

NEWS 'N' NOTES

Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas

Founded February 5, 1931

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

<http://poetsroundtableofarkansas.org>

May 2016

President's Address:

Poets,

I hope your allergy medicine this spring is picking beautiful words from those which are blooming and arranging them for the world to see. I would encourage you to remember your imagination is the bucket of color. By no means be afraid to use your geography, your flora, your fauna to create the poem arrangement you pick. A good reason was illustrated at Spring Celebration by one of the poems for critique. In "Night Noise" the poet used helicopter which seemed foreign to some of us. However, when it was revealed the poet lived near a hospital, we could readily grasp the picture.

Be sure and stay actively involved in poetry as we enter summer. Some of our groups are holding open mic events while some are working Art in the Park. There will be special contests to be announced and the Poetry Day contests are on the website. If your branch has an upcoming event, let us know so we can share when and where. Any event will draw attention to our passion and can be a pathway to new members. Keep writing.

Life is too short to be without poetry.

Dennis

Dr. Lily Peter Spring Celebration:

Many thanks to the South Arkansas Poets of the Pines (SAPOP) for hosting the annual Dr. Lily Peter Spring Celebration April 23rd in El Dorado. We enjoyed a Friday night meal at the Laredo Grill on the Square, followed by an "Open Mic Night" at PJ's Coffee Shop. PRA's own Karen Hayes was "hot" as the featured performer, reciting 5 series of poems. Several audience members, including PRA'ers, also participated with spirited readings. Then on Saturday we enjoyed a full conference at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. SAPOP President Donna Henson opened the meeting, welcomed us to historic El Dorado and dedicated the conference to departed PRA members Doreen Bailey, Magdalene Collums and Betty Heidelberger. To honor the conference namesake, Jim Barton delivered the same poem that Betty Heidelberger reads each year by Dr. Lily Peter, a past Arkansas Poet Laureate. PRA President Dennis Patton then offered tips for critiquing our poetry and that of others with humorous examples of a "Poetry Mechanic." He also read his winning 2015 Sybil Nash Abrams poem, "The Jesse James Shoot-out". SAPOP Treasurer Jim Barton presented the first Lifetime Achievement Award to Poets of the Pines charter member Mildred McKinney, who was described as "the heart and soul" of SAPOP. Ms. McKinney is from Camden, a lifetime honorary member of PRA, and in her mid-90s. She is still able to recite more poems

than most of us have read. We congratulate her on her many contributions and achievements. Everyone had a wonderful time and returned home with a jar of delicious Mayhaw jelly from El Dorado.

**Thanks to all who sponsored the following contests!
Winners announced at the conference are:**

Dr. Lily Peter Contest

Honorable Mention -- Sara Gipson

Third Place -- Pat Laster

Second Place -- Cathy Moran

First Place -- Karen Hayes

Mary Harper Sowell Awards Contest

Second Honorable Mention -- Karen Hayes

First Honorable Mention -- Marcia Camp

Third Place -- Cathy Moran

Second Place -- Barbara Blanks

First Place -- Laura Loughridge

Verna Lee Hinegardner Memorial Contest

Third HM -- Barbara Blanks

Second HM -- Charlie Southerland

First HM -- Laura Loughridge

Third Place -- Pat Durmon

Second Place -- Pat Laster

First Place -- Jim Barton

Light and Serious Verse Contests

Light Verse – Laura Loughridge

Serious Verse – Jim Barton

2015 Anthology Contest

Fifth Place -- Betty Heidelberger

Fourth Place -- Karen Hayes

Third Place -- Fay Smalling Guinn

Second Place -- Sara Gipson

First Place -- Pat Laster

2016 Collegiate Awards

Third Place - Andrew Newman, National Park College

Second Place - Austin Farrell, University of Arkansas

First Place- Annie Criswell, Hendrix

(Students entered from 6 colleges across the state.)

2016 High School Student SNA Awards

3HM - David Xiang, Little Rock Central High

2HM - Isaiah Spencer, Quitman High

1HM - Jacob Gifford, Quitman High

Third Place - Hanna Greene, Quitman High

Second Place - Bridgette Noland, Bentonville High

First Place - Flannery Hirrel, Little Rock (home school)

(Students entered from 5 schools across the state.)

PRA members are asked to speak at schools and colleges to encourage more student participation.

