

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

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NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next general meeting is scheduled for May 20. We do not yet know whether it will be in-person only and, if so, where. We are hoping it will be our first attempt at a hybrid meeting with both a morning and an afternoon session. Details will be shared as soon as they are available. In the meantime, we are pleased to announce that we have a judge and contest details for May.

May Members-Only Contest

Times New Roman or Arial font preferred.

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

Deadline, April 20, 2023

CONTEST DETAILS

Contest Poem — Imagistic Poems – 30-line limit

What do we remember about poems we've read? We remember the images we see and we remember the feelings they evoke. While poems evoke different emotions from different people at different times, the images are what stay crystal clear in the reader's mind. For example, what do we remember after reading this poem by Jane Kenyon?

What Came to Me

I took the last
dusty piece of china
out of the barrel.
It was your gravy boat,
with a hard, brown
drop of gravy still
on the porcelain lip.
I grieved for you then
as I never had before.

(Jane Kenyon: *Collected Poems*, Graywolf Press, 2005.)

Emotion-wise, we feel sorrow, sympathy and longing. But it's her images that make those emotions stay with us. Her central image is that of "...a hard, brown/drop of gravy still/on the porcelain lip." The other image is that of "...the last/dusty piece of china." I might forget the title of the poem, maybe some days even that it was Kenyon who wrote it, but I will never forget that drop of gravy on the porcelain lip.

Perhaps the most famous imagistic poem is "In a Station of the Metro" by Ezra Pound who founded the Imagist movement:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd:
Petals on a wet, black bough.

(From *Poetry* magazine.)

As famous is “The Fish” by Elizabeth Bishop. So we are not looking for poems that use only images; we are looking for poems that use images well. Other examples of poems that make great use of images are haiku (such as Basho’s simple “A field of cotton/as if the moon/had flowered,” “Nantucket” by William Carlos Williams, “Forty Years” by Mary Oliver, “Empire” by Charles Simic, and “The Knot” by Stanley Kunitz.

For a brief guide to the early 20th century Imagist movement, see <https://poets.org/text/brief-guide-imagism>.

ABOUT THE JUDGE

Cynthia Brackett-Vincent founded *the Aurorean* poetry journal (1995–2020), which printed the work of over 1,600 poets worldwide. Lead and acquisitions editor for Encircle Publications, she edits fiction and poetry books. Her poetry has been published in *frogpond*, *Ibbetson Street*, *The Penman Review*, *Sandy River Review*, *Yankee*, and others, and was nominated for the Pushcart Prize by *Pirene’s Fountain*. She previously served as membership chair of Maine Poets Society and now serves as treasurer for the Haiku Society of America. Cynthia facilitates a yearly poetry workshop in the Adirondacks. In 2016 she received a Norton Island residency in poetry. Her co-edited anthology, *Women on Poetry: Writing, Revising, Publishing & Teaching* (McFarland) was named “One of 100 Best Books for Writers” by *Poets & Writers*. She lives near Farmington with her husband and their two needy rescue cats. She holds a BFA in Creative Writing from the University of Maine, Farmington.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Only current MPS members are eligible and only one entry per person is permitted. Note that Times New Roman or Arial font is preferred.

If submitting by USPS: Mail to: Gus Peterson, 12 Middle Street, Randolph 04346

2 copies of your poem (ONE with your name; one without) in a letter-size (#10) envelope marked “CONTEST.” **Must be postmarked on or before April 20 to be considered.** Please be sure to enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Email entries must be sent as an attachment on or before April 20 to mainepoetsociety@gmail.com. In the upper right-hand corner, include your name, address, telephone number and email address. **Please send the poem in a .doc, .docx or .rtf format. Do not send it as a .pdf.** We suggest **Member Contest Entry Spring 2023** or something similar in the subject line.

Research regarding online payment for MPS

Our Treasurer has been attempting to lay the groundwork for online digital payment. What he has discovered is that the implementation of that process involves becoming a vendor that must meet certain federal compliance mandates for online vending. In addition, the cost of identifying and programming the digital interfaces proves to be a rather large sum for a small society. We also do not believe we have a member who is deeply oriented to the details of online vendorship who might be willing and able to manage the challenges it presents. We have decided to close the current attempt and reach out to the NFSPS to see what they may be able to share about the experience of other state societies.

