

# NEWS 'N' NOTES

## Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas

Founded February 5, 1931

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

<http://poetsroundtableofarkansas.org>

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February 2018

### President's Address:

Members,

The new year has arrived! As January often does, it began with its own new year's resolution—a bitter week of winter. Lows were in single digits. It looked as if we would have a winter like the old days. Then, as we usually do with our resolutions, January backslid; and we had a few days of spring with warming across the state. Again, as January remembered that new resolution, we had a few more days of winter, real snow, lows in the teens. Being a quitter like we are sometimes, January has slacked off on the resolution and faded into more spring-like weather. But, who knows, we made our first trip of the year to the gym today. Be ready for anything!

Sadly, some of us are getting into the act by coming down with colds, sniffles, and crud and croup that make the rounds during the uncertainty of January. Hang in there. You can't fool Mother Nature for long. She will get it straightened out. In fact, there are some green shoots springing up in the usual places and buttercups will make yellow smiley faces soon. They are not quite as good for what ails us as the hot soups my mother used to make this time of year, but they will help us hold out until the weather settles into the spring we anticipate, which is just around the corner.

Meanwhile, when you are out, bundle up. While you are inside, snuggle up to the fireplace or at least a hot cup of something to keep you warm as you look out the window. Dream about what you are looking forward to in the new year. Keep writing equipment handy to document what you see - whether it be nose mittens, kids, or kittens, or some other subject worthy of a poet's talent. And, whether you are wearing tank top and flip-flops or overcoat and woolen sox, we look forward to hearing about your adventures of the new year. Poetry is the language of the heart.

Life is too short to be without poetry.

Dennis

### Dr. Lily Peter Spring Celebration April 14<sup>th</sup>:

PRA as a whole will host this year's Dr. Lily Peter Spring Celebration in Little Rock on April 14th from 9:15AM to 3PM at the Cox Building-3<sup>rd</sup> floor on the Central Arkansas Library campus at 120 River Market Avenue. Featured speaker will be Jo McDougall, author, teacher, poet, Pushcart nominee and winner of numerous prestigious awards, including Arkansas's Porter Prize for Literary Excellence, Arkansas Writers' Hall of Fame Inductee (2006), and Honorary Chancellor for National Federation of State Poetry Societies (2017). Ms. McDougall also will share critiques of poems that members submit.

**Members are invited to send 1-2 poems by March 1<sup>st</sup> for Jo's critique to Shawn Southerland, 7922 White Oak Cove, White Hall, AR 71602.** Attendees also may submit a serious poem or light poem at registration. (See guidelines on page 10 of your yearbook.) Members must be present to win. Winners will be determined by attendee vote.

**Remember to mail your 3 poetry contest entries by March 15<sup>th</sup>** to the sponsors listed on page 9 of the yearbook. These contests are for PRA members only.

### Tentative Agenda:

9:15 AM – Registration (& early dues payment)  
9:30 AM – Welcome/Opening (Dennis Patton)  
Brief on Dr. Lily Peter (Donna Smith)  
9:40 AM – Introduction of Speaker (Donna Smith)  
10:35 AM – Break  
10:45 AM – Speaker Shares Critiques  
11:30 AM – Light/Serious Verse Contest Winners  
12 Noon – Lunch in the River Market  
1:15 PM – Introduction of Student Winners  
(Donna Smith & Laura Loughridge)  
1:45 PM – Business Session (Dennis Patton)  
Spring Contest Winners  
(Dennis Patton, John Crawford, Pat Laster)  
2:45 PM – Adjourn

## **Poetry Day Conference, October 13th, Little Rock:**

Poetry Day 2018 will be hosted by PRA as a whole on October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies in Little Rock on the campus of the Central Arkansas Library. The speaker has not yet been determined. If you would like to volunteer to help host Poetry Day, please contact President Dennis Patton at patton\_dr@hotmail.com. More details to come.

## **Poetry Day Contest Sponsorships Due Feb. 28th:**

Please consider sponsoring &/or judging a contest for Poetry Day. Or if you know of a potential sponsor (business or private) alert PRA President Dennis Patton. The Contest Sponsorship form is attached. Send completed forms with appropriate payment to PRA Treasurer Jim Barton (P.O. Box 263, Huttig, AR 71747) by February 28<sup>th</sup>. The Poetry Day contest brochure is produced in March, posted promptly on the PRA website, and mailed with the May newsletter. The subject for this year's Sybil Nash Abrams contest for a top prize of \$1,000 is *Arkansas Historical Homes*.

## **PRA Board Meeting Highlights of 1/20/18:**

### **1 - Discussion on Spring Celebration Continuation:**

Since no branches offered to host the spring and fall PRA 2018 Annual Events, PRA as a whole will host both in centrally located Little Rock. President Patton will discuss at the Spring Celebration whether to continue with two annual meetings. Member opinions are welcome at that time.

