

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 2

SPRING 2012

NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, May 19, 2012, Room 218, Randall Student Tech Center at the University of Maine, Augusta. **Directions to the Augusta campus:**

From the North: Take Interstate 95 south to exit 112, turn left off exit ramp.
Go about .75 miles and turn right at the UMA entrance sign.

From the South: Take Interstate 95 north to Exit 112 A, turn right off exit ramp.
Go about .75 miles and turn right at the UMA entrance sign.

Agenda for Meeting

9:30	Registration and coffee	1:00	PM Contest—FORM: <i>Triolet</i>
10:00	Business Meeting		guest judge, <u>Kathleen Ellis</u>
10:30	AM Contest—SUBJECT: “Travel” member judge, <u>Ellen Taylor</u>	1:50	Guest judge reads her own work
11:20	Member judge reads her own work	2:30	Announcements and closing
12:00	Lunch and Silent Auction	2:45	Reading in the Round

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OUR NEXT CONTESTS

Instructions for Submitting:

- Maggie Finch, 1463 Washington Street, Bath, ME 04530
- DEADLINE—19 April 2012
- 1 poem per contest (no fee)
- 2 copies of each poem (ONE of each identified)
- Envelope: Letter-size (long, #10), marked “CONTEST”
(*please*, NOT a large manila envelope)
- **INCLUDE SASE!!**

AM Poem—SUBJECT: **Ellen Taylor** will judge our poems (any form with a limit of 24 lines) on “Travel.” There are no restrictions on this theme. She looks forward to seeing what participants will do to interpret and represent the subject. It is wide open!

PM Poem—FORM: **Kathleen Ellis** will be judging *Triolets*. (any subject, either one triolet or several that are related, not to exceed 24 lines)

The features of the **Triolet** are:

- 8 lines.
- Two rhymes.
- 5 of the 8 lines are repeated or refrain lines.
- First line repeats at the 4th and 7th lines.
- Second line repeats at the 8th line.
- Rhyme scheme (where an upper-case letter indicates the appearance of an identical line, while a lower-case letter indicates a rhyme with each line designated by the same lower-case or upper-case letter):

1st line (called Line A)

2nd line (called Line B)

3rd line rhymes with end word of Line A

4th line Line A (repeated exactly)

5th line rhymes with end word of Line A

6th line rhymes with end word of Line B

7th line Line A (repeated exactly)

8th line Line B (repeated exactly)

These could be two separate triolets or they could make up a double triolet:

Tryst I

It's the same sky we both see.
 It's the same sun overhead.
 Though none of it comes to us for free.
 It's the same sky we both see.
 I'm on fire. Come lie with me
 in the meadow's soft green bed.
 It's the same sky we both see.
 It's the same sun overhead.

Tryst II

I'm on fire. Come to the meadow
 and be with me for a day's delight.
 No one needs to know.
 I'm on fire. Come to the meadow.
 Why won't you be my noontime shadow?
 Must we only be lovers at night?
 I'm on fire. Come to the meadow
 and be with me for a day's delight.

ABOUT THE JUDGES

Ellen Taylor is a resident of Appleton and a professor of English at the University of Maine at Augusta. Her latest collection, Floating, showcases her eye for detail and her ability to expand the small into the mighty. She is a driving force for poetry in the UMA's Terry Plunkett Poetry Festival each spring. Taylor is now co-director of the Writers in the Round Conference at Star Island (poetry and song writing) which takes place at the historic Oceanic Hotel at the former settlement of Gosport, Isles of Shoals, each fall. Ellen is interested in all kinds of poetry; travel poetry in particular. At the end of this month, she will travel to Nicaragua with a group of students from UMA, an annual trip. Expect some new poems from this adventure.

Kathleen Ellis is an award-winning poet whose latest collection, Narrow River to the North, features poetry and original photographs. She teaches at the University of Maine, Orono and conducts an annual summer writing workshop in Rockland at the Farnsworth Art Museum. This workshop is in its 2nd decade. A native of the Bay Area of California, she devotes her time and writing to the natural resources of Maine, her beloved adopted state. In June, she will conduct two writing workshops as a part of the Centennial Re-Discovery of Edna St Vincent Millay. These will be held on June 20th and 27th at the Whitehall Inn in Camden, Maine.

SPRING 2012 CONTEST WINNERS

AM Contest—Ghazal: Judge, Carol Bachofner

First Prize, Doug Woodsum

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

They glitter like stars, they bend, and they school: tropical fish.
 They kiss, they fight, they glow, and have pull: tropical fish.
 They're called clowns, foxes, pandas and cats.
 If you think they're not coming, you're a fool. Tropical fish.
 As the waters warm, their range expands.
 If you haven't seen them yet, you will: tropical fish.
 A Gloucester fisher caught some with his shrimp,
 his bulging fishnet spangled with jewels: tropical fish.
 There are those who bellyache, "The end is near,"
 but I prefer to see the glass half full: tropical fish.
 The world has been too cold for too long.
 Praise the aquarium. Praise the pool. Tropical fish.
 Khalid says, "Glaciers are melting away;
 gouramis, tetras, and betta fish rule!" Tropical fish.

