse lines, "Because, like cowbells ... tinkering in the afternoon's meadows, the time lifts echoing." This poem's verse lines lift echoing and resonate in beautiful tones. This is an accomplished and spirit-lifting poem.

— M.B. McClatchey



Chris Flocken

Say Hello to FSPA’s New Membership Chair, Chris Flocken

Taking over the Membership Chair of the Florida State Poets Association is a daunting task for anyone, and I should know. Keeping track of all the members of one of the largest state poetry societies in the country takes an eye for detail and a serious sense of duty. Chris Flocken of the Orlando Area Poets chapter takes on the leadership role with gusto and a grin.

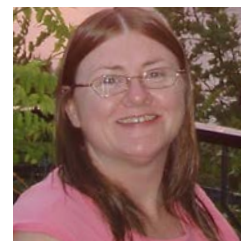
“Our next victim,” joked FSPA President Al Rocheleau, just before assuring her that the once-labor-intensive position had been streamlined.

Chris writes both short stories and poetry, and she is currently working on a memoir. The accompanying poem, “Stolen Away,” will serve as an epigraph for one part of her memoir. Many of us have read Chris’s poems in FSPA’s annual anthology, *Cadence*, in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Chris has worked as a bookkeeper for many years, at first part-time, now as a full time job. She graduated summa cum laude from University College at the University of Maryland with a major in art history and a minor in English. She is also a graduate of Rollins College with a Master of Arts in Teaching with a focus on elementary education. She currently lives in Orlando with her family.

Please help us welcome Chris to her new role as Membership Chair. We’re delighted she has agreed to join our hard-working volunteer team in FSPA administration.

~ *Mary Marcelle, FSPA Vice President*



Mary Marcelle

Please send your dues to:

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

Stolen Away

I held your hand, my love,
as your sun began to set.
My impending loss
blinded me with tears.

When my vision cleared,
you’d been stolen away.
Yet I feel you still
in the songs of Motown and
the crack of a baseball off a bat.

~ *Chris Flocken*

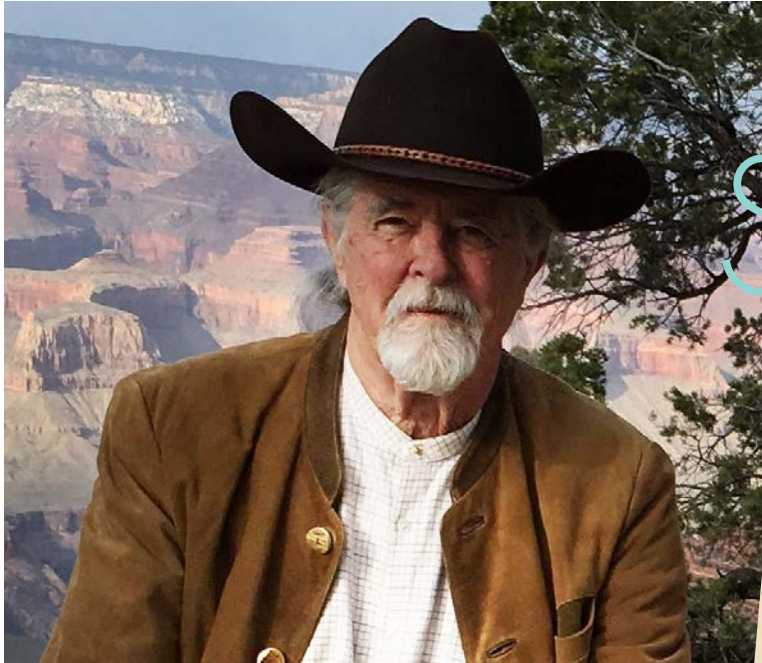
FSPA Student Contest Report

I have received the *Cadence* Anthologies to distribute to our winners. The close of the 2018-2019 contest will then be complete. Entries are trickling in for the 2019-2020 contest, but I expect to be deluged in the next few weeks. Two eager judges are waiting for their stack of entries.

