

2016, ISSUE 4
EDITOR, KATHY COTTON

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

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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.

Why Not "Write to the Bottom of a Drawer"?

Legendary Chicago poet John Dickson admonished writers, "Don't write to the bottom of a drawer." There is an amount of effort in tracking and publishing our work that poets often avoid by consigning poems to lonely lives in folders or computer files. Another version is to throw poems away or give them away. For decades I was a "give away" poet; the mother of a childhood friend collected about a hundred of my early hand-scribbled poems.

Lately, I've been asking poet/friends, "Why work at getting published?" Dickson's daughter and well-published poet Patty Pieczka, replied, "Because Dad told me to." (Good advice.) Other answers included: "Publication validates my writing." "I've said something important to me and want to see it in print." "Ego." "I hope what I say will help someone." "It makes me feel connected to a wider community." What would *your* answer be? Email it to me for the September newsletter. —Kathy Cotton, kacotton7@frontier.com ✍



A Message from the ISPS President

The NFSPS convention in Chaska, Minnesota, ended on June 13 and was filled with several thought-provoking presentations and writing activities. Among those who attended were four of us from Illinois and two at-large ISPS members from other states. Next year the national convention will be held in Texas at the Hilton Fort Worth Hotel from June 29-July 2.

One of the recent convention options was a panel discussion on "The Craft of Poetry." Although we are already poets, it can be interesting to hear from other accomplished wordsmiths about what makes a poem. Some of the thoughts included the style of how a piece is written, such as staccato or lyrical, and whether it offers a universal theme or one of a more personal narrative. Even in the latter approach, the poem fits somewhere in the human condition but perhaps how is less obvious. Some poets hide in poetry and remain shy with their message while others provide a quicker and more immediate connection. Another panelist's comment was about lying and truth telling in poetry. There is an emotional truth we often consciously or unconsciously embellish, and Wallace Stevens believed that "A poem is the supreme fiction."

One presentation offered suggestions on ways to "Build Your Brand" by getting your name and work out into the world. Other ideas included creating a word wheel to spin new combinations of words for a poem, the benefits of using a small press publisher, and how American poetry often reflects place and our national identity. One session focused on doing free writes to get potential ideas for a poem. This technique requires that the writer's pen never leaves the paper for at least two minutes, and pausing and self-editing are not allowed.

With much to think about on our own poetry journeys, consider the next ISPS opportunity to appear in our anthology, *Distilled Lives, Volume 3*. The deadline is July 15, and information is available on our website. Also, check your membership status which should be renewed for the next year starting July 1. Last but not least, it is not too soon to start writing or selecting which poems you might want to submit for the 23rd ISPS Poetry Contest with an October 15 deadline.

As summer drifts forward, may we join in the camaraderie of expectation and grow poems that bloom into potential bouquets.

Happy writing, Susan T. Moss ✍

Illinois Shines at the National Federation of State Poetry Societies 2016 Convention



Two Illinoisans took major awards at the June 2016 convention of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies in Minnesota.

David Bond of Carbondale won first place in the coveted NFSPS Founders Award with the grand prize of \$1,000, as well as four additional awards. Bond, a member of the ISPS Southern Chapter, is a librarian at Southern Illinois University.

Michael Welch of Chicago was winner of the College Undergraduate Poetry Competition Florence Kahn Award. Welch read from his winning chapbook, *But Sometimes I Remember*, and had a book signing at the convention. In addition to publication and 75 copies of his book, Welch received \$500 and a \$300 travel stipend.

Eleven ISPS members earned awards in the national contests. For a full listing of winners, poem titles, judges, and submission counts, see nfsp.com.



(Top) Kahn Award winner Michael Welch with ISPS president, Susan Moss. (Above) New NFSPS president, James Barton of Huttig, AR.

