

**Executive Board
2020**

President

Elizabeth Kerlikowske
mme642@aol.com

Vice President

Jennifer Clark
jenengeman@aol.com

Treasurer

Susan Anderson
(231) 429-2443
Treasurer.PSM@
gmail.com

Recording Secretary

Phillip Sterling
sterlinp@ferris.edu

Membership

Coordinator
Debra Belcher
membership.psm@
gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Phillip Sterling
(616) 897-4258
sterlinp@ferris.edu

Webmaster

David Jipson
davidkjibson@gmail.com

Peninsula Poets Editor

Melanie Dunbar
editor.psm@gmail.com

Contest Chairperson

Melanie Dunbar
psmcontestentry@
gmail.com

Historian

Inge Logenburg Kyler
(517) 646-9569
ingekyler@gmail.com

Parliamentarian

Jerry Lang
Jerry.lang61@comcast.net

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Poetry Society of Michigan



"Encouraging Poets Since 1935"

September 2020

President's Message

Back in April, I did not think we would still be fighting COVID 19 in September, but we are. Out of caution (and common sense), we will cancel the Fall Meeting, which was to be hosted by the Lansing Poetry Club, and hope that we will have an opportunity in the healthful future to gather in the Capitol area. (Much thanks to **Ruelaine Stokes** for her efforts in that regard!) In lieu of a formal meeting, we hope to offer PSM members something on a late Saturday in October, perhaps a workshop or two, perhaps a virtual reading. You have time to hone your Zoom skills!

I'm still posting daily prompts on the PSM Facebook page and then they are put on our web page. Thanks to Webmaster **David Jibson** for that. By now you should have received your copy of the Spring issue of *Peninsula Poets*. Our printer had closed, of course, in April, but we were the first job they processed when they reopened. If you haven't received your copy, please contact me. Vice President **Jennifer Clark** and I did the mailing and my hats off to the group who usually does it! What a job! **Melanie Dunbar** has presided over another great *Peninsula Poets* as usual, and she is deep in the production of the Fall (Contest) issue.

I hope you are finding plenty to write about in these days of social distance and quarantine. I have been, without even seeking it out. I think this is a great time for self-reflection about our values and how we have chosen—or choose—to live. May you likewise be productive, contemplative, sometimes goofy, and always aware of the currents that move the air around us.

—Elizabeth Kerlikowske

Fall Decor

A garland of bittersweet
adorns the mantle,
spills from a woven basket
on the hearth.

How like the fall!
The bitter dread of winter,
the sweet promise of spring.

—Betty J. Van Ochten

Detroit Writers' Guild

Undaunted by the pandemic, **M.L. Liebler**, with support from the **Detroit Writer's Guild, Poets & Writers**, and **Book Beat** continues to provide literary events in the virtual Metro area. Through the Living Room Online Literary Series, Liebler has hosted award-winning poets and writers from Michigan and around the country, the likes of **Semaj Brown, Keith Taylor, Lisa Lenzlo, Charles Baxter, Laurel Blossom, Jack Ridl, Mark Doty, Minnie Bruce Pratt, and Mary Jo Firth Gillett**, among others.

Upcoming events include the **9th Annual Midtown Detroit Lit Walk**, scheduled for Sunday, **September 20**, from 2 to 4 p.m. The live event will feature such poets, writers, and musicians as **Pete Brown, Melba Joyce Boyd, Shonda Buchanan, Joseph Harris, Brian Gilmore, Allison Swann, and Marion Hayden** and can be accessed via Zoom and Facebook Live. For more info and upcoming events visit **M.L. Liebler's Facebook Page** or search **The Living Room Online Literary Series**.



Springfed Arts News

John Lamb, Director of Springfed Arts, announced the winners of the 2020 Writing Contests in early summer, but due to on-going coronavirus mandates the organization was unable to celebrate the awards with its annual reading and reception, typically held in August. Instead, many of the winners participated in a livestream reading on Wednesday, September 2, via Facebook.

