

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 1

FEBRUARY 2019

NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, April 27, 2019, at the First Universalist Church, 169 Pleasant St. in Auburn. Please bring a bag lunch. Coffee, tea, bottled water, and a few goodies (but not a meal) will be provided. A \$10 registration fee will help defray the cost of renting the facility.

Agenda for Meeting

9:30	Registration and coffee	1:00	<u>Contest</u> : A Persona Poem, With a Twist – 30-line limit. Judge: Carol Bachofner
10:00	Business Meeting		
10:30	Open Mic (Poets' Corner) sign up at registration - first readers will be those who have not submitted a poem for the contest. A total of one hour will be allotted for this.	1:50	Judge reads her own work and/or offers poetry writing helps.
11:30	Mini Workshop	2:30	Announcements and closing
12:00	Lunch (bring your own) - Book exchange to replace the Silent Auction (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

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

Send to: James Breslin
451 Bassett Rd.

Winslow, ME 04901

DEADLINE: March 27, 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— Persona Poem, With a Twist. Persona poems are those written in the voice and character of another person. A persona, from the Latin for mask, is a character taken on by a poet to speak in first-person. This person doesn't have to be a famous or recognizable character. You might choose to write in the voice of a friend, a family member, or a made-up character (a carnival barker, a policeman, a child, a musician, etc).

Remember that doing a persona is like being an actor. You take on a role. This may require a bit of research but will surely take planning and revision to make sure your character's voice comes through. Writing as someone else—exploring what you don't know—can prove an excellent method of coming to know yourself as a writer. Persona poems can address a number of writing concerns—creating dramatic tension, making decisions about authorial distance, and addressing difficult or seemingly private personal subjects—while allowing a greater freedom to write without self-censure.

Persona presents a puzzle. In a persona poem, the writer speaks directly to readers and forges an interpersonal relationship with them. It whispers in their ears or grabs them by the neck. Keep the poem in the present tense. Form is up to you, something loose and free or a form that you like using (triolet, pantoum, prose poem, villanelle, etc.) Just remember to limit to 30 lines. The gold standard for persona poems is Robert Browning's dramatic monologue "My Last Duchess." Remember that you are writing AS the other person, not ABOUT him/her. Get into the person's voice!

ABOUT THE JUDGE

Carol Willette Bachofner, poet, watercolorist, and photographer, is the author of seven books, the latest released in 2017 and 2018: *The Boyfriend Project* (poetry); and *Test Pattern, a Fantod of Prose Poems*. Individual poems have appeared in various journals such as *Prairie Schooner*, *The Connecticut Review*, *The Comstock Review*, *Cream City Review*, *Crab Orchard Journal*, *Bangor Metro*, *Stolen Island*, and many others.

Her poems have appeared in the following anthologies: *Take Heart: Poems From Maine*, selected by Wesley McNair, Maine State Poet Laureate; *Unraveling the Spreading Cloth of Time: Indigenous Thoughts Concerning the Universe*; and *Dawnland Voices, an anthology of writings from Indigenous New England*.

Carol won the 2017 Maine Postmark Contest for her poem, *Passagassawaukeag*, published in *The Maine Review*. She was awarded an MFA in Poetry from Vermont College of Fine Arts in 2004 and served as Poet Laureate of Rockland Maine from 2012-2016.

One Winter Gathering Yet to Happen

Regional Gathering Augusta Area

Saturday March 23, 2019 – 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

HOST: Sally Joy

Location: Maine Authors Room, Maine State Library, Augusta

BRING: Up to 4 poems to share (Time allotted for each reader will depend on number of attendees.)

RSVP not required, but helpful: (email jsjoy@roadrunner.com)

FORMAT: Open Mic – number not limited

10:15 Sign-in; meet and greet.
10:30-12:30 Open Mic

A Poem from the Regional Gathering for the Southern Maine Area

Fragments of Winter—Nancy Orr

Cold winter dawn
crows leaving roost
black silhouettes
against blushing sky.

Clouds in the west
pale purple streamers.
Hemlock branches
bent low with snow.

Boots crunching crusty
snow in hushed woods.
Animal tracks on the ice
crossing the river.

A scrabble on the snow
with wing prints
of owl or hawk.
Life is short.

Calling ALL
Poets!

