

# STANZA

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 1

MARCH 2017

### NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, May 13, 2017, at Continuum for Creativity, 863 Main Street in Westbrook.

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>Contest</u> : Subject – “Food” any form – 24-line limit
10:00	Business Meeting – election of officers		Judge: Alice Persons
10:30	Open Mic (Poets’ Corner) sign up at registration	1:50	Judge reads her own work
11:00	Writing Prompt and a chance to write	2:30	Announcements and closing
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:** April 13, 2017
- 1 poem per contest (no fee)
- 2 copies of your poem (ONE  
identified)
- Envelope: Letter-size (long, #10)  
marked “CONTEST”
- **INCLUDE SASE!!**

**Contest Poem—SUBJECT, Food (24-line limit): Judge, Alice Persons** (an MPS Member), says, “Food is a great subject for poems since we can’t live without it and some of us really do live to (and love to) eat. The subject is so big. I expect to be surprised by many entries. You can of course write about literal food or metaphorical food.”

### ABOUT THE JUDGE

Alice moved to Maine in 1983 to go to law school, and is still here. She started Moon Pie Press in 2003 and has published 94 books of poetry by poets from Maine and all over. Her own poetry books are *Thank Your Lucky Stars* and *Fancy Meeting You Here*. She has two cats and a dog, lives in Westbrook and serves on the Westbrook library board. Alice teaches part time at USM and volunteers for the Maine State Society for the Protection of Animals (MSSPA), New England’s largest horse rescue.

**Reminder:** To participate in MPS contests, you have to be a current member of MPS. Membership terms run January through December 31. Dues are still \$20, and checks should be sent to our Treasurer/ Membership Chair Margie Kivel, 71 Ben Paul Lane, Apt.1, Rockport, ME 04856. If you have not renewed your membership for 2017, we urge you to do so. If you have, please remember to renew for 2018 before the end of the year. Note that the mailing list will be updated prior to the next *Stanza*.

<b>REPORTS OF REGIONAL MEETINGS</b>
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**Gathering #1 – Winter Workshop in Westbrook****Workshop Leader: Jenny Doughty**

Alice Persons of Moon Pie Press generously opened her home to us again, and provided a delicious lemon cake and apricot scones, for our regional workshop on February 18th.

Eight members attended, including some new ones, and we spent a full and busy morning working on how to generate poems when you're stuck, and how to access your creative unconscious. In the afternoon, we workshopped five poems that people had brought with them, and then had a reading in the round and voted on three poems to send to the *Stanza*.

**Gathering #2 – Augusta****Workshop Leaders: James Breslin and Ted Bookey**

On March 4th at the Church at 209 on Eastern Avenue in Augusta, 10 MPS members met for the Augusta area workshop. In the early part of the meeting attendees presented poems for discussion and comment by other presenters. All contributed poems. The discussion was detailed and helped us to sharpen our insight into what makes a poem effective. In the later part of the session, Ted Bookey presented an enlightening talk on Semiotics and contextual nature of language. Handouts were presented on the topic. At the end of the workshop members who brought poems for consideration for inclusion in the *Stanza* read them. Members then voted on the three poems to be chosen. Selection was difficult because of the uniform quality of entries, but the poems selected were those by Gus Peterson, Jim Mello, and Jim McKendry.

**Gathering #3 – Rockland**

To take place on April 1st (Postponed from December)

**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.

**RSVP by March 21st** to Carol at [mainepoet@me.com](mailto: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

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**Check out our Website and our Facebook Page!**

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.

We also have a Facebook page. 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."

<b>POEMS FROM GATHERING #1 - Westbrook</b>
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**Eight Year Plan – Margie Kivel**

One lone island popped in earth's pressure cooker  
to bob like a cork.

Two male bower birds compete in the luxury hotel  
business, bring colorful bangles to line the entry way,  
call in love.

Three corners of government hat realigned  
to polarize voters.

Four small hands clap up memories of the old days.

Five friends hang together to pen recreated languages.

Six more years until the shoe drops.

Seven cormorants hijack a skiff, head south.

Eight years in the making, and it'll never leave  
the shore – another relic for gull theater.

**The House Comes Down – Sally Woolf-Wade**

Newcomers from another state  
are tearing down the tired house.  
Old timbers groan with each hard thud  
of the giant wrecking beast.  
A cornerstone moans and shudders  
with steaming wheezes of the shovel.  
The roof flinches, squawks, and falls.  
The graceful fieldstone chimney  
is the last to stand,  
still proud, defiant, at quitting time.  
Now, far across the ragged field,  
woods darken in fading daylight.  
Look quickly! Among the trees  
two translucent shadows flicker.  
On closer look, they could almost be --  
almost -- but not quite -- two old people  
hidden, watching, sighing,  
grieving.