DAVID BOND, Carbondale, IL
 1st Place, NFSPS Founders Award
 1st Place Poetry Society of Michigan Award
 6th HM, Georgia Poetry Society Award
 7th HM, The Brown-Eyed Girl Poetry Contest
 8th HM, Georgia Poetry Society Award

KATHY COTTON, Anna, IL
 1st Place, Arizona State Poetry Award
 1st. Place, Mildred Vorpahl Bass Award
 3rd Place, Peace Award
 1st HM, Nevada Poetry Society Award

GAIL DENHAM, Sun River, OR
 1st HM, Main Poets Society Award
 7th HM, Utah State Poetry Award

JEANETTE MAES, Lynn, MA
 3rd Place, Donald Stodghill Memorial Award

KOLETTE MONTAGUE, Centerville, UT
 3rd HM, NFSPS Board Award
 5th HM, Louisiana State Poetry Society Award
 6th HM, Winners' Circle Award

7th HM, Van Breeman Downes Memorial Award

WILDA MORRIS, Bolingbrook, IL
 1st Place, Barbara Stevens Memorial Award
 2nd HM, Al Laster Memorial Award
 3rd HM, Prouty Memorial Award

DONNA PUCCIANI, Wheaton, IL
 2nd Place, Illinois State Poetry Society Award
 2nd Place, Mississippi Poetry Society
 2nd Place, Barbara Stevens Memorial Award
 1st HM, Jesse Stuart Memorial Award
 1st HM, NFSPS Board Award

BETH STASS, LaGrange Park, IL
 2nd Place, Nevada Poetry Society Award

DORIS STENGEL, Brainerd, MN
 3rd Place, Poets Round Table of Arkansas

JUDITH TULLIS, Indian Head Park, IL
 3rd HM, Roberta Bowman Memorial Award

MICHAEL WELCH, Chicago, IL
 Winner, Florence Kahn CUP Award ✍️



(Left) Five ISPS members pose at the convention: Judith Tullis, West Suburban Chapter; Wilda Morris, Southwest Suburban Chapter; Mary Ann Westbrook, at-large member from Florida; Susan Moss, North Suburban Chapter; and Amy Jo Zook, at-large member from Ohio.

Also attending was Michael Welch, an at-large member from Chicago. ✍️

Spotlight on ISPS Poet Steven Kappes



Director of the Red Herring Poetry Workshop in Urbana for many years, Steven Kappes co-edited several editions of *Matrix*, their annual anthology. In the early 1990's Kappes was editor of *The Leader*, a newspaper in Ogden, where he wrote a weekly column as well as feature articles, obituaries, and sports. Kappes was also nominated for the position of Illinois Poet Laureate in 2003. He now lives in LaBelle, Florida, with his wife and three cats, and continues to produce poetry.

When did you first start writing poetry?

While I was stationed in Germany in the army, I found myself with a typewriter on my desk and free time. I always considered myself a writer, and had written some very short stories in high school, but this was when I first attempted poems. It was also where my first poem was published in *Stars and Stripes European Edition* in the column "Pup Tent Poets." After I left the army, life got in the way, marriage, a family and a job, and I didn't write very much. It wasn't until years later, when I left the position at *The Leader*, where I had written every day for work, that the bottled up words started coming out as poetry.

What inspires you to write?

I'm fascinated by people. I see someone who looks interesting and start making up stories about them, which often turn into poems. Also, my personal opinions and experiences are fodder for the mill.

I find that I need a muse, a person or audience that gives me the incentive to write. In the army, it was a fellow clerk in my office; later it was my family for whom I collected poems about growing up and the world at that time. Each week I share a poem with a group of friends, and also on Facebook. Anyone who would like to receive this weekly poem may contact me at skappes@illinois.edu with "poem" in the subject line.

What favorite poets or books inspire you?

When I started to seriously write, I discovered Charles Bukowski. It was a revelation to me, and like a lot of poets who felt trapped by form, his freestyle verse was something I could embrace. I also like Mark Strand, Carl Sandburg and Robert Frost.

Where have you published your poetry?

For the 16 years I was a member, my poems were included in *Matrix*, the annual anthology of the Red Herring Poets. I have published and produced ten chapbooks: *Family Bridges*, *Dividing What's Left*, *Scene in the Rear-view Mirror*, *Years of the Past*, *Nifty Fifties*, *Generations*, *Another Day in the Woods*, *Your Average Night In a Bar*, *Under the Microscope* and *Birds of All Sorts*. And my poetry appears in journals, including *The California Quarterly*, *Dream Fantasy International* and *Golden Apple Press*, among others.