Business Meeting Minutes, April 23, 2016

1. Secretary's Report – read by Laura Loughridge was approved with one correction: spring contests are funded by the Contest Fund, not General Fund.
2. Treasurer's Report – read by Jim Barton was approved.
3. PRA Concerns - to be addressed at the June Board meeting – Recruitment, Retainment, Finances, and Additions to website such as poetry form resources.
4. Newspaper ad – Cathy Moran checked the cost of a basic 2x2 ad run one time in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. It costs \$437 with statewide coverage. Members discussed how to reach local newspapers through press releases for free coverage of events.
5. Second Vice President Position – The PRA 2nd VP resigned after Poetry Day. Cathy Moran made a motion that the position be deleted. That requires a change in the constitution. The motion passed and will come to a vote at Poetry Day.
6. Roll Call of Branches – President Dennis Patton conducted the roll call of branches. He then announced a new branch in Searcy called the Gin Creek Poets.
7. Poetry Day 2016 – will be in Hot Springs on Saturday, October 22, with Friday night activities. John Crawford is PD Chair. Pat Laster stepped in as Contest Chair.
8. Vacant Historian Position – With Betty Heidelberger's death, this position was vacant. Marilyn Joyner volunteered for the position and the board approved.
9. Hosts for 2017 Spring Celebration and Poetry Day – Dennis encouraged members to speak to their branches about hosting either of these events. He also asked for a volunteer to be anthology chair.

Reminder!

PRA member fees are due by June 30th. To be listed in the 2017 PRA yearbook, participate in free monthly contests, and enter the NFSPS annual contests your dues must be paid. Please send \$20 (or \$15 for students and seniors) to PRA Treasurer Jim Barton at Box 263, Huttig, AR 71747. (Note: College students who entered the collegiate contest are paid through 2017.)

Poetry Day, October 22, Hot Springs:

Our thanks to the Hot Springs Poets who will host the 2016 Poetry Day conference on Saturday, October 22, from 8:30 AM to 3 PM at the Comfort Inn (behind Dixie Café), 3627 Central Avenue in Hot Springs. A Friday night event, also at the Comfort Inn, is planned from 7 to 9 PM. Many thanks to Pat Laster who will serve as Poetry Day Contest Chair. See the Poetry Day contest brochure attached and posted on PRA's website. Send poems with payment in one envelope between June 1 and August 15, 2016 to Pat Laster, 7433 Samples Rd., Benton, AR 72019.

Tentative agendas for Poetry Day activities:

Fridav, October 21, 2016, 7- 9 PM. at Comfort Inn, 3627 Central Ave, Hot Springs, 501-623-1700:

- Sing-a-long, led by PD Chair John Crawford and Terry Rutledge with keyboard
- Read-a-round, 1 poem, 24 lines, subject-something about membership in PRA, any form
- Impromptu contest (sheets provided at registration) for a poem of 24 lines, subject-"fall", any form
- A hand-raised vote will award by majority prizes of \$25, 15 and 10 provided by Hot Springs PRA

Saturday, October 22, 2016, at Comfort Inn, 3627 Central Ave, Hot Springs, 501-623-1700:

8:30 - 9:15	Registration
9:15 - 10:00	Greetings - Hot Springs - John Crawford Greetings - PRA President - Dennis Patton Reading of Poetry Day Proclamation Announcements from floor
10:00 - 10:30	Poetry Presentation - Kai Coggin
10:30 - 10:45	Break
10:45 - 11:15	Critique of Poems - Kai Coggin
11:15 - 11:30	Questions from the floor
11:30 - 1:00	Lunch on your own -- Dixie Cafe (next door)
1:00 - 1:30	Business Meeting - Dennis Patton
1:30 - 2:30	Awards Chair - Pat Laster
2:30	Announcements and dismissal

Want an Online Branch?

All PRA'ers are welcome to join an online branch, led by PRA's Membership Chair Kate Lacy. The current month's challenge is to write 2-3 poems of 24 lines for any Poetry Day contest. Email poems to her for critique by June 3rd at voicedancer2002@yahoo.com.

PRA- Arkansas State Fair Partnership:

PRA is sponsoring the Best-of-Show poetry winners for 4 age groups at the 2016 Arkansas State Fair in October. Winners will receive: \$25/adult (age 19+), \$25/senior youth (14-18), \$15/junior youth (9-13) and \$10/youth (5-8). The adult winner also will receive a PRA membership for 2017. Press releases will go to each winner's hometown newspaper. See the State Fair's website (arkansasstatefair.com) for contest details, or call 501-372-8341 for a print version. Entry is free to all Arkansans. Mailed poems (with entry form) must arrive at the fair by September 30, or be hand delivered by the dates printed in the general rules. The fair will share poets' mailing information with PRA. The fair's online Creative Arts Handbook will include PRA's website so entrants may research and alert the fair if they don't want their address released.

