



POETS' ROUNDTABLE OF ARKANSAS

Founded February 5, 1931

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

<http://poetsroundtableofarkansas.org>

Poets Roundtable of Arkansas Poetry Day Contest Winners

10/18/2025

Submitted by John McPherson

OVERALL RESULTS: A total of 811 poems were entered in 33 contests, with the least number of entries being 8 and the most being 38 (twice.) 44 poets participated from 14 states.

AL=4;AR=19; IL=1; IA=1; LA=1; MA=1; MO=5; MS=4;OK=1; OR=1;PA=1; TN=1; TX=3; UT2.

There was one disqualification

1. Sybil Nash Abrams Award

Sponsor: Sybil Nash Abrams Trust

(8 entries) Judge: Philip Howerton

1st place	Fay Guinn	<i>River Rat (Helen Ruth Spence, 1912-1934)</i>
2nd place	Larry Witherspoon	<i>Stones A Rolling</i>
3rd place	Dennis Patton	<i>Gun Smoke on the Ouachita</i>
1st HM	Karen Moulton	<i>A Gangster's Paradise</i>
2nd HM	Elizabeth Dail	<i>Unsettled Dust: Frank James</i>
3rd HM	Cathy Moran	<i>A nod to the gangsters who visited</i>

2. Rosa Zagnoni Marinoni Award

Sponsor: Larry and Desiree Witherspoon

(27 entries) Judge: Larry and Desiree Witherspoon

1st place	Marilyn Joyner	<i>A Rooster Named Trouble</i>
2nd place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Different Music</i>
3rd place	Dennis Patton	<i>Breaking The Silence</i>
1st HM	Fay Guinn	<i>THERE'S ALWAYS ONE</i>
2nd HM	Diane Stefan	<i>Happy Hydrangeas</i>
3rd HM	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Hawaii Tries To Belong</i>

3. Three Little Lines Award

Sponsor: Fay Guinn

(23 entries) Judge: Fay Guinn

1st place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>I, Robin Hood, stole</i>
2nd place	Elizabeth Dail	<i>trees' shadows lengthen</i>
3rd place	Dennis Patton	<i>a solo cricket</i>
1st HM	Jerri Hardesty	<i>Bees swarm the flowers</i>
2nd HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>God's creatures stampede</i>
3rd HM	Cathy Moran	<i>Images of summertime</i>

4. Roundtable Poets of Hot Springs Award

Sponsor: Roundtable Poets of Hot Springs

(14 entries) Judge: Roundtable Poets of Hot Springs

1st place	Russell Strauss	<i>Why I Wear Black</i>
2nd place	Dennis Patton	<i>Maya Angelou</i>
3rd place	Marilyn Joyner	<i>Hattie Caraway, Senator</i>
1st HM	Patrica Laster	<i>Yes, Virginia, There is a Verna Lee Hinegardner</i>
2nd HM	Cathy Moran	<i>A hero's trek for freedom</i>
3rd HM	Laura Bridges	<i>Bobby King Sings The Blues</i>

5. Neville Saylor Memorial Award

Sponsor: John Crawford

(16 entries) Judge: John Crawford

1st place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Hail</i>
2nd place	Cathy Moran	<i>Mother's mink</i>
3rd place	Karen Moulton	<i>Lucky Day</i>
1st HM	Fay Guinn	<i>BEST AND WORST OF BEING A TWIN</i>
2nd HM	Sara Gipson	<i>Denied Hope</i>
3rd HM	Dennis Patton	<i>Revenge is Sweet</i>

6. Banner Mountain Girl Award

Sponsor: Family of Freeda Baker Nichols

(24 entries) Judge: Christine Henderson

1st place	Alyssa Darby	<i>Our Haven</i>
2nd place	Nancy LaChance	<i>Can You Go Back</i>
3rd place	Fay Guinn	<i>What Happened to My Home Sweet Home</i>
1st HM	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Sparklers</i>
2nd HM	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Anglophilia in America</i>
3rd HM	Dennis Patton	<i>The Childhood Home</i>

7. Couchwood Award

Sponsor: Pat Laster

(23 entries) Judge: Pat Laster

1st place	Cathy Moran	<i>The flood of the year</i>
2nd place	Marilyn Joyner	<i>People United</i>
3rd place	Stephen Schwei	<i>River Rising</i>
1st HM	Sara Gipson	<i>Drought</i>
2nd HM	Mark Hudson	<i>The Pope</i>

