

News 'N' Notes

August 2025

Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas

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Member of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc.

<http://poetsroundtableofarkansas.org>

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Hi – it's me again. My goal in this and future articles is simply to share thoughts I have as I run across bits of information. Sometimes I



stumble upon a phrase (like the one below) that just makes me think and re-set my process, or reminds me of something I had forgotten. Many of you may feel you have surpassed this stage, but I believe there is room for re-visiting everything.

So, here's my latest food for thought.

Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein, explaining that language can never convey the fullest understanding of life wrote, "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world." in his book, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. **

I caught this reference in an article about the frustrations of communication, and no, I didn't read the book, but I absolutely loved the quotation. It warranted attention because the struggle to find the right phrase (my use of language) is always present. Did you ever write something and proudly share it, only to discover nobody else understood it the way you intended, if at all?

The article included two signposts to guide this effort. 1. Think, don't talk and 2. Seek

understanding, not answers. Both of these are good suggestions, but can they be applied to the art of writing, specifically poetry?

Can we think, and consider how our audience reacts to the same words and phrases we use? Listen to the audience as well, and pay attention to the language they use. What phrasing will reach into others' emotions? Think: how can I express this so that everyone will have the same feeling or thought that I do? Not just my words, but theirs?

Seeking understanding is often what poetry is about, but we might work on gaining a better idea of how the same things we write about touch others differently, and how we could divulge all of that - we understand the audience, they understand our writing - so the poem becomes communal.

Of course our poetry is, after all, our own. It is what we, the writers, want to reveal. But if we work on finding that communication, our poetry becomes multidimensional. Perhaps someone will read and say 'Wow. They really get it!' - when all we really did was share.

** from Arthur C. Brooks: *The Ultimate German Philosophy for a Happier Life*

Christine Henderson
President, PRA

Welcome New Members

Kayla Elrod of Houston, Arkansas
Irene Hunt of Jonesboro, Arkansas
Simeon Stipp-Bethune of El Dorado, Arkansas

Congratulations and Newsworthy

May Monthly Contest Winners

Judge: **Marie Allison**
First Place: **Dennis Patton** “The Flowers of May”
Second Place: **Denise England** “Abundance”
Third Place: **Alyssa Darby** “More Than a Menial Seed”
First Honorable Mention: **Barbara Mosley** “A Flower Grows”
Second Honorable Mention: **Cathy Moran** “My backyard kingdom”
Third Honorable Mention: **Christine Henderson** “Killing the Dandelions”

June Monthly Contest Winners

Judge: **Jan Hamlett**
First Place: **Karen Moulton** “Rewarded”
Second Place: **John McPherson** “Chameleon Complex”
Third Place: **Barbara Shepherd** “Desert Snow”
First Honorable Mention: **Janice Canerdy** “Autumn Majesty”
Second Honorable Mention: **Pat Durmon** “Loss of a Pond”
Third Honorable Mention: **Laura Bridges** “A Day of Calm”

July Monthly Contest Winners

Judge: **Rick Houston**
First Place: **Dennis Patton** “The Excitement of Fall”
Second Place: **Patricia Laster** “October, Bon Voyage”
Third Place: **Jerri Hardesty** “Haute Couture”

First Honorable Mention: **John Crawford** “Where Are the Joys of Spring”
Second Honorable Mention: **Gary Breezeel** “To Autumn”
Third Honorable Mention: **Sara Gipson** “Mountain Drive in Fall”

Dr. Emory D. Jones “Injured Angel” was published in the April 2025 edition of *Pennsylvania’s Poetic Voices*; “The Survivor” was published in the April 17, 2025 edition of *Poetry Super Highway*, in the 27th Annual *Yom HaShoa (Holocaust Remembrance Day Issue)*, it won second place in A Life Saved Award of the 2025 Mississippi Poetry Society’s Contest, and it was published in the *Mississippi Poetry Journal 2025 Contest Edition*; “Sea of Grass” was published in the Spring 2025 *WyoPoets News*; “Dancing Autumn: An Etheree” was published in the Spring 2025 of *WyoPoets News*; “Bones Die Hard” was published in the Spring 2025 of *WyoPoets News*; “Eagle Snow” was published in the Spring 2025 of *WyoPoets News*; “Valley of the Springs (The Coming of Ishtaiukatubbe)” won third place in the Native American Culture Category of the 2025 Poetry Festival of the Poetry Society of Tennessee; “Remembering Mississippi” won honorable mention in the MPS Award: Mississippi Origins and third honorable mention in the Mississippi Poetry Society Award of the 2025 Mississippi Poetry Society Contest; “Breakfast” won first honorable mention in Category 2 (Free Verse) of the 2025 Missouri State Poetry Society’s Winter Contest; “Raft of Years” won third place in the President’s Award of the Poetry Society of Tennessee 2024-2025 Festival Contest; “Upon Putting an Anthology of Poetry in the Community College Bookstore” won fourth place in the Anything Goes Category of the 2025 Spring Award of the Alabama State Poetry Society; “The Big Bad Wolf” won first honorable

mention in the Primrose Award of the 2025 Mississippi Poetry Society Contest; “Eagle Snow” won second place in the Confluence Category of the Poetry Society of Indiana 2025 Summer Contest; “Painted Desert” was published in *The Avocet: A Journal of Nature Poetry Summer—2025*; “Her Fury” was published in the May/June 2025 edition of *Pennsylvania’s Poetic Voices*; “A Walk in the Park” was published in the May/June 2025 edition of *Pennsylvania’s Poetic Voices*; “Tin Roof” was published in the May/June 2025 edition of *Pennsylvania’s Poetic Voices*; “Queen Lilies” was published in the May/June 2025 edition of *Pennsylvania’s Poetic Voices*; third honorable mention The Robbie Award; sixth honorable mention William Stafford Memorial Award.

Laura Trigg had two poems published in a print anthology: *Kinds of Cool: An Interactive Anthology of Jazz Poetry* from Unsolicited Press in January of this year, and has poems selected for a second volume to come out at the end of the year.

John Crawford had three poems published in Hot Springs "Sentinel Record's" arts column, June 21, June 28 and July 5 issues; won second place for “Spring Violets” and third place for “You are My Adam and My Eve” in the Mississippi Poetry Society member contests; won third place in the Tennessee Poetry Society March member contest; won first and second place in Arizona State Poetry Society March member contest; read poetry at Hot Springs Wednesday Night Poetry June 25 "A Wasp*'s Flight and July 2, "A Path Back" *WASPS were World War II female volunteers as "Women’s Airplane Service Pilots."

