

# STANZA

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 2

June 2015

### NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, September 12, 2015 (the **second** Saturday in September), at the Rockland Library, 80 Union Street, Rockland.

**Directions:** Note parking entrance is on White Street.

From the North (Augusta): Take ME-17 E/Eastern Ave for 40.3 miles. Turn right onto Birch St/U.S. 1A.

Continue to Beech Street then turn left. Take the 2nd right onto White Street.

From the South (Portland): Take U.S. 1 N, it's about 50 miles to Rockland. Turn left onto Broadway/U.S. 1A.

Take the 3rd right onto Limerock Street and then the 2nd left onto White Street.

From the East (Bangor): Take U.S. 1A W/Bangor Road. Continue onto ME-3 W/U.S. 1 S/E Main St.

Continue to follow U.S. 1 S for 29 miles. Turn left onto Main Street in Camden.

Continue onto U.S. 1 S/Elm Street. Turn right onto Rankin Street. Take a slight left onto Union Street.

Turn right onto Beech Street. Take the 1st left onto White Street.

As usual, there will be a \$12 registration fee which includes lunch. (Please note that the fee applies to all attendees and is the same even if individuals opt not to share in the lunch.)

### Agenda for Meeting

9:30	Registration and coffee	1:00	<u>Form Contest:</u> A Prose Poem
10:00	Business Meeting		Member judge: Carol Bachofner
10:30	<u>Subject Contest:</u> "Confusion"	1:50	Member judge reads own work
	Guest judge: Weslea Sidon	2:30	Announcements and closing
11:20	Guest judge reads own work	2:45	Reading in the Round
12:00	Lunch and Silent Auction		

### Contest Submissions

(Submission to a contest constitutes permission to publish.)

- Send to Jennifer Doughty  
278 Flaggy Meadow Rd.  
Gorham, ME 04038
- **DEADLINE:** August 12, 2015
- 1 poem per contest (no fee)
- 2 copies of each poem (ONE of each identified)
- Envelope: Letter-size (long, #10) marked "CONTEST"
- INCLUDE SASE!!

**AM Poem—SUBJECT, Confusion:** Guest Judge, Weslea Sidon says: Why confusion? Aspects of what we call "confusion" accompany most of our intense emotions and many of our less intense ones. Reactions to very bad or very good news often start with a lack of comprehension we call confusion (as in: "This can't be happening" or "Is this a joke?"). It can be a literal misunderstanding, a serious inability to comprehend, or just a state of inattention. It provides lots of inside jokes for friends and family, and is used for states of dementia or brain injury. Confusion can show up anyplace in our lives.

**PM Poem—FORM, A Prose Poem: Member Judge, Carol Bachofner:**

What I am looking for in the entries are poems that defy traditional prose and defy traditional poetry. Poems should be right-justified, contain elements of poetic diction, metaphor (oh, in particular, I want to see metaphor), sound devices, IMAGERY and above all NOT be a rambling narrative. I want to see exciting and fresh language. Do not think only in sentences, but in phrases, dramatic presence. Present images and let them speak.

Prose sonnets should contain 14 “pieces” (see example) and have a turn somewhere around “piece” 9. They may or may not have a rhymed bit at 13 and 14. Prose sonnets should have the “pieces” numbered. Regular prose poems will not have numbers. Recommended: *Rose Metal Field Guide to Prose Poetry*. Email me at [mainepoet@me.com](mailto:mainepoet@me.com) for a longer handout to help with your entry:

**Contest Format:**

Poetry which follows the definition above, with right-justified margins (will look like a block). **To count for our line limit of 24 lines, count at the left margin.** Example given here counts out at 17 lines. For you formalists, why not try a prose sonnet. The prose sonnet exists in a block form, with 14 parts, a turn at or around part 9, and rhyme at parts 13 and 14.

Prose Sonnet (Carol Bachofner, 2015)

**Marina**

*He enters her picture, breaks the promise he'd made*

—from *Ulay, Oh*

1. She's pure red art, shining. 2. Maple table and two chairs, one for her, one for... Perfect, quiet tree 3. she's silence, art, vessel. 4. Every visitor pairs in her silence, her portrait. Hands in her lap, head down, she awaits the soft sound of each arrival. Fresh souls alight, see themselves in her, depart. 5. Her eyes draw down, reopen to another story, to another secret. 6. Beautiful boy, sheaf of ash blond hair, slow beam of light at the corner of his lips. 7. Woman wearing her hair like a silver crown, her eyes radiating garnets. 8. Foreigner doesn't understand, but won't break the spell she weaves. 9. Then 10. *he* comes, enters her picture, shakes himself before her, sits 11. like a ghost. He unlatches her. 12. Holy promise to be apart made so long ago, shattered for love, for art. 13. She leans into the territory between them. Her hands, his hands reach where they have not for so long, her faced floods with tears. His eyes say everything unsaid: my darling, my love, my light. But her portrait of them is too much. He breaks the rule of years. 14. She withdraws her fingers, smooths her face with the tears he brought. She lowers her eyes. He is gone, and a new soul appears.