Farewell to Betty (1937-2016):

Past PRA President Betty Lou (Gibbs) Heidelberger of Lexa died suddenly in a vehicle accident on March 10, 2016. She was born February 9, 1937 in Memphis, Tennessee to the late (W.P.) William Parker and Florence Moore Gibbs. She was a member of Jacksonville United Methodist Church where she assisted her late husband, Henry Heidelberger, Sr., in teaching Sunday school for 25 years. She loved God, her church, her family and poets. She was a published poet, past state president of PRA, president of the Delta Poets (a PRA branch), and member of both the River Market Poets of Little Rock (PRA) and the Poets' Society of Tennessee. Betty loved nature, animals and the Delta. Many of her poems were about these subjects. She was always eager to help the less fortunate. Betty is survived by her 5 children, 16 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and many friends.

"Betty will be sorely missed by all those who knew her." - PRA President Dennis Patton

"Oh my heart breaks to hear this news. What a wonderful lady she was." - PRA Membership Chair Kate Lacy

"Arkansas has lost a wonderful lady and poet. PRA has lost a great worker and leader. I have lost a piece of my heart. Betty made me feel like I was worth something. She was a dear friend, and I am stunned. She meant so much to me and to all she met. I miss her. I will always miss her." - NFSPS VP and PRA Treasurer Jim Barton

"(Several PRA members attended Betty's funeral.) Harding Stedler and Dennis Patton spoke at the service. Many of Betty's poems were read by the family, plus one to be opened only at her death. It was poignant. She is sorely missed." - Past PRA President Pat Laster

Poem For Betty

You were ambience personified,
perennial flower in our heart's vases,
best ambassador for gladness,
and we will ever miss you.

You decorated with wisdom's touch -
every room we'd made drab by muttering,
with your broom of laughter, swept
aside the bleak, distressing 'small' stuff.

Our sweet and sage poet of skill and wit,
we can but try, . . . be certain that we will,
to paint some soul just as you painted ours,
with vivid gaiety, mischief, and grace.

By Stephen Phillip Johnson
(Read at the funeral of Betty Heidelberger)

Yearbook Corrections:

Please make the following additions/corrections to your 2015-2016 yearbook. For security reasons, member addresses will not be posted in the newsletter or on the web in the future.

Welcome to the new PRA branch **Gin Creek Poets of Searcy** formed in February! Members include: President, Christine Henderson; Secy/Treasurer, Amanda Partridge; John McPherson; Rhonda Roberts; Jim Sheffer; Pauly Bunting; Patsy Pipkin; and Kim Vernon. They meet monthly, the 2nd Thursday, 6:30 PM at Simmons Bank, 401 S. Main St, Searcy, AR.

Welcome new PR members: Annie Criswell, Conway; Samuel Cross-Meredith, Texarkana; Austin Farrell, Fayetteville; Joshua Hammons, Conway; Jon Han (MO); Karl Killian, Fayetteville; Barbara Laird, Hackett; Arianna Miguez, London; Phyllis Moutray (IL); Andrew Newman, Hot Springs; Jennifer Purinton, El Dorado; Lucas Smith, Franklin; Jane Weathers, Siloam Springs.

River Poets of Batesville have changed their meeting location: 6PM each 2nd Tuesday of the month at UACCB Fine Arts Building in Batesville.

New Officers for Poets Northwest are: Marion Tichenor, President; Harry McDermott, Treasurer; Kate Lacy, Program Chair; and Vivian Barcroft, Assistant.

Note – Information from the yearbook is now posted on PRA's website, excluding member names/addresses. PRA also is working to deliver the 2017 yearbooks electronically. Printed books will still be available. So pay your membership for 2017 to PRA Treasurer Jim Barton by 6/30/16, update your contact information, and be included in the new yearbook published in July.

Did You Know?

All PRA members are also members of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS) with yearly access to 45 free or low cost contests in Arkansas, 50 contests at the national level, plus free access to PRA's State Critic services. Members may also access contests in other states through the NFSPS website.

Poetic Wins, Activities & Publications:

Please send notice of your accomplishments to PRA News Editor Donna Smith, 58 Briarwood, Greenbrier, AR 72058 (tndsmith@live.com).