Teresa H. Klepac received second place in the Well-Versed Contest sponsored by the Columbia Chapter of the Missouri Writers Guild for her poem, “On the Stationary Bike

of Life.” The poem, along with two others, “A Sense of Place, A Change of Scene,” and “Luna Moth’s Brief Life,” will be published in the Well Versed 2025 Anthology. Her short story, *The Owl Sentinel’s Secret* will also be published in the Anthology. Her poem “The Hermit in the Shed,” received second honorable mention in the Missouri State Poetry Society’s Winter 2025 Contest for free verse, and “The Thistle and the Storm” received third place in the Seasonal Category of the MSPS contest.

Captain Billy Bones Sayles reports that the Hot Springs Haiku Club has been meeting for 29 years. They met on the first Friday of every month from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Garland Library. Hot Springs Village Writers Club meets at his home once a month. Next meeting is 08/05/2025 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. For more information and address contact me at captainsails@aol.com.

Using his pen name, Oliver Gold, he has published two books so far in 2025. He says, “*Maui and Beyond* is a collection of 75 very strange stories and some of the poetry I've written over the years. The second book I published this year is *Drawing and Haiku the Art of Zen Maintenance*. It is a 300 page sketchbook with 150 of my own haiku and many of my own sketches. Both are available on Amazon. This month I've started a third book which is a memoir of my father, a World War II veteran and a wonderful amazing man, *Nobby Sayles, Rags to Riches*.”

John McPherson won these Alabama State Poetry Society Spring Awards: first place for “The Kites of Spring;” second place for “She's Out There, Somewhere, Laughing at Us;” first honorable mention for “The One Way Street to Something Better;” He had these honors at the White County Creative Writers Conference: second place for “Ode To A Worthy Teacher” (Sonnet); third place

for “February Daybreak” (Rondel); second honorable mention for “True Grit” (Limerick); second honorable mention for “The Seven Dwarfs” (Short Story); and honorable mention for “Boogie and the Bear” (Short Story); fourth honorable mention Poetry Society of Michigan Award; seventh honorable mention Mary Collar Memorial Award.

Pat Laster had a poem accepted by CALLIOPE for its summer issue.

Cathy Moran is pleased to let you know that she placed in the Dancing Poetry Contest in California. She won two first places and one second place. It will be presented on YouTube this fall; fourth honorable mention Jessica C. Saunders Memorial Award; took second honorable mention Mississippi Poetry Society Award; third honorable mention The Poets Northwest Award (members only); third honorable mention Jim Barton Memorial Award (members only); second honorable mention The Mango Award; second place Birma Castle Memorial Award (members only) for “A Face in the Crowd.”

Russell Strauss won third place NFSPS Board Award for “Genesis”; second place Jim Barton, Bard of the Pines Award for “Alligator Tale”; first place Poetry Society of Indiana Award for “Decisions After Midnight”; second place Poetry Society of Tennessee Award (members only) for “Rationed in 1944”; seventh honorable mention Jessica C. Saunders Memorial Award; second honorable mention Columbine Poets of Colorado Award (members only); fourth honorable mention Iowa Poetry Association Award; first honorable mention Mississippi Poetry Society Award; fifth honorable mention The Poets Northwest Award (members only); sixth honorable mention Florida State Poets Association Inc. Award; third honorable mention The Mango Award; seventh

honorable mention The Countee Cullen Poetry Prize.

Jerri Hardesty won third place Iowa Poetry Association Award for “Look Closely”; first place Wallace Stevens Memorial Award (members only) for “We Are the Bards”; third place WyoPoets for “Vista”; fourth honorable mention The Virginia Corrie-Cozart Memorial Award; third honorable mention Missouri State Poetry Society Award; fifth honorable mention Jim Barton, Bard of the Pines Award; third honorable mention The Countee Cullen Poetry Prize; sixth honorable mention Mildred Cummings Memorial Award.

Sara Gipson Scott won fourth honorable mention The Hilde Award; sixth honorable mention Jim Barton, Bard of the Pines Award; sixth honorable mention Ohio Award; fifth honorable mention Jesse Stuart Memorial Award; fourth honorable mention Wallace Stevens Memorial Award (members only).

Judith Rycroft won second honorable mention Social Critique Poetry Award; fourth honorable mention Birma Castle Memorial Award (members only).

Donna Geise Owens won first honorable mention Winners’ Circle Award.

Caroline Riley won third honorable mention Student Award Grades 9-12.

Faye Smalling Guinn won first honorable mention Iowa Poetry Association Award.

Mike Wahl won fifth honorable mention Illinois State Poetry Society Award.

Mark Hudson won seventh honorable mention Arizona State Poetry Society Award.

Alyssa Darby won first place Winners’ Circle Award for “The Mourning Dove”; second place Land of Enchantment Award for “On Drawing Circles Around Ants”; third place Arizona State Poetry Society Award for “Snow Dunes”; second honorable mention Mildred Cummings Memorial Award; fifth honorable mention Wallace

Stevens Memorial Award (members only); third honorable mention Morton D. Prouty & Elsie S. Prouty Memorial Award; seventh honorable mention Miriam S. Strauss Memorial Award (members only); first honorable mention Mildred Vorpahl Baass Remembrance Award (members only).

Dennis Patton won second place Social Critique Poetry Award for “A Christmas for Heroes”; first place Illinois State Poetry Society Award for “A Typical Woman”; first place Poetry Society of Michigan Award for “Along Lake Ouachita Shores”; second place Florida State Poets Association, Inc. Award “Dreaming of a Coast”; fifth honorable mention Poetry Society of Indiana Award; sixth honorable mention Nevada Poetry Society Award (members only).

Janice Canerdy won second place for “As Graduates March By” traditional poetry, MPS (Mississippi) members-only May contest; first place for “Irresistible,” double etheree, traditional poetry, ASPS (Arizona) members-only May contest; first place for “Beauty in the Sky,” assigned topic—rainbows, ASPS (Arizona) members-only May contest; first honorable mention for “Autumn Majesty” in the PRA’s members-only June monthly contest; and the Society of Classical Poets online, published three limericks beginning July 22, 2025.

Lorraine Jeffery has published: *When the Universe Brings Us Back*, 2022; Kelsay Books published two chapbooks: *Tethers*, 2023 and *Saltwater Soul*, 2024; her third chapbook, *String-held Kites* will be out in 2026, also by Kelsay Books; third honorable mention The Barbara Sykes Memorial Award; first honorable mention The Margo Award.