- No age requirements
- No attendance requirements
- An opportunity to enjoy poetry

POETS in PROCESS

An open group for poets
with and without experience

An opportunity to share
and ask for constructive feedback

When: 2nd Tuesday, January to June, 5:30-6:30
1/8, 2/12, 3/12, 4/9, 5/14, 6/11

Where: Maine Authors Room, MSL

FMI Contact: Peggy O'Kane

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www.maine.gov/msl
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We do not generally share information about non-MPS programs except by occasionally including a link. However, we thought this no-cost opportunity for poets in the Augusta area might be of interest to our readers. There are four sessions yet to come: March 12, April 9, May 14, and June 11. Time is 5:30 to 6:30 on the second Tuesday of the month. Come as you're able. No age requirements (old or young).

THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY PRIZE POEM CONTEST 2019

The Maine Poets Society is proud to present our second annual \$100 prize poem contest. This year we are also offering a \$50 prize to Maine poets who have 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. 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 February 19th and March 30th 2019.

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. A maximum of 4 entries for each is permitted, but each entry must be covered by an entry fee.

Topic and form are left open to the poet's judgment, but there is a limit of 50 lines. Entries exceeding the limit will be disqualified. Previously published poems are not permitted.

Our distinguished judge in 2019 for the \$100 prize poem contest will be Gibson Fay LeBlanc, director of The Telling Room, and winner of the Vassar Miller Prize in Poetry 2011. Board members of the Maine Poets Society will judge the contest for previously unpublished poets. The winner will be published in MPS's newsletter, Stanza.

Our prizes will be presented at the 2019 Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance awards evening, on Thursday, June 13th in Portland. The shortlists will be announced beforehand by email.

Please send two copies of your poem, one of them identified with your name, contact details (mailing address, email address and telephone number) and which contest you are entering, and one with no additional information on it, to MPS President Jenny Doughty, at 31 Rustic Lane, Portland, ME 04103. 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.

Opportunity Grants Update

Happy 2019 fellow poets! I hope this finds you all well as the winter slows and the creative waters begin their quickening. As you know, being a member of MPS allows for a range of opportunities, from our members only contests at gatherings to any number of nationwide contests via NFSPS. These are just a few of the ways by which we accomplish our mission of helping poetry flourish in the state of Maine.

To date one of the most unused – and best – ways to do this is our very own scholarship program, aka Opportunity Grants. Current members can apply for up to \$100 to go towards an educational experience (poetry seminar/workshop, conference, etc) on a first come, first serve basis. We have 10 slots available for 2019, and I would like to see this resource used to the utmost. See the website "members" section for complete guidelines or feel free to email/snail mail any one of us board members!

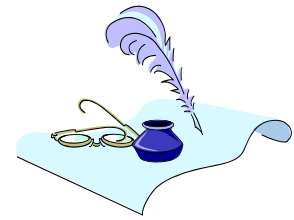
Gus Peterson
Treasurer and Membership Chair

Links to a couple of things that may be of interest:

An article about Governor Mills as a poet: <https://downeast.com/maine-governor-janet-mills/>

From National Public Radio: <https://www.npr.org/2019/01/21/686349087/-i-reject-walls-a-2019-poetry-preview>

Reminder: Members of MPS are automatically members of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, and thus eligible to enter their contests. You can find a full list of the contests in each edition of the NFSPS newsletter, Strophes, so check out the January 2019 issue of Strophes, which has been posted to <http://nfsp.com/>



PRESIDENT'S WORDS SPRING 2019

As we poets cautiously peer out of our burrows, hoping to avoid six more weeks of winter if we don't see our shadows, and contemplating what kind of poem to write about it if we do, let's look forward to our next meeting on April 27th at the First Universalist Church in Auburn. I hope to see as many of you there as possible, and I would like to encourage you to enter the contest. Our judge, former President of MPS and former Poet Laureate of Rockland Carol Bachofner, has set us an intriguing topic and I am currently puzzling over what to write. So many characters to choose from! And I could even make one up!

Our winter regional gathering in Westbrook, about Revision Strategies, was enjoyed by everyone, including the presenter (me). We studied early drafts of poems by famous poets alongside the finished versions, and considered how they had gone about revision. We looked at the various tactics that can be employed during revision, and at the purpose of revision. After lunch, and some delicious baked goodies kindly donated by our generous host Alice Persons, we workshopped poems brought by attendees. You'll find one of them – post-revision – in this newsletter. Thanks to Nancy Orr for allowing us to publish her work.