Members Only “Reading in the Round” on Zoom January 21 – 10 a.m. to Noon

Our next Reading in the Round is scheduled for Saturday, January 21, 2023. We remind you once again that our membership year begins on January 1st. A reminder will be sent in early January to those whose 2023 dues are still owed. **Please understand that you will receive the link to the January reading even if still showing with a membership ending 12/31/2022, but only those with a 2023 end date will be eligible to read.**

September 2022 CONTEST WINNERS

Contest: “Grief”—Judge, Dawn Potter**1st Prize— Cynthia Lozier
The Traveler**

I'm not like you
I can't let go, although

with time the grip loosens
and remembering is easier to carry

you've always been a light traveler

leaving behind anything
that might slow you down

nothing to declare, nothing to hide

I admire that
as I sling a heavy carry-on
from one shoulder to the other

not yet trusting that I won't need
something that's packed inside

**3rd Prize—Gus Peterson
Netflix Recommends**

As if sensing my disorder,
she asks: what sparks joy?
So, this is about more
than cleaning out a closet.
She wants all the skeletons,
insistent as spring blossom.
But there is a method to this.
See, you fold shirts just so.
I think of trying to read earlier.
How, lifting my hand to turn
the page, a bar of sunlight
had slipped through the blinds,
alighted to the back of a wrist.
It sang, warm and weightless
as a bird. How suddenly it all
made sense, the way a man
on screen is sobbing now,
clutter his way of coping.
I remember watching a friend
sort a loved one's clothes.
She'd kept them for months.
How she still had to check,
face ironed to each sweater
before letting go.

**2nd Prize—Mike Bove
TO MARGARET FULLER
AS HER SHIP GOES DOWN**

You're off the coast of Fire Island and your ship
hit a shoal or reef and your young son
is in your arms and your husband is there, or he's
your partner and you're not married,
the biographers aren't sure, but you've been
in Italy for years loving him and writing
and having a child, which isn't something
you thought you wanted when you left Concord
where you walked with Emerson and rowed
with Thoreau, and hold on to that deck-rail
though it's soaked with rain, and hold on to
your child though the crewmen are yelling
to put him in a lifeboat, and search the sky
in all directions for light though you can't tell
which way is east, and cry, Margaret, you have to
cry, because you don't know how this ends
but we do, we know your ship goes down, we know
your little boy drowns, we know you
and your husband die and most of the crew,
and we know they'll never find your body
though pieces of the ship will wash ashore
and someone will recover some of your letters
but not the book you were finishing,
and people in town will catch wind of the wreck
and the items washed up and some of them
will come to the water to scavenge
for things to sell and Emerson will get
an urgent message and send Thoreau
to look for you and when he arrives
on the beach the ship will be gone and he'll see
a scattering of people going through
the wreckage and one of them will be
wearing your coat and he'll manage to
tear away a single brass button he'll hold
in his palm when the sky clears and the sun
strikes it creating a glint we'll remember forever
because we can see it all the way from here.

1st Honorable Mention—Kathryn Tracy The New Baler

They buried the old man two weeks ago.
Even so, his son shows up to mow hay.
They've worked our field for thirty years--
feed for Black Angus, bedding for hogs.

He says the rumble and dust of harvest helps.
The swelter of heat is prime for hay.
He figures to get four trailers full--
a fair yield in a dry year.

He tows a new machine behind the John Deere.
It twines and tosses golden bales in a heap--
untidy compared to the tight stacks he made
when his father drove and he hefted the load.

He idles with a cigarette when we hand up iced tea.
In middle age, he's leathered by sun.
He says his children moved away to get other work.
We nod. Ours too, moved out of state.

Tomorrow he'll return with produce
from the garden his father put in last June.
Zucchini, potatoes, sweet corn, chard--
a welcome feast, and some to spare.

2nd Honorable Mention—Richard Foerster Last Time in L.A.

A middle-aged man is straining to hold a comet's ashen smudge
in his sights. For three nights it has moved through Libra's dark house,

the abrading trail all the while brightening as it slipped closer, pulled
in the sun's unyielding grip. Decades it's taken since it last ventured

from beyond the planets to arrive—and pin him there, trembling
in the chill night, unable to keep his binoculars trained any longer

on what's become so apparent before him: his mother's hair
brushed out and settled in a darkened room that last time in L.A.

3rd Honorable Mention—Diane Hunt Calm Seas and a Safe Voyage

He was the last of the golden ones,
Aware of his stature, he never
took advantage,
for in his time and place
last was a pleasing space.
He knew many things,
many things.
He knew the silvery rainbow fish,
He knew a little monkey called JoJo,
He knew enough dance steps
to dance the whole night through.
He knew the Pacific, the Golden Gate Bridge,
He knew how to fix a leaky faucet
and what a come-along was.
He knew the man made lake

His life lake,
when the ice was strong enough
to walk on,
where and when the floating island
would rise up again
He knew Lovingkindness.

