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2020**

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Honorary Chancellor

Larry Thomas

# Poetry Society of Michigan



*"Encouraging Poets Since 1935"*

March 2020

## President's Message

Whenever a new issue of a literary magazine arrives in the mail, I first check the table of contents to see if I'm in there and then to see if other writers I know are represented. So the other day when the latest issue of *Cloudbank* arrived, I was pleased to see **Jim Daniels** and **Kathi McGookey**, both of whom have been presenters at one of our PSM meetings. But more importantly, there was **Milton Bates**, longtime PSM member from Marquette, whose poem "Barista" is about how we pretend things are all right.

I'm always interested in reading poems by people I know, especially in published form. Publication is, of course, part of PSM's Mission. We aim to give members plenty of opportunity to be published and (consequently) to be read, whether you're a lifetime member or a newbie. That's why I especially look forward to the latest *Peninsula Poets*—which current editor **Melanie Dunbar** is doing a fantastic job of overseeing—as each issue has tons of people I know (or would like to meet). Every time, the mixture of new poets and widely published poets speaks to the mission of our organization.

I love having gotten to know so many writers statewide. It makes reading tables of contents much more exciting. Many PSM members are expanding their literary reputations well beyond the Great Lakes. (Something, I'd like to think, that would not have happened without PSM . . . ) So keep writing and submitting. I'd love to see a familiar name in every issue of the small magazines I receive.

But as lovely as a poem is on a page, poetry is also meant to be heard. I was recently part of an exhibition with visual artists, who thought it was enough to put a poem on a wall. It wasn't. So I mobilized the other poet involved in the exhibit, drew in the aforementioned Melanie Dunbar, and organized a reading—it turned out wonderfully and was well-received. I think more PSM members should do the same. It's pretty easy to organize a reading, and I'm going to speak to that at our next meeting, which is **April 4 in Mt. Pleasant**.

*April?! It seems National Poetry Month is pawing at the back door, so get ready to write, read, and listen. See you there.*

**Elizabeth Kerlikowske**

*Honorary Chancellor Call for Nominations*

The Board of PSM would like to thank **Larry Thomas** for his esteemed service as Honorary Chancellor for the past two years. PSM has benefited profoundly from Larry's advocacy and wisdom—not to mention his knowledge of Michigan's literary tradition and his own outstanding poetry (and gifts of books!). In the Spring we hope to name a new Honorary Chancellor "in recognition of a past or present member of PSM who has distinguished him/herself in perpetuating the purposes and objectives of the Poetry Society of Michigan" (By-laws). We are actively seeking nominations. To nominate, either send an email with the name of the person(s) you think should be considered for the recognition (and a sentence or two telling why) to President **Elizabeth Kerlikowske** at [mme642@aol.com](mailto:mme642@aol.com) OR snail-mail your nomination to **Chancellor Nomination, Poetry Society of Michigan, PO Box 1035 Cadillac, MI. 49601**, no later than March 28, 2020.

**News from the Treasurer**

Thank you once again to everyone who renewed their membership for 2020! We appreciate your support!

Spring is just around the corner and with it comes our April Meeting and the publication of the Spring Edition of *Peninsula Poets*, our Members Edition! We hope you will be able to join us in Mt. Pleasant. It is always a day well spent!

See you there!

— Susan Anderson

**THE SPRING MEETING**

The 2020 Spring Meeting of the PSM will take place on **April 4** in the **Strosacker Room of the Charles V. Park Library** on the Campus of **Central Michigan University** (250 E. Preston) in **Mt. Pleasant**. Hosted by the Creative Writing Program of the CMU Department of English, the meeting will feature faculty and student representatives of the CW Program. As usual, we will plan coffee and check-in starting about 9:30, with the meeting to begin at 10.

Lunch will be catered by Classic Fare Catering.

Part of the day's activities will include a reading and workshop by **Robert Fanning**, Professor of English at CMU and the founder and facilitator of the Wellspring Literary Series in Mt. Pleasant. **Fanning** is the author of four full-length collections of poetry: *Severance* (Salmon Poetry, Ireland, 2019), *Our Sudden Museum*, (Salmon Poetry, Ireland, 2017), *American Prophet* (Marick Press, 2009), and *The Seed Thieves* (Marick Press, 2006), as well as two chapbooks: *Sheet Music* (Three Bee Press, 2015) and *Old Bright Wheel* (The Ledge Press, 2001). His poems have appeared in many literary journals, including *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Shenandoah*, *The Atlanta Review*, *Waxwing*, *The Cortland Review* and others.