I hope a lot of MPS members can make it to the Open Mic at the Maine State Library on Saturday March 23rd, from 10:30-12:30. It's free! How many lovely winter events are free? And we would love it if you could bring along a poem of your own to read.

If you can't make the Open Mic event at the Maine State Library, please do bring along a poem to share at our own open mic at the beginning of our April meeting.

At our April meeting, I will offer copies of the hand-out from the Revision Strategies workshop to attendees. Some of it is photocopied from handwritten drafts and I don't have it available in email form, but I will happily donate extra copies for those who attend the meeting. Live events and gatherings are a great way to network with like-minded people and pick up ideas that can help you with your own work.

Also at our April meeting, during the business meeting portion of the day, we will need to discuss and vote on the new board for 2019, so I welcome anybody who would like to become more involved with the running of the Maine Poets Society.

I would like to remind members that MPS is affiliated with the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NSFPS) and as such we are allowed to enter any of their contests that are open to people from out of their state. You'll find a list of them on their website and in the current issue of their newsletter, Strophes, available online at <http://www.nfsps.com/Strophes2019-Jan.pdf>. Browse their website and hunt through the contests. You're bound to have a poem that will fit!

Happy spring! See you in April, I hope.

Jenny Doughty

Membership Update

The *Stanza* is emailed to all whose membership was current as of December 31, 2018. The new membership year began on January 1, 2019. What this means is that receipt of the *Stanza* is not in itself evidence that your membership is current.

If you have not yet renewed for 2019, you will receive only one more issue. In addition, if you show on the membership list as current only through 2018, you are not eligible to participate in the April or September contests. The good news is that if you renew before March 27, you can take part in either or both of those contests.

In doubt about your membership status? If so, please send an email, along with any address or contact information change, to Gus Peterson, Treasurer & Membership Chair, at glp3324@gmail.com.

Publication & Member News

Poems

Jenny Doughty has five poems in issue #32 of Fibonacci Review which should be published at the end of February. The titles are: "When sleeping women wake mountains move," "The glass ceiling," "Moon blind 1978," "Look!" and "Pack with care." **NOTE:** If you come to the April meeting, you will learn more about Fibonacci poems in our mini workshop!

Margery Kivel has placed third among the 10 finalists in the Carolyn Forché Poetry Contest. This is an international contest held annually by WaterWood Press. Her entry will be included in the forthcoming volume *Elusions: Refugee Poetry* expected to be published in late Summer or Early Fall.

Books

James Breslin's new book, *Hummingbird and Other New & Collected Poems*, copyright 2019, is available from Moon Pie Press. Cover art is by MPS member Ruth Bookey.

Monday Morning Poets (MPS members, Darlene Glover, Kathryn Tracy, Nancy Orr, Linda DeSantis, and Bill Frayer), *Wit, Wisdom, and Whimsy*, available on Amazon.

Sarah J. Woolf-Wade's book of poems, *Wolf Moon Down*, Goose River Press, 2018 is now available from Goose River Press, Amazon, at Sherman's Book Stores, or from Sarah herself at sallyjww@gmail.com.

Richard Foerster's *Boy on a Doorstep: New and Selected Poems* will appear from Tiger Bark Press in March 2019.

Other Member News

Carl Little reminds us that he submitted his poem "Genie" to the Maine Poetry Society contest last year. He received an honorable mention and some very helpful feedback from Linda Aldrich. He worked on the poem again and has received notice that Stuart Kestenbaum will be reading it on a future "Poems from Here" on Maine Public. And so he says: "Thank you, Linda!"

Ruth F. Guillard now has 10 books of poems published (available on Amazon.com/books). Her work has also appeared in *Take Heart*, an anthology of Maine poets by former Maine Poet Laureate Wesley McNair. Ruth has lived for 38 years on the Damariscotta River, a main source of inspiration for her poems. She will soon move to an 1815-era house in Bowdoinham, on the Cathance River. She will be interested to see what will grab her attention there, and what changes may happen in her writing. Email: guillard@twc.com.

Deadline for Member and Publication News for the next *Stanza*: July 10, 2019.

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

FIRST CLASS

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

FMI or to join, write
Gus Peterson
12 Middle Street
Randolph, ME 04346

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Webmaster, Lisa Montagna lisa@dimensionswebdesign.com

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.”