



2015, ISSUE 1
EDITOR, KATHY COTTON

Also available
on our website
www.illinoispoets.org/
news-links.htm

IN THIS ISSUE

Notes from the Editor	1
President's Message	1
Featured Poet Gail Denham	2
Tracking Submissions	3
Brewed Awakening	3
Spark II Exhibit	3
Poetry Month Display	4
New Members / Members' News	4
Online Submissions	4
Email Critique Groups	4
Chapter Meetings	5
Farewell Poet Laureate	5
Poetry Calendar	5
Writing About Chicago	5
Southern Chapter Exhibit	5
Board of Directors	5

WANTED: PHOTOS, NEWS
Your editor is looking for fresh ideas for feature stories, interviews and writing prompts, as well as news and photos of chapter meetings and poetry events.

Email photos (jpg or tiff) or an idea or news for consideration to kacotton7@frontier.com. Please send photo files as attachments.

Do You Know Where Your Poems Are?

It isn't difficult to keep track of your poems if they are languishing in a drawer or on a hard drive. But for poets who seek publication and contest prizes, tracking submissions becomes part of the challenge. This issue's featured poet, Gail Denham, has honed her tracking system to accommodate making submissions almost every day from hundreds of poems. (See feature on page 2.) Many of us have a smaller selection and our own little organizational schemes.

I track in an easily sortable six-column Excel spreadsheet. My poet/friend Patty, who once received an acceptance two years after a submission (two years!), now uses a system that she created in MS Word, using the search function to sort by journal, title, etc. Other friends I've polled prefer recording submission data in notebooks; they enjoy the emotional release of highlighting and starring acceptances and crossing out rejections. A few more suggestions are on page 3. Send me your best tracking tips for our next issue. —Kathy Cotton, Editor ✍



A Message from the President

Now that the new year is underway, it could be a good time to make some poetry resolutions. A few examples include participating in this year's poetry month library display with a March 7 deadline. Another idea is to participate in more open mics at local coffee houses such as Brewed Awakening in Westmont or Madame Zsu Zsu's tea shop in Highland Park, The Café Gallery in Chicago or so many other local places in your own area.

Perhaps this is the year to start sending or send more poems to various national, international and local journals. *Duotrope*, *Poets and Writers Magazine* and *The Line Break* (an online blog) are just a few places to check for submission ideas.

You might even decide to assemble your own work into a chapbook or full-length collection. The poems could be self-published or in cooperation with a publishing house.

Hosting one of a growing number of salons held in private homes is a congenial way to share poems and even add music or art as a combination of celebrating creativity.

Try contacting local bookstores for readings by a small group of poets. Many places are happy to host an evening or weekend afternoon event and also sell the poets' books.

Start another ISPS chapter at your local library with members in your area. Help is available with guidelines and feedback.

Participate in more theme-related poetry contests. This year's NFSPS offers many choices as do local contests. Highland Park Poetry has ongoing opportunities. Also watch for the next ISPS poetry contest this year.

Make a video of you reading personal poetry and send it out to the world. This idea is growing quite popular. Check YouTube for some performance ideas.

Set aside more time to collect and respond to ideas for writing poetry. It helps to have some goals for future work and even places you want to submit the finished pieces or compilation for a personal collection.

With this year still new between first days of winter and early sightings of spring, it is time to consider the quote by Rainer Maria Rilke, "And now we welcome the new year, full of things that have never been." Happy writing, Susan T. Moss ✍



Spotlight on ISPS Poet Gail Denham

Gail Denham of Oregon belongs to a dozen state poetry associations, including ISPS. A writer and photographer for 36-plus years, she now focuses on poetry. Denham is a frequent contest winner and took a first and an honorable mention in the 2014 ISPS contests. She and her husband live on two acres in Central Oregon. They enjoy their 14 grandchildren and some greats as well.

When did you start writing poetry?

I took college English classes while working full time to put my husband through school (and corralling five kids). My stories were full of archaic language; I turned to nonsense poetry and earned A's. A professor told me, "You really should be published." I was hooked.

Which poets are your favorites?

A long list: Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel (the Okie poet), William Stafford, Ted Kooser, Billy Collins, Jane Kenyon, Sir Charles Keppel (look him up), Mary Oliver, and others. I've read (and underlined) scores of help books such as *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott, *Writing Down the Bones* by Natalie Goldberg, and *The Muses Among Us*, Kim Stafford.