When it was time,
he followed the silver trout
deep into the dark, cold water
and with ease and delight
He stepped onto the other shore
Voyage ended.
And our well-placed tears
flowed off to find the sea.

MAINE POETS SOCIETY PRIZE POEM CONTESTS 2023

The Maine Poets Society is proud to present our sixth annual \$100 prize poem contest. This year we are again also offering a \$50 prize to Maine poets whose poetry has not been previously published. Publication in a newsletter or an online workshop does not count for this purpose.

The contests are open to all Maine residents, including seasonal, except for Maine Poets Society board members. If your entry will be postmarked out of state, please enclose a letter verifying your address when resident in Maine. Entries must be postmarked between January 15th and the deadline of March 30th, 2023.

There is a \$5 entry fee for the \$100 prize poem contest, and a \$2.50 entry fee for the \$50 contest for previously unpublished poets. You may enter up to 4 poems, but you must cover each poem with an entry fee. You may not enter a poem that has been previously published.

Topic and form are left open, but there is a 50-line limit. Entries exceeding this will be disqualified.

Our distinguished judge for the \$100 prize poem contest in 2023 will be Wesley McNair, Maine Poet Laureate from 2011-2016 and Emeritus Professor at the University of Maine, Farmington. He has received fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and United States Artists. Among his other honors are the Robert Frost Prize, the Theodore Roethke Prize, the Jane Kenyon Award for Outstanding Book, the Sarah Josepha Hale Medal for “distinguished contribution to the world of letters.”

Our prizes will be presented at the 2023 Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance awards evening. The shortlists will be announced beforehand by email and on the MPS Facebook page.

Please send two copies of your poem, one of them identified with your name, mailing address, email address and telephone number and which contest you are entering, and one with no additional information, to MPS Vice-President Gus Peterson, at 12 Middle Street, Randolph, ME 04346. Mark your envelope CONTEST.

Enclose a check payable to Maine Poets Society, with ‘Contest entry’ on the memo line. Entries will not be returned, so please retain a copy.

Publication & Member News

Poems

Jeanne Julian has a poem, “The Resting Place, in Lakeshore Review issue 2, and “Walk in Thaw” in *Kakalak 2022*. An anthology, *Bindweed: Winter Wonderland 2022*, will include her poems “How to Walk the Cables on the Golden Gate Bridge (in Fog) in Ten Easy Steps,” “Vengeance,” and “Where.”

Jenny Doughty’s poem “Watching the Little Sisters” was among 10 poems highly commended for the Bridport Prize in the UK. They had over 3,000 entries to produce the first, second and third place winners plus the list of highly commended poems.

Darlene Glover had her poem “When I Miss You Most” published in the fall/winter edition of “*West Coast Maine*” magazine.

Laura West responded to our July email invitation to submit poems to the Arizona State Poetry Society contests. Two of her poems were awarded third place. They will be published in the 2022 *Sandcutters* anthology.

Frances Nankin also participated and received an honorable mention in the 2022 Arizona State Poetry Contest for her poem, “Bear.”

Nancy Sobanik's poem “Bindings” will be published in the January 2023 Issue 29 by *Triggerfish Critical Review*.

Robert Allen published two poems in *Dissident Voice* in June 2022 entitled “The Man Know One Knows” and “Martin's House.”

Craig Sipe's poem “Sunday Open House in the Country” was published in the November 1, 2022 issue of *Hole in the Head Review*. Also, his poem “Tentative Ode to My Knee Replacement” appeared in the October 2022 issue of *Maine Senior*.

Cynthia Lozier's poem "Loss Lingers Remembered by Poppies" was included in the Southern Arizona Press 2022 anthology titled *The Poppy: A Symbol of Remembrance*.

Gus Peterson's poem “Hand Axe” will be published online in issue 10 of *Bracken Magazine*, and his poem “Putting it Off” will be published in issue 23 of *Panoply*.

Anne Rankin had a poem published in *Hole in the Head Review* for its special Thanksgiving issue, and has work forthcoming in *Passager Journal* for a themed issue on ancestral or generational trauma. Her poem, "left unsaid," was a finalist at this year's Belfast Poetry Festival.

Richard Foerster's poem “At Uluru” has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize by *Hole in the Head Review*, and two others will appear in their next issue: “Anxiety Dream: Everywhere I've Ever Been” and “Shiva's Dance (My Tantric Massage).” “I Watched from My Adirondack Chair” appeared recently in *Valpariso Poetry Review* and “On My Way to the Fine Craft Show” in *One*. “Bijoux Box” and “Tasmanian Cave Spider” are forthcoming in *Poetry East*. His chapbook *The Birder* has been accepted for inclusion in *Ten Piscataqua Writers 2023*, and his ninth collection, *With Little Light and Sometimes None at All*, will be published by Littoral Books next fall.