Tell us more about how you learned to publish the chapbooks.

I started out as a printer at a daily newspaper, where I learned layout, a skill I later used when I did the typesetting and layout for those 16 years of *Matrix* and several publications for Hawk Productions. It's a skill I have also used to self-publish my chapbooks. I select the poems, arrange the pages, and print and bind them myself.

What advice can you share with our readers about how to get published?

Submit, submit, submit. All the usual advice but mainly to persevere.

What are you working on now?

I write several poems a week, depending on the mood. I'm beginning to compile poems for a chapbook to send out for the holidays. ✍

Poems by Steven Kappes

the gang

the rising and falling
growl and whine
of a group of motorcycles
heading up the road
like a mad pack of bumblebees
looking for a clover patch
on a quiet Sunday morning
instills a sense of longing
wanting to be part
of the swarm
one of those buzzing
along with all the others
part of a mass migration
lost in the lure
seeking adventure

sweet silence

I can hear voices
from the living room
down the hallway
through open doors
cultured voices
trained voices
voices on the television

these voices are
a constant in my life
they go on all day
day after day after day
until I want to silence them
smash the television
into matchsticks
and slivers of glass

the voices go on
pretend to inform
pretend to entertain
bicker scream
sell us used cars
useless medication
and false security

I long to go back to the days
I spent alone
with my own thoughts
when the wind in the trees
the calls of myriad birds
the distant hum of a tractor
working the earth
were the only sounds
I could hear

ISPS New Members / Members' News



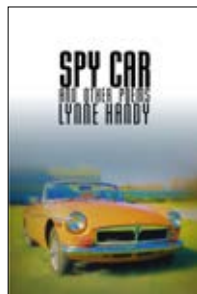
Poets Mary Ann Eiler, Mardelle Fortier, Barbara Eaton, Lennart Lundh, and Bakul Bannerjee read June 18 at an ISPS event at the Oak Brook Library.

SHERRI LOHRUM BAKER of Belleville is a new member of the Southern Chapter. She is a special procedures technologist who has worked at Memorial Hospital since 1994. Sherry has written poetry intermittently throughout her life “to purge her feelings,” and had a few pieces published in college, but usually threw her poems away. In recent years, she says, she has experienced much tragedy and finds comfort in her writing that she hopes to share with others. At the insistence of her sister, who also writes poetry, Sherri says she no longer throws away her poems. Some of her work is available online as creative broadsides.



PHILLIP EGELSTON of Jonesboro recently published his fifth book, *Stories*. He is the author of *Reste Placide*, *Light Stalking the Dark*, *Simply Intact* and *A Liberal Education and Other Poems*. Egelston's poetry was featured in an exhibit and readings at an Anna Arts Center reception June 18. He is a member of the Southern Chapter.

LYNNE HANDY is an author and poet who lives in a northern Illinois river town. A former librarian, she has an intense interest in the written word.



She's also interested in the fusion of spiritual and earthly experience, which she addressed in her 2013 novel, *In the Time of Peacocks*, and explores again in her recent novella, *The Untold Story of Edwina*. She published a chapbook, *Spy Car and Other Poems*, in 2016. Her poetry and short fiction have been published in several online and literary journals. Visit the author-poet at lynnehandy.com.



JOHN MAHONEY, who passed away in May at the age of 98, was honored with a memorial event June 26 at Brewed Awakening where readings of his work and poems about John were featured. Mahoney was a member of the Southwest Suburban Chapter. He is pictured at a poetry reading with his daughter, Georgina Milsted, also an ISPS member.

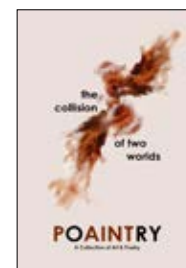
APRIL LUO of Bloomington is a new member of the Central Chapter.