**2 - Anthology Changes:** PRA's board approved continuing PRA's anthology with some changes. Mark Barton (SAPOP-El Dorado) and Kate Lacy (Poets NW-Springdale) will be reaching out to members for help to make the anthology an improved version of past books. Changes will include promoting the book and seeking donations for costs to create a new collection of winning and published poems over the last two years from PRA members living in or out of the state. Kate will act as editor and Mark will focus on promotions and donations. If you would like to help, please contact Kate ([voicedancer0002@hotmail.com](mailto:voicedancer0002@hotmail.com)) or Mark ([drspook1302@suddenlink.net](mailto:drspook1302@suddenlink.net)).

**3 - Membership Coordinator Change:** Since Kate Lacy will be acting as editor of the anthology, she will no longer serve as Membership Coordinator. Cathy Moran has agreed to serve in that role. Another change is that all checks and membership information should be sent directly to Cathy Moran, 401 Auburn Dr., Little Rock, AR 72205. Cathy will forward checks to PRA Treasurer Jim Barton, and furnish updated membership information to Jim, President Dennis Patton and Newsletter Editor Donna Smith as needed. These process changes will be reflected in the new 2018-2019 PRA Yearbook to be distributed in August.

**4 - 2018 Jeanie Dolan Carter Memorial Collegiate Contest** – JDC Contest materials have been provided to all colleges statewide and over 150 individual college representatives. Materials also are posted on PRA's

website. Entrees are due 3-15-18 to Chair Donna Smith, 58 Briarwood, Greenbrier, AR 72058. Our thanks to sponsor Roger Carter for his continued support of this statewide student contest. Winners will meet Mr. Carter, read their winning poems, and receive their prizes at the Dr. Lily Peter Spring Celebration on April 14<sup>th</sup> in Little Rock. Press releases will be sent afterward to news outlets and college contacts statewide.

## **5 - 2018 Arkansas State Fair Partnership**

**Continued:** The board decided that PRA will continue to sponsor the *Best-of-Show* poetry winners in 4 age categories each year at the Arkansas State Fair in October. Updated guidelines and entry form will soon be posted on PRA's web site. State Fair general information also is available online for all craft contests at:

**<http://www.arkansasstatefair.com/events/2018/create-arts-information>**.

**6 - Poet Laureate Selection Process:** Arkansas Poet Laureate Peggy Vining passed away in November. The Governor will appoint a new Poet Laureate per Act 292 of 2017. Nominations will be presented to the governor by a committee from higher education and PRA. Cathy Moran and Stacy Pendergrast are representing PRA on the committee. PRA Board members have submitted two nominees from PRA to be considered by the committee as a whole.

**Did You Know?** PRA members are NFSPS members too, with access to other state & national contests.

**Notes from Jim, NFSPS President:** In the January NFSPS Newsletter, President Jim Barton expressed gratitude to all the poets for, "helping make this country just a little more friendly, a little more kind, and a little more beautiful by bonding together and spreading the joy and the wonder of poetry."

Jim's words "a little more" are reflected in a quote from President John F. Kennedy: "If more politicians knew poetry, and more poets knew politics, I am convinced the world would be a little better place to live."

NFSPS needs you. Jim is looking for volunteers to fill three national positions: the Stevens Manuscript Chair, the Brochure Chair, and the College/University Poetry Competition Chair (CUP). Current Chairpersons are resigning due to health/personal issues, but they are willing to help new folks in those roles. Current chairs are Wilda Morris (Stevens), Sharon Martin Turner (Brochures), and Shirley Blackwell (CUP). Please contact Jim ([jbob214@yahoo.com](mailto:jbob214@yahoo.com)) if you are interested in serving at the national level.

## **Yearbook Updates for July 2017 - June 2018:**

Beginning January 2018, South Arkansas Poets of the Pines will hold their meeting at 3:30 pm on the second Tuesday of the month. Meeting place will remain the same - Barton Library in El Dorado.

**Online Group:** PRA members, if you're not attending a branch consider joining the Online Group. Contact Kate Lacy at [voicedancer2002@yahoo.com](mailto:voicedancer2002@yahoo.com). New participants are always welcome.