~ *Carolynn Scully,*



Carolynn Scully



Jesse Sam Owens



Jesse Sam Owens is a practicing attorney living in Port Orange, Florida. His specialty is Land Use and Environmental Law. He received his B.A. degree from Georgia, served in the Peace Corps in Guyana S.A, and received his law degree from the University of Mississippi.

In his mid 40s Jesse began performing music and writing. He has performed and taught guitar workshops in all major Florida folk festivals. In 2017 his musician and artists friends presented him with a coffee table book of his writings with original art to depict his characters and concepts.

A hand injury ceased Jesse's performing music. However, three years ago he joined the Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach. At one of their performances the poet Dan Pels attended and invited Jesse to his Poetry Show. The publisher Mary Custureri of Taylor and Seale Publishing happened to be in that audience and after reviewing Jesse's first book, agreed to publish Jesse's second book titled *The Way of Dreams*. On a dare, Jesse entered a spoken word contest at the 2017 FSPA convention, taking first place, then second place at the spring 2018 event. Jesse later was a MC at the 2018 Fall FSPA Convention.

Jesse's work is described by his publisher as philosophical, lyrical, rhythmical and universal. Volusia County Poet Laureate David Axelrod refers to Jesse's work as "word music". Jesse serves as vice president of the Daytona Writers Guild.

[Link to purchase](#)

For a free PDF of his first book, email Jesse: jessesamowens@aol.com

Accusations, in E Minor

While strolling down the well worn path
A chance encounter made
A smile to share, a well worn laugh
Began the masquerade.
The caring lass, the honored gent
The perfect marriage played
She kindly spoke with assonance
To soothe an inner rage.

A rage unchecked begins to bloom
The black rose now the gift
Received with trepidation's stir
As coupled passions shift.
The strike, the reel, the fall, the kill
The blame laid? God forbid.
They did not do this to themselves
Twas life the thing that did.

~ Jesse Sam Owens

The Ride

When the wind sings its hymn into the wilderness
And the snow turns to white my pony's mane
There the chill lends a shrillness to the solitude
Of my claim on the Carson Valley Plain.

Well, a claim is just a place to gather memories
And a mind is just a place to sort the same
But a memory is a thread of time that weaves into the future
As a record, Lord, of how I rode the range.

When the wind sings its hymn unto my memories
And the thread of time unravels in my mind
I hear the thundering of hooves there keeping time to the wind-song
And I know my life was all about the ride.

So when my pony kicks out, Lord, and thunders hard across the desert
Leaving troubles, time, and darkness far behind
I know I'm tethered to a thunderbolt that stops just shy of heaven
Where the Lord can see this boy was born to ride.

When the wind sings its hymn into the wilderness
And time turns to grey my pony's mane
Still the chill will lend a shrillness to the solitude
As I'm claimed by the Carson Valley Plain.

~ Jesse Sam Owens




Jesse and Grammy winner Chris Gantry, fellow performers at Bamfest. Two cowboys at a black tie affair.

Photography by Bob Stone, Stone Studios



Jesse Sam Owens performing at the Daytona Writers Guild Bamfest at the Daytona Beach Museum of Arts and Science