**ABOUT THE JUDGES**

**Guest Judge Weslea Sidon** is a poet and musician who lives in Seal Cove, on Mt. Desert, with her husband, cats, and big plans to finish the garden and the kitchen. Her poems have appeared in several anthologies and literary magazines including most recently, *Paumonok, Poems and Pictures of Long Island*, and *Still on the Island*, as well as *Two With Water, Wolf Moon*, and *Off the Coast Food Issue: Tongue & Taste*. A column, “Permanently From Away,” appeared regularly in *Face Magazine* for two years, and reviews, mostly music, have appeared in the *Mt. Desert Islander, Bar Harbor Times, Off the Coast*, and *High Performance Magazine*. Her favorite prose work was for the late, lamented *Squash*. Weslea teaches guitar privately, and has taught poetry and creative writing to children age 10-16 at Summer Festival of the Arts since 1989. She was awarded the Martin Dibner Fellowship in Poetry in 2002. *The Fool Sings*, her first full length book, was released by Rain Chain Press on July 1, 2014.

**Member Judge Carol Willette Bachofner** has been writing all her life, beginning at age six when she scratched her first poem into the sand in York, Maine. (“I love the beach/I love the gulls/ I love them more/than playing dolls”) When the oncoming tide “ate” her poem, she knew she needed to write them on paper. After raising a large family and traveling the western world, Carol got serious about writing full-time, earning an MFA in Poetry from Vermont College of Fine Arts in 2004. Since that time she has published 4 collections of poetry, most recently *Native Moons, Native Days* (Bowman Books 2012). Her work has been widely published and anthologized including *Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writing From New England* (Siobhan Senior, Ed., University of Nebraska Press, 2014). Carol serves as Poet Laureate of the City of Rockland (Maine) and leads a long-standing poetry workshop group there. She will direct a large poetry festival during Poetry Month Rockland, in April of 2016, *Poetry Come Ashore*, featuring poets Richard Blanco, Patricia Smith, Dorianne Laux, and Susan Wooldridge.

Carol has dreams of opening a creativity center, believing all people should have the opportunity to have their art, including writing, supported by community writing. Carol was asked by a literary press recently to account for her own views of the reading/writing world. She says, in part:

*In our society, it has become somewhat unfashionable to read, more so to write. In this age of super technology and fast-paced entertainment-based living, it is not unusual to visit a home where there are no books visible whatsoever...What I'd like to see is a greater, wider appreciation for the magic of reading. I'd like to hear folks in the grocery store talking about "the great book I read last week; you should read it; want to borrow my copy?" instead of the latest video or computer game played. Where are the great poems being memorized and recited?...Why are our books not our treasured possessions, our library cards more important than our credit cards? Do parents spend time reading in sight of their children to set an example? This is what I'd like to see more of, what I would hope will happen again. Meanwhile I will continue to write, looking for someone to be my reader.*

### **Electronic Copies of Winning Poems for the Stanza**

When you submit poems for our contests, be sure to keep an electronic copy ***as submitted*** on your computer. If your work is selected for recognition by a judge (whether a prize or an honorable mention), please email an electronic copy to *Stanza* editor, Sally Joy, as soon as possible after the meeting. If you've made changes since your submission, please do not include them. Give us the poem to include in the *Stanza* as it was judged. Thank you.

### **MPS Elections**

Officers for the next two years were elected at our May 2015 meeting in Augusta. Carol Bachofner will serve a second term as President and Jenny Doughty as Vice President. James Breslin is the new Secretary. Margery Kivel will serve as Treasurer and continue to serve as our Membership Chair. The following appointments have been made for the next two years: Rebecca Irene, Programs Chair; Anne Hammond, Historian; Deb Neumeister, Hospitality; and Sally Joy, *Stanza* and Publicity. Still needed: are a Round Robins Secretary and a Mentor Chair. Anyone interested in serving in either of those positions is invited to contact President Carol Bachofner.

### **A Special Invitation**

As the newly appointed Maine Poets Society historian, I have a favor to ask of you. I intend to put together a history of the organization which will depend a great deal on you, the members. Your history is what makes Maine Poets Society alive.