3rd HM None

8. Baker Nichols Award

Sponsor: Family of Freeda Baker Nichols

(12 entries) Judge: Christine Henderson

1st place	Sara Gipson	<i>I Love America</i>
2nd place	Jerri Hardesty	<i>Of Thee We Sing</i>
3rd place	Fay Guinn	<i>WHY THE PILGRIMS CROSSED THE POND</i>
1st HM	Alyssa Darby	<i>No Country Can Compare</i>
2nd HM	Stephen Schwei	<i>Beyond Love</i>
3rd HM	Janice Freytag	<i>This Land, My Land</i>

9. Opal Jane & Harry O'Neal Memorial Award

Sponsor: Ben H. O'Neal

(38 entries) Judge: Marie Allison

1st place	Nick Sweet	<i>Brad, Kim and Ted (RIP)</i>
2nd place	Fay Guinn	<i>JABBERWOCKY</i>
3rd place	Barbara Castle	<i>A Maid's Tale</i>
1st HM	Russell Strauss	<i>Beaver Moon, 1905</i>
2nd HM	Larry Witherspoon	<i>Mourning</i>
3rd HM	Donna Smith	<i>Angels Among Us</i>

10. Opal Jane & Harry O'Neal Humor Award

Sponsor: Ben H. O'Neal

(25 entries) Judge: Pat Laster

1st place	Fay Guinn	<i>WELL, SHUT MY MOUTH</i>
2nd place	Marilyn Joyner	<i>An Outing</i>
3rd place	Russell H. Struass	<i>All According to Direction</i>
1st HM	Janice Freytag	<i>Atlanta Memories</i>
2nd HM	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Southern Song</i>
3rd HM	Donna Geise	<i>Tea and Scruples</i>

11. Sharp Award

Sponsor: Cathy Moran

(36 entries) Judge: Cathy Moran

1st place	Crystie Cook	<i>Pandora's Box: A Greek Myth Retold</i>
2nd place	Sara Gipson	<i>Single Leaf Trapped in Ice</i>
3rd place	Teresa H. Klepac	<i>Conversation in Passing</i>
1st HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>STRANGERS AT A STOP LIGHT</i>
2nd HM	Fay Guinn	<i>HE SAID HE'D BE GLAD WHEN...</i>
3rd HM	Karen Moulton	<i>These Taipei Men</i>

12. Arts & Crackers Award

Sponsor: Alyssa Darby

(19 entries) Judge: Alyssa Darby

1st place	Dargan M. Ware	<i>Dance of Time</i>
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2nd place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Straightening Up</i>
3rd place	Janice Freytag	<i>Collector's Prey</i>
1st HM	Karen Moulton	<i>Weathering</i>
2nd HM	Cathy Moran	<i>Season's end</i>
3rd HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>UNBALANCED</i>

13. L.C. Bridges Memorial Award

Sponsor: Pat Bridges

(27 entries) Judge: Pat Bridges

1st place	Trina Lee	<i>You Are Not Alone</i>
2nd place	Fay Guinn	<i>A LETTER FROM SOMEWHERE IN HEAVEN</i>
3rd place	Alyssa Darby	<i>Sunday School of Fish</i>
1st HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>COFFEE WITH JESUS</i>
2nd HM	Pat Durmon	<i>Waiting in a Hospice Room</i>
3rd HM	Donna Smith	<i>Choices</i>

14. Tom J. Smith Memorial Award

Sponsor: Donna Smith

(37 entries) Judge: Donna Smith

1st place	Marilyn Joyner	<i>First Love</i>
2nd place	Crystie Cook	<i>Terpsichorean Tumbleweeds</i>
3rd place	Teresa Klepac	<i>Sunset Hummingbird</i>
1st HM	Jeri Hardesty	<i>Tiny Troll</i>
2nd HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>HOME HOSPICE CARE</i>
3rd HM	Lydia Cheatham	<i>Expiration Date</i>

15. Hazel J. Alexander Memorial

Sponsor: Donna Smith

(36 entries) Judge: Donna Smith

1st place	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Sour Taste</i>
2nd place	Nick Sweet	<i>May's Cafe</i>
3rd place	Marilyn Joyner	<i>Changing Times</i>
1st HM	Russell Strauss	<i>Visitor</i>
2nd HM	Diane Stefan	<i>AH CHOO</i>
3rd HM	Pat Durmon	<i>Guidance for Those I Leave Behind</i>

16. Poet's Choice Award

Sponsor: Dennis Patton

(38 entries) Judge: Dennis Patton

1st place	Cathy Moran	<i>Walking along with the poets</i>
2nd place	Donna Geise	<i>Anthem to Red Paper Wasps</i>
3rd place	Tanya Whitney	<i>Thunder</i>
1st HM	Gail Denham	<i>Looking Out on The Shortest River</i>
2nd HM	Denise England	<i>Ephemera</i>
3rd HM	Marilyn Joyner	<i>The After Life</i>