Photography by Bob Stone, Stone Studios



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

Jim Peterson
outdabox@aol.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

Miami Poets

Miami Poets welcomed autumn, coloring the season with their words. We meet each first Wednesday at the Miami Poets Soirée, moderated by Tere Starr, where we share poetry and inspiration. On second Mondays, we join Group 10, the critique group facilitated by Steven Liebowitz. Both groups meet at the Pinecrest Branch Library from 1 to 3. Achievements: **Ricki Dorn** was the library's featured writer in August for an afternoon of poetry, offering new prompts and techniques. Her poem, "You're Invited to a Punctuation Party," was published in South Florida Writers Association's *Author's Voice*. Ricki won the first place prize in poetry for "Mexico by Motorcycle" in the SFWA Writing Contest. **Connie Goodman-Milone's** poem, "Freeskiing in Park City," was awarded second place. **Pat Bonner Milone** received a first place prize for her story, "The Sport of Kings," and received the special merit award for writing excellence. Pat, **Rosa Douglass**, **Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk**, and **Tere Starr** read their poetry during Books & Books at Suniland's Five Minute Pieces. Sharing her love of poetry with the community, Tere also led a September Poetry Soirée for the Brandeis Women's South Miami Group. **Zorina Frey** launched an online publishing course on Udemy, "How to Become an Independent Publisher." Her play, "Regulating Pollution," has been selected for the Artistic Vibes Flip the Script Fundraiser, taking place on November 15 and 16. Zorina edits the online magazine, *45 Magazine Women's Literary Journal*, and welcomes submissions at <https://45magazineiwa.com>. **Steve Liebowitz** presented a writing workshop at the South Florida Writers September meeting along with co-writers **Jonathan Rose** and **Holly White** based on collaboration for their book, *Three Friends: A Modern Fable of Sex & Spirituality*. The Miami Poets' love of the written word is apparent as we share poetry and more in a variety of venues in Miami and across the miles.

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.

~ Tere Starr, President



Front Row: Rita Morrissey, Zorina Frey, Mervyn Solomon, Connie Goodman-Milone, Lori Swick
Back Row: Mary Keating, Nancy Ward, Rosa Douglass, Pat Bonner Milone, Tere Starr, Marina Stevens, Rob Stevens, Doris Kraus, Mark Kraus, Holly White, Steven Liebowitz, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Ricki Dorn



Robert E. Blenheim

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach is just coming off hosting the 45th Annual FSPA Poetry Convention at the Plaza Resort, and it was an amazing success for everybody. So many wonderful entertaining and illuminating workshops and presentations, capped by M.B. McLatchey's incredible keynote speech on her Irish poet mentor, Seamus Heaney. It was a night to remember for all who attended.

The Live Poets Society's monthly challenges included writing dark poems on plants or flowers, poems on cafés, and nonsense poems using non-words. Themes of other challenges were "numbers," "compassion," and the end of life on our planet. Analyzed was Marianne Moore's poem, "Poetry," and a workshop was held on "awful poetry." (Needless to say, no Live Poet member contrived to write any of the latter.)

Notably, two new members have joined The Live Poets Society: **Jackie Vores** and **Stan Buss**, wonderful additions to the chapter. Stan Buss is particularly welcome because he is just beginning as a poet, and it is always exciting to see fledgling poets develop and begin to use their own voice in verse.

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.



Jackie Vores



(left to right): Vicki Iorio, Cherelyn Bush, Bob Blenheim, Justine Mathis and Stan Drescher



Stan Drescher

Most of the members were extra busy on the convention and contributed so much to its success (especially **Ellen Nielsen** presenting a superb workshop on "Persona poetry" and **Vicki Iorio** and **Bob Blenheim** playing roles in **Marc Davidson's** marvelous Shakespearean one-act play), but a few members still had their own individual recent accomplishments. The chapter's vice president Vicki Iorio has had poems published in *The Long Island Quarterly* and *Heroin[sic] Love Songs*; Jesse Owens is having his poem, "Rhythm's Lair," published in *The River Poets Journal*, and president Bob Blenheim managed to rack in five awards from the Poetry Society of Tennessee's annual contests (including a First and Second Place) as well as three more from FSPA. More significantly perhaps, Blenheim managed to release at the convention his new CD, Volume 2 of his *Poetry Parody Songbook* after performing them there. Finally, all members are sending a magnum full of good thoughts and prayers to **Judith Lawrence**, past member of The Live Poets Society, now recovering from a stroke in Bartow, Florida, where she is now residing. Everyone is 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



Stan Buss



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 Maitland Public Library hosted a quarterly poetry coffeehouse on September 27, emceed by **Elaine Person**. Local poets, mostly Orlando Area Poets members, read their poetry on the theme of “Free Falling.” The next coffeehouse will be held in January with the theme of “Double Vision.” Elaine also presents free workshops at the Maitland Public Library for those who want additional information and inspiration on the theme. Please check the library website for dates: <https://www.maitlandpubliclibrary.org/events/>

Leslie Halpern had an article titled “Have Fun with Children’s Poetry” published on Wanda Luthman’s Children’s Books website (<https://wandaluthman.wordpress.com/?p=16441>), and will be speaking at the Seminole County Library main branch in October on “Writing, Publishing, and Marketing Children’s Poetry Books.”