ArtVerse 2025

In May of this year, three PRA members participated in ArtVerse 2025, a collaborative venture between members of

the Conway League of Artists (CLA) and seven poets from the Natural State. The CLA is an art organization that strives to provide opportunities and visibility to artists in Conway and the surrounding areas. In 1973, the group started out with five members and has grown considerably to include a diverse group of members of all ages, art backgrounds, and experiences. One of the founding members was Jackie Guerin, whose granddaughter **Paulette Guerin Bane** of Searcy was one of the participating poets in ArtVerse.

Each year, the CLA sponsors two juried shows, one in the spring and one in the fall. This year, organizers of the spring show invited local poets to submit poems as inspiration for the artists. The result was an exciting multi-media exhibit of word and image at the Faulkner County Library in Conway, which ran through the month of May. Highlight of the exhibit was a reception on May 12, at which the poets read their contributions and the artists spoke about their interpretations of the poems in their paintings. Thomas Fernandez, a professor of art at the University of Arkansas-Beebe, was the judge for the spring show and was also on hand to comment on his selections.

In addition to Paulette, other PRA members taking part in ArtVerse 2025 were current state poet laureate **Suzanne Underwood Rhodes** of Fayetteville and **Michael Blanchard** of Conway.

2025 NFSPS Annual Contest

Winners

The complete list can be found here: <https://shorturl.at/iuy0q>

Opportunities

From **Michael Blanchard**: *SLANT* will begin accepting submissions to their Fall

2025 issue on August 1. Members can check the website for submission guidelines: [Submission Guidelines – SLANT](#). These PRA members had work appear in the Spring issue: **Paulette Guerin, Karen Moulton, LaDeane Mulinix, and Suzanne Underwood Rhodes.**

From Nancy LaChance

Missouri State Poetry Society Convention
Friday and Saturday Sept. 19 and 20, 2025
Hosted by Lebanon Poets Society
Held at: Second Baptist Church Fellowship
Hall 355 S. Madison Ave. Lebanon, MO
65536
Make hotel reservations at Holiday Inn
Express 1955 W. Elm St., Lebanon
1-800-465-4329 or 417-532-1111
Must book by August 29 (mention Missouri
State Poetry Society for special rate)
Please RSVP if coming to
lachancenancy@outlook.com
Lunch provided in house for \$11.00
(green salad, pasta, choice of 2 meats, garlic
bread, dessert and drink)
Friday evening speaker: Phillip Howerton
Saturday afternoon speaker: Todd Sukany
Bring lots of poems for four read a rounds.
Begins at 6 p.m. Friday evening
End at 3:15 Saturday afternoon

From Laura Bridges

Do you have trouble writing bibliographies?
Use www.mybib.com. It helps you generate
a bibliography easily.

**The 2025-2026 Roundtable Monthly
Contests Topics** will be on the PRA website
soon. Also notice some different rules for
entering. You can find it all on the PRA
website under Contests/Monthly Contests.

Members Sharing Poetry

From **Janice Canerdy**
Longing for Respite!

King Sol is stealing all my energy.
There's no relief in sight, forecasters say.
Come, clouds, with brief relief; this is my
plea.
While summer lovers bask in heat each day,
I'll dream of fall and trust in my AC.

From **Pat Laster:**

Written after re-reading John J. Han's Book,
*Returning Home: Haiku and Other Succinct
Poems.*
May 29, '25 – Fibonacci
ODD

on
a
sunny
but not hot
Thursday in May, squirrels
--usually everywhere—are gone.

WONDERING

where
is
the rain
forecasted
for this last May day?
the plants need watering badly.

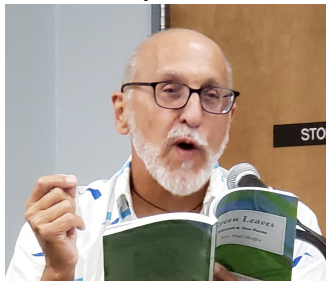
SOON, IT'S JUNE

...the
last
day of
May, twenty
-twenty-five. What June
has in store is yet to be known.

Poetry Day is October 18

Poetry Day will be held in the Fireplace
Room on the campus of University of

Central Arkansas on Saturday, October 18, 2025. Directions will be posted on the PRA website soon. **Michael Blanchard** will serve as Poetry Day Chair. Lunch and snacks will be provided by the university. Look for information regarding pre-registration from **Michael Blanchard**. 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.

Eric was kind enough to take the time to answer some of my questions despite travel, tsunami

warnings, and illness. We're calling this part I. Part II will follow in November's issue.

Q You have been a writer for quite a while. Did you always want to write? Do you remember when you became aware that this was something you wanted to do?

By the time I wanted to write, I was already writing. I don't remember thinking, "I want to write." Instead, I was always and am still a reader. My Nana taught me to read when I was four, and I was entranced by the whole process. I watched her finger move from word to word, and I realized that every time a word in a certain shape appeared, she spoke the same word. In four-year-old-ese, I said, "Wait, those little black marks under the pictures are the words you're saying?" The black marks were a code, and the code was a story, and stories are fun! From then on, I was in. I probably memorized the story first from hearing the words and then learned letters and words from matching sound to sense.

But you asked about writing. The first story that made me say to myself, "I want to do that," was Madeline L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*. That story transported me, and, probably by now, millions of other young readers, to another world, introduced me to themes that are still among my own primary themes, and presented characters that still enchant me to this day. That Earth can look so different through other eyes and that Camazotz is another horribly possible world enlarged my perspective. That Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Which, and Mrs. Who were actually stars--burning hot balls of fusing hydrogen in space!--is still a notion that awes me. That there is a struggle between light and darkness--and not simply an easy dichotomy of dark and light, but a spectrum of tints and shades that contrast and complement each other--also still engages me in every work I write. That L'Engle's novel is a mix of science fiction and fantasy shaped my tastes for looking at existence from the unusual angles on metaphor and imagery that those two genres provide and that poetry allows even more grandly. I dove deep and read fast. I read *A Wrinkle in Time* at age thirteen

(I think) and by age sixteen, I read Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughter-House Five*. Then, I woke one day in a high school literature class taught by Mr. Brown, and he introduced my class to poetry. That day--a Wednesday?--Mr. Brown shared a mimeographed copy (are you old enough to remember the purple print and that heady smell from the page?) of "15" (a poem from *A Coney Island of the Mind*) by Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and I was utterly entranced. I still remember repeating the opening words to myself after the bell--"Constantly risking absurdity," rang all day from my tongue--on the way to my next class and walking home. The lines were flung across the page, zigzags of wondrous phrases and clauses, and the words were clear and meaningful; the poem *meant* something, and meant to *tell me* something, and meant something *to me*, and in my wonder, I remember thinking, "Wait, you can do that?" And I wanted to do that. From then on, I was writing, attempting my own poems. In my next year of high school, I took "Creative Writing" from Mr. Coombs, a genial and encouraging fellow, who was kind to my work. I remember him complimenting my use of verbs, a lesson that motivates me still.