Fall writing classes will be held by way of Zoom, including Prose classes (day or night options) led by **Maureen Dunphy**, and a Poetry Workshop led by **Kelly Fordon**. Classes begin in October. For more information and registration go to **Springfed.org/Classes**.

Springfed Arts **5th Annual Lost Lake Writers Retreat**, originally scheduled for October 8-11, 2020, has been rescheduled for **October 7-10, 2021**. Watch for more info.

Springfed Arts 2020 Poetry Winners

1st Place: *The Fallen-Aways* by **Mary Minock**

2nd Place: *Someone Who Believes in You* by **Jeffrey Hermann**

3rd Place: *Glory to Him* by **Nadia Ibrashi**

HM: *The Singer Machine* by **Randy K. Schwartz**

HM: *Inland Lake Weeds of Michigan* by **Michelle Morouse**

Poetry judged by **Cecilia Woloch**

Springfed Arts 2020 Prose Winners

1st Place: *Revelation at Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari* by **Diana U. Dinverno**

2nd Place: *Right Front Corner* by **Michelle Morouse**

3rd Place: *Salt* by **John Jeffire**

HM: *Call Me Maxie!* by **Phillip Sterling**

HM: *Elm in the Desert* by **Harah Frost**

Prose judged by **Anne-Marie Oomen**

THE PRINTED WORD

Kelly Fordon's latest collection of poetry, *Goodbye Toothless House* is available from Kattywampus Press. "With words as effective and as cunningly crafted as newly sharpened knives, a relentless insistence, and stunning wordplay," writes National Book Award Winner Gloria Whalen, "Fordon gives voice to those trapped behind the idyllic facade." *Goodbye Toothless House* can be ordered from Amazon or directly from Kattywampus Press. Several poems and excerpts from the book can be found online.



In recognition of the 20th Anniversary of the publication of Phillip Sterling's debut collection *Mutual Shores*, anyone who submits their mailing address to [phillipsterling\[at\]ferris.edu](mailto:phillipsterling[at]ferris.edu) by the end of November will receive a free, autographed copy of the book, postage-paid. (While supplies last.)

Congratulations goes out to longtime PSM member Ed Morin for several distinguished publications. His memoir "With Ray and Rosenthal at *Chicago Review*" appeared in the October 2019 issue of *Chicago Review*, and can be accessed on the magazine's website at <https://www.chicagoreview.org/with-ray-and-rosenthal-at-chicago-review/>. Also in that issue are two poems by Cai Qijiao ("A New Spring" and "A Poem that Wrote Itself") that Ed co-translated with Dennis Ding, and Fang Dai. In addition, Ed's poem "Ladder Crash" appeared in the Spring issue of *Third Wednesday Magazine* and "The Academy" in the Austin Poets *di-verse-city Anthology 2020*. Ed's article "Nature Mysticism in 'The Rose,'" will appear in *A Field Guide to the Poetry of Theodore Roethke*, edited by William Barillas (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2021).

Motes

The teacher said that molecules were too small to be seen by the naked eye, so I didn't tell her I could see them when the sun shown in the window by the daybed. They floated and bobbed and sometimes were still in the way a lake looks still when it is actually full of movement.

I didn't tell anyone about my gift. I didn't want to be doubted. When my grandfather walked through the living room, they parted for him and swirled around his figure, hugged him and ricocheted. Molecules moved long after he was gone to refind their place like memories looking for their coordinates.

These molecules were never still, no end to them. The world was all molecules. They hid in the dark or slept. I knew they were still there. They filled the sunny air with their great population, everyone equal, yet separate. I sat for hours watching in the summer air, wondering what good this gift was.

—Elizabeth Kerlikowske

Lovely on a Tee

With gratitude to A.E. Housman

Lovely on a tee, the golf ball now
shines like an apple on the bough.
The well raked course on which we play
lures me this clear November day.