Peter Gordon has three poems in the upcoming Yellowjacket Press anthology. The anthology focuses on poems based on the Bungert Brothers photo archive in the Tampa Library. The brothers chronicled life in Tampa from the early to mid 20th century. Peter’s poems are titled “Same Rice,” “Pearl Foster and Bethy C,” and “Al and Nick After Boxing Match Show Good Sportsmanship.” All three were the titles of photos in the archive.

Diane Neff’s article “The Library Will Keep You in Stitches” will appear in the next issue of *Lake Mary Life* and its related city magazines.

Elaine Person lead an Inspired Words–Writing to Art workshop at Crealdé School of Art’s Hannibal Square Heritage Center location on October 12, to be repeated December 14. She led several workshops at the Florida Writers Association (FWA) Conference and participated in FWA’s Writers at Work release and book signing at the conference. Her poem “On Stronger Writing” was accepted in the published collection.

~ Diane Neff, Vice President
for Leslie Halpern, President



Diane Neff



Peter Gordon



Elaine Person



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

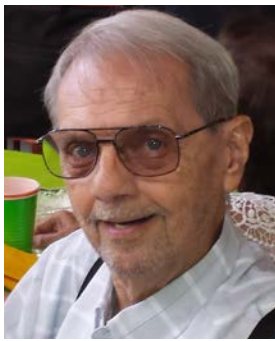
New River Poets

New River Poets continues to meet every third Saturday of the month at the Old Richland Schoolhouse in Zephyrhills. We are pleased to announce that the schoolhouse will be the venue for the 2020 FSPA Spring Meeting, and we know that those attending will love the ambience.

New River cancelled our regular September meeting to celebrate with member **Ken Clanton** at his 90th Birthday Party--- an ice cream social. The guest of honor enjoyed a coconut layer cake (his favorite) and the attention paid to him by friends and family. Ken has been one of our most active members, serving as Membership Chairman and entertaining us with his homespun (and sometimes slightly naughty) poetry. In honor of Ken's milestone birthday, **John Foster** wrote the following limerick:

The Good Humor Man

A nonagenarian named Ken
entertains with a poetic pen.
His talent with phrasing?
Amusing, amazing!
Just awesome again, and again!
~ John Foster



Ben Clanton at 90

Our chapter encourages members in all their literary pursuits. The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) recently announced that **JC Kato** is the new free meeting facilitator for the Tampa Bay Area. JC continues to write books for young people and generously encourages other writers in that genre. Members of New River find many ways to share their talent. **Meg Roman**, a retired art teacher, creates original greeting cards with her own art and poetry. This fall **John Foster** is presenting a series of six poetry workshops during his independent-living community's "Senior Graduate School," where residents present courses in various fields of expertise. On October 12th, **Janet Watson** participated as a reader in a tribute to Mary Oliver, organized by FSPA member-at-large, **Evelyn Romano** at the New Tampa Library.

At this time, we are looking forward to the fall Convention in Daytona and the opportunity to get together with all our FSPA friends.

~ Janet Watson, President



Nancy Ortiz, Secretary

Osceola Poetry Society

New elections are pending. Secretary **Nancy Ortiz** has agreed to be on the ballot for Vice President. As the Osceola Poetry Society has in the past involved area high school students among its officers, and as those past officers have now graduated, a new selection process is ongoing. Nancy has also agreed to head FSPA's Education Committee and its outreach to teachers. Another Osceola member, current FSPA Treasurer **Robyn Weinbaum**, has agreed to stand for another term in FSPA's 2020 elections. Osceola member Al Rocheleau is the FSPA president.