Hope you can join us!

**YES! We'd love to attend the 2020 Spring Meeting in Mt. Pleasant!**

I've enclosed my registration fee of \$25/each in the form of a check made out to *The Poetry Society of Michigan*.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest \_\_\_\_\_

Spring MEETING 2020  
The Poetry Society of Michigan  
PO Box 1035  
Cadillac, MI. 49601

## News from UP North

On Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>, the City of Marquette, as part of the Marquette Makers' Project, presented **Milton Bates** with the **2020 Writer of the Year Award** in recognition of his publishing accomplishments and his public service in sharing his literary skills with the community. Artists **Amanda Blumer** and **Bob Polzin** were awarded the **2020 Arts Advocate Award** for their work making art and building the artist community.



On Feb. 11, at Peter White Public Library, Marquette Poets Circle members **Terri Bocklund** and **Kathleen Heideman Rydholm** gave an Isle Royale Winter Study presentation featuring music, stories, and poetry inspired by their adventures at Isle Royale National Park.

On Valentine's Day, U.P. Poet Laureate **Martin Achatz** read love poems and participated in skits as a member of the **Red Jacket Radio Show Jamboree** at the Rozsa Center at Michigan Tech University.

On Sunday, Feb 16, Marquette Poets Circle poets **Esther Margaret Ayers**, **Milton Bates**, **Amanda Blumer**, **Lynn Domina**, **Gail Mahan**, **Gala Malherbe**, **Rick** and **Janeen Rastall**, **Christine Saari**, **John** and **Miriam Taylor** celebrated Valentine's Day with a reading at Wild Pages in Marquette in an event called "Listen to Love (Poems)".

**Amanda Blumer** of **Pyre Publishing** led a Zine Workshop, Saturday, Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Pyre Publishing has announced a Call for Submissions for their magazine *Ez.P.Zine*, Issue 7, with the theme "Arid // Moisture." Writers are encouraged to submit 1-5 poems up to 70 Lines each or Flash Fictions of no more than 300 Words by **March 9<sup>th</sup>**. Submit via Email. Please send content in a file document (not a PDF) with your name as the file title followed by genre ("name\_poetry") to [pyresubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:pyresubmissions@gmail.com). Include a bio about yourself and/or links where people can find your other work.

**"Words & Music: Borderland Arts Meets Marquette Poets Circle"**—an Interactive Display of art by Borderland Artists of Iron Mountain and poetry by the Marquette Poets Circle—will be displayed from **Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> to Mar. 27<sup>th</sup>** at **Bay College West Campus** in Iron Mountain. See works inspired by our favorite musicians: The Beatles, Debussy, Neil Diamond, Handel, JEM and more. QR codes and sound modules allow gallery visitors to hear the music and learn more about the artists and authors. The public is invited to a reception on **Thursday, Mar. 5<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 8 pm CST**. Participating artists and authors include: Martin Achatz, Susan Antonissen, Esther Margaret Ayers, Milton J. Bates, Christine Burns, Melissa Carr, Lynn Domina, Lisa Fosmo, Gail Galotta, Genean Granger, Stella Hansen, Kathleen M. Heideman, John Hilden, Susan Huotari, The Reverend ME Kilpatrick, Christina Kionka, Jesse Koenig, Kathy Kuczek, Jane Landwehr, Matt Maki, Gala Malherbe, Barbara Willard Marden, Terry O'Connor, Kathryn Palmcook, Jane Piirto, Janeen Rastall, Christine Saari, Cyndi Safstrom, Sharon Schmeltzer, Audrey Smith, Gail Stanek, Darlene Strand, Rebecca Tavernini and Russell Thorburn.