What do you like best about Maine Poets Society? What experiences do you remember at gatherings? Or Round Robins?

For long term members, what do you remember of times past? Anthologies, key members of the group and how they influenced you?

Please email material to [ahammond5@comcast.net](mailto:ahammond5@comcast.net) or send it to me at 321 Murphys Corner Rd, Woolwich, ME 04579. Include your name and how long you've been a member (if you remember when you joined).

~ Anne Hammond

<b>MAY 2015 CONTEST WINNERS</b>
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**AM Contest—Subject: Birds; Judge: Alice Persons****First Prize—Margie Kivel****Sybil's Manifesto**

*after The Egg Mother by Leonard Baskin*

Thumb and finger sign  
not working.  
Big black bird and I sit  
poised for flight, ready  
for the egg crack, the brain dump,  
but nothing's happening.  
I haven't been able to bathe  
nor bird to preen, no food or sleep  
for 6 days, down  
in the hole waiting for a vision, a message  
for some ruler who wants the odds on future wars.  
The Delphi oracle fares better  
than we lesser sibyls,  
gets some perks, doesn't worry about a change  
of mood, or list that would alter  
one's standing from sibyl to witch,  
heretic, whore. There's a point  
where everything wears thin,  
but not the veil.  
And so we wait, bird and I,  
for the visitor, the voice,  
the note from beyond.

**Second Prize—Elizabeth Berkenbile****The Crows of Late October**

Considered a sign of luck in parts of Asia,  
but not so much here in the western world  
where survivors of the Great London Fire  
coined the phrase, a murder of crows,  
dismayed as flocks of hungry crows  
descended on the smoldering ruins.

A family of crows has taken up residence  
in the elm trees near my house.  
Clever, miscreant creatures,  
I watch them as they strut and preen,  
inquisitive eyes steady-bright,  
caw-cawing their grave concerns.

They fill the trees and dot my fading lawn,  
metallic-black, their feathers sheening,  
moving like omens on dark, wiry feet —  
the crows of late October,  
come to pluck the last remains  
of summer's memory.

**Third Prize—Gus Peterson****Just Another Bird**

I've never quite figured out  
which one it is exactly or  
why I care so much about that  
high pitch refrain shrilling in Spring.  
Nothing special about it —  
not like a peacock strutted  
in front of my window fanning  
the kaleidoscope of its tail  
over a dead sea of winter grass.  
Certainly no nightingale, either —  
Sinatra of ode and meter,  
crooning voice drawn like a bow  
over the string of the heart.

No, not even a loon wailing  
beneath a fang of moonlight,  
binding breath with brevity's  
isolation.  
It's just another bird in Maine  
parked above dying snow,  
back from warmer climes  
like the ant line of RV's snaking  
up 95, plugging into the grid,  
clogging checkout lines  
at Hannafords from here to  
wherever it stops being beautiful.

**First Honorable Mention—C. J. Munier****Bird on a Wire**

The canary in the coal mine is already dead.  
 She died ago, but doesn't know.  
 Men with rocks in bags pass by,  
 say, good bird, why won't you fly.

And what would Audubon say?

Japanese fields melt in mushroom sky.  
 The boiling pot left to wither on stove.  
 Goldfish in ponds now cook like tea.

And what would Einstein say?

The mouse on wheel spins in place  
 and hopes to be fed,  
 then to be bred, then to be dead.

And what would Darwin say?

Mexican madness of drugs and dust,  
 of tacos and toil,  
 of gardens and ghosts,  
 and churches ---- no hope.

And what would Jesus say?

The blistered baby waits for worms in state.  
 But, there is no there, there.  
 And the last canary flies to Wounded Knee to die.  
 Its last song now heard no more forever.

And what would you say?

**Second Honorable Mention—Rebecca Irene****The Dodo Show**

High above this smear of pastel blue, dodos endlessly twirl.  
 Shrunken wings whir the glee of proving sailors wrong.  
 Sailors who spit out gristly dodo meat, smashed one-egged  
 nests, cut down dodo legs mid-lazy-dodo-waddle.

In this sky above our sky, dodos finally love their ugly heads  
 and eat no more meals of iron and stones. Dodos titter and tut  
 over butterflies for breakfast. Excitement mounts over larvae  
 for lunch. Finally, across onyx heavens, the twilight movie's blaze.

The dodo show begins as it always begins— on Mauritius,  
 long before ships arrived. Food was plentiful. Comfort was plentiful.  
 Predators were few. Wings were long and lovely. Dodos shriek  
 delight at scenes of morning dodo mating in the sand.