~ Nancy Ortiz, Secretary
for Mackenzie Riley, President

When we meet:

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



Mary-Ann Westbrook

Tomoka Poets

Thank you to Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach for a wonderful Fall Convention. The Tomoka Poets who attended had a delightful time. Our meetings are still ongoing despite the revamping of the Ormond Beach Library and our being assigned a different room. We persevere in the love of poetry and much appreciate the library finding a place for us to continue.



Marc Davidson

Congratulations to **Marc Davidson** for his first place award in the Humor category in the Massachusetts Poetry contest. His winning poem is titled "Doomsday List." Marc has also been featured at the *Dan Pels Poetry Show* at The Hub in New Smyrna Beach. Congratulations to Joe Perrone. His second novel, *The Stockbroker*, has just been published. Besides his two novels, he also has a book of poetry published.

We cancelled our October Open Mic at the Copperline Coffee in Port Orange so that we all could travel to Deland and Stetson University to see and hear **U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo**. What a wonderful evening. We are so fortunate to have a poet and poetry of that caliber come to our neck of the country.



B.J. Alligood

Congratulations also to Tomoka Poets **BJ Alligood** for her second place and **Sonja Jean Craig** for her honorable mention and to all the Florida winners in our FSPA annual poetry contest.

Several Tomoka Poets attended the memorial service held at the Ormond Beach Unitarian Universalist Church for long time Tomoka Poet **Heather Ragsdale**. Heather was 98 years young when she left this earth and was still doing poetry at her home in the Brookdale Assisted Living Center in Ormond Beach.

~ Mary-Ann Westbrook, President

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



Cheri Herald

Sunshine Poets

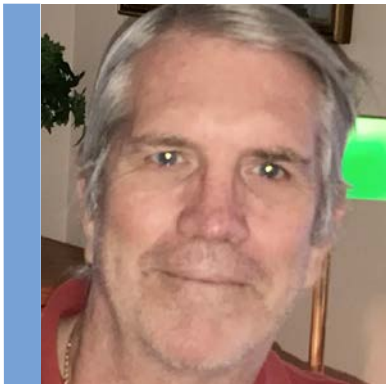
Sunshine Poets meets at the Central Ridge Public Library in Beverly Hills on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10 am. We welcome all ages and levels of poets. A new form or technique is described and offered as a homework assignment. Homework and critique are optional, followed by an open reading. We 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 sponsored a humor category in FSPA's annual contest, and also donated to the youth contest. Sunshine President, **Cheri Herald**, and member, **Angie Mayo**, attended the FSPA Fall Convention in Daytona. Member, **Joyce Shiver**, had a 1st and a 2nd place win in Massachusetts' contest. Sunshine Poets has a Facebook page. **Contact:** sunshinepoets@gmail.com

~ Cheri Herald, President

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



Jim Peterson

Space Coast Poets

At the September meeting, SCP member **Anne-Marie Deroauli** read poems in English and French! In an effort to increase awareness of Space Coast Poets and FSPA – and attract new members – a press release was sent to Melbourne-area media outlets, as well as the Melbourne Barnes & Noble and Books-a-Million.

Several Space Coast Poets (SCP) members will have poems published in the Space Coast Writers' Guild anthology, *Change*.

As part of its community outreach, SCP has contacted the RiverView senior-living complex about conducting poetry "talks" and readings.

The first event will occur January 2020. SCP members are looking forward to the Advent Poetry and Organ Concert Series at the Community Church in Vero Beach, December 5, 12, and 19, 11 a.m., hosted by SCP member **Sean Sexton**.

The Lenten Poetry and Organ Concert at the Community Church in Vero Beach will take place every Thursday morning, February 27-April 2 at 11 am.

~ Jim Petersen, President

When we meet:

The Space Coast Poets meet the third Tuesday of the month at 5:15 in the Viera/Suntree Library, room 103. Upcoming meetings are 19 November and 17 December.

Jim Peterson's poem "Intention" earned second place in the 2019 Poetry Society of Michigan contest.