PRA Monthly Contest winners are: February- 1st Dennis Patton, 2nd Don Crowson, 3rd D. Beecher Smith; and March – 1st Jennifer Purinton, 2nd Barbara Blanks, 3rd Cathy Moran, 1HM Karen Hayes, 2HM Don Crowson, 3HM Dennis Patton. Check contest winners at <http://poetsroundtableofarkansas.org>.

Beecher Smith (Member-at-large – Memphis, TN) won 2nd Place in Limericks, 2nd Place in Creative Nonfiction, and 3rd Place in Children's Poetry, plus an HM in Small Towns poetry at Green River Writers' Conference, Louisville, KY. He also is sponsoring a new contest for PRA's Poetry Day.

Lee Ann Russell (Member-at-large – Springfield, MO) won a 1st place in Humorous Verse from Missouri State Poetry Society, and has a photo in the Senior Art Exhibition at MSU's Hammons Hall. She won a 1st place in the Missouri Writer's Guild Contest, and 3 of her poems are included in the 2016 Missouri Writer's Guild Anthology. Lee Ann authored a wonderful resource book entitled *How to Write Poetry, Ballad to Villanelle* with 184 pages, 448 definitions, 205 poetic forms, 102 examples and 173 famous poets' life spans. Contact Lee Ann at 1004 N. Rogers, Springfield, MO 65802, or lar1111@sbcglobal.net for a copy.

Cathy Moran (River Market) won two 1st places in Pennsylvania and two 1st places and an HM in Mississippi.

PRA members who attended the 24th annual Lucidity Poetry Retreat in Eureka Springs, April 19-21 were: Pat Laster, Kate Lacy, Jo Lightfoot, Diane Stefan, Charlie Southerland, Pat Durmon, Christine Henderson, Kim Vernon, Barbara Blanks (TX), Dena Gorrell (OK), Jon Han (MO) and Phyllis Moutray (IL). Winner of the Critic's Choice contest was new PRA member Jon Han. Contest winners were Pat Durmon, 1st (\$100), HMs- Christine Henderson, Kim Vernon, Charlie Southerland and Barbara Blanks (\$25 each). Next year's Lucidity is Apr 4-6. See more at www.luciditypoetryretreat.com.

Pat Laster (Saline County) was interviewed for a Saturday 4/23 podcast on the Ozark Radio Hour. It was archived, so it will be available for some time.

South Arkansas Poets of the Pines (SAPOP) and South Arkansas Writers were featured in an article in the Spring 2016 edition of the *El Dorado Insider's Guide*. SAPOP members also hosted open mic sessions on February 12, March 25, and April 22 at PJ's Coffee on the square in El Dorado. We thank SAPOP for all the work they did hosting PRA's Spring Conference, too.

The Hot Springs Branch participated in the April 29 - May 8 event ARTS AND THE PARK in Hot Springs, and sponsored 2 contests for adults and youth. They also are busy planning to host Poetry Day in Hot Springs the third weekend of October, with some fun activities on Friday evening, including a read-a-round, an impromptu contest, and a sing-a-long. Contact Poetry Day Chair John Crawford with any questions at: docshakespeare@gmail.com or 501-802-0315.

Marilyn Joyner (SAPOP) has graciously agreed to serve as PRA's Historian for the rest of Betty Heidelberger's term. Please send pictures, clippings and items for PRA's scrapbook to Marilyn at 3606 Iris St., El Dorado, AR 71730.

Congratulations to our excellent poets and branches for promoting the art of poetry!

Need Publishing Tips?

Check with Pat Durmon who, with her marketing team, researched publishing tips for "old school" and "new school" poets. She will be happy to share their results. Contact Pat at jdurmon@centurytel.net.

Upcoming Deadlines/Events/Contests

2nd Saturday each Month: PRA's Monthly Contest entries are due by mail to Chairman Stephen Johnson, 93 Old Tracy Road, Mountain Home, AR 72653. See guidelines on page 7 of PRA's Yearbook. For poem forms see shadowpoetry.com and rhymezone.com.

PRA members may send poems for critique – one free per month - to PRA's State Critic Jeff Rawlings, P.O. Box 76, Yellville, AR 72687 (jeffr50@yahoo.com.) Jeff accepts poems by email.

May: PRA is partnering with the Arkansas State Fair to sponsor the 2016 Best-of-Show poetry winners in four age groups: Adults (age 19+), Senior Youth (14-18), Junior Youth (9-13), and Youth (5-8). See details posted this month at Arkansasstatefair.com in the Creative Arts Competition Guidelines. Entries are free, for Arkansans only and due in September by posted deadlines. Prizes will be awarded in October by mail.