JETARA PERRY of Naperville is a new member of the Southwest Suburban Chapter. She is the author of *Imperfect*



Angel: Her Journey to Womanhood and the president of the Imperfect Angels Organization. She began the non-profit organization in January 2016 to help young women in

the Chicagoland areas with college prep, self-confidence, self-respect, and community involvement. Jetara has been writing, reading and/or performing poetry for more than 13 years. She says that she loves writing, reading, traveling and motivating young women. You can find Jetara on Twitter and Instagram (@JetaraPerry).



POAINTRY, an art and poetry collection co-sponsored by the Southern Chapter, includes each poem and art piece from their ekphrastic exhibit. The book is available on amazon.com.

BUNNY SEDELBACH of Willamette is a returning member of North Suburban Chapter.

JINAH YUN-MITCHELL of Lincolnshire is a new member of the North Suburban Chapter. ✍️



Chapter Meetings

CENTRAL CHAPTER, PONTIAC

1:00 p.m., Saturday, August 13
Pontiac Public Library, 815-844-7229
211 E. Madison St., Pontiac, IL

HAIKU CHAPTER, NORTHBROOK

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Sunday, August 21
Northbrook Public Library, Civic Room
847-272-6224
1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, IL
Bring 10 copies of 6-10 haiku for critique.

NO. SUBURBAN CHAPTER, NORTHBROOK

1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Sunday, July 10
Northbrook Public Library, 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, July 10
Carbondale Public Library, 630-986-1976
405 West Main, Carbondale, IL
Bring 12 copies of poems for critique.

SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN CHAPTER, LISLE

1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Sunday, August 7
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, July 2
Indian Prairie Public Library, (630) 887-8760
401 Plainfield Road, Darien, IL
Bring your beverage, dish to share and 20 copies of poems for critique.

ONLINE CRITIQUE GROUPS

To request a copy of the guidelines or to join an ISPS Email Critique Group, contact coordinator Wilda Morris at wildamorris@ameritech.net. Put "ISPS Email Critique Group" in the subject line of the email and be sure to include your name with your request. ✍

Southern Chapter Co-Sponsors Exhibit and Book



ISPS vice president, Jim Lambert, reads from the manuscript of featured poet Phillip Egelston (left) at a June 18 reception of the Poaintry exhibit, co-sponsored in Anna by the ISPS Southern Chapter.

ISPS Southern Chapter, Carbondale, co-sponsored a June ekphrastic exhibit with Shawnee Hills Arts Council. Nine chapter members, Kathy Cotton, Carol Dooley, Phil Egelston, Jacob Erin-Cilberto, Jim Lambert, Lucy Logsdon, Patty Pieczka, Jan Presley and Marie Samuel, had poetry in the exhibit and in the full-color companion book, *Poaintry: Collision of Two Worlds*. Five members also had art in the exhibit and book. Phillip Egelston of Jonesboro was the featured poet and reader at the reception. Cotton, Dooley, and Lambert were each awarded \$25 prizes for their poems.

Four Poets to Perform at ISPS Brewed Awakening Events

Featured poets will read at Brewed Awakening, 19 West Quincy, Westmont, on July 31 and August 28 at 12:30 p.m., followed by open mic. Cover charge of \$10.00 includes coffee and a snack.

Sunday, July 31



CHRISTINE SWANBERG has published several books of poetry, including *Tonight on This Late Road*, *Invisible String*, *Bread Upon the Waters* and *Who Walks Among*

the Trees with Charity. An award winning poet, her work appears in numerous anthologies and she has published hundreds of poems in journals. She has been a teacher for more than 30 years.



DAVE GECIC is the publisher of The Puddin'head Press, which started publishing books in 1985. He has been the host of several poetry venues

including, Estelle's, The Gallery Cabaret, and The Oak Park Teen Coffeehouse. His writings have been

published in anthologies, literary magazines, and technical journals. By day he does science stuff.

Sunday, Aug. 28



MICHAEL WELCH of Chicago is the winner of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies' Florence Kahn Memorial Award, and the author of the chapbook, *But Sometimes I Remember*. His work has appeared in *South 85 Journal* and *MULR*.