Second Prize, Carol Milkuhn

A BOVINE EVOLUTION

Only old-fashioned cows still munch hay, to tell the truth.
 Barnyard guardians, they are passé, to tell the truth.
 Because the modern world has spawned a new breed of cow
 whose genetic edge none can gainsay – to tell the truth.
 Black and white, sleek and chic, it pastures on painted trucks
 in the fast lane of superhighways, to tell the truth –
 as well as grazing on the shelves of grocery stores,
 delis, or even at exclusive soirees, to tell the truth.
 More, it thrives in the deep freeze, at zero or below,
 but can still please a picky gourmet, to tell the truth.
 Publicized, Ben and Jerry-ized, this cow basks in fame;
 since by competitors few are swayed, to tell the truth.
 So much for old-fashioned cows, plodding and plebian –
 this ice cream icon is here to stay, to tell the truth.

Third Prize, Ellen Taylor

ON GREETING ANOTHER DECADE

How could I know, what youth could have been, when
I was still young? What love could have been, when

I knew so few men? Now I'm mature
like a tree who knows her true seasons: when

to be lush and shady, when to drop leaves,
to bear winter, to grow buds again. When

though, will I be old? In my mind I'm still
fresh, young, yearning; I breath desire when

I inhale. Long settled now with one love,
my perception's slow to grow akin. When

will I feel old? Must my body stoop, spread,
my breasts sag, my hips fail, my hair thin? When?

Should I wear sensible shoes, a sun hat?
Should I stay home, slippers in my den when

I am old? Or rage like Thomas against
the dying light, squeeze each day again when

I start to feel old? Or instead be thought
wise, sagacious, kind, clever with pen when

past penta times ten? A seamstress may hem
her lines then; like a poet, she knows when.

First Honorable Mention, Marta Rijn Finch

SO IS THIS ALL THERE IS?

My message waits unanswered, yet again:
Ignored—or did you just forget again?

How my spent hopes soared last week, seeing
Your eyes that moment when we met again. . . .

We live in times where one shared glass of wine
May let the appetite be whet again:

Allowing mere acquaintances to act
The role of rake and coy coquette again;

And haunted by their forty-something fears
That loneliness will be a threat again,

They leap from bed to bed and call it loving
(This time a blonde? No—sleek brunette again);

They jump into their chlorinated pools
When they want swimming. Sunk in debt again,

They play the frenzied Wall-Street gambler's odds
To gain or lose; then place the bet again

And call it work. It's only hard jogging
That causes them to break a sweat again—

And riding bedroom bicycles to nowhere.
I'll text, and clutch my amulet again,

Hoping this time you'll throw Titchka a bone:
Text back!—before our sun has set, again.

Second Honorable Mention, Lynda La Rocca
THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Now let us raise a glass, we drink
to joy, to love, to thee, drink.

Deep ruby wine, with scent of smoke,
the music's melody, drink.

My friend, pour out another round.
Your hand upon her knee, drink.

Lips redder than the reddest rose,
will they be moist, will she drink?

Yes, tilt the goblet to her mouth.
Already I foresee—(Drink!)—

the pleasures of the silken couch
when Kira comes to me. Drink

Third Honorable Mention, Jim Breslin
THE CALL

*I have sought the one my soul has loved.
I sought him but I did not find him.
Song of Solomon 3:1*

I call your precious name tonight.
Ignite me with your flame tonight.

The shrouds of darkness swaddle me.
I sense my prayer's in vain tonight.

The coils of doubt are crushing me.
Am I somehow to blame tonight?

Perhaps you have abandoned me.
I crouch in fear and shame tonight.

You seem indifferent to tears.
What will more weeping gain tonight?

I beg that you will end this drought.
But parched roots drink no rain tonight . . .

It was as if your angel spoke
"He weeps with you in pain tonight."

I saw a distant steady light.
"He comes, have patience, James," tonight

Half-day Workshops Offered in Rockland: "Deep Revision" by Carol Bachofner
Wednesday, May 23rd, 1-4 PM or Saturday, May 26 1-4 PM
Space limited to 6 participants—email mainepoet@me.com or call 594-8954

PM Contest—“A Sense of Weather:” Judge, Dave Morrison**First Prize, Lynda La Rocca**

FROST AND FLOWER

And now it is October in these mountains.
Here and there, a clutch of leaves
keeps glowing gold but most
blew down in that first storm
and crumpled browner on the earth
than earth that swallows cold, dry bones.
Yet somehow, and who knows just how,
those dead leaves still smell faintly of the spring.