Have you published your poetry?

Yes. I'm practical—don't like to spend all that work and time, then not be published. For years I've sold poems here and there. Now I concentrate on state poetry contests, prompts and guidelines I receive online. I've been published in anthologies such as *Golden Words*, *Distilled Lives*, *Through a Distant Lens*, *Mountains, Valley & Oceans*, *Legends*, and *Gifts of the Great Spirit*, to name a few. I've also published three poetry chapbooks.

What is your advice to fellow poets?

SEND OUT YOUR WORK! Any poem or manuscript does no good in a desk drawer. Find markets through *Poetry Market* or prompts online. Also join critique groups, including online. Secondly, READ, READ, READ. Read every kind of poet; emulate some—pick a favorite line from one and take off on that. Read other genres; historical mysteries are my favorites. Read the natural world—I love junipers, the songs of coyotes, relationships, humor, old buildings that creak their stories. Take a trip around your state, explore ghost towns. Go downtown; watch people. My goal is to "write the real." Obscure around-the-barn poetry, I don't understand or write. Literary poetry's beyond me, too. I've noticed Oregon's poet laureates write understandable poems. That's encouraging. I would suggest poets not push rhyme or to be too literary. Write natural.

What are you working on?

It's a daily drill to find new contests, markets, places asking for submissions. Plus, when I hear about a new form of poetry, I try it. Great fun. I don't write every day, but most days I submit something from the hundreds of poems I have in files.

How do you keep track of your frequent submissions?

Tracking poetry submissions is a challenge. I file each poem in a separate manila folder. A 5x7 card inside lists the poem and where it's been sent, if it's won a prize, etc. In addition I have a notebook into which I enter every submission and date. Cross indexing is vital. Poem folders are filed alphabetically. ✍

Poems by Gail Denham

The Sleeper Car

Ratcheting up from deep sleep, I'm aware
the train moves again. The gentle rock
and occasional bump brings my head
in contact with the sagging upper bunk
mattress where she finally sleeps;

this fantastic storyteller who regaled us long
after midnight with small town stories which drew
us into South Dakota just as this engine pulls a river
of cars through canyons with walls close enough
to notice single blossoms and stunted trees
that erupt from rocky cracks;

and after she clumsily hoisted her prodigious
frame to the overhead and when lights dimmed
till passing towns made rainbow shadows on the walls
of our car, she began to laugh again, while I fought
sudden panic should her bed collapse upon me;
but my heart betrayed me into giggles,
then guffaws that helped
shake our journey into the darkness.

From *Hold That Moment*

Dance a Little

Centó form with lines from William Stafford

This whole day is your gift. Dance
on the calendar. Time jerks its way
forward, yet we looked our message
across the room and made our escape.

It's a good world to be lost in where
the gray door opens. The way a door
clicks, we're caught up in a dance
where no one feels need or fear.

Outside, the lawn jumps in the rain,
sounding its quick little sips. This
everything dance, even mushrooms
will speak. Dreams out there like silver

music, the sky going everywhere pours
into our eyes. On brick walls, a certain
light begins to learn its way and pieces
of time break off, alive in their being.

Published in the *Arizona Poetry
Association Anthology*

Clouds of Alzheimer's

Heptalude

Creaky rocker, arms worn smooth
by worried hands
stroking tan wood,
fearing darkening shadows,
chasing memories,
grasping wispy
out of reach reality.

From *Hold That Moment* ✍

Resources for Tracking Your Submissions

Are you looking for a simple way to organize the what, when and where of your poetry submissions to journals and contests? Try one of these templates, downloadable free from Internet sources.

Annie Neugebauer offers a document template with columns for title, market, submission date, response and notes. Her table features color-coded entries: red/rejected, yellow/under consideration, green/published. Download the chart from www.annie-neugebauer.com.

Matt Bell says he made "a simple one on Google Docs (including a fancy formula to calculate response times, which always feels important)." His free chart, tracking title, publication, date sent, date response received, response, wait/response time, and notes/feedback, is available to download at www.mattbell.com.

For more extensive organization, check www.mamatrue.com/2009/09/30/organizyourpoems/ Mama True suggests three Excel worksheets: poem index, published poems, and need editing.