**Farewell to Peggy Caudle Vining (1929–2017):**

Arkansas Poet Laureate, Peggy Sue Caudle Vining, 88, of Little Rock passed away on Sunday, November 26, 2017. She was born in Greenfield, Tennessee on March 4, 1929 to Clayton and Winnie Moore Caudle. Peggy earned a B.A. in Elementary Education from UALR and taught until she retired in 1993. She also served 21 years as director of the Children's Center at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She is survived by her husband of 69 years Donald D. Vining, Sr. of Little Rock, 5 daughters, 1 son, 11 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Governor Asa Hutchinson said, "With the passing of Mrs. Vining, Arkansas has lost a wonderful poetic ambassador . . . Arkansas is richer for the life of Poet Laureate Peggy Vining and for the verse she left behind. Two lines in her poem *Arkansas the Natural State* capture my feelings about Arkansas: '*O Arkansas, which season is your best? Each one seems far more lovely than the rest.*'"

Vining was appointed Arkansas Poet Laureate in 2003 by Governor Mike Huckabee. She is the 6<sup>th</sup> to hold the position since it was established by legislative resolution on Oct. 10, 1923. Vining's appointment caused a poetic stir in politics at the time, and gave Huckabee a surprise. Arkansas Code 1-4-114 authorized the governor to name a state poet laureate, but tradition allowed the honorary title for a lifetime, to be re-appointed only after the predecessor's death. The 5<sup>th</sup> Arkansas Poet Laureate Verna Lee Hinegardner, who was appointed in 1991 by President Bill Clinton, was moved aside from the role she had filled for 12 years.

From an early age, Peggy "loved the challenge of finding words that rhymed, and (took) great pleasure in giving that joy to young children." She won numerous awards for her poetry, including the Sybil Nash Abrams Award from the Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas. In 2007, she was honored at the State Capitol for her poem *Arkansas the Natural State*. She also was named "Arkansas Mother of the Year" in 1982 by American Mothers Inc. Peggy was known for her passionate faith, great humor, love for children and her creativity. She enjoyed time with her family and reading to her grandchildren.

PRA extends our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Peggy Caudle Vining. We are so grateful to have known Peggy and to have enjoyed her wonderful creativity during her 50+ years as a member of PRA. Peggy served her fellow poets in many capacities through the years, including 3 terms as PRA's President (1965-67, 1981-83 and 2001-2003.)

**Farewell to Wallace Nash Abrams (1923–2017):**

Another member of the Sybil Nash Abrams donor family has died.

Wallace Nash "Buster" Abrams departed earth December 22, 2017. He was born September 9, 1923 to Charles Williams Abrams and Sybil Nash Abrams in Little Rock. He is survived by his wife Marilyn, 2 children, and 12 grandchildren.

Abrams was educated in Little Rock, graduated from UALR with a B.A. in Accounting, and served in the Navy during World War II in the South Pacific. He worked 37 years for the Frank Lyon Company, serving as Vice-President of Sales and Marketing, and Vice-Chairman of the Board. He was honored many times for being an outstanding national distributor of RCA, Whirlpool-Litton, Jenn-Air, Carrier and Bryant. Abrams was elected President of the Greater Little Rock Sales and Marketing Executives Association in 1972, and was the first president to welcome female members into the organization.

A lifelong sports enthusiast, he enjoyed golf, tennis, marathon running, and later race walking. He won many state, regional and national races. Abrams had a great interest in encouraging people to stay healthy and enjoy life more fully. For a short time, he had a television program on Channel 7 called *Senior Fitness*. Almost since its inception, Abrams served on the Governor's Council of Physical Fitness and Sports.

He also served as a member of Baptist Health 55, Arkansas for a Healthy Coalition, Little Rock's Parks and Recreation Vision Team, Chairman of Little Rock's City Beautiful Commission, and first President of the Arkansas Senior Olympics. Abrams was selected as one of 21 individuals to carry the Olympic torch through Little Rock in route to Atlanta in 1996.

PRA sends our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Mr. Wallace Nash "Buster" Abrams.

**Old Anthologies:** If you would like to donate past anthologies to complete PRA's series at the Arkansas State Archives, Arkansas State Library, and the Butler Center, please contact PRA President Dennis Patton, PRA Historian Marilyn Joyner or PRA Board Member Donna Smith.

**Poetic Wins, Activities & Publications:**

**Please send notice of activities & accomplishments to PRA News Editor Donna Smith, 58 Briarwood, Greenbrier, AR 72058 ([tndsmith@live.com](mailto:tndsmith@live.com)).**

PRA Monthly Contest winners are: **November** – a tie for 1<sup>st</sup> between Wendy Visser and John McPherson, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Beecher Smith II, 3<sup>rd</sup> Cathy Moran, 1HM Sara Gipson, 2HM Patricia Laster, 3HM Diane Attwell Palfrey; **December** – 1<sup>st</sup> Harding Stedler, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sara Gipson, 3<sup>rd</sup> Diane Attwell Palfrey, HM Cathy Moran.

Karen Hayes (River Market) was featured in an article in the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* (11-24-17). She was lauded for her volunteer work using poetry with the Arkansas Alzheimer's Association, plus her many other poetic outreach activities in the North Little Rock area. We applaud all of Karen's creative outreach to promote poetry in Arkansas.