Gone are my threescore years and ten;
friendly Time lends some back again.
No matter that my nine-hole score
tracks my age as I call out, "Fore!"

While glaciers melt and maples die,
I mark how smoothly the greens lie,
so on the fairway I will stride
until approaching Christmastide.

—Ed Morin

News from Your Treasurer

September! How did it arrive so fast? Hopefully we will still have some lovely weather taking us on into fall.

My Summer has been spent in weekends along the north west coast of our Lake Michigan, beach combing! My job has kept me working right on through the quarantine with the exception of two voluntary furloughs, two weeks each, once in July and once again in August. Blessed to have steady work but appreciative of the down time too... especially in summer!

Fall is membership renewal time! Yep, it's that time already! Seems like this year is a bit upside down to say the least—the Spring *Peninsula Poets* just went out and our Fall Book will be hot on its heels. And wow, the Spring edition was fabulous! Two thumbs up!!

It's been few and far between for gatherings, readings, and workshops. However, I was able to attend two events recently and both did a great job social distancing and creating a safe space for creativity. The first was hosted outdoors at the Glen Arbor Arts Center to create awareness for FLOW (For the Love of Water). Participants were invited to read poetry in response to the question "Who owns the water?" It was an inspiring evening! If you would like to view a recording of the event, it is available on FLOW's Facebook page.

The second event I attended was "Poetry and Plants" a writing workshop organized by Title Track, a collaborative whose mission is to support clean water, racial equality, and youth empowerment. The workshop was held at Poesis Farm, part of the Gardens at the Commons (the old state hospital grounds in Traverse City). The workshop focused on writing poetry inspired by nature. There was a presentation by Kate Belew of The Poetry Society of New York. Following Kate's instruction we each found places in the garden to sit amongst the flowers and veggies and write. We then enjoyed readings of what each participant created.

Let's hope we can all find opportunities to fill our creative wells and keep on writing! And please, keep on with your PSM membership. We appreciate your support! 2021 dues of \$30.00 should be sent to:

Poetry Society of Michigan
PO Box 1035
Cadillac, MI. 49601

Wishing you all the best as we venture forward!

—Susan Anderson

"Going Beyond" by Jane Mayes

Let us go beyond what is visible:
feel the dampness of fog on our skin,
the prickle of a chill draft.

Let us remember the elusive scent of arbutus
nestled deep in a Northern forest,
and of Grandma's warm molasses cookies.

Let us taste the hunger of homelessness,
a neighbor's hopeless despair,
and hear the empty echo of a lonely heart.

Let us delight in children's laughter,
the joy of old friends reunited,
the magic of the soundless opening of a spring bud.

Let us cherish love—
love that permeates our being
to settle snugly deep in our souls.



"A Fall Song" by Ryan Ann Feit

The trees change color
Their leaves a shade of every hue of the season
Vibrant reds, oranges, greens blanket the ground
Crunching under my feet as I take my daily stroll
The air is crisp and cool
Changing my face to a bright red, as red as a just picked apple
Squirrels roam around scrounging for food
My visit to this special place makes them happy
Is that a smile I see?
Deer hiding in the background just waiting for their moment to shine
Birds chirp up near the heavens singing their own songs
Sparrows, robins, chickadees, goldfinch
The scent of pine is in the air
I long for days like these . . .

Emerson's "The Poet"

By Ron Weber

In Ralph Waldo Emerson's second volume of essays, published in 1844, there is, among other pieces, his long and all-encompassing tribute to and praise of "The Poet." To Emerson, it is the energy, openness, and expressive skill of the poet that speaks to all of us, that speaks *for* all of us.

Emerson's poet sees and chronicles the many facets and foibles of mankind as he struggles with not only his strengths but also his desires, his imperfections and weaknesses, as well as his physical, social, and spiritual needs and the many relationships called forth with nature. Emerson's poet is a composite, of course, just as life itself is a composite, and yet he is also glowing beam of light.

