

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 2

AUGUST 2019

NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, October 19, 2019, at the Emmanuel Lutheran Episcopal Church, 209 Eastern Ave. in Augusta. Please bring a bag lunch. Coffee, tea, bottled water and some morning refreshments will be provided. A \$10 registration fee is expected from all attendees to help defray the cost of renting the facility. However, if you bring a guest who is not a member of the society, that guest (first-time only) will not need to pay the registration fee.

Agenda for Meeting

9:30	Registration and coffee	12:30	Open Mic - sign up at registration. Half an hour will be allotted. First readers will be those who have not submitted a poem for the contest.
10:00	Business Meeting	1:00	Judge Kevin Sweeney will announce the contest winners and offer feedback to those present who entered
10:30	Mini-workshop led by Ann Britting-Oleson "Manifesting the Manifesto" and narrative poems	1:50	Judge reads his own work and/or offers poetry writing helps.
12:00	Lunch (bring your own)	2:30	Announcements and closing

Book exchange (If books you bring are there at the end of the meeting, you may reclaim them. Otherwise they'll be given to Good Will.)

Contest Submissions – Members Only

(NOTE: Submission to a contest constitutes permission to publish.)

Send to: James Breslin
451 Bassett Rd.
Winslow, ME 04901

DEADLINE: September 19, 2019
1 poem (no fee)

- 2 copies of your poem (ONE with your name; one without)
- Envelope: Letter-size (long, #10) marked "CONTEST"
- INCLUDE SASE!!

Contest Poem—A free verse poem of not more than 30 lines about a place: a town, a street, a house, an apartment, a bar, a valley, an island, a fishing spot along the river, a state. Try not to be sentimental. You don't even have to know the place well. Judge, Kevin Sweeney, offers links to several poems that will give you a sense of what he's looking for.

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43088/degrees-of-gray-in-philipsburg>

<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/death-of-the-kapowsin-tavern/>

<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-church-on-comiaken-hill/>

<http://adilegian.com/hugo.htm>

ABOUT THE JUDGE

Kevin Sweeney has an MFA in fiction from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst and is the author of three poetry books from Moon Pie Press: *Rags of Prayer*, *Ordinary Time*, and *Imminent Tribulations*. He is the English department chair at Southern Maine Community College where he has taught for 36 years. He is also an assistant poetry editor at the Café Review in Portland and has done interviews with poets Kim Addonizio, Martin Espada, Margaret Randall, Gerald Locklin, and Carl Dennis. Over the decades he has published poetry and fiction in *The Wormwood Review*, *Free Lunch*, *Berkeley Samisdat Review*, *Unspeakable Visions*, *Big Hammer*, *San Fernando Poetry Journal*, *Off The Coast*, and *The Aurorean* among others. He has been nominated four times for a Pushcart Prize

April 2019 CONTEST WINNERS

Contest: A persona poem with a twist - Judge, Carol Bachofner

First Prize— Margie Kivel

I catch a flash of metal

make my cursory circle

feign indifference

then pump * wings * up

and UP

turn

make a dive

S-W-O-O-P

grab the cigarette holder right from his mouth

and head for the brambles.

What a find!

You can't have too much

silver

in your cache.

Faithfully yours,

Charles Crow

Second Prize— Robert Paul Allen

The Hangman Calls Presidio, Texas 1883

Barely above hearing's threshold, like a clock ticking
in the other room, footsteps are marching.

In my cell, I match their pace between the pipe frame bunk
and the foul privy. My last meal sits untouched,
as the resident rat waits for it to be his alone.

I happened into the mercantile to find the owner on the floor
by the counter with its open till. His bashed head revealed
jagged slivers of bone pressed inwards expelling bits like curd.
Rivulets of blood spread across the well-worn floor.

As a Tejano, protests of innocence would be proof of guilt.
My heart sledgehammering in my chest, I ran for it.
The sheriff spotted me and collared me on a hunch.

Boots stop in lock step outside my door.

After the turning lock grates, the door rasps open.

The hangman in his black hood binds my wrists.

A priest by his side mumbles as he thumbs his bible.

Together we parade past the gawking raucous rabble
assembled with picnic baskets and bottles of whiskey.

My head erect, eyes dry, the hemp ties scratching at my wrists,
I scan the jeering crowd for loved ones, but see none.