Q You have written memoir, short fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Can you say more about what inspires you to write in each of these genre?

In order of likelihood of genre, I write poetry, fiction (novel and short story), and non-fiction (memoir and craft). In other words, when I sit down on any day to write, I am most likely to compose a poem or a piece of one or notes that want to become a poem. Since I turned seventy, I have been meaning to sit down and count up the total number of still extant poems I've written (and still have around here somewhere). I think I am approaching my life-goal of one thousand poems. As far as I am concerned that is an appropriate number of works for a writer to be reasonably examined and considered as a proficient writer of poems,

and that's what I hope anyone reading my work will think. If readers of my lines say to themselves "I want to do that" or "Wait, you can do that?," I will consider my goal of producing worthy poems achieved.

POETRY: So, yes, I mainly write poems, and I am lucky to have published nine poetry volumes. *Second Nature*, my tenth book of poems, is set for publication in 2026.

After that, I'm finishing (and I'm close!) *Eavesdropping at the Asylum*, a book containing *only* persona poems, soliloquies, and dramatic monologues. I love these three forms because the primary feature is that the narrator is *not* the author. The narrator is a figure from history or mythology, real or imagined, classic or contemporary, but speaks in a voice only his or her own. In the last decade, I realized these are forms I often employ, and I want to collect most in a separate book.

I may try to talk a publisher into reissuing my first two works, a chapbook called *The Fires Outside* and a full-length volume called *RattleSnake Rider*, in one volume. I may also put together another set of sixty-four poems for Shih-te, a grumpy, snippy cook and janitor at an eighth-century Buddhist-Taoist monastery in China (and friend to Han-shan, of greater fame), who was the narrator of my book *Living at the Monastery, Working in the Kitchen*.

Then, I may pull together one more final individual volume, yet untitled. In the end, I hope to organize all of my poems for a Collected Works that will likely never be published, but the organizing will provide me a task that is fun.

FICTION: I love writing fiction, too, and I am gladdest with my work in novels. *Burn & Learn, or Memoirs of the Cenozoic Era*, my first novel, is some of the best writing I've ever done. Truly, that book is a work of fiction, based, as most are, on fictionalized and invented versions of my own experience

and imagination. I know the word *memoir* appears in the title, but that was one of the many challenges to what we think of when we think of fiction that the novel presents. Memoir, of course, is “a personal account of one’s presence in historical events,” so I was playing with the notion that “historical” means both “earth-shaking minutes” and “chronicles of intimate moments,” both of which impact the world of anyone caught up in the passage of time. So I wasn’t writing memoir; I was using as a guide the notion of regarding one’s life as worthy to be history. As I said, I was mainly a writer of poems, but in 1985, I finished Richard Brautigan’s *The Tokyo-Montana Express*, and I remember looking up and saying, actually aloud, although I was alone, “I want to write a novel.” Within the next few days, I’d composed seven chapters (mine are short!) for the novel. In the next six years, I applied everything I’d learned from Brautigan and my two other “guides” Kurt Vonnegut and Tom Robbins to my book as the page count mounted. By 1991, I had drafted all the chapters I intended to include. I organized the book, finalized the manuscript, and started failing to get anyone to publish the novel.

My three “guides,” of course, are not mainstream writers, dedicated to experiment and exuberance and excellence without regard to expectations as each is. I wanted to produce something by writing as they wrote, not reproduce something that they already wrote. *Burn & Learn*, therefore, challenged every element of fiction. Plot, a measured sequence of events demonstrating cause and effect? Nope. Every chapter in *B&L* was conceived as a stand-alone moment and presented in no chronological order at all. Character? Nope. Most of the characters have the same name or a version of the same name. Why? Every character is enmeshed in a moment that defines and is defined by their presence. That the character *is* matters

more than *who* the character is. Most have names that in some way are only or include the initials “K.C.” Themes are typical yet treated atypically: coming of age, young love, getting an education, surviving bad ideas, actions, and events, and coming to term with whatever needs articulation and comprehension. Point of view? Every one I could think of, I used, and I gave one to the book, too, so the book could talk about itself. Setting? Centered in the University of New Mexico campus and immediate environs and extending far into the distance, the imagination, and the globe, to the stars, to the past, to the mythic and monumental. Tone? Breezy about the eternal, serious about the momentary. Conflict? Minimal, tangential, ludicrous. Everything matters in contact only, and contact does not necessarily mean conflict.

Most of all, when I was working on *Burn & Learn*, I called the process “making sentences” because that was my main compositional focus. I wanted the sentences to be beautiful and significant, like the lines in poems, and that was what I did. Some of the best sentences I ever made are in that book; some of the best moments I ever conveyed are there; some of the best and most elegant ideas, images, approaches, and depictions I ever produced are there. Too bad the book is out of print.

Okay, so that was a very long walk to a place where I can now say that my fiction is a furthering, an extension of writing poetry. These are not two trees, side by side; poetry is the trunk and most of the limbs and leaves, and fiction is a few limbs and a lot of leaves on the same tree. The xylem and phloem is and always has been poetry. I have, however, written many more words of fiction, all or mostly unpublished, and all of which are on the worktable of my retirement. Ahead are novels and a book of short stories to complete: *Root of the Sun* (an American English professor in Okinawa);

American River Blues (education and other follies in the Central Valley of California); *A White Car Nation* (short stories of university life on Okinawa). I am currently finishing a Young Adult novel called *Six Ways Home*, the story of a fifteen-year-old boy working on a Christmas tree farm and navigating his first year of high school in Michigan and learning to live without his father, who abandoned the family and without his grandfather, who died under unusual circumstances. This manuscript will begin circulating among the publishers in the Fall. NON-FICTION: My non-fiction is also a good part of my writing, but is also the least published of my work. I'll be working next year on *A Mockingbird of Maui*, a series of observations and essays about my life upcountry on the sunset slope of Haleakalā. I may also eventually get to *Scenes of Life in Shuri*, a series of observations and essays on my life in Okinawa. I have three other areas of non-fiction: essays on craft advice on poetry and fiction; observations and critique of literature; and essays on random topics. For these, though there are many words composed, there is little organization, and group of topics might result in three or seven books, given the two more decades to which I look forward.