Marquette Poet Circle poets **Esther Margaret Ayers**, **Milton Bates**, **Amber Edmondson** and **Lisa Fosmo** will help summon Spring by participating in the family event *Summon Spring* on **Saturday, March 7**, from **4-6 p.m.** at **Campfire Coworks in Marquette**. There will be a dramatic reading of *Green Eggs & Ham* by U.P. Poet Laureate **Martin Achatz** and local author **BG Bradley** and music by Beechgrove & Blacksmith with MPC member **Terri Bocklund**. Local artists Cindy Engle, Amber Edmondson, Raja Howe and Spencer Epps will sell their work and Escape Marquette will have a special on-site puzzle to help guests escape Winter.

—Janeen Rastall

## “Art Talks Back” Poetry Contest 2020

The **Muskegon Museum of Art’s** “Art Talks Back” ekphrastic poetry competition is open until **March 26**. All adult/college area writers residing in the state of Michigan are invited to write an original and previously unpublished poem inspired by one of the *Art Talks Back* selections at the MMA.

While poets are encouraged to visit the museum to view the works in person—along with the “Excellence in Fibers Exhibit” (until March 15)—photos of the 2020 art pieces and contest guidelines are also available on the Museum’s website, [muskegonartmuseum.org](http://muskegonartmuseum.org).



“Game Bus” by Kadir Nelson

There is no entry fee. Cash and other prizes will be awarded at an awards ceremony to be held in April at the Muskegon Museum of Art. **PSM is a recognized sponsor of “Art Talks Back.”**

**Questions?** Contact the Education Department at 231.720.2577, or email Crystal Jackson, Curator of Education, at [cjackson1@muskegonartmuseum.org](mailto:cjackson1@muskegonartmuseum.org).

**Third Wednesday Magazine** is seeking poems for its Summer 2020 issue. Free submissions through Submittable, or for a \$3 fee your poem can be entered into the issue’s 50/50 contest, with the best poem (as determined by the editors) winning 50% of the entry fees (or \$50, whichever is greater). Free digital copies of 3rd Wednesday and more information can be found at: [thirdwednesdaymagazine.org](http://thirdwednesdaymagazine.org).

## News from the River Junction Poets

The next Meeting of the **River Junction Poets** will be held at **7 p.m.** on **March 25**, at Zauel Library (3100 N. Center Rd., Saginaw). **Jim Fobear** will provide refreshments and **Marion Tincknell** will give the Snapshot report. The meeting will include a rehearsal for the Spring Performance, so participants are asked to bring the poems they plan to read. (You are also asked to let Marion know which poems you will provide for the supplement.)

The annual **RJP Spring Performance**, in honor of National Poetry Month, will be held on **Sunday, April 26**, at **3 p.m.** at the **First Congregational Church’s Bradley House**. The theme is “**2020—A Year of Vision.**” Everyone is welcome!

RJP member **Betty Van Ochten** will be honored as one of Creative 360’s “**Yes We Can! Tuesday Tributes.**” The event will be held at **1 p.m.** on **Tuesday, March 10**, at **Creative 360** in Midland. Betty will share her poetry and stories from her life.

### Springfed Arts Reading and Music Series

Royal Oak Public Library  
222 E. Eleven Mile Road,  
Royal Oak, 48067.

**Wednesday, March 25**, 7 p.m.

Featuring: poets **Zilka Joseph, Christine Rhein, Dennis Hinrichsen**; author **Linda Sienkiewicz**; songwriter **Amy Petty**.

**Wednesday, April 22**, 7 p.m.

Featuring: novelist **Michael Zadoorian**; authors **Bill Vlasic, Susan Whittall**; songwriter **Jim Bizer**.

Hosted by **John D. Lamb**. Special thanks to Friends of the Royal Oak Public Library.

For information on future events and other Springfed events, classes, retreats, contests, and membership, go to: [springfed.org](http://springfed.org) Or check them out on Facebook, Twitter

## Inside Whitman's Head

By Ron Weber

Have you ever found yourself wondering about some extremely interesting and intriguing person to the point of wishing you could get inside their head and see what makes them tick? Or at least get a handle on their guiding principles or personal philosophy? I've recently completed just such an excursion, although it wasn't planned as such. I found myself—quite literally—inside the head of Walt Whitman.