My flowers all were frosted
early in September, drooped and done—
geraniums, lobelia, marigolds, the last blue columbine.
Then just today,
one cinquefoil blossomed,
mimicking the autumn leaves,
heart-shaped petals, orange-outlined,
yellow sloping to the center,
bright and beaming, crimson starburst,
I poured water, sat beside it,
patient in the autumn sunlight.
Sitting so, I've been for hours,
watching as it lives
and waiting.
For this night there will be snow.

Second Prize, Elizabeth Berkenbile

BLUE SKY

I think the sky's most dangerous when it's blue.
A gentle breeze and sunshine all around
can put me off my guard and help subdue
that inner voice that warns when threats abound,
a subtle switch of pressure in the air,
foreshadowing a shift, perhaps profound,
while I indulge my daydreams unaware
of some unfathomed blow about to strike,
a change for which there's no way to prepare,
some shock to rock my world just out of sight,
descending through that cheery azure hue,
inbound, as I so innocently write,
some unexpected devil crashing through . . .
I think the sky's most dangerous when it's blue.

Third Prize, Tom Lyford

WEATHER ADVISORY

After two long years of dust an' drought (an' feelin' that last drop o' hope drip out), well there ain't no tellin' what *it is* a man might do. But round 'n round that weather vane, we *rain*-danced drunk 'neath the moon for some rain, like Hollywood Comanches on the warpath, Ki-yi-hooooo!!!!

Now a breeze starts stirrin' up the dust all aroun' an' here *he* comes just a-gustin' into town like a ill wind blown straight outta the ol' wild blue. A real prickly-pear of a tumbleweed (*'Watch whatcha pray for,' boys, pay heed*)... "He's a *rain man*," somebody claims, "from Timbuktu!"

Eyes jus' a-swivelin' all around in his head, them peepers lollin' ever'where doldrum-dead, an' both of'em stony-hard and cobalt blue... an' then *lightnin'* flashes off his ivory teeth, down beneath, grinnin' outta their sheath... an' boys, that sure runs a chill like a sword through you!

He finishes checkin' out everythin' aroun', then lays down the price that'll save our town, an' next he's braggin' that's jus' what he gonna do—even if it takes turnin' upside-down (his credentials jus' a-drippin' with world renown lookin', *you* know, too damn good to be half true).

"O-K," ya hear yerself thinkin'—*but*— down in the workin's of yer whirligig gut, they's *sumpn'* there don' *feel* quite right to you... yet right or wrong, ya folla along with the rest of the herd now the winds whip strong, for what *else* is a fella, like us, he gonna *do*...?

Then the blow starts rippin' them power lines down, a-snuffin' out the lights all o'er the town, an' the sky she's a-flickerin' electric-fireworks blue! So we batten us down in Joe's Saloon, while the cyclone's skreekin' up her banshee tune as The Gale from Hell spins a hurricane hullabaloo!

Us packed in like a barrel o' trout, we're watchin' the Route 2 bridge wash out when somebody yells, "Now the mail won't never get through!" A whole week passes in a nightmare dream, the roofs of our barns jus' a-sweepin' downstream an' our cars bobbin' after like apples sailin' clear outta view...

So it turns *out* that we been skinned. Who knows... mebbe it's 'cause we sinned (just *guessin'* here though— cain't say fer sure that's true)... but we handed him our cash, and oh how he grinned, an' our life-long savin's is gone with the wind— Say Joe... whatcha say...? Couldja lemme borrey yer canoe...?

First Honorable Mention, Sally Rowe Joy

FORECAST: MIXED WITH MEMORIES

The sky is gray;
the forecast, *freezing rain*:
two words that chill me to the bone.
They bring to mind
images of black ice coating roadways,
icy steps, a slip and fall,
a twisted knee,
and the clear memory of
the hollow sound of skull on ice.
Empty-headed, so it seemed to say.

I had a spouse who used to say
I ought not pretend to be so stupid.

No pretense was involved,
and ignorance is not stupidity.
But his words impacted me
more forcefully
than the ice beneath my head,
with results much more long lasting.

Alone now, I struggle to believe,
though often lacking knowledge
and needing help from others,
my head is far from empty
and I really am not stupid.

Second Honorable Mention, Inga M. Potter

BELIEVE

When winter struggles into spring I find
myself inspired and try to think away
from wind and cold, earth's many shades of gray,
attempt to dust the cobwebs from my mind.
It takes more than the thrust of daffodils
and green blades making 'tweed coats' of the lawn
before the wooliness of winter's gone
and I forget those short, dark days and chills.
Then April fools me with more blowing snow,
and I am glued each day to weathermen,
who always promise warmth will come again,
but how can those mere mortals really know?