Man, I have a lot of stuff to say about a lot of stuff. Sorry.

Your publishing credentials (taken from your website) are outstanding:

More than 650 of Shaffer's poems have been published in reviews, journals, and magazines throughout the USA, Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Scotland, Singapore, and Wales, including North American Review, RATTLE, Slate, and The Sun Magazine; Australia's Cordite Poetry Review, Going Down Swinging, Island, Quadrant Magazine, and Westerly; Canada's CV2, Dalhousie Review, The Fiddlehead, and Prairie Fire; Éire's Poetry Ireland Review and Southword Journal; England's Iota, Magma, and The Stand Magazine; and New Zealand's Poetry NZ and Takahē. His work has been translated into Esperanto, Farsi, and Spanish. His poems also appear in more than twenty-seven anthologies of

poetry, including Fire and Rain: EcoPoetry of California (Scarlet Tanager, 2018), The EcoPoetry Anthology (Trinity UP, 2013), Jack London Is Dead: Contemporary Euro-American Poetry in Hawai'i (Tinfish, 2013), 100 Poets Against the War (Salt, 2003), and The Soul Unearthed (Tarcher/ Putnam, 1996).

Thank you.

Q Have you always been a submitter? You must have an amazing submission record-keeping system!

Keeping track of submissions is a huge task, but fortunately, the steps are small. I have a weekly time set aside for doing market research and submitting work. Every Saturday from 8:00 AM to 1:00 or 2:00 PM or when I can't stand sitting at the desk any longer, I put together submissions for reviews, journals, and magazines. My goal is five submissions per session, but I am glad to complete three. The hours are long because reading submission guidelines and calls for work or specific themes takes a while as does re-reading my poems and other writings to make sure the words are right for the place. And re-reading means revising, and so the minutes pass. I also re-format the work, when necessary. My goal for every year is to send out 50-100 submissions and to keep at least 50 "in the mail" at any time. I make no submissions in August and during the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Years' Day since, for the most part, editors and other humans are busy with more pressing concerns then. As for the system, each poem gets an index card (or more, when the rejections mount), and each market gets an index card, on which I keep track of the dates of the submission window, whether the market charges to read, whether the market pays, the number of poems to include in a submission, whether simultaneous submissions are okay (usually), whether previously printed poems are okay (usually not). Each submission is dated, and the poems included are listed. When the submission is returned, I record the results and return the card to the publisher pile.

On the poem cards are the title. Then, there is the name of the publication to which the poem is submitted and the date sent. When the submission is returned, I record the results on each poem card. Then, I mark the individual poem cards with the results and return the card to the poems pile.

Write and repeat.

Q Is there any advice you can offer to poets who are hesitant to submit their work?

Yes. Send out your work. Rejection is inevitable and frequent and hurts every time. Well, so what? Everything, especially in these interesting times, hurts and always will until nothing hurts. Nobody needs our work, so we must be the first to step up and say, "Look at this." To be honest, from the reactions of my family and most of my friends, nobody even wants to look, but there are some, a few, one or two, and those folks are often in a position to publish good work, so if you have some, share the lines. Stephen King wrote of setting a spindle on the desk and staking every new rejection on that sharp, silver point, but what I liked most was that when the spindle was full, he drove a spike into the wall and started filling that. Nice, right? I also like the idea of papering your office walls with all of your rejection slips so that you can always see exactly what you're up against. This is the world within which we live, really live. "No" is the price of admission; "Yes" means seeing the show.

I recently read *Leaves of Green*. Some of my favorites are: "The First Man to See a Rainbow," "Victoria's Astronomy Lesson," and "Matching Coffee Mugs." I loved many of your lines but especially these: In "Witnesses" ...*the mountain bears the light like a burden* and in "Ceremony, In the American Twilight" ...*the blue was tempered with twilight*. I also enjoyed the poems that referenced Chinese culture and symbols since I lived in Shanghai for 10 years and Taipei for 12 years.

Thank you. Rarely does a writer of poems hear which, if any, poems appealed in particular to readers, so this means a great deal to me. I very much appreciate your kind words.

You've mentioned some of my own all-time favorites of my work. That is cool!

"Matching Coffee Mugs" is my absolute #1 favorite, mainly because of the celebration

of the love Veronica and I share and the easy way we live together, but also a song of praise for my favorite place to live ever, in Kula at 1900 feet on Haleakalā. If I was told, "Okay, we have one page for one poem to represent your work. Which one should be use?" I would say, "Matching Coffee Mugs."

Yup, lines are the planks of poetry, and again, you have picked out some that make me gladdest. In particular, "Ceremony" is one of my best poems of the past decade and communicates some of my great sadness concerning America. If there were two more pages for the anthology, I would say, "Add 'Ceremony, In the American Twilight.'" So one for my love and one for my country.

Thank you again for telling me.

Q Please describe your poetry writing process. I know that's a huge question, so I'll break it down a bit. Do you write every day?

I write every day, based on the theory that *only* anything done every day makes the doer a practicing hand of the activity. Write every day = writer.

Q Do you keep word lists?

Oddly, I never have--until this month (July 2025). I was talking to Jordan, my writing partner, publisher, and great friend, the other day, saying that as an early and voracious reader, I remember encountering words I could not pronounce, but added to my vocabulary anyway. The real fun began when I tried to *say* those words in conversation without ever hearing them aloud. Whew, what a mess of embarrassment. So I started a list, as a source for a future poem. Here are the words and the way I pronounced them at first:

superfluous /sue-per-FLEW-us/

hyperbole /high-per-BOWL/

cliche /clich/

superlative /sue-per-LATE-ive/

bouquet /BOO-kit/

Feel free to contribute.

Q Do you collect lines that come to you when you are swimming or hiking or engaged in some other repetitive activity?