Books

Jefferson Navicky's poetry book “Antique Densities” is available from Deerbrook Editions, and his novel “Head of Island Beautification for the Rural Outlands” is forthcoming in February 2023.

Bill Frayer's new collection, *Tyranny of Maps*, is available on Amazon.

Other Member News

Margaret Yocom conducted three “Monson Memories” workshops at Monson Arts this summer and fall. She helped participants discover personal stories and then write essays and poems based on them. All will be gathered into a book in celebration of Monson's Bicentennial 2022.

The Topsham Public Library recently announced that David Sloan won the annual Margaret F. Tripp Prize for his poem “Solo,” an ekphrastic piece inspired by Winslow Homer's “Returning from the Spring.” Even better, his nine-year-old granddaughter Luisa Feliciano won top honors in the Grade 3-5 category for her poem “Crow.” Both pieces will be **posted soon on the Joy of the Pen website.**

National Federation of State Poetry Societies 2023 Contests

Brochure is available

Deadline: March 15

Just a reminder that membership in the Maine Poets Society includes membership in NFSPS. The brochure for the 2023 contests is now available. [brochure2023.pdf \(nfsp.com\)](#) Note that it is designed to be printed on legal length paper (8.5 x 14). Entries must not be postmarked earlier than January 1, 2023, nor later than March 15. The submission process is a bit complicated, so be sure to read what's expected in that regard. There are 50 contests. To be eligible to participate as a member, your Maine Poetry Society dues must be paid for 2023 by the beginning of March. There is a link on the home page of our website ([MainePoetsSociety.com](#)) that will take you to the current issue of the NFSPS newsletter (*Strophes*).



President's Ink December 2022

Life gets busy at this time of year, doesn't it? No sooner have we got Thanksgiving behind us than we start thinking about Christmas – making special food, putting up decorations, buying and wrapping gifts, and sending cards. Somebody has to deal with all of them, and that somebody is usually you. It doesn't leave a lot of time for our own particular form of creativity.

In my family, when my children were young, we used to have a tradition of writing cryptic clues on the label for whatever the gift was inside, and if it was something obvious, like a CD or a book, we'd write "It's an elephant" or "a rhinoceros". Sadly, now Christmas presents often come in Amazon gift wrap. But we're all creative people, aren't we? Why not write a short verse to go with a Christmas present? I now have a tradition of buying my sons socks and underwear as well as anything else, on the grounds that these are things only your mother buys you, and this year I thought I'd accompany them with a verse:

It's soft, it's squishy, and it doesn't look
or feel hard-edged – you know it's not a book.
It's not too heavy, so it isn't rocks.
Oh yes you guessed it - yet again it's socks.
Any disappointment you must smother:
this comes only from a loving mother.

It's not great poetry but it might make them smile. Now I must think of one to go with underwear, but that's harder to rhyme. What rhymes with boxers?

And while you're thinking of what somebody can buy you for Christmas – why not ask them to pay for the renewal of your membership to Maine Poets Society, due by January 1st? Or for a contribution to membership of the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance? They are running some splendid courses through the winter – always a great way to sharpen up your work. Don't forget that you can apply for one of our Opportunity Grants to help you with the cost of those. You can check them out, and the workshops they are offering this winter, on <https://www.mainewriters.org/> under "Workshops and Events". You don't have to be a member to attend their workshops, but it is a little cheaper if you are.

As another Christmas suggestion, maybe ask for a book of poems you'd like to read? Or give one to somebody else? Let's spread the joy of poetry and support those who write it. Go one better and buy it from your local independent bookstore.

There are some brilliant poets in Maine, and we are lucky enough to have secured one of the best – former Poet Laureate of Maine Wesley McNair - as the judge for our Prize Poem contest this year. Watch for the announcement of our opening date in January and sharpen up your entries.

I wish all Maine poets and their families the happiest of festive seasons.

Jenny Doughty

"I love the scents of winter! For me, it's all about the feeling you get when you smell pumpkin spice, cinnamon, nutmeg, gingerbread and spruce." — Taylor Swift

"A few feathery flakes are scattered widely through the air, and hover downward with uncertain flight, now almost alighting on the earth, now whirled again aloft into remote regions of the atmosphere." — Nathaniel Hawthorn

STANZA, Maine Poets Society
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FIRST CLASS

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

FMI or to join, write
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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.”