I must believe that May will soon unfold
its brilliant fields of dandelion gold.

Third Honorable Mention, Marija Sanderling

LATE NOVEMBER

When tourists depart
Downtown withers
Traffic dwindles
Only one store open
Only one restaurant
Boarded windows on beach houses
Stand sentinel against sea storms.
We who remain
Work in the school, the bank,
The electric company,
Or eke out livings
Doing this odd job or that
Holding it together in the lean season
Remarking to one another
In chance encounters at the post office
When snow flurries whirl
If perhaps next year we should move
Escape the snow slushed ironbound coast
The empty stretch of beach
Where sea gulls swoop
And sandpipers skitter

President's Message

Well, a good many of you apparently stayed away in February because of the terrible weather the night before (and maybe because of the later date), but there were several new faces to make a good turnout again—enough for an excellent reading-in-the-round, which started early for once. **Carol Bachofner** gave a wonderful presentation on the ghazal form before critiquing our entries, and **Dave Morrison did the same with** “A Sense of Weather.” They both followed with samplings from their own books. We thank them heartily. →We thank **Kitty Chadbourne**, too, for hosting the library space, and **Sally Joy** for reading the minutes of the last meeting for **Deb Neumeister** who is away caring for her ill father. Also, **Marija Sanderling** for taking the minutes this time. And a special thanks to **Anne Hammond** for keeping all our finances in good order, and **Dita Ondek** for the Silent Auction.

→Remember that your dues should have been paid by January 1st. If not, please contact Membership Chair **Cynthia Brackett-Vincent**. →The Round Robins are circling again! If you've been wanting to join one, please get in touch with **Carol B.** (who will be starting a new one soon. →Please take note that this edition of the *Stanza* has a new editor, **Elizabeth Berkenbile**: contact her with any announcements or kudos! →Mentors are needed! Please let us know if you are willing to work with a less-experienced member looking for ways to improve his/er writing. Hours will be arranged by *you*. →The anthology is such a success that a new one is being planned for next year! So start polishing up your best poems to submit! There will be a *minimum* number to send in this year to ensure the best get chosen—probably six. →Remember to enter the next contests—and don't forget the self-addressed stamped envelope—everybody!—even if you plan to attend the meeting. No SASE, no return. →Finally, we try to keep you informed through the *Stanza* and emails, but *you* are ultimately responsible for keeping up with things like contest deadlines and meetings! If you haven't heard (and think you should have), please contact one of us. →We will be getting an official website sometime in the next few months! Details forthcoming—you'll be able to see the *Stanza*, find other members, and learn details about upcoming (and past) meetings.

See you all in Augusta on May 19th—may the MUSE be with you!

Warmly, **Marta and Maggie**

Exciting News: Two New *Stanza* Columns!

MPS Membership Chairperson Cynthia Brackett-Vincent will be compiling two new columns for the *Stanza* beginning with the next issue.

- 1) **Member Profiles.** To help us get to know our fellow MPS members, this interview-style column will feature one MPS member per issue. Cynthia will draft a set of “getting to know you”-type questions. MPS members will be chosen at random and asked to participate by answering the questionnaire (by mail or e-mail). One member will be highlighted in each *Stanza*.
- 2) **Member Publications.** In order to share our publication successes with each other (and thereby sharing information on possible places to submit to), Cynthia will compile a list-style column of members' recent publications.

Guidelines for Submitting Your Publication News:

- Members may submit news of recent (in the previous twelve months) book publications (books of poetry/books related to poetry), *or* news of books forthcoming.
- For individual poem publications, submit news anytime *after* publication (in print or online).
- Format for submitting book publications (books of poetry/books related to poetry): member's name; name of book (including subtitle if applicable); publisher; date of release.
- Format for submitting poem publications: member's name; name of poem; journal or website name; name of press if different (i.e. “*the Aurorean*; Encircle Publications”); date on journal or website (i.e. “Spring/Summer 2012”); volume and issue number.

Send according to above format to: Cynthia Brackett-Vincent, PO Box 187, Farmington, ME 04938
ATTN: MPS MEMBER PUBLICATIONS COLUMN.

Or, send by e-mail: Brackett-Vincent@encirclepub.com.
Note MPS MEMBER PUBLICATIONS COLUMN in subject of e-mail.

Include your contact information in case of questions. Received-by deadlines: for March *Stanza*, Feb. 1; for July *Stanza*: June 1; for December *Stanza*: November 1.

Board Members

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FIRST CLASS

Stanza is the tri-annual
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FMI or to join, write
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