Once you find a system that works for you, remember it is only as useful as the updated information you enter for each submission. ✍

Spark 2 Exhibit: A Joint Project of ISPS and Lemont Center for the Arts

Twenty-six members of ISPS responded to the invitation from The Lemont Center for the Arts (LCA) to write poems in response to images of artwork submitted for an upcoming exhibit, entitled Spark 2, reflecting the idea of "one form of expression providing the spark for another."

Poets are invited to read their poems, view the art and meet the artists at a reception March 15, 1:00–3:00

ISPS Poetry Readings at Brewed Awakening

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

Donna Vorreyer will join Deborah Rohde, whose reading scheduled for January was postponed due to driving conditions, as featured poets at Brewed Awakening on Sunday, March 29 at 12:30 p.m. Open mic readings will follow.

DONNA VORREYER is the author of *A House of Many Windows* (Sundress Publications, 2013) as well as six chapbooks, most recently *Encantado*, a collaboration with artist Matt Kish from Redbird Chapbooks, to be released in April. Her poems have appeared in numerous journals, including *Rhino*, *Sugar House Review*, *Linebreak*, *Cider Press Review* and *Oyez Review*. She is an assistant poetry editor for *Extract(s)*, and her second collection is forthcoming from Sundress Publications in 2016.

DEBORAH ROHDE began writing poetry in 2012 when she was "struck by the muse after perceiving yellow chrysanthemums as lemon snow cones." Following a 30 year career in hospital construction management, Rohde retired from the non-profit corporate universe to pursue her first love: teaching. Rohde's publishing credits include poems featured in *Distilled Lives, Volume 2*, *Your DailyPoem.com*, *Highland Park Poetry* and the

full length book, *Planning and Managing Major Construction Projects; A Guide for Hospitals*. Her poetry has earned awards in contests sponsored by local, state and national organizations. She is a frequent participant in poetry open mics around Chicagoland and was selected to read her work in a juried reading sponsored by Oak Brook Library. Rohde is a member of the Board of Directors of Poets and Patrons and a Fellow in the American Society of Healthcare Executives.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26

The April 26th reading at Brewed Awakening will feature all the poets who attend. Wilda Morris says, "Bring a bunch of poems so you can participate in Hat Trick Poetry. You will get to put one topic (or poetry form) in the hat, and get first chance at reading when your card is drawn. There may be one or two surprises, too, as we celebrate the end of National Poetry Month."

Brewed Awakening is located at 19 West Quincy (across from the train station) in Westmont. Cover charge of \$7.00 includes coffee and a snack. The readings are sponsored by the Illinois State Poetry Society and Brewed Awakening. More information is available at www.illinoispoets.org. ✍

p.m., at the LCA, 1234 State Street in Lemont. The artworks and poetry will remain on exhibit until April 12 for those who are unable to attend the reception.

The following ISPS members have poems in the exhibit: David Alexander, Michael Anderson, Candace Armstrong, Camille Ball, Robert Coté, Gail Denham, Sheila Elliott, Michael Escobus, Georgiann Foley,

Marilyn Huntman Giese, Caroline Johnson, Jim Lambert, Jill Angel Langlois, Pamela Larson, Wilda Morris, Susan Moss, Ina Perlmutter, Jenene Ravesloot, Marjorie Rissman, Barbara Robinette, Deborah Rohde, Tom Roby, Marie Samuel, Judith Tullis, Gail Vescovi, and Linda Wallin.

ISPS and LCA previously cooperated in an exhibit in which the artists created work inspired by our poetry. ✍

"Transportation" is Theme for Poetry Month Displays

Saturday, March 7, is the final day for active members to submit poems for the ISPS National Poetry Month displays. Exhibits will be installed in ten libraries in April and one in May.