Groans resound as time-elapse footage reveals night after night  
 of slumber, wings winging away, feather by dodo gold-green feather.  
 Cinema lengthens, time lengthens.  
 Understand— this show never ends with dodo extinction.

Past the Indian Ocean, the sailors' descendants wake: plump-bellied,  
 curly-haired, wide-eyed, waddling babes. Human food is plentiful.  
 Human comfort is plentiful. Predators are few. Conversations are long  
 and lovely. The dodos clack, sob, stomp their dodo claws.

Dodos recognize the ease and greed of evolution. Dusk after dusk,  
 they watch our children grow:  
 TV, tests, twitter, texts.  
 Dodos curse our complacency, curse our years of minute subtractions.

**Third Honorable Mention—Carol Bachofner****Bird, a Prose Sonnet**

1. She might be the one, 2. might be the one building a nest off-season in the roosting box, 3. might be the one the cat has lusted after for days, 4. might be the one peeking down between the slats of the porch floor — 5. or the one waiting for some errant seed heads to float over to feed her 6. She might be the one doing some kind of crazy bird dance [never have seen a back flip like that] 7. She might be the one looking me straight in the eye, me warm in my kitchen munching on Halloween candy 8. She might be any of these ones 9. or she might be the dead bird I'll be crying over in a few minutes 10. Bird, could you not tap your beak on the window? 11. You might be the one I could have saved 12. You might be the one to come back to life 13. but you didn't say a single word 14. You didn't say anything, Bird.

**PM Contest—Triolet; Judge: Ted Bookey****First Prize—Anne Rosenthal****Mission Style**

As she started down the aisle  
 I had a premonition  
 that she'd used a bit of guile.  
 As she started down the aisle  
 she wore a very pregnant smile.  
 Though she'd not mentioned her condition,  
 as she started down the aisle  
 I had a premonition.

**Third Prize—Sally Rowe Joy****The Power of Words**

Our words can serve as weapons and cause pain.  
 No blood. No broken bones. This much is true.  
 But is it worth the end we hope to gain?  
 Our words can serve as weapons and cause pain.  
 Relationships will often feel the strain.  
 Though told that words can't hurt, we always knew  
 that words can serve as weapons and cause pain.  
 No blood. No broken bones. This much is true.

**Second Honorable Mention—James P. Breslin****Death-song of the Grasshopper to the Ant**

Could I sing you'd still be too busy to hear,  
 Though all that I'd sing had been written for you.  
 Daylight grows sparser and branches grow bare.  
 Could I sing you'd still be too busy to hear.  
 The autumn lies dying as flurries appear  
 While the air becomes colder, freezing the dew.  
 Could I sing you'd still be too busy to hear,  
 Though all that I'd sing had been written for you.

**Second Prize— Elizabeth Berkenbile  
Waiting**

I don't know if I'll hear from you again.  
 It's been so long; you told me we'd talk later.  
 I hope you think about me now-and-then,  
 but don't know if I'll hear from you again.  
 I still want to believe you; yet, it's been  
 forever since you phoned. Are you a traitor?  
 I don't know if I'll hear from you again —  
 it's been so long; you told me we'd talk later.

**First Honorable Mention— Lynda La Rocca  
That Afternoon**

Ice closes up the lake.  
 The surface swirls to white.  
 One snap, one slip, one break—  
 ice closes up. The lake  
 engulfs all it can take.  
 No longer clean or bright,  
 ice closes. Up the lake,  
 the surface swirls to white.

**Third Honorable Mention—Lisa DesRochers****Time**

Who knows how long we'll be here,  
 only time decides our fate:  
 weeks or months or years  
 who knows how long? We'll be here  
 in happiness and fear.  
 We'll be here in love and hate.  
 Who knows how long we'll be here?  
 Only time decides our fate.

**Please Let Us 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 [mtkivel@gmail.com](mailto:mtkivel@gmail.com) Thank you.

## Southern Maine MPS Workshop Outline for March 2016, led by Jenny Doughty

Meeting at the house of Alice Persons in Gorham (address and precise date to be confirmed nearer the time). Many thanks to Alice for her kind offer to host our gathering.

Please bring a brown bag lunch. Coffee, tea, water and cookies/cake will be available.

9:30 am – Welcome and coffee.

10:00 am – Review of meter in verse: stresses and syllables and basic patterns.

11:00 am – Exercises to stimulate free writing.

12:00 pm – Lunch.

1:00 pm – Workshop opportunity: please bring ten copies of any poem you would like the group to workshop. If you have never taken part in a poetry workshop before, please check out <http://www.mshogue.com/poetry/wkshp.html>. Depending on how many people attend and would like their poems workshopped, we may have to draw lots, as it takes around 15 minutes to workshop a poem.