In silence, I climb the thirteen steps to the wooden gallows.

My throat tightening, I pray it will be quick.

The hangman places the hood, then the rope.

The scaffold creaks as they step back. A wooden lever slides,

Looking down below the hood, the trap door drops beneath my feet.

The rope jerks, twists, and then snaps. The wind is knocked out
of me as I hit the ground. Two men toss me in a wagon

and race off bouncing and jouncing me like a bag of feed.

Before the posse can form, I am unbound and floating

across the Rio Grande, my family and fresh horses on the far shore.

Third Prize—Ruth F. Guillard**MARIA**

I am lying under a thin
blanket, feeling for a mother
who isn't there.

In my old home, before they came
and dragged away my father,
he said to my mother,
Here is the money; take Maria
and go with the next caravan.

After a long month that seemed
like years, crossing deserts, ranges,
dry stream beds, we came to somewhere
in America. That was the last time
I saw my mother, or anyone
but strangers.

The smaller children are whirring,
too bewildered to scream their fears,
too tired to struggle anymore.
I try to soothe a little girl
with eyes like a deer's,
eyes that the hunter sees
before he takes away
the life that might have been...

I am thrilled to have been awarded third prize in
the "persona" poem contest with my poem
"Maria." Please convey my thoughts to everyone
who made this, and other contests, possible so that
writers like me can have a voice. ~ *Ruth Guillard*

First Honorable Mention—Carl Little**The Model (Room in Ogunquit)
(after Yasuo Kuniyoshi's After the Bath, 1923)**

Here I am combing my hair,
Skin tingling in the cooler air
While you stare.

You don't see me, Mr. Kuniyoshi.

I act like I'm shy
But I am sly
And I can see desire in your eye.

You don't see me, Mr. Kuniyoshi.

This room in Ogunquit looks out on the sea.
You study me,
You think I'm free.

You don't see me, Mr. Kuniyoshi.

The curler on the dresser resembles a flower.
You have the power
To make me cower.

You don't see me, Mr. Kuniyoshi.

You have your painting, I have my money –
That's the arrangement, honey.
Everything is peachy-sunny.

You don't see me, Mr. Kuniyoshi.

Meanwhile a ship passes and I grow cold.
I am 16 years old.
Stay like that, I'm told.

You can't say that, Mr. Kuniyoshi.

Reminder: Members of MPS are automatically members of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, and thus eligible to enter their contests. Check out the August 2019 issue of *Strophes*, which has been posted to <http://nfsp.com/> as the current issue. Winners of the 2019 contests are in this issue. Click on *Strophes* in the left-hand column and then "Current Issue" at the top of the page.

To see the list of contests for 2020, go to <http://nfsp.com/> click on "Poetry Contests" in the left-hand column and then on "Annual Poetry Contests." You will have an option of reading online or downloading a brochure, which is designed to be printed on legal length paper.

Second Honorable Mention—Andrew Twaddle
His Next Duchess

Father, why must I marry
 this man who sees me with appraising eye?
 I would have a man who pleases me,
 youthful, attractive, and tuned to my desire,
 one who would love me and wish me
 whole, not an old man
 who sees only the blush of my youth,
 who would have me an acquisition to collect
 as art. His last Duchess was beautiful,
 smiled much at me and was kind, but much
 as he praised her, she was not herself. She was
 mere exquisite object. Father,
 I would marry for love, not connection.
 Please don't hang me on his wall!

Fourth Honorable Mention—Nick Stone
MONA LISA

*“Are you warm are you real Mona Lisa?
 Or just a cold and lonely lovely work of art?”*

as a painting I don't have to answer questions
 I look away to keep the world outside
 why I smile will always be a mystery
 until someone comes along who needs no guide

in the background is that sea or hidden valley?
 are the foldings of my bodice any clue?
 is my face aglow from sun or lingering passion?
 do my eyes say all that I've been through?

am I waiting for a love or has one left me?
 are my hands crossed resting or in prayer?
 do the shadings of my throat tell any story
 is there a message in the tumbling of my hair?

are my breasts there to arouse you or to nourish?
 or maybe there is nowhere I can hide
 around my head is that a glowing halo
 or a vain creation of my mind?