17. Saddle and Spurs Award

Sponsor: John McPherson

(17 entries) Judge: Christine Henderson

1st place	Dennis Patton	<i>Hanging Around</i>
2nd place	Sara Gipson	<i>Friendship Born on a Ranch</i>
3rd place	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Barbed Wire Broken</i>
1st HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>THE OLD COWBOY COMES HOME</i>
2nd HM	Alyssa Darby	<i>War Ain't Done (after Jesse James)</i>
3rd HM	Gail Denham	<i>Rancher's Daughter</i>

18. Natures Wonders

Sponsor: Two Rivers Poets of Ft. Smith

(32 entries) Judge: Mary Sangster

1st place	Dr. Emory D. Jones	<i>THE SANCTUARY</i>
2nd place	Fay Guinn	<i>EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN...or FIRST DAY OF SPRING</i>
3rd place	Alyssa Darby	<i>Nature's Work of Art</i>
1st HM	Jerri Hardesty	<i>Local Celebrity</i>
2nd HM	Tanya Whitney	<i>Music of Nature</i>
3rd HM	Cathy Moran	<i>Listening to the concert</i>

19. Jim Barton Memorial Award

Sponsor: South Arkansas Poets of the Pines

(24 entries) Judge: South Arkansas Poets of the Pines

1st place	Karen Moulton	<i>A Road in the Country</i>
2nd place	Cathy Moran	<i>Holding the space of country roads</i>
3rd place	Dennis Patton	<i>Handed Down</i>
1st HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>BEYOND THE INTERSTATE</i>
2nd HM	Alyssa Darby	<i>Not a Single Street Light</i>
3rd HM	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Ghost Road</i>

20. That's Life Award

Sponsor: Laura Bridges

(24 entries) Judge: Laura Bridges

1st place	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>SHORT LEGS</i>
2nd place	Crystie Cook	<i>Underwater Love Story</i>
3rd place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Dancing with Miss Mac</i>
1st HM	Stephen Schwei	<i>The Dance</i>
2nd HM	Cathy Moran	<i>Stepping into a ballerina world</i>
3rd HM	Dennis Patton	<i>Matinee</i>

21. Saline County Branch Award

Sponsor: Saline County Branch of PRA

(34 entries) Judge: Elizabeth Dail

1st place	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>The Chicken</i>
2nd place	Cathy Moran	<i>What you taught me</i>
3rd place	Mike Wahl	<i>Modern Fairy-tale</i>

1st HM	Karen Moulton	<i>Transitions</i>
2nd HM	Dennis Patton	<i>The Picture of You</i>
3rd HM	Terry Jude Miller	<i>People of Ink and Bone</i>

22. Florence Gibbs Memorial Award

Sponsor: Roxie Wilson

(31 entries) Judge: Emory Jones

1st place	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>APRIL IN MY HEART</i>
2nd place	Marilyn Joyner	<i>Dance of Time</i>
3rd place	Tanya Whitney	<i>Ghosts of the Seas</i>
1st HM	Nancy LaChance	<i>Family Picnic</i>
2nd HM	Diane Stefan	<i>FLASHBACK IN A COFFEE CUP</i>
3rd HM	Dennis Patton	<i>Driving a Hard Bargain</i>

23. Betty Heidelberger Memorial Award

Sponsor: Roxie Wilson

(33 entries) Judge: Sara Gipson

1st place	Dennis Patton	<i>Enter by the Front Door</i>
2nd place	Dr. Emory D. Jones	<i>A POETIC FEAST</i>
3rd place	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Coda</i>
1st HM	Janice Freytag	<i>From the Top of a Hill</i>
2nd HM	Richard Ramsey	<i>Winter Sprites</i>
3rd HM	Patricia Laster	<i>The Thinnest of Threads</i>

24. Mirriam S. Strauss Memorial Award

Sponsor: Russell H. Strauss

(27 entries) Judge: Russell H. Strauss

1st place	Lee Anna Chuculate Mitchell	<i>Contrails</i>
2nd place	T rina Lee	<i>Ode to My F-150</i>
3rd place	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Oregon Flight</i>
1st HM	Cathy Moran	<i>Those railroad ties</i>
2nd HM	Laura Bridges	<i>Perry was a Railroad Town</i>
3rd HM	Tanya Whitney	<i>The Shelby</i>

25. Baxter County Poets' Award

Sponsor: Baxter County Poets' Association

(26 entries) Judge: Elizabeth Dail

1st place	Fay Guinn	<i>NIGHT THE UNIVERSE LISTENED</i>
2nd place	Dargan M. Ware	<i>Stars Must Be Lonely</i>
3rd place	Donna Smith	<i>Grandpa's Porch</i>
1st HM	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Forest Tribe</i>
2nd HM	Teresa H. Klepac	<i>Starfish on the Beach</i>
3rd HM	Mark Hudson	<i>Cosmic Mirages</i>