Hmm, I don't collect lines, not in the sense that I write down words somewhere. What I do is when an idea comes to me, I articulate the notion in some words, aloud or in my head, and if those lines generate other words, I string those together while I'm walking or working or driving, and I keep going till I have enough to write down. "Hawk in October" was written entirely in my head on a run along Putah Creek in Davis, California. I generated, repeated, elaborated the lines until I got home and wrote the whole thing down on a piece of scrap paper, smudged with sweat. Other times, I wake up with a line in my head, and the words will not go away (I am ashamed and pleased to say that often I can drive the words away!), so I go to the office, and start scribbling on a sheet. Writing down the line leads to an utter tumble of further words. "Officer, I Saw the Whole Thing" was written that way. I woke at 4:30 AM with the words "Officer, I saw the whole thing," spoken in my head in the voice of my Maui poetry pal Lawrence Hill, and 75 minutes later, 80% of that rowdy, 1,029-word, four-page rant was on paper. I took a break and a shower; then, I wrote nearly all of the rest before I left for work at 7:00 AM. The same "waking with words" scenario occurred with "The Man Who Lost His Middle Finger." I awoke with that title, sat down, and was finished in one hundred twenty-five words and ten minutes. This makes my production of poems sound dreamy, right? The above examples, however, are extremely rare instances. Usually, I must sit down at the same certain time every day at the table or desk and start hitting the keys. The process is like punching in for work. I even have a kitchen timer that I set for sixty minutes. That ticking reminds me that this hour is for words. (Nope, I never feel pressured by the clock; I feel encompassed and enclosed in a safe space where only writing is required.)

Sometimes, I remember what I meant to do. Other times, something occurs to me because I showed up to work. A lot of times, I stare blankly at the screen or the wall until I pick up someone else's book of poems and read till I get an idea. The most important part of the process is what I heard Frank McCourt, author of *Angela's Ashes*, call "bumglue." He meant that peculiar adhesive that one applies to the posterior in order to stick to a chair long enough to write. Worse, some days, I get nothing useful; worst, some days, I get something horrible that makes me wonder what the hell I am doing.

Fortunately, there is an app for that: the round file, the "Delete" key, and the trash can. All praises to the holy rubbish bin, in that round, resounding emptiness is further and eternal space for creation!

Q Do you use prompts?

Yes! I love prompts! My writer pals Melanie van der Tuin and Jordan Jones and I meet once a week on Zoom to write for an hour in each other's presence, and we keep an eye on each other. The microphone is muted, but the camera is on, and I can glance up from tapping away to make sure nobody's goofing off.

To ignite the writing, we develop prompts on the fly. Sometimes, Melanie says, "Let's write about fruit-picking and theft." Okay. Or Jordan says, "I saw a news report about a Ukrainian woman in a unit firing mortar shells at the Russians on the front line. Her commander calls her 'Demon.' Let's write about that." Okey-dokey. Or I say, "Let's write about a punctuation mark. Pick one. Go!" And we're off.

Jordan and I also develop more complex prompts that we write up and share in a Google folder. Those are the ones that respond to particular works by poets, and they need context and directions. One was a response to Elizabeth Bishop's "Armadillo" and Robert Lowell's "Skunk Hour." We each had to study their poems and incorporate their structure but base the poem

in our particular places, for me, O‘ahu, for Jordan, Albuquerque. For that one, I wrote ten rules. Another was an assignment to write a poem about a former teacher, but only using characteristics of a specific animal. The rules were that the writer must have seen the animal personally and lived at some time in the common habitat. Another was to write an abecedarian poem, but challenge the form enough to surprise the readers. I included a number of examples, including Nemerov’s “Primer of the Daily Round” and Sutphen’s “Semi-Literate.” Prompts are everywhere in the world and on the net. And any weird idea one gets can be forged into a useful prompt. Look for part II in November.

*Member
Profiles
Meet Heather
Olvey*



My name is Heather Olvey, and I am an AP Literature/English12 teacher at Mount St. Mary Academy, and soon-to-be empty nester as my last two children (boy/girl twins) move off to college. I also have an older son who will be a senior in college this year. I love reading, traveling, cross stitching, and the outdoors (I am a Romantic at heart), and my favorite times are when all of my family is under one roof spending time together. I don’t really remember when I started writing poetry, because writing and journaling have been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. My mother is probably the most influential in my reading/writing life. My childhood was

filled with stories, trips to the library, and I have memories of her reciting specific poems as I was growing up. She had a knack for finding poetry that would grab me at different ages, and for a time she wrote poetry herself. As far as writing for myself, I typically handwrite in a pretty journal. I am a sucker for pretty pens and papers, so I much prefer first drafts that are handwritten; however, I tend to move to my computer when finishing a piece. My writing is a blend of essay/poetry/journal writing, and because I stay so busy with teaching and reading my students' writing, I don’t polish many of my own poems, so they sort of live in limbo for “some day.” I tried to give my own children a strong literacy background, so we read bedtime stories that turned into chapter books until they were old enough to want to read on their own, and we read lots of poetry as they grew as well. My only daughter has taken an interest in poetry, and she has placed/won poetry contests every year since she was in the 6th grade. I am in awe of how she can turn a phrase. When she got to the high school where I teach, she wanted to start a Poetry Club, so we built one together. It started as a place where I gave the students prompts to help them write, where we shared poems we liked, and sometimes we played games. One meeting we even watched *Dead Poets Society*. It has turned into a small group of girls (most of whom have placed in PRA Poetry contests) who meet and share their poetry in a fun and relaxing atmosphere. We workshop poems together, and usually the girls bring their work that they wrote on their own time; however, most of the club graduated this year, so it will probably morph into whatever the new members need. Some of my favorite poets include Billy Collins, Mary Oliver, and Ted Kooser, and a favorite poem that I love to share with all my students is Mary Oliver’s “The Summer Day.” I begin each of my classes with a

poem that we will not analyze or discuss (unless they ask to), so that my students can be exposed to many different pieces in hope that they can think about these poems without worrying about getting an interpretation “wrong,” and hopefully come to if not enjoy, at least respect poetry. Even though I tell them there are multiple interpretations to a poem, having to analyze and discuss poetry is still scary for many of my students.

Here is a poem I wrote for a class after reading Ross Gay’s “The Way of Love.”

Life

The way of finding is not a clear path -
 There is no right door to walk through with
 answers to all questions lounging behind.
 Sometimes the road circles back on itself to
 show us some delights we missed the first
 time;
 light reflecting off the water causing the
 leaves above to shimmer;
 reveling in the symphony of birds that is
 usually only background noise;
 the peace that comes in a moment when
 lungs are full and we can just . . .
 be.