*are you warm, are you real, Mona Lisa?
 or just a cold and lonely lovely work of art?*

if you know you don't really need my answer
 if not my smile will keep you out

Third Honorable Mention—Bill Frayer
My Tears Flow South

*Ever has it been that love know not its own depth
 until the hour of separation. ~ Kahlil Gibran*

My tears flow south
 washing me back from the border
 into our barrio, alone, without
 my little Lupe.

She splashed rainbows
 into my dark casa.
 Now my tears fall into
 the rich pozole, Lupe's favorite.
 I can taste her breath
 rising from the soup.

As I lie in my bed
 the church bells call to me.
 These same tears burrow into my soul
 as her fading voice rings “Mama, Mama!”

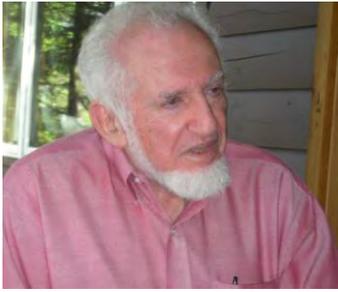
I cannot feel my feet as I step
 into the blazing sun in the warm plaza
 “Lupe!” I call to her. I see her white dress
 drifting slowly across the cobblestones
 Her voice grows faint as I
 cradle her in my empty arms.

People passing by
 just step around
 puddles of my tears
 as though nothing
 has been lost.

“Poetry is a life-cherishing force. For poems
 are not words, after all, but fires for the cold,
 ropes let down to the lost, something as
 necessary as bread in the pockets of the
 hungry.”

~ Mary Oliver, *A Poetry Handbook*

Remembering Ted Bookey



We are saddened by the death of Ted Bookey, a giant in the Maine poetry world, who left us on March 10 at age 90. Ted was a mentor and teacher to many poets of all levels of experience. He was unfailingly generous and wise in his advice. Ted was funny, always curious, very smart, and embraced life with gusto. He had unique gifts with language and his poems sparkle with wit and insight. Ted's poetry books are *Mixty Motions*, *Language As A Second Language*, *Lostalgia*, *A W/Hole In One*, and *'Stitiously Speaking*, the latter four from Moon Pie Press. Also, in collaboration with his wife Ruth, he produced a book of translations from the German of Erich Kastner.

He was a member of the Maine Poets Society and was on several occasions a judge for our contests. He taught classes in Poetry and on Humor in the Senior Education program at the University of Maine in Augusta. For years Ted and Ruth ran successful poetry readings at the Harlow Gallery in Hallowell, Maine that now continue as "The Bookey Readings." Ted's poetry, criticism and reviews appear in many journals and anthologies. His plays have been produced in Maine and off Broadway in New York City.

He will be missed by a great many people.

MPS Prize Poem Contest Results

Previously Published Poets: The winner was Richard Foerster's poem "Daphnis in Old Age," and runners-up were Kevin Sweeney's "Uncle Vanya in Mad Town" and "The Glass Worker" by Leonore Hildebrandt.

Unpublished Poets: The winner was Jen Ryan Onken with her poem "Breezy Point After the Hurricane."

Opportunity Grants

Good fall fellow poets! I hope your summer has been both fruitful and fun. As we move into the colder months, a couple things of note: the Opportunity Grant Program has not been used to the extent we anticipated. We had slotted 10 available grants of \$100 (a percentage of which could be used for gas/travel expenses) to be used by members in 2019 for virtually any type of online or in person poetry seminar/workshop experience. As of our July business meeting no one had applied, so we as a board propose to 1/2 that to \$500 in 2020 and use the balance for general meeting workshops and presentations by outside talents. We experimented with this last year with Nate Amadon of Port Veritas to great results. We feel this allotment will provide a further enriching experience for members who are able to attend our general meetings. Please note that there will still be ample opportunity (no pun intended) to take advantage of the Opportunity Grant Program (go here to print out an application: <http://www.maine-poets-society.com/grant-2019.pdf>). Lastly, I just want to remind everyone interested and able that renewing your membership before the end of year or at the fall meeting will count towards 2020! This makes it infinitely easier for us to implement new ideas in the spring and less annoying for everyone overall (no reminder emails, etc). Thank you and good writing! I hope to see many familiar and new faces this October.

