

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 24, NUMBER 3

December 2016

Winter Gatherings – 2017

Again this year, instead of a general meeting in February, we will hold three regional meetings during the winter months. There will be no contests. There will be a \$5 registration fee which will be used to cover costs associated with the meeting. Anyone is welcome to participate in any or all of the three. MPS members will be given priority registration; others welcome on a space available basis. Please note that an RSVP is asked for one month prior to each meeting. Details for the February and March gatherings can be found on page 2.

Regional Gathering Midcoast Area

Saturday, January 21, 2017 – 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

HOST: Carol Bachofner

Location: Lincoln Street Art Center, 24 Lincoln Street, Rockland

BRING: \$5 registration fee. A brown bag lunch. Bring your coffee or other beverage and any snack food you may want. None will be provided on site. There will be birthday cake, since it will be close to Carol's birthday!

RSVP by December 21st to Carol at mainepoet@me.com or 207-594-8954

FORMAT: Maximum of 16 people

9:00	Check-in; meet and greet
10:00	Types/styles/methods of critique Strategies for applying critique principles to our own work when revising
12:15	Brown bag lunch, birthday cake (gluten free flour used)
1:00-2:30	Practicing two types of critique methods using our poems and a poem of another poet
2:30-3:15	Poet's Corner (open mic). Bring a poem of no longer than 24 lines on the theme: "What to do to survive winter".
3:15-3:30	Fill out evaluation forms Farewell and homeward

NOTE: Please bring two poems: one of your own and one you admire written by someone else. Both will be critiqued.

Maine Poets Society Winners in NFSPS Annual Contests

In each issue of the *Stanza*, we remind you that as a member of the Maine Poets Society (MPS) you are also a member of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS). As such, you are eligible to participate in that organization's annual contests. Go to http://www.nfspd.com/Strophes2016_Aug.pdf to see the August 2016 issue of their newsletter. Winners of last year's contests are listed in that issue. We are pleased and proud to share that two MPS members are included.

Jim Brosnan was awarded sixth honorable mention in our own contest (the MAINE POETS SOCIETY AWARD), which was judged by Jenene Ravesloot of Chicago, IL.

Lynda LaRocca achieved one first prize, one third prize, and 3 seventh honorable mentions.

MPS President Carol Bachofner served as the judge for the NEW YORK POETRY FORUM AWARD.

The file is searchable. Searching for "Brosnan" or "Lynda" or "Bachofner" will take you quickly to the specifics.

At http://www.nfspd.com/poetry_contests.htm you can find information about the 2017 contests. Note that these contests have a March 15, 2017, postmark for their deadline.

**Regional Gathering Southern Maine Area
Saturday, February 18, 2017 – 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

HOST: Jenny Doughty

Location: The home of Alice Persons, 16 Walton Street, Westbrook.

NOTE: There are cats at this location

BRING: \$5 registration fee. A brown bag lunch, a notepad and pen, and poem(s) to share. Coffee/tea and water will be provided. Also cookies (everything goes better with cookies).

RSVP by January 18th to Jenny at jmdought@maine.rr.com or (207) 298-9094.

FORMAT: Up to 12 people

EMPHASIS: Gathering inspiration and tapping into the creative unconscious.

- 9:30 Check-in and coffee
- 10:00-12:00 Tapping into the creative unconscious and using prompts to generate poems. Writing exercises and handouts making use of this information.
- 12:00 Lunch and conversation
- 12:45-2:30 **Workshop.** Please include in your RSVP if you would like to bring a poem with you to be workshopped and bring 12 copies of the poem with you. If more wish to participate than time will allow, slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis according to when the request was received. If you have never taken part in a poetry workshop before, please check out <http://www.mshogue.com/poetry/wkshp.html>. Line length of poems should not exceed 24 lines.
- 2:30-3:00 Reading in the round, vote on 3 poems to send to the *Stanza*. 24 line limit.
- 3:00 Fill out evaluation forms; farewell and homeward.

**Regional Gathering Augusta Area
Saturday March 4, 2017 – 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

HOSTS: Ted Bookey and James Breslin

Location: Church at 209 (formerly Prince of Peace Lutheran Church), 209 Eastern Ave, Augusta

BRING: \$5 registration fee. A brown bag lunch.