Intention

Spoken words
leave words unspoken—
perhaps wanting—
but not released and given voice.
Taken roads
leave roads untaken
from the making of each choice.
Each thought
cancels another
or, at least,
one must wait.
One life lived
leaves another un-lived,
entangled in parallel fate.
Action breeds purpose
while often undefined:
necessity and its invention,
need moved to intention,
better now and going
than later, or never—
even if unrefined.

by Jim Petersen



Alex Kaelin

Big Bend Poets & Writers

We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at the Tallahassee Barnes & Noble Bookstore to spread the joy of sharing poems and short stories. Recent meetings have featured local politicians including Tallahassee City Commissioner **Jeremy Matlow**, poet **Mary Jane Ryals**, author of several award-winning books, and **Kermit M. Brown**, author of *My Life in North Florida*.

Thanks to **Linda Marie**, Outreach Coordinator, we co-sponsor open-mic poetry and story telling events each month in locally owned venues including a bookstore, a café, and a jazz club. These monthly events are ongoing, freely open to the public, widely advertised, and bring in new members to our chapter.

When we meet:

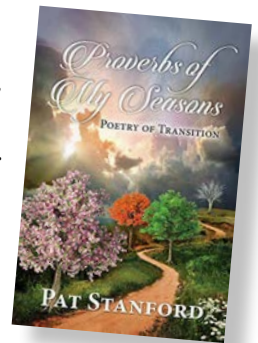
The Big Bend Poets & Writers meet the second Tuesday of every month from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 2415 North Munroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32303

YouTube Link

to Mary Jane Ryals and Cynthia Rose reading Mary Jane's poem, "In the Night from the Sixteenth Floor Apartment."

www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxRqtayVIDo

This summer, **Pat Stanford's** newly published book of poems, *Proverbs of My Seasons, Poetry of Transition*, won two gold medals from the Florida Authors and Publishers Association. One medal was for the heavily entered category of Poetry and the other for Adult Cover Design. Pat's newly released second edition of *Fixing Boo Boo, A Story of Traumatic Brain Injury*, is now a #1 Bestseller on Amazon.



[link](#)

In September, **Katie Clark** was the featured speaker at the Leon County Library "Booked for Lunch" program. She discussed her book *Acceptance of Seasons: Poems Embracing Mental Health*.

~ Linda Wright, Secretary
for Alex Kaelin, President



Avis Simmonds



Cynthia Rose



Mary Jane Ryals



Linda Marie





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) continues to examine notable poets. Most recently, members have been reading works by the latest U.S. Poet Laureate - **Joy Harjo**. The notable poets for November will be those who are notoriously known for their “bad poetry.” Original poems by members are also read and discussed.

Because it is Veterans Day and the Tallahassee Senior Center will be closed, our November 11th meeting will either be held at a different location, or on a different day of that week. Due to the holiday schedule in December, meetings may change to the first and third Mondays for just that month.

Otherwise, PLOI meets 2:45 - 4:45 pm, the second and fourth Mondays of the month, except for August and holidays. Meetings are now in Room 1A on the main floor of the Tallahassee Senior Center. Visitors are always welcome.

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



Members at Large

Jill Jennings

Jill Jennings sent in three poems to a new journal called *Please See Me*. Two were accepted for the Fall issue, “Night Fright” and “Arthritis,” and a third is scheduled for the winter issue. If you want to take a look at *Please See Me*, here is the web address: <http://www.pleaseseeme.com>

Poetry Challenge

Words of Thanks

Thank you, Lord,
for sun, for sky
for the air I breathe
for my feet
that can still feel the grass
for setting suns and rising moons
for empty beaches
and full sailboats
for Earl Grey tea in a china cup
for French pastries in shop windows
for fast trains in foreign lands.

Thank you
for the silence of stained glass windows
and the crash of waves on Ulua Beach
for the solidity of old friends
and the excitement of new ones
for wool felt berets in winter
and butter lettuce in spring
for hands to hold this paper
on which I write
for words that hit the mark
for those that don't
and the sense to tell the difference.