Other times it dumps us into a thicket of
 devastation
 we have to claw our way out to survive.
 How do we continue?
 The thorns reach out lacerating arms and
 legs -
 thin trails of blood draining our will
 making us grieve for what we have lost.
 You will find the path leading out.
 You will one day filter through the fuzziness
 of recollection
 and be unable to pinpoint the rings of defeat,
 knowing only that you said “no”
 and found your way.



Member Profiles

Meet Denise England

I was born in
 Fayetteville in 1972
 and grew up riding my
 bike, playing in the

forest, drawing, painting, reading and
 listening to stories and poems on vinyl. My
 favorites were Shel Silverstein's *Where the
 Sidewalk Ends*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice in
 Wonderland*, C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles
 of Narnia*, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The
 Secret Garden*, all of which I read
 repeatedly. I graduated from Fayetteville
 High School in 1991, where I had spent four
 years studying French. At Oklahoma Baptist
 University, I majored in French and met my
 husband Heath, a brilliant business mind and
 drummer. I spent a year in Bordeaux,
 France, studying French language and art,
 then completed an MA in French literature
 at the University of Arkansas and taught
 French for several years. In 2004, my
 husband and I adopted our two kids
 from Russia, Will (now 23) and Abby (22).
 As the kids got into high school, we were
 able to begin traveling more, which is a
 shared passion for Heath and me. We
 enjoy exploring the world together, meeting
 people from different cultures. As a poet, I
 have a desire for the sensory experiences of
 travel: touching lichen on ancient stones,
 tasting curries using my fingers, climbing
 spiral stairs in medieval towers. Being an
 empty-nester in my fifties, writing is
 synthesis and joy for me, as is sharing
 among other writers and artists.
 I like the word "inspiration" because it
 relates to breathing in and receiving life.
 Ideas for poems come to me by way of
 taking in the world around me and watching
 things interact with the world that lives
 inside of me, the way the taste of a

madeleine dipped in tea brings Proust's protagonist back to his childhood at his aunt's house. What comes in resonates with memories residing there and they get caught in conversation. These are often just normal, everyday things: a larger-than-typical squirrel, or baking a family recipe for cobbler; sometimes it's travel: an Indian wedding, shopping in a Cotswolds' bookshop; sometimes it's a piece of artwork: photos I've snapped in galleries, museum websites; sometimes it's grief, in its strange expressions triggered by a holiday ritual, a tie-dye t-shirt, a plastic pony.

I write or revise most days, preferably with a cup of coffee early in the morning when the house is asleep. If I'm writing a new poem, I tend to focus on it for days until I feel like it's saying what I want to say, how I want to say it. Poems usually present their form to me fairly early on. Some will announce that they want to be a sonnet or pantoum, for example, and how much they want to play by the prescribed rules. Some start as free verse and then group themselves into couplets or quatrains. Sometimes they need a shaping up as they're coming together, like that cobbler recipe I mentioned. I roll the dough and cut it to fit the pan, but there are always bits that need a little squish or trim. My poems have to please my ear, too. I think of it like playing a deck of cards. If I've dealt an /i/ or an /k/, I hold that in mind and try to play from that suit again as I go. Liquid consonants will lilt and limn; a good string of plosives or fricatives add staccato perfervidity (that word is pure, musical play!). As I write and revise, I record myself reading my poem and then listen to it while I drive around or do things around the house. My ear edits for rhythm, meaning and sound. When I feel like I've done all I can do, I love sharing my poem with trusted poet friends including my PRA colleagues in the Ozark Mountain Poets in

Fayetteville; they give me tremendous feedback and insight.

I'm indebted to our Arkansas Poet Laureate, **Suzanne Underwood Rhodes**, who has mentored me and encouraged me to publish. We met through Spectra Arts, which is a group at our church for writers, artists and musicians. Suzanne inspires me to hone my craft and send my poems out into the world. She brought me into the PRA fold and has introduced me to many outstanding Arkansas poets. I'm also grateful to my husband, who listens to all my drafts and simultaneously flatters me while telling me which darlings he would axe.

My favorite poem is "Le Pont Mirabeau" (The Mirabeau Bridge) by Guillaume Apollinaire. The original French is lovely and haunting with its repetitions of /o/u/l/m/n/...like the water that flows under the bridge, washing away his hope of love, leaving him behind as the hours continue to strike in refrain, stranding the poet lonely in time. English translations can't do it justice. Read Denise's poem

"Wedding Guest Ghazal" in *SLANT*: <https://slantpoetryjournal.wordpress.com/denise-england/>

Suzanne Underwood Rhodes Poet Laureate of Arkansas



Notes from the Sea of Boxes

Greetings, dear poet friends, from my new home in Siloam Springs! I moved from Fayetteville on July 5 and am pleased with the house I'm renting and the people I've met so far. This fall I'll be teaching an English class at John Brown University and know I will enjoy being part of the college community.

On Tuesday I'm boarding a plane for Dublin, Ireland (my ancestral home) for a couple of days, and from there will travel to Belfast for the C. S. Lewis Summer Institute (<https://www.cslewis.org/si/>. Check it out!). The conference, from July 24-30, is usually held in Oxford, England, but this year it's in Belfast. I was greatly blessed to receive a full scholarship and will be attending with my good friend and fellow poet, Margret Walker, from Fayetteville. The theme is "Returning Home"—how appropriate considering I just moved! Currently I'm reading Lewis's *Till We Have Faces*, which he and his critics considered his masterpiece, and Seamus Heaney's *100 Poems*. I'm excited for the opportunity to be enriched spiritually, intellectually, and socially. People from all over the world will be there, and the lineup of speakers (poets and artists among them) is impressive. After the conference, I'll fly to Amsterdam to visit my son, whom I haven't seen in three years, for a few days.

Back in January I was asked to write a letter of recommendation for **Rosa Marinoni**, who served as our state poet laureate from 1953-1970, to be inducted into the Arkansas Women's Hall of Fame. So, to the Fayetteville library I went, and when I asked to see her books, was told these were kept under lock and key in the manager's office but they would be brought to me during my visit to the library. I so enjoyed learning all about my predecessor four laureates back, and her remarkable writings so full of her warm and imaginative spirit. It came as no surprise that she was chosen for the Women's Hall of Fame. A celebratory dinner will be held for her and other honorees on August 21 at the Statehouse Convention Center's Wally Allen Ballroom in Little Rock. Consider attending if you can. See ArWomensHallofFame.com. The number to call is 501-372-5959.