We will finish with sharing poems by reading in the round, and vote as a group on which workshopped or shared poems to send to *Stanza* for publication in the spring newsletter.

### Opportunity Grants Update

Opportunity grants (on a first-come, first-served basis) are available to members in good standing for help—up to \$300—for attendance at a workshop, to take a class, or to attend a poetry festival or residency. You can download a Membership Opportunity Grant Application and guidelines from our website. Click on “Membership” at the home page. As we finalized this issue of the *Stanza*, there was still \$450 available for 2015. The monies awarded in the first part of the year were used as shown below.

Rebecca Irene —\$300 towards attendance at the Black Fly Writers Retreat in early May 2015. Christian Barter was the instructor for the poetry segment, where the focus was on “energy and potential.”

Margery Kivel—\$150 for a week-long poetry workshop with Kathleen Ellis at the Farnsworth Art Museum in early March 2015.

### Publication News

#### Poems

David McCann received the Touchstone Award from the Haiku Foundation for his haiku poem published in *Acorn: a journal of contemporary haiku*.

**Share Your Member News:** Holding a Reading or Event? Publishing a Book? Winner of a Contest? Submit your information to Sally Joy at: [jsjoy@roadrunner.com](mailto:jsjoy@roadrunner.com) or 16 Riverton Street, Augusta, ME 04330. Please include your contact information in case of questions. If sending via e-mail, please use **Info for Stanza** as the subject line.

**Deadline for Member News for the next Stanza:** November 20, 2015.

*Why not invite a friend to come to the next meeting with you.*

**Reminder:** Your Maine Poets Society dues include membership in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies. Thus, you may enter many of their contests offering cash prizes. Visit their website: **nfps.com**. Click on “Strophes” at the left-hand side of the home page to get access to their newsletter.



## President's Ink

Let me begin by thanking members who have stepped up to serve in the next two-year term. I cannot say strongly enough that an organization like ours functions best in the spirit of volunteerism. Just getting the meetings organized and set up is a task that highlights the work of volunteers. And lunch, speakers, and contests do not just “appear.” So thanks to all who pitch in and make everything work.

### NEWS FLASH:

We are piloting a new format for our winter meeting only.... we will take a look at how this works and make some recommendations to the membership after that. This format is what we are calling “Regional Gatherings.” These will be held in the winter months (Jan, Feb or March) INSTEAD OF the “usual” meeting in the southern part of the state. February is always pretty “iffy” in terms of weather and temperature. It is harder at that time of year for our members to get out, to drive long distances, etc. to attend. SO... this winter we will have THREE gatherings, allowing folks to drive less and hopefully increase attendance. The gatherings will resemble more of a workshop than a meeting; no business will be conducted. Stay tuned to Stanza for details on each of the three gatherings in terms of format, date, and details. These gatherings will be held in the Augusta, Rockland, and Portland areas. You may attend the one nearest your home; or if you are brave, go ahead and attend a second, or even all gatherings. RSVP will be necessary in order for the individual hosts to plan. No contest, no provided lunch (BYO), and a modest fee of \$5 will be collected from each attendee. You will still be able to bring a poem to share and poems will be chosen (by vote) from those read to be put into the following *Stanza*.

I look forward to seeing great attendance at all of these gatherings. Speaking of attendance: the number of members showing up is pretty disappointing of late. We need to think of attendance at meetings as one of the great privileges of membership. 15 people at a meeting (out of 74 members) is more like a Tupperware Party. Please make MPS a priority. We only get together three times a year. Won't you come next time (in Rockland, September 12th) and bring a friend.

Wishing you “good ink,”

Carol Bachofner



STANZA, Maine Poets Society  
16 Riverton Street  
Augusta, ME 04864

FIRST CLASS

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

FMI or to join, write  
Margery Kivel  
71 Ben Paul Lane  
Apt 1  
Rockport, ME 04856

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### **Board Members**

Carol Bachofner, President, Round Robins [mainepoet@me.com](mailto:mainepoet@me.com)  
Jenny Doughty, Vice President [jmdought@maine.rr.com](mailto:jmdought@maine.rr.com)  
James Breslin, Secretary [jameslindabreslin@gmail.com](mailto:jameslindabreslin@gmail.com)  
Margery Kivel, Treasurer & Membership Chair [mtkivel@gmail.com](mailto:mtkivel@gmail.com)  
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Webmaster, DiTa Ondek [dita@dita.org](mailto:dita@dita.org)

### **Check out our Website!**

Please check out the MPS website ([MainePoetsSociety.com](http://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.