A list of where poems have been placed will be available after all are collected and mounted. To have a poem included:

1. Send one or two "family friendly" poems of one page or less on the theme of "transportation."
2. Use a simple, legible font (no script) in 14 point type.
3. Center the title at the top and skip two spaces before beginning the poem.
4. Put poet's name two spaces below poem and to the right of center.
5. Do not use bold type, quotation marks or underlining in the title.
6. Center the poem on the page.
7. Do not send in pdf format.
8. Send one or two entries to jkirscher@comcast.net by the March 7 deadline.
9. If unable to send via email as an attachment, mail hard copies to: Sheila Kirscher, 705 Gregory, Wilmette, Illinois 60091. ✍

ISPS Online Submissions

Kickng off National Poetry Month, the next bimonthly submission period for member poetry on the ISPS website is April 1 through 14, Members may submit one piece of original work, maximum two pages, to Alan Harris at oasis@alharris.com or by mail to Alan Harris, 543 E. Squirrel Tail Dr., Tucson, AZ 85704. Member poetry is viewable by poet, poem title, or submission period at www.illinoispoets.org. ✍

ISPS New Members / Members' News

LAMPIS ANAGOSTOPOULOS of Northbrook is a new member of the North Suburban Chapter.

WILLIAM CAREY, a Glencoe resident for 24 years, is a new member of the North Suburban Chapter. Carey is a lawyer and real estate investor by trade; musician and writer by avocation. He is married to Linn, with a son, Will, a junior at the University of Notre Dame.

GAY GUARD CHAMBERLIN, of Chicago is a new member of the North Suburban Chapter. Chamberlin says she is glad to be a poet and artist living in the eclectically diverse Devon neighborhood. She has a Masters in Interdisciplinary Arts from Columbia College, Chicago. Her poems have been honored in Poets & Patrons as well as the annual Joann Hirshfield Memorial Poetry Awards, and featured in the original play *Somewhere Under the Table* as part of the 2014 Rhino Fringe Art Festival.

TRACY COSTELLO of Bloomingdale is a new member of the Southwest Suburban Chapter. Tracy writes: "I have been playing around with poetry since I was a teenager. I am a college administrator and instructor, primarily working with adult learners. It is my job to help them acclimate back into college, to become a successful student and ultimately graduate. I thoroughly enjoy my work. I am married, have one daughter, a senior at Columbia College. I can't forget my furry kids, Gracie (cat) and Stormie (Border Collie)."

KATHY COTTON of Anna has a current exhibit of poetry and digital art at Longbranch Coffeehouse in Carbondale, with a formal reception on March 20.

JEANNE GERRITSEN of Chicago is a new member of the North Suburban Chapter. Gerritsen tells us that until 2012 she was a life-long resident of

Michigan except when she traveled to Mexico, Canada, England, Zimbabwe, Ukraine, Moscow and Uzbekistan for many weeks at a time to study, teach, observe and photograph. In 2012, she moved to Chicago to be near her youngest daughter and family when she retired – again. She received her undergrad and master's degrees in political science (international) at the age of 60 and 62 respectively. She is a relative newcomer to writing poetry, but wrote/produced news articles, speeches, brochures, advertising and film scripts most of her adult life. While owning a public-relations/marketing consulting firm, she received several professional honors and awards and served on the boards of numerous local, state and national small business and women-owned business associations.

SUSAN MOSS of Evanston will read from her new book, *In From the Dark*, at Madame ZuZu's in Highland Park, April 25 at 8:00 p.m.



PHILLIP EGELSTON of Jonesboro has published his first volume of poetry, *Reste Placide*, available on Amazon.com.

JOHN WOLF of Naperville, is a returning member to the Southwest Suburban Chapter. ✍

Join a Critique Group

ISPS members are invited to join one of our five-poet email critique groups. Each assigned group member is entitled to submit one poem for critique monthly and, in turn, agrees to critique poems submitted by the other members. To join a group or request a copy of the guidelines, email Wilda Morris at wildamorris@ameritech.net. Put "ISPS Email Critique Group" in the subject line. ✍



Chapter Meetings

CENTRAL CHAPTER, PONTIAC

1:00 p.m., Saturday, April. 11

Pontiac Public Library, 815-844-7229
211 E. Madison St., Pontiac, IL

NO. SUBURBAN CHAPTER, NORTHBROOK

1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Sunday, March 8
Northbrook Public Library (second floor, interactive classroom), 847-272-6224
1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, IL
Bring 8-10 copies of poems for critique. No food/beverages allowed in this room.

SOUTHERN CHAPTER, CARBONDALE

2:00 to 4:00 p.m., Sunday, March. 8
Carbondale Public Library, 630-986-1976
405 West Main, Carbondale, IL
Bring 10 copies of poems for critique and a snack to share.

SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN CHAPTER, LISLE

1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Sunday, April 5
Lisle Public Library, 630-971-1675
777 Front St., Lisle IL
Bring your beverage, 20 copies of poems for critique, and a snack to share.

WEST SUBURBAN CHAPTER, DARIEN

1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Saturday, March 7
Indian Prairie Public Library
(630) 887-8760
401 Plainfield Road, Darien.
Bring your own beverage, 12 copies of poems for critique, and a snack to share. ✍️

ISPS Board of Directors

President, Susan T. Moss
Vice President, Jim Lambert
Secretary, Wilda Morris
Treasurer, Judith Tullis
Historian, Carolyn Jevelian
Newsletter Editor, Kathy Cotton
Central, Facilitator David Alexander
North Suburban, Facilitator Susan Moss
Southern, Facilitator Kathy Cotton
Southwest Suburban, Facilitator Barbara Eaton
West Suburban, Facilitator Caroline Johnson
Past President, Mardelle Fortier
At-Large Member, Sheila Kirscher

Farewell to a Poet Laureate



Phillip Levine, the 18th U.S. Poet Laureate, died on February 14. He will be remembered for vibrant poetry, "alive with the sound, smell and sinew of heavy manual labor." His collections include *News of the World*; *The Simple Truth*, which won the Pulitzer Prize; *What Work Is*, which won the National Book Award; and *The Names of the Lost*, which won the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize. Levine served as Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 2000-2006.

Writing About Chicago

Caroline Johnson and Wilda Morris will lead an ISPS poetry workshop, Writing About Chicago, Saturday, March 21 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. The event will be hosted at Powell's Bookstores University Village at Halsted and Roosevelt in Chicago.

Southern Chapter Exhibit

Winners of the Renee Mavigliano Ekphrastic Poetry Contest along with original art/poetry by ISPS Southern Chapter members will be featured at the Carbondale Public Library gallery April 1 through May 15.

Mark your Poetry Calendar for March/April 2015

- **MARCH 1**, deadline for NFSPS Manningham contests (grades 6-8 and 9-12).
- **MARCH 7**, 11:30 a.m., ISPS board meeting, Pontiac.
- **MARCH 13**, 8:00 p.m., Gail Goepfert will read from her new book, *A Mind on Pain*, with open mic following at The Art Center, 1957 Sheridan Road, Highland Park.
- **MARCH 14**, noon, Write! Chicago outing at the Ukranian Institute of Modern Art, 2320 W. Chicago Avenue, west of the Kennedy Expressway.
- **MARCH 15**, submission deadline for NFSPS 2015 contests.
- **MARCH 15**, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., "Spark 2" poetry and art exhibit at the Lemont Center for the Arts, 1243 State St #101, Lemont.
- **MARCH 21**, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Writing About Chicago workshop at Powell's Bookstores University Village at Halsted and Roosevelt in Chicago.
- **MARCH 21**, 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Public lecture, "What is Haiku Poetry?" by Lee Gurga, editor of Modern Haiku Press, at the Polish Museum of America, 984 North Milwaukee Ave., Chicago.
- **APRIL 1 TO APRIL 14**, ISPS online poetry submission period.
- **APRIL 1 to MAY 15**, "Ekphrastic," an art/poetry exhibit at Carbondale Public Library with poetry contest winners and artwork/poems by So. Chapter members.
- **APRIL 6**, 10:00 a.m., "Poetry On Parade" for the Highland Park Senior Center, Public Safety Building, 1677 Old Deerfield Road, Highland Park.
- **APRIL 10**, 8:00 p.m., poetry challenge and open mic at The Art Center, 1957 Sheridan Road, Highland Park.
- **APRIL 11**, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m., The Fun Art of Haiku and Senryu Workshop with Charlotte Digregorio, Deerfield Public Library, 920 Waukegan Road, Deerfield.
- **APRIL 14**, 7:00 p.m., Secrets of Self-Publishing, Highland Park Library, 494 Laurel Avenue, Highland Park.
- **APRIL 25**, 8:00 p.m., Susan Moss reading from her new book, *In From the Dark*, at Madame ZuZu's, 582 Roger Williams Avenue, Highland Park.
- **APRIL 29**, 7:00–9:00 p.m., Second Annual Poetry Extravaganza sponsored by the DuPage Writers Group, Carol Stream Library, 616 Hiawatha Dr., Carol Stream.