Emerson writes, "And this hidden truth, that the fountains whence all of this river of time and its creatures floweth, which are intrinsically ideal and beautiful, draws us to the consideration of the nature and function of the poet, or the man of beauty, to the means and materials he uses, and to the general aspect of the art in the present time."

Emerson believed that people in general were "too feeble" for describing or conveying in an enlightened and evocative sense the impressions of nature, the thrill of every touch. He lamented that every man could not be an artist to report in conversation and in writing that which has befallen him and given him the experiences that are life and living. He states that "The poet is the person to whom these powers are in balance, the man without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experiences, and is representative of man, in virtue of being the largest power to receive and to impart."

To Emerson, the poet is "the sayer, the namer and represents beauty. He is a sovereign and stands on the center." I can only surmise, but perhaps Emerson here is implying that it is only from an intimacy with nature's "center" that the poet can strive to serve everyone, as Emerson himself tried to do in his poetic tribute to "The Poet."

The Poet

A moody child and wildly wise
Pursued the game with joyful eyes,
Which chose, like meteors, their way,
And rived the dark with private ray:
They overleapt the horizon's edge,
Searched with Apollo's privilege;
Through man, and woman, and sea, and star,
Saw the dance of nature forward far;
Through worlds, and races, and terms, and times,
Saw musical order and pairing rhymes.
Olympian bards who sung
Divine ideas below,
Which always find us young,
And always keep us so.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Lullaby for the Sleeping Bear

Listen to the meadow sing . . .
 cricket song in the long grass,
 wind whispering through tall weeds.
Birds sail silently under the warming sun;
dragonflies flick blue sparks across the field.

The great sand-bear sleeps . . .

Sound spreads in the summer air;
the meadow hums its sun-song,
 its wind-song, insect-song,
 a song of country silence,
 silent singing,
 singing silence.

—Marion Frahm Tincknell

Peninsula Poets Corrections

Due to a proofreading error, the poems by **Ron Cracchiolo** and **Phillip Sterling** in the Spring Issue of *Peninsula Poets* were printed incorrectly. The editorial staff regrets the error, and we are happy to print the correct versions here.

A Night on the Au Sable / *Ron Cracchiolo*

Salivating along the river
eating roast apricots
wailing to the flow of the current

Lay your head on the pine carpet
and wet your lips
with the dew of the evening

When the fire dies
and the whippoorwill smiles
try to sleep
try to eat the thick, black dangling heart
try to slow the ticking blue null

Savor the foul smell
and hound the night
with ancient howls
and fear

Words Frequently Confused: Endure, Inure / *Phillip Sterling*

Secluded in garden straw
beneath the squat vines
of what may be pumpkins,

the bunny cannot recall
its birthday, nor the sound
of its mother, whose noise

sifts through the humid air
like the tiny muting feathers
of an owl's wing. As for

the owl itself, the bunny's
memory is slight, it provides
no basis for recognition.

And still, at twilight, might
one not see the day's
leaf-growth sprouting

from the stalks of young
beans, sweet and tender
as all get out, and

plentiful, as plentiful
as candles on your
grandfather's birthday cake?

"Autumn Haibun" by **Patricia Barnes**

The world outside my window is falling asleep. Trees yawn off their colors, flutter lashes of leaves and close into dormancy. I have mercifully uprooted the tired summer annuals to save them the embarrassment of wilt. Only the squirrels zip with energy, exploring and re-exploring the porch furniture, as if they know it is headed for storage as soon as I muster the energy to carry it to the garage. Sometimes the squirrels tire me out as I shut down my summer mode and ease into furnace warmth.

squirrels twitch quick tails
skitter through my unraked leaves
as I fall to sleep

2020 PSM Contests

Contest Chairperson **Melanie Dunbar** is pleased to announce the winners of the 2020 Contests:

Category 1: Margo LaGatutta Memorial Award

Judge: Daniel Edward Moore

- 1st "Rust Belt" / Randy K. Schwartz, Ann Arbor, MI
 2nd "All Night the Rain" / Kristin Brace, Ada, MI
 3rd "November" / Jack D. Ferguson, Auburn Hills, MI
 HM "Rock, Paper, Scissors" / Ellen Lord, Charlevoix, MI

Category 2: Chancellor's Prize

Judge: Laurence W. Thomas

- 1st "Window" / Patricia Barnes, Wyandotte, MI
 2nd "Good Fencing" / Lorraine Jeffery, Orem, UT
 3rd "The Poet Goes Prospecting" / Randy K. Schwartz, Ann Arbor, MI
 HM "The Staunch Listener" / Inge Logenburg Kyler, Eaton Rapids, MI

Category 3: Founder's Prize

Judge: Dennis Hinrichsen

- 1st "Midland" / Nancy Cook, St. Paul, MN
 2nd "Water, Water Everywhere..." / Patricia Barnes, Wyandotte, MI
 3rd "Jack Pine Savage" / Ellen Lord, Charlevoix, MI
 HM "October, Southeast Michigan" / Dawn McDuffie, Detroit, MI

Category 4: Barbara Sykes Memorial Humor Poem

Judge: Elizabeth Kerlikowske

- 1st "Poem in Which the Poem Works Very Hard..." / Kristin Brace, Ada, MI
 2nd "I Explain to My Great Grandpa" / Lorraine Jeffery, Orem, UT
 3rd "Sounding the Alarm" / Lynne Fernandez, Farmington Hills, MI
 HM "Transformation" / Marilyn Churchill, Ann Arbor, MI

Category 5: George Dila Memorial Prose Poem

Judge: Phillip Sterling

- 1st "A Man and His Game" / David James, Linden, MI
 2nd "pang" / Diana Hart, Kalamazoo, MI
 3rd "Dear Therapist," / Patricia Barnes, Wyandotte, MI
 HM "Velvet Ear" / Jill Doster Marcusse, Grand Rapids, MI

Category 6: Nature

Judge: Jerrold Narland

- 1st "Lucky 13" / Terry Jude Miller, Richmond, TX
 2nd "Backyard Nature" / Sue Yurick, Rockford, MI
 3rd "Winter Snowfall" / Cynthia Weber Nankee, Canton, MI
 HM "Lost Mountain" / Lori Goff, Walled Lake, MI

Category 7: Love

Judge: Diane DeCillis

- 1st "Alien Lover" / Dawn McDuffie, Detroit, MI
 2nd "Redolent" / Diana Dinverno, Troy, MI
 3rd "Autumn Garden" / Jack D. Ferguson, Auburn Hills, MI
 HM "Falling" / Christian Belz, Berkley, MI

Category 8: Pandemic

Judge: Terry Jude Miller

- 1st "Counting" / Marie Davids, Ferndale, MI
 2nd "Maybe" / Eric Greene, Royal Oak, MI
 3rd "Languor" / Garrett Stack, Rockford, MI
 HM "Monthursday, Frisunday, April?" / Carla Dodd, Waterford, MI

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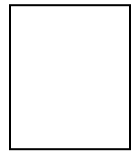
PSM Treasurer
PO Box 1035
Cadillac, MI 49601

Email: Treasurer.PSM@gmail.com

Website:
poetrysocietyofmichigan.wordpress.com
& FACEBOOK

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The National Federation of
State Poetry Societies
www.nfsps.com



Literary Locals: Writers Welcome

Coronavirus Alert! Confirm with Organization before Attending!

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).

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 for more information.

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) or visit their Facebook page.

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.

Bards of Bird Creek will suspend meetings until further notice. Typically *May through October* at 7:00 p.m. in the **Port Austin** Welcome Center. Call (989)738-7641 to confirm dates or for more information.

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 or 906-451-4473

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) or Horizon Books Cadillac at (231) 775-9979.

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.

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.