

## 2023 Poetry Day in Arkansas

October 14, 2023

Benton, AR

PRA's 2023 Poetry Day Conference is scheduled for October 14 at the Parkview United Methodist Church, 514 North Border Street, Benton, AR. Registration will begin at 9:00 am and the conference will begin at 9:30 am. There is no registration fee and a lunch will be available at \$8.50 a meal.

Dennis Patton will serve as Poetry Day Chair and Christine Henderson will serve as Poetry Day Contest Chair.

The featured speaker is Michael Blanchard of University of Central Arkansas. Michael Blanchard joined the Department of English as an adjunct faculty member in the fall semester of 2018. In addition to his teaching duties, he serves as editor of *Slant*, the department's journal of contemporary American poetry. A native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he is a graduate of the University of Virginia, where he was an Echols Scholar and inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and where he twice won the University Union Fine Arts Award for Poetry. He also earned an M.A. degree from Indiana University and completed additional graduate study at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has taught literature and creative writing at Troy University (where he served as editor of *Epos*, the University's literary magazine, and where he was presented the Ingalls Award for Excellence in Classroom Teaching), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, and the University of Louisiana.

Recent publications include four books of poetry: *Naming the Silence: New & Collected Poems* (2017), which was nominated for the Patricia Goedicke Award for Poetry; *And the Mountain Replied: 39 Poems* (2019); *Stones in the Path: New Poems* (2020); and *The Pearl Diver's Daughter & Other Poems*, a collection of 45 poems which an editor of *Southern Literary Review* described as "finely crafted and inventive" and "layered and lyrical."

Poetry Day is the main poetry event in Arkansas. Each year this conference honors Arkansas Poet Laureate Rosa Zagnoni Marinoni (1953-1970). As a result of her efforts to promote poetry in Arkansas, Governor Ben Laney proclaimed October 15, 1948, the first annual Poetry Day in Arkansas. For conference questions, contact John McPherson at [mcpherson8391@gmail.com](mailto:mcpherson8391@gmail.com) or 501-305-9972.