RSVP by February 4th to James at jameslindabreslin@gmail.com or (207) 872-5469

FORMAT: Up to 15 people

- 9:30 Registration; meet and greet. Please bring your own coffee or other beverage and munchies.
- 10:00-11:00 A) Free verse versus Formal verse. Line-breaks. Metaphor and Other Poetic devices, Modern Poetry versus Traditional. Examples
B) What to do when you are not inspired. List poems, Cinquain, etc. Other examples
Handouts
C) What is Semiotics? Definition, Origins of. Importance for writing poetry.
- 11:00-12:00 Presentation of poems brought.
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch
- 1:00-2:30 Continuation of discussion of poems brought.
- 2:30-3:00 Fill out evaluation forms; farewell and homeward.

SEPTEMBER 2016 CONTEST WINNERS

Contest: a poem that makes some use of or reference to a myth or myths from any culture

Judge: Jenny Doughty

First Prize—Betsy Whitman

Cassandra Speaks

In memory of Anna Akhmatova

Herr Kommissar, I am not allowed to be ignorant in this haunted house.

No short cuts either.

I am not allowed to converse with everyday voices,
nor douse my letters with red stars,
red stars that once meant everything.

I am not allowed delusions of grace, like those who bear their abuse

like an ill-named wind, Herr Kommissar, without a care they shuffle their fears.

My pitiful troubles stand midget amongst worldly catastrophes, the shifting of worlds.

I bear them nameless without the use of visions;
stand straight, set the table,
sweep the floor,

there is no location, no refuge,
where I am allowed historical naiveté, any lazy turning of words;
neither forgetfulness nor simply making do –

Perfection is the rope by which
my lot hangs,

perfection of the ivory statue who stands alone in the nave,

what she speaks scrubbed invisible;

I am not allowed the comfort of giddy delusions,

Herr Kommissar,

the only departure I can take is straight

by that swaying narrow bridge that some call Truth.

Second Prize—Sherry Barker Abaldo

Blue Tears

After we make love you ask if I want something to eat, and I say, “Sure, brie, grapes” knowing we have no brie, no grapes in the refrigerator. I then get a cool thrill from rejecting your offer of cereal. You ask what I want again, and I whisper, “Taiwan.” You think I’m talking about my bucket list. I’m not. Rising up on my elbow I tell you all about sea sparkle, the summer phenomenon of ocean phosphorescence happening right now off the Matsu Islands. How they thought at first it was pollution, contamination, Fukushima radiation but it’s this beautiful blue algae, Noctiluca Scintillans, with a voracious appetite. How this is my favorite color, electrified. Can you even imagine it, bluer than blue, lipping every breaking wave? Our ankles making eddies in it. Our canoes. Our dipped bodies glowing, dripping blue tears into warm white towels. Matsu also is a goddess for those lost at sea. When you speak, you say it is my fate to drown.

<p>Carl Little, who judged an ekphrasis contest for us in May of 2016, offers these resources regarding that type of poetry: W.D. Snodgrass, “Poems about Paintings,” in his book of essays and <i>In Radical Pursuit</i> and John Hollander, <i>The Gazer’s Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art</i>. He also says there is a lot about ekphrasis available online.</p>

<p>Woody Woodsum, who judged poems about “Wild Animals” in May offers information about some of the things he referred to that day: He said: “I send poems to: <i>The Café Review</i> out of Portland, <i>The Denver Quarterly</i> (which publishes bazaar, “postmodern” material), and <i>Gray’s Sporting Journal</i> (the sporting journal for English majors). I also recommend <i>The Lilliput Review</i> which costs only one dollar (send for a sample before you submit) and encourages submissions of nine or fewer poems of ten lines or less. All journals can be looked up on line for submission guidelines.” He also suggested reading works by poets Alice Fulton (“postmodern”) and Linda Pastan and the odes of John Keats, three very different poets. And reminds us that he referenced R. Frost’s “Design” and W. Whitman’s “When I Heard the Learned Astronomer,” two fine poems, again, very different from each other.</p>
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Third Prize—Swiftwalker**Lament**

*In memory of Nora Thompson Dean
"Leaves that Rustle Softly as they Touch"*

A feather fan waves through cedar smoke
that disperses and rises with her spirit
past Thunder Beings who rumble a greeting.

From the head of her grave, a paint
greased passage has been made for her
blood spirit to enter and leave.