Gus Peterson, Treasurer & Membership Chair, glp3324@gmail.com



President's Message

So that was the summer.... and I hope you all had a good one. If you went anywhere beautiful (and if you stayed home in Maine you were already somewhere beautiful) please consider writing a poem about it, or about another place that means a lot to you, for our next contest. Our judge, Kevin Sweeney, who was a wonderful runner-up in our prize poem contest with his poem "Uncle Vanya in Mad Town," has set the topic of Place. See the contest article for more details. I look forward to hearing your poems and his comments at our fall meeting in Augusta in October.

This next meeting should be a very rich experience, so I hope as many of you as possible will make it. Novelist and poet Anne Britting Oleson has agreed to run a mini-workshop for us. If you haven't read any of her novels – *The Book of the Mandolin Player*, *Dovecote and Tapiser* – or her poetry chapbooks, *The Church of St Materiana*, *The Beauty of It*, and *Alley of Dreams*, treat yourselves. They are all well worth reading. In her day job, she teaches high school English; but several years ago she made a promise to herself that every day she would do one thing to advance herself professionally as a writer, whether it was writing, revising, editing or submitting. She calls it "Manifesting the Manifesto." I hope that she is going to talk to us about that, as well as about narrative poems. It's all to do with story!

Our second Maine Poets Society Prize Poem contest was a success. We covered our costs and attracted some wonderful entries. This year we divided the contest into two – one for previously published poets, and one for previously unpublished poets. This worked well, in that it allowed previously unpublished poets to shine in their own category, and indeed the winner of that category, Jen Ryan Onken, produced a wonderful poem called "Breezy Point After the Hurricane."

The winner of the contest for published poets was Richard Foerster, a wonderful and well-published poet who lives in Eliot, Maine, with his poem "Daphnis in Old Age." He was a runner-up in our first year, and has kindly agreed to judge our 2020 Prize Poem contest for previously published poets. Details of that will follow in the next issue of Stanza. Our thanks go to this year's judge, Gibson Fay LeBlanc, who is the new director of the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance. If you're not familiar with their work, do check out their website, <http://mainewriters.org/>. They run some wonderful workshops in different parts of the state, and from my own experience of taking part in these I can say they are richly rewarding.

While you are browsing the Internet, do remember also to check out the contests run by the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NSFPS). As members of MPS you are eligible to enter any of their contests that are open to people from out of state. I came second myself in a contest run out of Utah last year and won \$50, so it's always worth a try. You'll find their website at <http://www.nfsps.com/>

I hope to see you in October. Please bring a poem to share at our open mic.

Yours in poetry

Jenny Doughty (President, MPS)

Publication & Member News

Poems

Bill Frayer's poem "Digital Intelligence" has been accepted for the Cosmos-themed issue of *The Poeming Pigeon*, to be published later this year by The Poetry Box.

Craig Sipe has a poem "A Drinking Boat" in the May 2019 edition of *Right Hand Pointing*.

Richard Foerster will have two poems in the next online issue of *The American Journal of Poetry*: "After" and "Lentigo." "Numismatics" will appear in the next issue of *Tar River Poetry*. Richard will be featured in the Poet Spotlight of the Fall issue of *Frost Meadow Review* with a group of poems and an interview.

Jenny Doughty has one poem, "Imago," in the forthcoming climate change anthology from Littoral Press, and three poems in Encircle Publications' recently published anthology *Except for Love: New England Poets Remember Donald Hall*: "As for the rose," "I love you like an apple" and "In the lean time."

Robert Paul Allen's poem "Almost Home" was published in the Lewiston Sun Journal on July 7.

Books

Tammi Truax's YA historical hybrid based on Maine history, *For to See the Elephant: a novel in verse*, is available at Piscataqua Press, Amazon and Sherman's Maine Coast Book Shops.

Ruth F. Guillard's latest book of poems, *Between the Tides*, May 2019, is available through Tadorna Press, Ithaca, NY, and on Amazon.

NOTE: The deadline for Publication & Member News for the next *Stanza* is November 1, 2019.

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FIRST CLASS

Stanza is the tri-annual
newsletter of the
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promoting good poetry
since 1936

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MPS website (MainePoetsSociety.com)

MPS Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1747588905507733/>. When you indicate an interest in joining the group, Jenny (as Administrator) will be able to confirm your request. You can also search within Facebook for Maine Poets Society. Choose the option that says “public group.”