**I Miss You, Sister – Bill Frayer**

Sometimes, when all is quiet,  
I think of you,  
of the possibility of you,  
a baby girl,  
A miscarriage,  
among three boys.

How would our lives  
be touched  
by your feminine voice,  
by your different voice,  
in our locker room.

Would Mom  
have withdrawn  
Into her safe world  
among the boys and man,  
or would she  
have found her voice,  
your softer ear  
to hear her tears?

Would you  
have held us together,  
brought us together  
more often?

Would you have  
brought a fragrance  
into our madness?

Would you have made us  
more tender?

How would your love,  
your feminine voice,  
have enriched us  
and helped us bear  
those sorrows  
we do not speak?

I miss you, Sister.

<b>POEMS FROM GATHERING #2 - Augusta</b>
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**In a February Thaw, I See Dali and Van Gogh  
– Gus Peterson**

Surreal as a fever dream,  
our icy coverlet thrashed  
into the air and hung  
on this cold branch of night.  
We flutter like moths to  
the carousel of blue,  
a line of red eyes blinking  
at an origami of metal,  
their drapes of blanket  
already melting into  
a persistence of memory  
over a starry night of glass.

**Winter's Passing – Jim McKendry**

One last ice berg  
lies forlorn on our deck.  
While wind plays a dirge,  
Sun has an urge  
to purge winter's last fleck.  
"Good Bye" cries the berg.  
Tears clear our deck.

**Blizzard – Jim Mello**

it is hard to see outside:  
wind whipping snow in every direction  
simultaneously

the end of the block  
a blur in a fog of precipitation

the remembered streetscape eerily transfigured

it is hard to see outside:  
with the window screens clumped  
with snow hurled relentlessly since early morning

skeletal fingers from the roof elongating  
by the hour  
the house across the street reduced to a  
surrealistic painting

the knuckles of the berried tree swollen  
to three times their normal size

sometimes  
it is hard to see outside

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**An Important Reminder:**

**There's Still Time to Compete in NFSPS's 2017 Contests**

Deadline for the National Federation of State Poetry Societies 2017 contests is March 15. We would remind members of the Maine Poets Society that their membership in MPS includes membership in this national organization and entitles them to participate in all the contests, including those that say "members only." To be recognized as a member for this year's contests, MPS membership must have been active since January of 2017.

Poets who are not members of a state poetry society may participate in contests that aren't listed as "members only." Note that there is a small fee for submissions (\$5.00 per poem for up to four submissions for the NFSPS Founders Award contest and \$1.00 per poem for entries in other contests). Submissions cannot have been previously published anywhere, including online, and there is a one-poem limit for all contests except the Founders Award. See the details at: [http://www.nfsp.com/poetry\\_contests.htm](http://www.nfsp.com/poetry_contests.htm).

## MPS Really Needs New Board Members

We are very pleased to announce that Gus Peterson has agreed to allow his name to be put forward at the May meeting to serve as our Treasurer/Membership Chair. Jenny Doughty will be on the slate of officers to serve as President, and James Breslin as Vice President.

That still leaves us needing a Secretary and a Hospitality Chair. If you would be willing to serve in one of these capacities, please respond to James Breslin at [jameslindabreslin@gmail.com](mailto:jameslindabreslin@gmail.com) or Sally Joy at [jsjoy@roadrunner.com](mailto:jsjoy@roadrunner.com). If you are not a current member and are in need of a membership application, you can find a link to the form on our website ([MainePoetsSociety.com](http://MainePoetsSociety.com)).

### Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for taking notes at all meetings and reading the minutes from the previous meeting at the next meeting. The secretary will write thank you notes, send notes to ill members, have cards signed at meetings, and offer condolences to families of deceased former MPS members.

**This is an elected position, with a term of two years.**

### Hospitality Chair (Hostess)

The Hospitality Chair/Hostess is responsible for the morning and lunch set up, including bottled water, regular and decaf coffee, teas and morning foods, plates, napkins and cups as well as the appropriate condiments.

**This is an appointed position, with a term of two years.**

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### Thank you MPS!

Thanks to the opportunity grant from Maine Poets' Society, I was able to go on a week's residency in North Adams, MA, with Tupelo Press. There were eight of us in the group, and we were provided with comfortable apartments across the road from the Massachusetts Museum of Creative Arts (Mass MoCA), and an individual studio in a building that was part of the MoCA complex. The studio was just an empty white room with a table and chair – perfect for making you concentrate!

All of us had objectives we wanted to achieve – mine was to get my existing work organized for my forthcoming poetry book (published by Moon Pie Press and due out in the fall). However, we also had time with experienced editors to workshop some poems and to discuss and generate new ones. We had time with Carol Ann Davies, John Schlay and Jeffrey Levine, all of Tupelo Press, and a wonderful morning session with Lawrence Raab of nearby Williams College.