I enjoyed teaching a poetry class in my home in the spring to five women, all accomplished poets and some, members of PRA. I called it "Cross-Pollination Poetry," featuring several themes such as nature, loss, and love, and poems related to those themes by modern and contemporary writers that we studied. Then the students wrote original poems drawing on aspects of the poems I had assigned. It was a wonderful experience to share words and friendship in close community. I hope to be able to offer another class like this in the future and to teach another virtual poetry workshop this fall at the Muse Writers Center, for I do love teaching and mentoring, almost as much as writing poems!

Speaking of writing poems, I have recent work accepted or published in *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Christian Century*, *Spiritus*, and *Slant: A Journal of Poetry*. What sad news to learn of Leah Jordan's death on July 14. She and her husband founded Pearl's Books, an independent bookstore in downtown Fayetteville that welcomed readings by local and regional writers. I was fortunate to read there with Gerry Sloan a couple of times, and **Michael Blanchard** gave a reading as well. You can't beat the intimate atmosphere and conversation afterwards among books and friends. Learn more about Leah here and her love of reading, family, and community: <https://www.nwahomepage.com/news/co-owner-of-pearls-books-in-fayetteville-dies/>. She will be deeply missed.

It's time to return to the sea of boxes to be unpacked and to check off my to-do list for the trip. Everything seems to have happened at once! Lines for poems I want to write manage to slip into my worries like cats that flatten themselves so as to fit into impossible places. But these poems will have to wait. May yours be on time and ever coming.

Suzanne

Minutes from the July Board

Meeting: Highlights

*Poetry Day and Spring Celebration
Speakers' stipend - Motion was made and approved to increase the speakers' stipends to \$300.00 instead of \$250.00

*Raising entry fees for Poetry Day contests was discussed. The issue was tabled.

*The following changes will be made to the yearbook:

Membership Information on page 5 will read:

Please include the following information: name, address, phone number, address (if available).

Revise #5 under Contest Rules, Monthly Contests for Members, page 7 of the Yearbook to read:

5. Two copies; place contest month and contest subject in the upper left corner; place name and address on one copy only in the upper right corner.

A motion was made to ***remove the sentence:***

"Except for correction of errors deemed critical by the Poetry Day Chairman, Poetry Day Contest Chairman and President, no revisions may be made to the Poetry Day Brochure after mailing." from page 20 of the Yearbook under News 'N' Notes and to insert it under Poetry Day on page 21.

Membership dues will increase for new members joining the second half of the fiscal year from \$10 to \$15.

*Guidelines for Poet Laureate Nomination
The Arkansas Code Annotated Section 1-4-114 provides for PRA to participate with the Division of Higher Education in a committee to nominate Poets Laureate for Arkansas when the need arises. Currently, there are no guidelines in the Yearbook to assist the PRA committee with this endeavor. The following guidelines will be added under Standing Rules:

In accordance with Arkansas Code Annotated 1-4-114, upon the death or

resignation of the current Poet Laureate or at the upcoming lapse of the current Poet Laureate's term, the President of Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas (PRA) shall appoint a Chairperson for the PRA Poet Laureate Nomination Committee. The Chairperson shall select a PRA member to assist on the Nomination Committee. The PRA Poet Laureate Nomination Chairperson will contact PRA members and request nominations for Poet Laureate be submitted to the Chair. Any nomination needs to be discussed with the nominee and agreed to prior to the nomination by a PRA member. A detailed resume should be developed for each nominee. The resume will be developed with assistance from the nominee. If applicable, nominee's personal web address should be included in the resume. This resume will be used by the full 4-person committee to determine the final nomination(s) for the Governor and will be presented to the Governor for review.

A.C.A. Section 1-4-114 specifies that this title is to be in recognition of outstanding accomplishments and contributions in poetry by a person who is a resident of the state of Arkansas. There are no job duties specifically named for the position of Poet Laureate. However, former Poets Laureate have:

lived in Arkansas, been members of PRA, written and/or published poetry, developed a poetical form, been recipients of state and/or national awards, edited poetry columns or magazines, been active in literary societies and activities that promote a greater appreciation of poetry, served as ambassador for the enhancement of poetry throughout the state and, possibly, nation, participated in other applicable activities or accomplishments.

Once nominations from PRA members are received by the PRA Poet Laureate

Nominations Chairperson, the PRA Poet Laureate committee will review and select nominations to be reviewed by the full (four person) Poet Laureate Nominations Committee.

The PRA Poet Laureate Chairperson will contact the Commissioner of the Division of Higher Education to establish the method of review of nominations by all four committee members. The method of review may be by e-mail, phone, meeting, etc. A letter of nomination to the Governor will be developed by the Commissioner of the Division of Higher Education and the PRA Poet Laureate Chairperson. Detailed resumes will be included in the letter. It is recommended that no more than two nominations be included in the letter to the Governor.

*Appointment of Poet Laureate Committee Chair

The term for current Poet Laureate **Suzanne Rhodes** expires at the end of this year. President **Chris Henderson** appointed **Dennis Patton** as the Chair of the PRA Poet Laureate Nomination Committee. **Dennis Patton** will select a PRA member to assist on this committee.

* It was agreed to rearrange topics alphabetically under Standing Rules in Yearbook.

***Frieda Patton** has resigned as Treasurer effective July 31. President **Chris Henderson** will endeavor to fill this position as soon as possible.

From the Editor

The August News 'N' Notes is jam-packed with information about events and members—just how I like it! Thanks to **Heather, Denise, Eric, Pat, and Janice** for their contributions as well as regular contributors: **Christine** and **Suzanne**, and of course to those of you who sent me your publication news.

I hope you take advantage of the many opportunities to submit your work (PRA event and monthly contests), NFSPS contests, and *SLANT* as well as ways to improve your writing through the various conferences and workshops on offer. I am looking forward to seeing you in Conway on October 18th. The Fireplace Room is a wonderfully cozy space for us to meet, share, and learn from Eric Paul Shaffer, our featured speaker. Many thanks to **Michael Blanchard** who will be serving as Poetry Day chair for organizing the space and for lunch which is provided by the university.

Once again I am participating in the Poetry Postcard Festival. I've painted my postcards and written five of the 31 poems that will go out to the folks who signed up on the list. I've received a few already. It is great fun to be part of this festival. If you are interested in participating, send me an email and I'll share the sign-up info.

Thanks for reading this extensive News 'N' Notes. Please let me know if you have an idea for a feature or a series or if you'd like to share info about yourself in a profile.

Sincerely,
Karen Moulton