26. Gin Creek Poets Award

Sponsor: Gin Creek Poets

(19 entries) Judge: Gin Creek Poets

1st place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>My Twilight Tune</i>
2nd place	Dennis Patton	<i>Not Me</i>
3rd place	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Could I Have This Dance?</i>
1st HM	Terry Jude Miller	<i>Sauter, Crapaud (Jump, Toad)</i>
2nd HM	Stephen Schwei	<i>Carousel</i>
3rd HM	Jerri Hardesty	<i>Vincent</i>

27. Grands

Sponsor: Dr. Emory Jones

(26 entries) Judge: Teresa H. Klepac

1st place	Nick Sweet	<i>The Rustic Statesman</i>
2nd place	Barbara Castle	<i>The Castle's Lair</i>
3rd place	Alyssa Darby	<i>Deep-rooted Wisdom</i>
1st HM	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Walking to Grandpa's</i>
2nd HM	Sara Gipson	<i>Picasso Inspires Promise</i>
3rd HM	Marilyn Joyner	<i>Granny's New Day</i>

28. A Tale from a Fish

Sponsor: Terrie Jacks

(21 entries) Judge: GailDenham

1st place	Jerri Hardesty	<i>A Big Fish Story</i>
2nd place	Fay Guinn	<i>WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT FISHING?</i>
3rd place	Stephen Schwei	<i>I'm Hooked</i>
1st HM	Tanya Whitney	<i>A Lazy Day</i>
2nd HM	Dennis Patton	<i>From the Lake</i>
3rd HM	Donna Smith	<i>Dad's Gone Fishin'</i>

29. Pen to Paper Award

Sponsor: Diane Stefan and Pat Durmon

22 entries) Judge: Diane Stefan and Pat Durmon

1st place	Alyssa Darby	<i>Shallow Roots</i>
2nd place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Yad</i>
3rd place	Jerri Hardesty	<i>The Importance of Roots</i>
1st HM	Laura Bridges	<i>Looking Back at My Roots</i>
2nd HM	Marilyn Joyner	<i>The Album</i>
3rd HM	Fay Guinn	<i>NEVER FORGET WHERE YOU CAME FROM</i>

30. Elsie Larson Memorial Award

Sponsor: Gail Denham

(17 entries) Judge: Gail Denham

1st place	Janice Freytag	<i>First line: unconvinced, my phone</i>
2nd place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Generous Offer from yet Another Charity</i>
3rd place	Mark Hudson	<i>Laugh</i>
1st HM	Fay Guinn	<i>First line: laptops misspell, stress</i>
2nd HM	Stephen Schwei	<i>First line: at seventy-one</i>

3rd HM Ann Carolyn Cates *MEXICAN FOOD*

31. Mattie Campbell's Ozark Award

Sponsor: Joan Barrett Roberts

(19 entries) Judge: Joan Barrett Roberts

1st place	Donna Smith	<i>Land of My Forefathers</i>
2nd place	Lorraine Jeffery	<i>Trekking Arkansas Mountains</i>
3rd place	Cathy Moran	<i>As gentle as a spirit of settlement</i>
1st HM	Pat Durmon	<i>Whispering Hills</i>
2nd HM	Crystie Cook	<i>Music in the Ozark Mountains</i>
3rd HM	Laura Bridges	<i>Riverside at Sugarloaf Mountain</i>

32. Haiku Classical and Modern

Sponsor: The Arkansas Haiku Society

(28 entries) Judge: The Arkansas Haiku Society

1st place	Lydia Cheatham	<i>humpback whale spray</i>
2nd place	Nancy LaChance	<i>ripe red fruit</i>
3rd place	Dr. Emory D. Jones	<i>Swirling leaves flutter</i>
1st HM	Janice Freytag	<i>drops of blood on snow</i>
2nd HM	Ann Carolyn Cates	<i>white crepe myrtle bush</i>
3rd HM	Dennis Patton	<i>rust on golden pears</i>

33. Glassworks Award

Sponsor: Gayle Glass

(16 entries) Judge: Christine Henderson

1st place	Dennis Patton	<i>Silence is Golden</i>
2nd place	Alyssa Darby	<i>Light Wrapped 'round</i>
3rd place	Russell H. Strauss	<i>Curfew Warning</i>
1st HM	Jerri Hardesty	<i>Animal Planet</i>
2nd HM	Mike Wahl	<i>Abysmal</i>
3rd HM	Stephen Schwei	<i>Rolling Thunder</i>