Leaves that rustled softly as they touched
now silent and still on the forest floor.
We cut deer hide strips to tie us to the earth,

smoke our homes, and remember what she told us
of manitu, the winter tales, and Kishemeing,
the ways of the old heads now gone forever.

We hear the rumble of Thunder Beings.
Her words drip salt and slow onto the earth
sinking into our path, forever.

First Honorable Mention—Margie Kivel**The Myth of Wings**

It's a tale of runners and reel-to-reel
water-tower-madness, every night
another rung climb, red xos
on the party hat, gum along
the railings, all
one could want on the hero stage,
a real page-turner
the final taunt
soon to be headlines
he wouldn't listen loved the rush
a tragic fall from grace
with its sweet
sounds
of escape.

Second Honorable Mention—Carol Bachofner**Alate****1.**

Before you become a bird like me,
you should learn to knit:
feathers do not weave themselves
together or take flight without oil
from your fingers and needles
jutting in and out in the tempo of take off.
Once the wings are completed,
you need lessons in landings.
It's not backwards to learn landings before gliding
or stooping on a current, downdraft. Landings
an attitude, a position you take
against crashing to the sea like Icarus.

2.

I suppose hunger could make a bird give up heaven,
make it dizzy the surface of the sea
looking for a meal. I suppose it could hobble along the drafts,
brief beautiful pose on air
that won't stop the plunge, the dash
onto the cliffs. I suppose hunger
could sear the skin from inside its beak,
make its wings weak enough to fall like Icarus.
Mothers at back doors of churches,
pray for groceries, do not see God or grow the wings of angels.
Daedalus could not prevent his son's fall.
I suppose that kind of hunger could make a boy give up heaven.

Third Honorable Mention—Sally Woolf-Wade Land-Locked

Slouched in a wooden chair
at the edge of sea, midsummer,
knitting yarn idle in my lap,
day after day
I watch a sailboat catch the breeze
wishing I could guide her tiller
out there, far away from land.

This day a young and slippery seal
pops his head above the waves,
round eyes glowing wide,
sparkling with sympathy.
My own glance locks with his,
a long moment of meaning,
exchange of understanding.

On the ninth night at dusk
I will waltz down to the shore,
shed seven tears of an Orkney wife
and wait for the shining Selkie boy
to wade out of the evening water,
peel wet sealskin from his body
and lead me down to his home in the deep.



Some Helpful Information if You're Looking for Places to Submit Work

At our September meeting in Rockland, Vice President Jenny Doughty offered to provide links to websites that may be helpful to our members who may be looking for publication possibilities.

Head and shoulders above the rest, join up with the CRWROPPS-B group on Yahoo. The link is <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/CRWROPPS-B/conversations/messages>. You will need to have a Yahoo email address to do this but that is easily set up, and you can get the messages directed to your regular email account.

She has already linked on our Facebook group page <https://trishhopkinson.com/2016/09/09/paying-lit-mags-for-emerging-poets-3/>

There is also <http://www.erikadreifus.com/2016/09/monday-markets-and-jobs-for-writers-28/> but that is more generally for writers rather than specifically for poets and probably less useful to most of our members.

Third Honorable Mention—Marshall Witten Acting Out the Role

His Belt: two-inch dark brown tooled saddle leather.
His Buckle: silver trophy badge, engraved.
His Boots: antique black, inch'n half heels, snip toe.
His Stetson: white felt, shaped, broad brimmed, feathered.

Bedecked for boardroom, rodeo, hootenanny, folk tale,
He's set to sally forth, an assumed persona.
The strut makes him feel good, garners admiring
glances and social status. What's the harm?

Our Cowboy myths brewed Kool Aid foreign policy,
wounded, invisibly and visibly, us, friends, foes.
"Bring 'em on" cost trillions in treasure, trust,
and lives destroyed, left precious little learned.

We grafted High Noon on the nation's psyche
distorting how we see reality, bending
the facts to fit our plot line, tempting us
to see a threat in every empty shadow.

There's a need to change our formative fable.
Job done, Lone Ranger rides into the sunset
leaving Tonto to teach us the legends
of his tribe, myths that link us to the earth.

Honor Mother Earth with all Her creatures
and switch our swagger for soft walking, talking.
We are stewards of the earth not masters
and dependent on the land on which we live.