Walt himself invited me in, by way of two captivating books: *Intimate with Walt*, selections from Whitman's conversations with Horace Traubel during the last four years of his life (1888-1892), edited by Gary Schmidgall, and *Walt Whitman Speaks*, edited by Brenda Wineapple. These are not mere biographies. Each book is instead a selection of Whitman's own words (lightly annotated, if at all, by the editor). Especially *Walt Whitman Speaks*. Reading that book is like sitting in a room with Whitman as he speaks on a broad spectrum of life's topics.

It's as if the two of you are at the local Starbuck's whiling away the afternoon over coffee and conversation, and before you know it, it's nightfall, the place is closing, and you have to say goodbye. But on your way home, and for days after, your head spins with Whitman's words, his perspectives and tenets.

He believed in being open, accepting, and philosophically tolerant. To Whitman, "the last thing the world needs is a cut and dried philosophy . . ."; instead, Whitman's philosophy "sees a time and place for everybody—even Judas Iscariot—yes, for all: all of us are parties to the same bargain..."

Whitman was accepting of all people and their inherent value to the human family. He honored them in his poetry. Everyone was, to him, above all, an individual. He did not believe in wholesale comparisons and drawing rigid lines that "put

everyone into a scale, try every man by a tape measure." This is a major principle for him: "I take it to be one of the main things, if not *the* main thing, implied by my philosophy." He believed there are countless men and women who contribute to great results, "most of them in fact without a name, unknown, eclipsed by the formidable reputations of mostly lesser people." He did not believe in contributing to the myth of the highly lauded reputations of those who too often are frauds and charlatans.

He forewarns us to beware of what we could label the shallow celebrity of ego and personality. "We must not give too much importance to personalism," he says. "It is easy to overcharge it." He feels we should realize that we all have an equal chance in the pursuit of providence. That is, he adds, "if 'providence' ever has a meaning in human affairs."

To Whitman, much of life is a matter of positive thinking and a positive attitude. "We must not look back over our shoulder at the world: we should meet each day as it comes with the same assumption: we can make each new day the best of days if we get the habit."

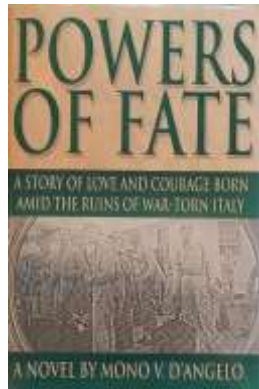
He advises patience, respect, and even compromise (if done for the greater good and when appropriate and possible while preserving our values and standards). "We must be resigned, but not too much so; we must be calm, but not too calm: we must not give in—yet we must give in some: that is, we must grade our rebellion and our conformity."

Whitman is quite a mindful, to be sure. In summary, he offers this: "I do not teach a definite philosophy—I have no cooked and primed system—but I outline, suggest, hint—tell what I see—then each may make up the rest for himself." He asserts that he's found "a great many of my readers credit my writings with things that do not attach to the writings themselves but to the persons who read them—things they supply, bring with them."

Poetry, that is, of the people.

## The Printed Word

Only a few days left to pre-order **Phillip Sterling's** forthcoming book ***Short on Days***, at the advanced sale price of \$7.25 (plus S&H) from the Main Street Rag bookstore [mainstreetragbookstore.com](http://mainstreetragbookstore.com). Sterling talks about the book and reads a few samples during an interview with Kelsay May for **WYCE's Electric Poetry** series, which can be streamed here: <https://grcmc.org/wyce/node/40477/electric-poetry-phillip-sterling> (be sure to listen past the music).



Longtime member and former PSM President **Mono D'Angelo** is pleased to announce the re-release of his WWII novel, ***Powers of Fate***. As 2020 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of World War II, and the free world prepares to honor those heroes who re-defined history, we need be reminded of a few lesser known, yet remarkable, consequences of the war. *Powers of Fate* explores one lesser-known consequence.

Based upon true events, ***Powers of Fate*** is both a love story (between a roguish American GI and the beautiful Italian girl that changed his life) and a slice-of-life tale of destiny. It provides the reader with an intimate perspective of World War II from both a soldier's and a victim's point of view. *Powers of Fate* is a moving story of courage, survival, personal growth, and devotion to family.