~ By Jill Jennings

Christmas

When the sun goes down on Christmas day
don't let Christmas go away:
keep its spirit and its power
surging through your every hour
of life. Keep praying. Keep forgiving
all the dead and all the living
who might have done you ill or wrong.
Don't reduce Christmas to a fleeting song
or a greeting card or a festive tree.
Think only of the nativity.
Think of Christmas as the start
of a fresh new way to open your heart.
God has arrived. You have every reason
to make your whole life a Christmas season.

~ By Dennis Rhodes

While On My Biggest Vacation

I thought about going to the office today,
then I remembered it's so far away.
I still have appropriate clothes to wear;
a four-hour drive will get me there.

I'll take the chance, I'll make the trip,
and pray that I can find that zip.
Upon arrival, I'll look out of place;
likely no one'll recognize my face.

Walking with purpose, I'll have a little fun
finding thirty-two forty-five cubicle #1.
But what's the point of finding that door?
It's been a decade, I don't work here anymore.

~ By Suzanne S. Austin-Hill

Tree

Dusty,
faded, webbed
from the entomology of the garage.
Tarnished ornaments peek
through tinsel to face Menorah's
twinkling lights.

I celebrate
too late this year. Too
late to say the prayers.
I try again to kindle holiday joy.

~ By Alice R. Friedman

□ Poetry Challenge

Always at Christmas

At Christmas there is always music;
Carols sing of snow and sheep and a silent night.
Some songs tell of comic creatures and bright beasts;
Melodies pipe into elevators and shops and school concerts.
Homes glow with silvery trees
Bedecked with ornaments and stars,
While carolers stroll the streets with songs
That tell of wassail, wise men and wonder.
Pageants present the story of old,
The ragged-robed shepherds, the swaddled babe.
The littlest angels shower the light from above
While choirs sing Joy to the World.
And the music continues in the ringing of the pealing bells
To fill the dark places with joy from the belfries.
Aunts and uncles tipple with egg nog and brandy,
As houses all over the town lift Christmas voices once again.
Hark the Herald soars above the darkness
To the quiet spaces, to the dark spaces,
And music overcomes the sadness
And cheers the world's soul always at Christmas.

~ By Judith Krum

Next Issue: Editor's Choice Poetry Challenge

Prompt: Image prompt (to the right)

Form: Any

Line limit: Up to 20 lines

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

The winning poem(s):

Will be featured in our
January/February issue



In Spite of It All, digital photograph, the Mississippi River at New Orleans, LA

Mark Andrew James Terry

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

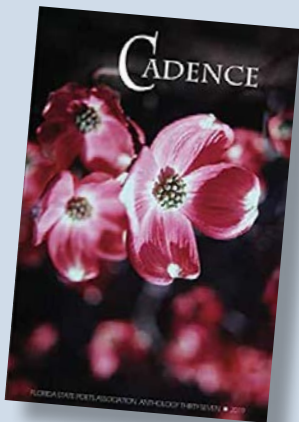
Submittal Specifications:

Format for text:
Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx),
RTF, TXT, or PDF format files.
Please do not embed your
submission in an email.

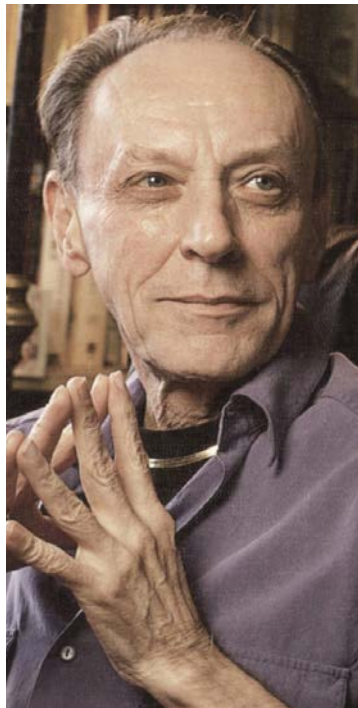
Format for images:
150 to 300 pixels/inch resolution
but no larger than 3.5M in JPEG (.jpg)
format. If you are unable to do this,
contact the Editor at 407.620.0158.