Please Remember to Let MPS Know When Your Contact Info Changes

Because most copies of the *Stanza* are distributed by email, it is especially important that you let us know of changes as soon as they occur. Margery Kivel, Membership Secretary, is the person to contact with changes (address, phone number, and/or email address). She can be reached at poetspomp@gmail.com. Thank you.

Publication News

Poems

Sherry Barker-Abaldo has two poems in *The Aureorean*, Fall/Winter 2015-2016, 20th Anniversary Issue and one poem in *Haiku Journal* #39. Both publications are available in print and online. She has another online at www.ultraviolettribe.com (posted 9/25/16).

Bill Frayer has had a poem accepted by *The California Quarterly*, a villanelle and two centos accepted by *Heyday Magazine*, and a poem accepted for the new *Poeming Pigeon Anthology: Poems about Music* to be published in November.

Check out our Website and our Facebook Page!

Please check out the MPS website (MainePoetsSociety.com) for all you need to know about the Maine Poets Society: Gatherings, Directions, Membership Application, Contests, Contact Information, President's Message, and more.

We also now have a Facebook page, thanks to Jenny Doughty's efforts. This link should take you to that 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."

The National Federation of State Poetry Societies is Establishing a Speakers Database

During the strategic planning meeting which followed the 2016 NFSPS Convention, we concluded that we can and should find ways to add value to services offered to state societies as well as members. One such service will be the development and promotion of a Speakers Database that can be utilized by state, chapters, or even individual members when developing programming to fit their needs.

The database will list individuals who have given workshops/presentations or are willing to give workshops/presentations. Information gathered would include: (1) nature of the workshop, (2) length of the workshop, (3) presenter's needs (projector, microphone, copies, etc.), (4) crowd size range (someone may not be comfortable presenting to a large group), (5) is the presenter willing to travel outside their home state, (6) payment requirements, (7) state membership, and (8) contact information.

The database will be made available through the NFSPS website as well as via email distribution when requested.

Members who have presentations and want to be listed in the database may contact Steven Concert via email or snail mail. His contact info is:

CHANCELLOR:
Steven Concert
Youth Chair
49 Kitchen Ave
Harveys Lake, PA 18618
paperlesspoets@gmail.com



President's Ink

Maine Poets Society's fall meeting took place in Rockland on September 17th, at St Bernard's Church hall. Those who attended were treated to a new meeting format. Instead of a morning and afternoon contest, the meeting was comprised of a morning greet and discuss session followed by Poets Corner, open mic. All agreed that this new way of starting our meeting was a breath of fresh air. The greet and discuss session allowed everyone to participate actively and to get to know one another in a more personal way. Everyone shared and participated. The atmosphere was warm and inviting. Following a soup and sandwich lunch, catered by Atlantic Baking Company, our contest judge provided both critique and insight as the results were announced. Despite a small turnout, the meeting was vibrant and inspiring.

I am pleased to announce that we will once again hold three regional gatherings this winter, one in each of January, February, and March. These regional gatherings were designed to cut down on potentially dangerous travel in February when we previously held our winter meeting. They were well-attended and offered members informative sessions on a number of topics.

On January 21, the first of this season's winter gatherings will be held in Rockland at the Lincoln Street Art Center. The session, held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., will feature a mini-workshop on critiquing (several strategies for doing so), as well as a Q & A on the topic and a short open mic. Members are invited to bring a poem they admire written by someone else as well as one of their own for practice. Handouts will be available. BYO morning coffee and snack as well as BYO lunch. Space is limited to 16 participants and RSVP is essential (for planning the exact number of handouts and set up of work tables). The notice for this session is found here in the *Stanza*.

The February gathering will be in Westbrook, at the home of Alice Persons; and the March gathering, at the Church at 209 (formerly Prince of Peace Lutheran Church) in Augusta. Details on these two gatherings can be found on page 2.

I am very excited about these gatherings, as it is a unique opportunity for members to learn something new, review what they already know on a particular topic, and have the opportunity to gather with poet friends in the deep of winter without a long drive.

Hope to see you in January in Rockland. P.S. There will be cake provided at lunchtime as the date is VERY close to my birthday.

NOTE: We are looking for someone to assume the job of MPS Treasurer / Membership Chair. It is not a difficult job, but requires someone who is organized and diligent. Election will be in May of 2017. Call me @207-594-8954 if you are thinking you might be willing.

Wishing you a happy holiday season and, as always, good ink.

Carol Bachofner

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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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