***Powers of Fate*** is available online at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or Authorhouse, or can be ordered directly from Mono at [monodan60@gmail.com](mailto:monodan60@gmail.com) (Phone: 734 363-3818).

## Upcoming Crazy Wisdom Events

All events start at 7 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom (114 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 734-665-2757). Free and Open to the Public.

### March 11, 2020

Poetry workshop. All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry or short fiction. **BRING ABOUT SIX COPIES OF YOUR WORK. COPIES WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU.** Hosted by Joe Kelty, Ed Morin, and Dave Jibson.

### March 25, 2020

An Evening of Poetry and Written Word  
Featured Reader: **Esperanza Cintrón**. Cintrón is author of three books of poetry: *Visions of a Post-Apocalyptic Sunrise*, the Naomi Long Madgett Award-winning *What Keeps Me Sane*, and *Chocolate City Latina*. Her interconnected stories of *Shades*, *Detroit Love Stories*, was published by WSU Press. She has recent work in *Manteca! An Anthology of Afro-Latin@ Poets*.

### April 8, 2020

Poetry workshop. All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry or short fiction. **BRING ABOUT SIX COPIES OF YOUR WORK. COPIES WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU.** Hosted by Joe Kelty, Ed Morin, and Dave Jibson.

### April 22, 2020 [Earth Day]

An Evening of Poetry and Written Word  
Featured Reader: **Donovan Hohn**. Hohn is the author of *Moby-Duck: The True Story of 28,800 Bath Toys Lost at Sea*, a New York Times Notable Book and runner-up for two major awards. His essays appear in *Harper's*, *Lapham's Quarterly*, and *Best Creative Nonfiction*. His *The Inner Coast: Essays*, is forthcoming.

## Minutes of the Meeting, October 19, 2019\*

[Held at Swedish Club of Detroit]

President Kerlikowske called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. She thanked Joe and Mary Kelty for securing the venue and asked members help clean up before we leave.

**New Business:**

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of the April 2019 Meeting as printed in the September Newsletter. Seconded. No discussion or amendments. Approved.

President's Report: Elizabeth has agreed to serve another term, if elected. She believes she's accomplished what she set out to do—make the meetings more purposeful and enjoyable. She praised the good work and dedication of the Executive Board, citing their accomplishments (contest coordination, By-Law revision, quality and cost of publications, membership) and as most of the Board is willing to serve another term as well, she accepts the nomination.

National Federation of State Poetry Society Report: Given by Pat Barnes, who attended the 2019 Meeting in Santa Fe. (Polly Opshal, PSM designated liaison, was not able to get to the October meeting). Pat talked about how enjoyable the NFSPS meetings are—hearing contest winners read their poems, meeting other poets, delightful side trips and excursions—she encouraged more PSM members to attend. No location has been selected for 2020, and though there has been some discussion among PSM members that we might co-host such an event, doing so for 2020 was deemed impossible.

Treasurer's Report: As of October 15, the PSM checking account showed a balance of \$5542; the savings \$2245. Susan Anderson shared a detailed accounting of activity since April. Highlighted the increased income in contest entry fees and sponsors and indicated that 2019 contest award payments and publication expenses had yet to be deducted. Members were reminded to get dues in, as PSM operates on an October to October membership cycle.

Membership Report: New members in attendance were introduced. Debra Briggs announced that she would be stepping down as membership coordinator but that Debra Belcher has volunteered to replace her.

Contests and Publications Report: Melanie announced that there was a record number of submissions. And better quality overall, which made for more reading by judges and more difficult decisions. But she'd like to think the trend will continue. She also wanted to thank Paula for her beautiful cover photo. Discussion about possibly moving the deadline

forward, about length limitations, and about exchange of email addresses and privacy issues ensued. A point of order referred those matters to the Board for further discussion and possible action.

President Kerlikowske asked if the By-Laws revision committee had any report. Phillip Sterling reported that the new By-Laws were in place and would govern the elections of new officers.

Elections. Nominations for elected Officers of the Executive Board were opened. A slate of officers was proposed (present Board members Kerlikowske, Clark, and Anderson were re-nominated; Phillip Sterling was nominated to fill the vacant Recording Secretary position). As the slate was unopposed, a motion was made and seconded to forgo paper balloting and elect by acclamation. Unanimous.