SUSAN B. AULD is a poet and a retired pediatric speech-language pathologist who lives in the Chicago suburbs. Author of three chapbooks, she has free verse poetry, haiku and

haibun published both online and in print journals and recognized in contests. One of her poems is displayed as part of a laminated-glass art installation in the New York City subway system. She facilitates the ISPS Haiku Chapter and a haiku group at her local library. ✍



PRAIRIELAND TREE

by Michael Escoubas

You stand alone among wildflowers,
drop seed and redtop grasses. Foxtail
and broom-sedge flourish. You shelter
field mice and snakes, grubs and worms.
Your branches spill light in shadows.
Your leaves are nurturing hands
to living things beneath your roots.

I see myself in you. Like an artist,
I open my easel and paint your patient
leaves with words. They wait for rain
that will spill liquid life on thirsty
ground. I brush-stroke the rustle
of birds in your branches. I breathe
your air and know I am man.

THE TREE ALMIGHTY

by Jill Angel Langlois

I stand before the tree almighty
in honor and in awe.
A grandfather in years
and leaves that have seen it all.

The roots bursting forth
from the ground cause damage
in the lawn next door.
So we sing our song of honor
and remove the tree in sorrow.

Sawing over memories,
a child that climbed its branches,
the kiss under the stars,
the poet in tears, hiding her words,
the colors in the fall.

ARBOR DAY by Candace Armstrong

Sweet silent sentries
guard the higher realm
unheralded heroes of life
wilderness protectors
shelter providers
unpretentious givers
creators of beautiful scenes
emissaries of peace.
We celebrate you.

Thanks to the many readers who re-
sponded to our June/July poetry chal-
lenge: "An original poem about trees."
Here are a few responses; sorry we
couldn't print all of them.

THE MONUMENT

by Alan Harris

Our elm began to die that spring, slowly.

Wanting stability in threat of change
we ourselves searched all summer
for a superlative glue,
found it in our store of hardest ware,
bought it dearly.

That fall our elm did die, slowly.

But we on variangled ladders
refastened the fallen leaves with
peerlessly permanent glue,
then stood back and looked.

Still it stands:
crisp, dead;
cutting the winter wind.

REVENGE by Marie Samuel

It started with just a simple plan
No pesky gum balls, evermore
The tree to fell will do the trick
First twigged arms and then the trunk
Will be our logs to burn come fall
But then a neighbor who spotted this
The end of grumbling as those rascals fall
He said, "My walnuts grieve me more
As I'm getting older and need them gone."
So branches fell and were cut once more
By an aging lumberjack who had a goal
First split these logs; the log splitter crunched
Until all gone except a pricey hardwood core
But next a trucker wanted lots of wood to burn
And then the trunk was hauled and sold to saw
But loading log splitter caused quite a noisy stir
When an end was dropped by one old man
Whose cuts & hamstring tears have slowed him
More than gathering balls and droppings sure
So say we now who has the last word here
Nature's sentinels or man's urge to destruct? ✍

2016 Anthology: A Perk for Members

The ISPS 2016-17 new year begins
July 1, so dues are due! Renew your
membership (form on page 7) by the
anthology submission deadline, July
15, and you will be eligible to have
your poetry included in *Distilled
Lives, Volume 3*.

The submission fee for the antholo-
gy is just \$6.00 and includes a copy
of the book. Members who meet all
guidelines will have one or two poems
included in the anthology. Full in-
structions with a submission form are
posted on our website, illinoispoets.org.

Email your submissions to: isps.submissions@gmail.com or send them by mail to
ISPS c/o Tom Moran, 34 W. 56th Street,
Westmont, IL 60559.

Payment of the submission fee and addi-
tional book orders go to: ISPS c/o Judith
Tullis, 6455 Big Bear Drive, Indian Head
Park, IL 60525. ✍

2016 ISPS Poetry Contest

The 23rd annual ISPS Poetry Contest
includes four regular and three new
categories. Prizes totaling \$580 will
go to first-, second-, and third-place
winners in each category. Three hon-
orable mentions will also be selected.

