

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 1

MARCH 2020

NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, May 16, 2020, at the First Universalist Church, 169 Pleasant St. in Auburn. Bring a bag lunch. Coffee, tea, and bottled water and some breakfast goodies will be provided. A \$10 registration fee will help defray the cost of renting the facility.

Agenda for Meeting

9:30	Registration and coffee	12:30	Open Mic – sign up at registration - first readers will be those who have not submitted a poem for the contest.
10:00	Business Meeting	1:00	<u>Contest</u> : “Truth telling” – free verse preferred – 30 line limit Judge: David Sloan
10:30	Mini Workshop led by Claire Hersom		
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.)	1:50	Judge reads his own work and/or offers poetry writing helps.

Contest Submissions

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

Send to: James Breslin
451 Bassett Rd.

Winslow, ME 04901

DEADLINE: April 16, 2020

1 poem (no fee)

- 2 copies of your poem (ONE with your name; one without)
- Envelope: Letter-size (long, #10) marked “CONTEST”
- INCLUDE SASE!!

ABOUT THE JUDGE

David Sloan is a graduate of the University of Southern Maine’s Stonecoast MFA Poetry Program. He teaches at Maine Coast Waldorf High School in Freeport. His debut poetry collection—*The Irresistible In-Between*—was published by Deerbrook Editions in 2013. His poetry has appeared in *The Café Review*, *Chiron Review*, *The Cider Press Review*, *Confrontation*, *Down East*, *Innisfree*, *Lascaux Review*, *Moon City Review*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *New Millennium Writings and Passager*, among others. He received the 2012 Betsy Sholl Award, Maine Literary awards in 2012 and 2016, The Margaret F. Tripp Poetry Award, and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. He was the first winner of the Maine Poets Society Prize Poem contest. He is currently enjoying life's latest delight—grandfatherhood!

Notes from the judge about the contest poem:

Contest Poem— **Truth-telling** covers so much territory. It can imply a tension between concealment and revelation, between deception and confession; or it can just be a wading through a dark swamp toward some dim light or firm footing. It can be as much a rueful self-realization as an admission under oath. Truth-telling lays bare, interrogates, rattles, whispers, exposes, betrays, broadcasts, lets slip, peels the onion, breaks the news. So many great poets and great poems exemplify this theme; here are a few: Carolyn Forché's "The Colonel," Robert Hass' "A Story about the Body," James Wright's "Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota," Sharon Olds' "Ideographs" or "I Go Back to 1937," Elizabeth Bishop's "One Art," Mary Oliver's "In Blackwater Woods," and Joseph Fasano's "Figure."

Here's a "truth telling" poem of David's own:

Two Approaches to Gardening

You don't seem to mind the rain as you kneel
straw-hatted in the garden and weed around
drooping peonies. The butterfly bush has finally
sprouted again, proof, despite your protests,
my zealous pruning has only mimicked murder.

You're so focused on this futile scrabbling,
as if weeding could keep stars from winking out,
or forestall other inevitabilities. I watch you work
without detection and wonder what keeps us
together. Children gone, we agree now

on so little; you want pine bark mulch,
I prefer seaweed. You're yearning for bees,
but I know who will have to tend them.
You desire fellowship, long phone calls,
a glass of wine in the evening. I could spend
days pedaling back roads skirting the bay,
sifting a weedy garden of words in need
of constant pruning. I've given what I could,
but you want more—even now, some
wordless assurance that, shears shelved,
I'll take my place beside you in the rain.

THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY PRIZE POEM CONTEST 2020

Submissions must be postmarked no later than March 30

The Maine Poets Society is proud to present our third annual \$100 prize poem contest. This year we are again also offering an additional \$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. 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 March 30th 2020.

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 can 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 50 line limit. Entries exceeding this will be disqualified.

Our distinguished judge for the \$100 prize poem contest in 2020 will be Richard Foerster, winner of the 2019 contest and author of eight poetry collections, whose honors include two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts. Board members of the Maine Poets Society will judge the contest for previously unpublished poets.

Our prizes will be presented at the 2020 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, 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 Dougherty, 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.

Reminder: Members of MPS are automatically members of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, and thus eligible to enter their contests. Deadline for the 2020 annual contests was March 15, but you can still download a brochure and get a feel for what may be offered next year. Check out "Annual Contests" at <http://nfsps.com/>. The submission process is a bit complicated, so be sure to read what's expected in that regard. While at their website, click on *Strophes* and then "Current Issue" to see their most recent newsletter (as of this writing, that's January 2020).

NOTE: The deadline for Publication & Member News for the next *Stanza* is June 10, 2020. Please send info to srjoy43@gmail.com.

Publication & Member News

Poems

Richard Foerster's poem "Lavabo" appears in the current issue of *The Café Review* along with a review of his book *Boy on a Doorstep: New and Selected Poems*. Other poems are forthcoming in *ellipsis* ("Solipsism") and online at *The Night Heron Barks* ("Like a Birch Tree Fallen in Snow").



President's Ink March 2020

You've probably noticed that the Stanza is only half its usual size this issue. That's because the winter meetings have no contest attached to them, so there are no entries to include. However, the two winter meetings were a great success and we will continue offering them. My "Finding your Creative Roots" workshop in January was thought-provoking and enjoyed by all who attended. The Open Mic at the State Library on February 22nd drew several people who have since become members, and the poems shared were enjoyed by all of us.

If your membership status is not current for 2020, here's your reminder that you can mail a check for your \$20 dues to Gus Peterson at 12 Middle Street in Randolph, 04346, or bring them with you to the May meeting. If you are a renewing member, Gus has your details. If you are a new member, you can find a membership form on our website: <http://www.maine-poets-society.com/2018-03-19-Membership-Application.pdf>.

"In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love", according to Tennyson, but my thoughts (though I am female and no longer young, which may account for the difference) are turning to two contests.

The first is our own members-only contest, on the subject of "truth-telling", and if truth be told the draft for my entry is sitting on my computer still at the "I need to work on this a bit more" stage. It's a very broad topic, and at first I was stymied about what would count as truth-telling, and then I decided that it meant the truth about something as I saw it, not just a poem about telling the truth to somebody. This should make for a very interesting set of entries. My current draft is a fairly unusual one for me. It may well languish among the also-rans, but I will be very glad of the judge's feedback, which is one of the best reasons for entering our contest. I particularly like hearing all the entries at our meeting so I hope you will not only enter but come to the meeting yourself. The closing date for this contest is April 16th

The second is, of course, our state-wide Prize Poem contests. The entries have been coming into my mailbox and I look forward to reading them all before those by previously published poets get passed to our judge, Richard Foerster, or to the members of the board in the case of entries to the previously unpublished poet part of our contest. This has been a most interesting and enjoyable aspect of this contest, now in its third year. Remember that the closing date for entries for these contests is that they should be postmarked before March 30th, and if they don't have a Maine postmark you should include a letter verifying your address when you are resident in Maine.

We are so lucky here in Maine, to be part of a thriving poetry community. I encourage our members to check out <http://belfastpoetry.com/> for details of the Belfast Poetry Festival, and consider entering one of the categories there.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at our meeting on May 16th at the First Universalist Church in Auburn. Let's hope that the coronavirus threat will have calmed down by then, but at least as poets we can occupy ourselves with writing if we have to self-quarantine!

Happy Spring, fellow poets.

Jenny

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
Gus Peterson
12 Middle Street
Randolph, ME 04346

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Webmaster, Lisa Montagna LMontagna@apitechnology.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.”