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



[Click here](#) to purchase the 2019 FSPA Anthology, *Cadence*.



Snippet from Our Historian

It was April, 2017, **Nancy Hauptle MacInnis** and I drove to Tampa to the FSPA Spring Fling late on Friday night. I left Nancy asleep because she drove, and I went to breakfast alone. Nancy joined me later. I overheard someone at the next table talking about writing and poetry. I turned around and said, "There's a writers' convention here."

The man said, "I know. I'm speaking there today." He introduced himself as Lee Bennett Hopkins wearing a big smile and speaking with exuberance. Lee told me he used to live in Newark, New Jersey. He said went to high school at South Side. I said I grew up in nearby Paterson, New Jersey and went to Eastside High School.

I said, "I just returned from Newark and my big brother took me to Branch Brook Park. It opened in 1895."

Lee said, "That's where I lived. That's my old neighborhood you visited." Lee's enthusiasm made me feel that instant connection one gets with a common interest, like poetry. I said, "I happen to have photos I took there last week."

"Let's see." He surprised me.

I got out my camera and turned it on; no cell-phone photography for me. I said, "My brother said Newark had more cherry blossoms than Washington, DC. It has thousands. He took me there on the way to the train station in Newark for my return trip to Florida. He showed me a huge world-renowned church there too."

Lee looked thrilled to see the pictures of cherry blossoms in his old city and those of the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart; he lit up like a child at Christmastime. "Yes, there they are, just like I remember them."

Later that day, Lee Bennett Hopkins gave his talk on "Getting in Touch with Your Inner Child."

And that's how I'll remember Lee Bennett Hopkins.

Cherry blossoms bloom
sweet smell wafts into my nose
the scent of Newark.

~ Elaine Person, FSPA Historian

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

~ Mark Andrew James Terry, editor



A Little Lagniappe:



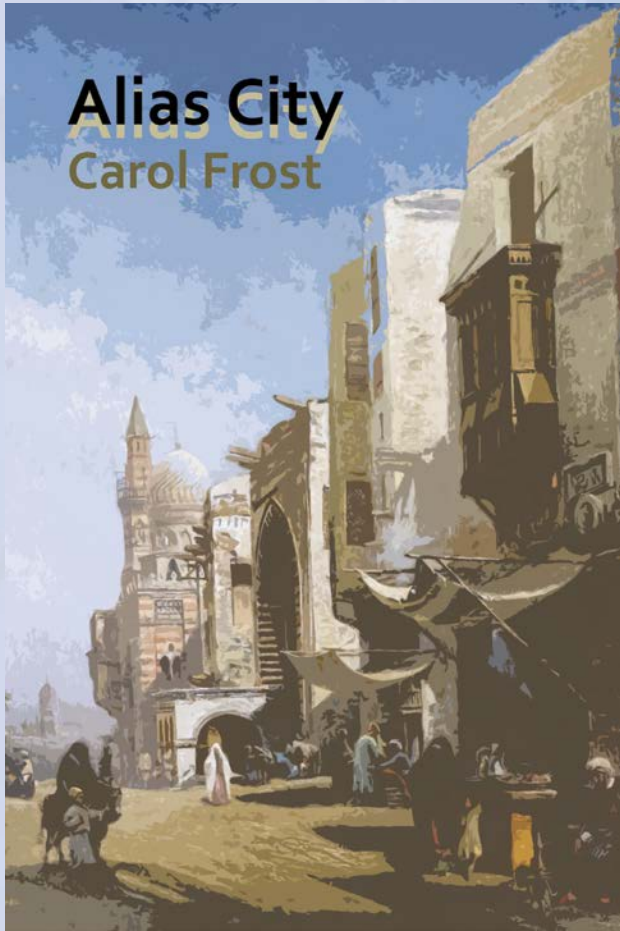
Photograph by Suzanne S. Austin-Hill

warmer times,
in the silence of your absence,
forever frozen

~ by Suzanne S. Austin-Hill

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.



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—ILYA KAMINSKY, author of *Deaf Republic*

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