May 4 – June 1: Deadline for Writer's Digest Annual Writing Competition offering a \$5,000 grand prize and trip to the WD Conference. Poems and several other writing categories are accepted online or by mail with an entry fee determined by entry date. See guidelines at writersdigest.com.

May 27: 7PM *Reading on the Grounds* at Guillermo's Coffeehouse, 10700 N. Rodney Parham, Little Rock. Award-winning Little Rock poets Jo McDougall, Bryan Borland, and Seth Pennington, plus acclaimed Kansas City poet Mary Frances Wagner will read from new work. Join in for complimentary coffee, a one-hour reading, book signing, and social hour. Contact Justin Yandell at 501-228-4448 for more information.

June 1: The 2016 Great River Shakespeare Festival/Maria W. Faust Sonnet Contest is open to receive sonnet entries due June 1, 2016. Prizes total over \$2,000. Judges include three present and past Poets Laureate. Full contest details at sonnetcontest.org.

June 1 - August 15: PRA's Poetry Day contest entries and fees are due in one envelope postmarked between June 1 and August 15, 2016 to Poetry Day Contest Chair Pat Laster, 7433 Samples Road Benton, AR 72019. See contest details attached and on website.

June 3-4: Watch for the Arkansas Writers' Conference. See details at arkwritersconf.org.

June 9-13: NFSPS Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota. See details at www.nfsp.com. (The 2017 and 2018 national conferences will be in Texas and Colorado.)

June 30: Deadline for PRA membership dues and information updates for the 2017 yearbook. Send \$20 (or \$15 for seniors and students), along with updates on address, phone and email to PRA Treasurer Jim Barton, Box 263, Huttig, AR 71474. Copies of all updates will be forwarded to Yearbook Editor Cathy Moran and Membership Chair Kate Lacy. Branch Presidents, please also provide updates on new officers, meeting dates, places & times. New yearbooks will be printed in July with the available information.

July 1-Aug 27: Submissions due for the Betty Heidelberger Memorial contests sponsored by Saline County Branch of PRA: 3 contests with awards of \$25/\$15/\$10/\$5/\$5/\$5. Entry fees are \$2 per poem or \$5 for up to 3 entries. Net proceeds will be donated to PRA in memory of Betty. Make checks payable to Dennis Patton, President. Mail entries and fees in one envelope to: Catherine Parker, 17102 North Alexander Rd, Lot 587, Alexander, AR 72002. Contests include: 1) Form-Free Verse, Subject-Any, Line limit-30; 2)

Form-Rhyme, Subject-Any, Line limit-20; 3) Form-Any, Subject-Any, Line-limit 30. Submit typed original & copy with contest # and form in upper left corner of both. On duplicate only, place name, address, e-mail, and phone# in upper right corner. Paper clip each original poem and copy together. Poems may be published or unpublished, but must be original. Saline County Branch will judge. Winners to be announced by October 1, on PRA's website. Contact Dennis Patton for more details at patton_dr@hotmail.com.

July/August: Watch your mailbox for PRA's new 2016-2017 yearbook to be printed in July with available information and mailed to paid members in August. Information from the yearbook, except member names/addresses, also will be posted on PRA's website.

September 1: Chicagoland Poetry Contest entries due. See guidelines at poetsandpatrons.net.

September 30: Entries for the Arkansas State Fair Poetry Contests must arrive by this date, if mailed. See details at arkansasstatefair.com. PRA will award Best-of-Show prizes in 4 age groups at the Fair in October.

October 18: Deadline for PRA's Anthology pages and contest. See guidelines on pages 11-13 in the yearbook.

October 21-22: PRA's 2016 Poetry Day Events will be in Hot Springs hosted by the Roundtable Poets of Hot Springs at Comfort Inn on Central Avenue. Contact Poetry Day Chair John Crawford for questions.

November: Student contest information will be posted and distributed this month. PRA branches are asked to promote these contests with schools in their area. Contact Youth Contest Chair Laura Loughridge with questions.

For More Information - Check PRA's website for updates on Arkansas activities and like us on Facebook. Also check the NFSPS web site (www.nfsp.com) for national news, contests, and links to other state poetry societies.

PRA members receive the quarterly *News 'N Notes* via email and web posting. The NFSPS quarterly *Strophes* newsletter is available online via link from PRA's website. Members also may request copies of both by postal mail. Branch Presidents are asked to assure that all members have access to these publications.

Please alert PRA Membership Chair Kate Lacy with any changes in member contact information or branch meeting places/times/officers. PRA currently serves 152 members, 12 branches, and an online poets' group.