

2025 Poetry Day in Arkansas
October 18, 2025
Conway, AR

PRA's 2025 Poetry Day Conference is scheduled for October 18 in the Fireplace Room on the campus of Central Arkansas University in Conway, Arkansas. (Directions below.) Registration will begin at 9:00 am and the conference will begin at 9:30 am. Michael Blanchard will serve as Poetry Day Chair. Poetry Day Contest Chair is John McPherson. Lunch and snacks will be provided by the university.

The featured speaker is Eric Paul Shaffer. A native of Washington, D.C., Eric Paul Shaffer earned a PhD in American Literature from the University of California-Davis. The subject of his doctoral dissertation was the mid-20th-Century American poet Lew Welch. Eric is the author of nine poetry books, including his most recent collection, *Free Speech, a volume of two poem sequences published by Coyote Arts Press in March of 2025*. Over 650 of his poems have appeared in literary journals in the USA, Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Nicaragua, India, Iran, Scotland, Singapore, and Wales. He published his first novel, *Burn & Learn*, in 2009. In 2002, Eric received the Elliot Cades Award, Hawaii's most prestigious literary prize. In addition, he won the Ka Palapala Po'okela Book Award in 2006 and 2019 and the James M. Vaughan Award for Poetry in 2009. After a stint living and teaching on the Japanese island of Okinawa, Eric and his wife Veronica moved to the Hawaiian island of Oahu, where he taught composition, literature, and creative writing at Honolulu Community College until his retirement at the end of the 2023-2024 academic year. He is now a member of the *SLANT* editorial board. You can read more about Eric in the August 2025 News 'N' Notes on the PRA website.

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 Christine Henderson at my1stdraft@yahoo.com.

Directions to the Fireplace Room at UCA in Conway

Directions to the McCastlain Hall, which houses the Fireplace Room are as follows:

If one takes the Oak Street exit, proceed west to Harkrider; turn left (south) to Bruce Street; turn left on Doneghey Ave; right on L A Niven Drive.

If one takes the Dave Ward exit proceed west to Doneghey Ave. and proceed north to L A Niven Drive; turn left.