Cathy Moran (River Market) placed in the following contests: Florida – two 1<sup>sts</sup> and 1 HM; Alabama - two 1<sup>sts</sup> and one 2<sup>nd</sup>; Chicagoland - two 2<sup>nds</sup>; Indiana – a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Upcoming Deadlines/Events/Contests**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday each Month:** PRA's Monthly Contest entries are due by mail to Chair Jodi Tooke, 331 Beach Haven Road, Hot Springs, AR 71913. See PRA's yearbook and website for rules, plus links to resources on poetry forms.

**February 5, 2018:** Happy 87<sup>th</sup> Birthday to PRA!

**February 28:** PRA's Poetry Day Contest Sponsor Forms are due. (See attached form.) Send completed forms with appropriate payment to PRA Treasurer Jim Barton, P.O. Box 263, Huttig, AR 71747.

**March 15:** PRA's Spring Celebration contest entries are due. See page 9 of the yearbook for guidelines and mail entries to sponsors listed there. Guidelines also are listed on PRA's web site version of the yearbook under the "Resources" tab. These contests are free and open to PRA members only.

**March 15:** National Federation of State Poetry Societies' annual contest entries are due. See instructions on PRA's website or go to [nfsp.com](http://nfsp.com).

**March 15:** Deadline for PRA's Jeannie Dolan Carter Collegiate Contest entries. See guidelines on PRA's website.

**April:** April is National Poetry Month. Celebrate!

**April 10-12:** Lucidity Ozark Poetry Retreat in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. See more information at [www.luciditypoetryretreat.com](http://www.luciditypoetryretreat.com).

**April 14:** Dr. Lily Peter Spring Celebration will be hosted by PRA in Little Rock's River Market at the Cox Building – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. See details above and on PRA's website. Plan to attend, enjoy the speaker (and

new PRA member) Jo McDougall, and hear the student winner readings. Members – current and future - also are welcome to pay your dues early for the upcoming fiscal year at the event.

**May 31-June 3:** NFSPS 2018 Convention in Denver, Colorado. Plan now to join the Columbine Poets of Colorado in the Mile High City. NFSPS President Jim Barton would love to see you there!

**June 30:** Deadline for PRA membership dues and information updates for the new 2018-2019 yearbook. Be sure to include your email address in your contact information. Dues for seniors (65) and students (under 18) are \$15. Regular dues for all others are \$20. The fiscal year runs July 1 to June 30. Mail checks payable to PRA to Membership Coordinator Cathy Moran, 401 Auburn Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205. Late payment may affect your eligibility for contests in the new fiscal year.

**August 15:** Deadline for PRA's Poetry Day contest entries. See details to be posted on PRA's website in March and in the May newsletter.

**October 13:** Poetry Day 2018 will be hosted by PRA in Little Rock at the Butler Center. More details to be announced.

**October 12-14:** Eureka Springs Writers' Conference celebrates its 51<sup>st</sup> annual Ozark Creative Writer's Conference, October 12 – 14<sup>th</sup> at the Best Western Inn of the Ozarks, Eureka Springs. Check the contest website for information.

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 may request copies of both by postal mail. Branch Presidents are asked to assure that all members have access to these publications.

**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](http://www.nfsp.com)) for national news, contests, and links to other state poetry societies. Please alert PRA Membership Chair Cathy Moran with any changes in member contact information or branch meeting places/times/officers. PRA currently serves 124 members, 11 branches, and an online group.



# POETS' ROUNDTABLE OF ARKANSAS

Founded February 5, 1931

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## 2018 Arkansas Poetry Day Contest Sponsorship Form

**Sponsorship Requirements:** A minimum of \$30.00 is required to sponsor a contest, and the first place winnings must be no less than \$25.00. PRA encourages higher level awards, similar to other states, to promote contest participation. If you have questions contact PRA President Dennis Patton at: [patton\\_dr@hotmail.com](mailto:patton_dr@hotmail.com).

**Form:** Complete this form and return it with your payment by the deadline to assure that your contest is listed in the Poetry Day Contest Brochure posted in March on PRA's website.

**Deadline:** The sponsorship form and payment are due **February 28, 2018.**

**Address:** Send this form with your check (payable to PRA) to: Jim Barton, PRA Treasurer  
P.O. Box 263  
Huttig, AR 71747

**Name of award:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Form:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Line limit:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(If a line limit isn't designated by the sponsor, there will be a limit of 40 lines.)

**Other requirements may be noted here or on reverse:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Awards:** First place \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Second place \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Third place \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
First HM \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Second HM \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Third HM \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Eligibility:** Open to all poets ( ) Open to PRA Members only ( )

**Judging:** I will be responsible for judging this contest ( ) Please get a judge for me ( )

**Donor's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_