Categories are Free Verse, Formal
Verse, Haiku, The Arts, Celestial, Mu-
sic, and Compassion. The contest is
open to anyone and has an eight-poem
entry fee of \$8 for members and \$10
for non-ISPS members. Additional
entries are \$1 each.

Submit two copies of each poem, one
with identifications and one without,
by October 15 to Jim Lambert at
Illinois State Poetry Society Contest
% Jim Lambert, 11617 Sherry Lynn
Drive, Carbondale, IL 62901.

For full contest guidelines, see
illinoispoets.org. ✍

Contest Deadlines State Poetry Societies

Check individual websites for more information on annual contests by poetry associations.

- JULY 15 Florida State Poets Association
- JULY 15 Kentucky State Poetry Society
- JULY 31 League of Minnesota Poets
- AUG. 1 Massachusetts State Poetry Society
- AUG. 1 Poetry Society of Michigan
- AUG. 15 Poetry Society of Texas
- SEPT. 1 Indiana State Fed. of Poetry Clubs
- SEPT. 1 Missouri State Poetry Society
- OCT. 1 Arizona State Poetry Society
- OCT. 15 Illinois State Poetry Society
- NOV. 15 Georgia Poetry Society ✍

ISPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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North Suburban Chapter, Northbrook
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Southwest Suburban Chapter, Lisle
Facilitator Barbara Eaton
eatonb1016@aol.com

West Suburban Chapter, Darien
Facilitator Caroline Johnson
twinkscat@aol.com

Past President Mardelle Fortier
fortier@cod.edu

At-Large Member, Sheila Kirscher
jkirscher@comcast.net

At-Large Member, Tom Moran
tgm1958@sbcglobal.net ✍

Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming Poetry Events

JULY 1, ISPS renewal memberships are due for the 2016-2017 year.

JULY 9, ISPS board meeting, 11 a.m., at the home of Caroline Johnson.

JULY 15, deadline for submissions to the third ISPS anthology. Send poems to isps.submissions@gmail.com. See submission form at illinoispoets.org.

JULY 16, 10:30 a.m., Write! Chicago. Meet at Willowbrook Wildlife Center.

AUG. 1-14, member poem submission period for illinoispoets.org.

SEPT. 1, deadline, Helen Schaible International Sonnet Contest. Informa-

tion at www.poetsandpatrons.net.

SEPT. 1, deadline, 60th annual Chicagoland Poetry Contest. Details at www.poetsandpatrons.net.

SEPT. 17, 1 to 3 p.m., juried reading, Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art in Chicago. Watch for e-mail invitation to submit to the event or just attend.

OCT. 15, Deadline for ISPS contest.

NOV. 5, ISPS Gala at Park Ridge Country Club.

MARCH 23, 2017 ISPS and P&P open mic reading at After-Words Bookstore in Chicago. ✍

Celebrate the New Year, ISPS 2016-2017

Renew your membership now for the triple benefit of belonging to the Illinois State Poetry Society PLUS the National Federation of State Poetry Societies PLUS any of the ISPS chapters. And don't miss the bonus opportunity to have your poetry in our upcoming anthology, *Distilled Lives, Volume 3*.

For the small investment of \$20 (optional \$30.00 for Patron status or \$50.00, Benefactor status), your renewal dues support poetry in Illinois through June of 2017.

✂ **RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2016-2017**

ISPS Membership Form PLEASE PRINT

Send the completed form for membership through June 30, 2017, and enclose a \$20 check for annual dues (optional \$30 for Patron status or \$50 for Benefactor) to the address below. New members please send also a short bio for our newsletter and website.

MEMBERSHIP:

Renewal New Member \$20 Regular \$30 Patron \$50 Benefactor

VOTING CHAPTER (select one):

Central, Pontiac North Suburban, Northbrook Southern, Carbondale
SW Suburban, Lisle West Suburban, Darien Haiku, Northbrook At-Large

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (home or cell) _____

Email _____

Mail to: Judith Tullis, 6455 Big Bear Drive, Indian Head Park, IL 60525