I came away feeling refreshed and encouraged in my work, and having made the acquaintance of some lovely people. Thank you MPS!

~ Jenny Doughty

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

When you submit poems for our contests, please 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 you are aware of this. If you've made changes since your submission, please do not include them. Give us the poem as it was judged. Thank you.

**Deadline for Member and Publication News for the next *Stanza*: July 10, 2017.**



### President's Ink

The May meeting will be my final meeting as your president. I have had the pleasure of serving the Society, first as Programs Chair and then as President, serving in that capacity for the past four years. One naturally reflects back and looks forward at a time like this. I recall those snowy icy meetings in Saco when I stayed overnight the night before, just to make sure I could get there safely and in a timely fashion. I am happy to see the successful implementation of our winter gatherings which replaced the February meeting with its weather "possibilities." I recall the hard work your board did to get our bylaws and our policies gelled into an efficiency that will serve our members for years to come. Of late, the board has implemented a slightly different, and I think member-friendly, member-inclusive meeting format: having one judge only and moving the "reading in the round" (now called Poets Corner) to the morning after our brief business meeting and a short exercise and discussion. Under my tenure, we developed Opportunity Grants which have provided a few members the chance to afford attendance at retreats and conferences. I hope these continue and urge members to explore the grants as a way to further your adeptness and interest in poetry. None of these changes could have happened without a board ready and willing to look at how we were doing things and asking the hard question: "can we do things differently for the benefit of the membership?" I am ever so grateful to Margie, Jenny, Sally, James, Deb, and the late Anne Hammond for their unflagging dedication to the Society and its mission of writing and enjoying and promoting poetry.

Going forward, I am confident that the board will keep looking at ways to build on what we have now and birth more great suggestions into reality. As I move toward completion of a long-neglected manuscript and enjoyment of travel with my husband, I hope that you will each find one memory of my time as your president and think of me. I hope to be invited back to judge or to present workshops. The Society is dear to me in so many ways, not the least of which is the opportunity I have had to make so many poetry friends. I will carry you with me always. I will keep track by reading the web site on a regular basis so I can see our poems and know what you are doing in the world of MPS.

I am always available by email, so don't be strangers! I will remain a member and may attend a meeting here or there in the future. Until then, thanks for your dedication to the Society and your help in making my job as president easier.

Wishing you, as always, GOOD INK.

Carol Bachofner, retiring president.

I think that we're beginning to remember that the first poets didn't come out of a classroom, that poetry began when somebody walked off of a savanna or out of a cave and looked up at the sky with wonder and said, "Ahhh." That was the first poem. — *Lucille Clifton*

Poetry is what in a poem makes you laugh, cry, prickle, be silent, makes your toe nails twinkle, makes you want to do this or that or nothing, makes you know that you are alone in the unknown world, that your bliss and suffering is forever shared and forever all your own. — *Dylan Thomas*

## April is National Poetry Month

The Academy of American Poets established National Poetry Month in 1996. Their website offers the following goals for this observation:

- to highlight the extraordinary legacy and ongoing achievement of American poets
- to encourage the reading of poems
- to assist teachers in bringing poetry into their classrooms
- to increase the attention paid to poetry by national and local media
- to encourage increased publication and distribution of poetry books, and
- to encourage support for poets and poetry.

### A Poetry Month Workshop – Free and Open to Writers of all Levels

On April 11, as part of “Poetry Month Rockland,” Carol Bachofner will offer a workshop, entitled “Where We Live is Why We Write: keeping a writer’s journal,” at the Rockland Public Library. **Note that this is not a Maine Poets Society event.** It is open, at no cost, to writers of all levels, including beginners. Check-in time is 5:45 p.m. The workshop will start at 6:00 and end at 8:00.

Focus will be a discussion of “place” in terms of its effects on our writing. Using several poems of Native American poets of the Northeast, and snippets of personal interviews with those poets, Carol will show how being “away” impacted their poetry and how being away (or returning home after being away) can provide you with materials for your own writing, either poems or prose.

Participants will explore keeping a journal of place, a treasure trove of writing ideas and bits of memory about home. They will create at least three different journal entries and try a bit of poetry from those.

Attendees are asked to bring a fresh journal/notebook (any will do) and a pen and/or pencil. Handouts will be provided. Door prizes will be given.

Please email [mainepoet@me.com](mailto:mainepoet@me.com) if you are interested in attending, or if you have questions about the workshop.

STANZA, Maine Poets Society  
16 Riverton Street  
Augusta, ME 04330

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 and Program Chair [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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