**Old Business:**

The publication of the next five-year anthology was raised. Jennifer Clark is willing to work with Melanie and other members of the publication team to pursue the possibility of an anthology for 2021.

**Announcements:**

Reports of activities by the following affiliate poetry groups were presented: Friends of Poetry (Kalamazoo), Crazy Wisdom (Ann Arbor), Downriver Poets and Playwrights (Metro Detroit), Ridgewriters (Farmington Hills), Third Thursday (Cadillac), Poetry Society of Rochester, Bards of Bird Creek (Port Austin).

Members shared info about other activities and opportunities. Members were directed to the Newsletter for updates.

President Kerlikowske asked if anyone knew of someone willing to take on the webmaster duties, as Janeen Rastall—who has gone out of her way to keep us online—is simply unable to. David Jipson offered his services and was immediately appointed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Phillip Sterling, Secretary*

\*For approval at April Meeting 2020. Corrections should be submitted to [sterlinp@ferris.edu](mailto:sterlinp@ferris.edu) by March 31.

## POETRY SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN

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**PO Box 1035**  
**Cadillac, MI 49601**

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Website:  
[poetrysocietyofmichigan.com](http://poetrysocietyofmichigan.com)  
& FACEBOOK

an affiliate of

The National Federation of  
State Poetry Societies  
[www.nfsps.com](http://www.nfsps.com)

## Literary Locals: Writers Welcome

### The Lansing Poetry Club

generally meets at 3 p.m. of the 3rd Sunday of the month at Dublin Square Irish Pub & Restaurant (327 Abbot Rd., **East Lansing, MI 48823**). For more info or to confirm a meeting, visit Facebook or email LPC President Ruelaine Stokes ([ruestokes@gmail.com](mailto:ruestokes@gmail.com)).

### Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle

meets on second Wednesdays of each month, 7-9 p.m., for workshop and on fourth Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. with a featured reader and open mic. Crazy Wisdom Book Store & Tea Room, 114 S. Main St., **Ann Arbor, MI**. See blog for details: <http://cwpoetrycircle.tumblr.com/>

### Downriver Poets & Playwrights

meets regularly on the first Tuesday of the month at Bacon Memorial Library in **Wyandotte** from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Contact **Dennis White** at 734-755-5988 or [denniswhite@mail.com](mailto:denniswhite@mail.com) for more information.

### Rochester Poets' Society

meets at the Rochester Hills Public Library, in **Rochester**, from 1-3 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month. For more info Contact **Nancy Stevens** 248-217-4034 or email [writings80@yahoo.com](mailto:writings80@yahoo.com).

### Marquette Poets Circle

meets on first Monday of the month in the Peter White Library Conference Room at 5:30 for workshop, 6:30 for Open Mic. For more info contact **Janeen Rastall** at [janeenrastall@yahoo.com](mailto:janeenrastall@yahoo.com) or 906-451-4473

**River Junction Poets of Saginaw** meet regularly throughout the year. For dates and times and other info, visit their Facebook page or call RJP President **Jim Fobear** at 989-714-5124.

### Friends of Poetry – Kalamazoo.

For information about the many activities and gatherings of this group that has served the literary arts of the greater Kalamazoo area for nearly 40 years, contact **Elizabeth Kerlikowske** ([mme642@yahoo.com](mailto:mme642@yahoo.com)) or visit their Facebook page.

### Bards of Bird Creek.

will meet for open poetry readings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, *May through October* at 7:00 p.m. in the **Port Austin** Welcome Center. Open to all! Call (989)738-7641 to confirm dates or for more information.

**3rd Thursday Poetry** meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at Horizon Books in **Cadillac** (with breaks in Dec. & June-Aug.). For info contact **Susan Anderson** at (231) 429-2443 ([treasurer.psm@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.psm@gmail.com)) or Horizon Books Cadillac at (231) 775-9979.

The **Southeast Michigan Poetry Meet-up** meets from 7-9 p.m. the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at Panera Bread, 27651 Southfield Road in **Lathrup Village, MI**. For more information, call **Carla Dodd** at 248-861-3636.