



Illinois Poets

Autumn News of the Illinois State Poetry Society

September - October 2019

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Northbrook)
**Tom Chockley,
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Lisle - SW Suburban
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Northbrook - N. Suburban
Mary Beth Bretzlauf

Pontiac - N. Central
Kathleen Murphy

President's Message



Green is giving way to autumn orange, red and yellow as I write this message on a rainy day. The inclement weather begs a response to the call of words and ideas while I sit comfortably at my desk to write both this letter and poetry.

There continue to be more and more opportunities to collaborate with artists as we create ekphrastic poetry. Recently, poets and artists gathered in Wheaton with their interpretations of archetypes. In keeping with the same approach, not long ago I was contacted by the Director of Communications at the Addison Center for the Arts who invited ISPS to be part of an exhibition with the Elk Grove Arts Guild. Another idea that might come to fruition is a chance to be part of a Wilmette Library event next April. Our collective communities seem to be pursuing more poetry, and the opportunities to join these endeavors are well worth our creative energy. Also watch for reading opportunities at bookstores around the Chicago area and south to Pontiac and beyond.

Recently, at a grocery store, I chatted with a poet I met a few years ago at a workshop in Wisconsin. Though we live not too far apart, our paths seldom cross, but we quickly took up the topic of writing poetry. Our mutual interest had made a permanent bond between us, and discussion of calling ourselves poets ensued at the shopping cart return. We both decided that every poet has to come to the personal decision to claim "poet" as a comfortable moniker.

After further discussion about crafting poems, it became apparent that there are those of us who frequently get ideas, phrases, single words and a sense of energy related to poetry which float into our consciousness at no particular time or place. Clearly, there are also specific moments and locations that evoke a poetic reaction, and these fleeting insights are exciting and often elusive unless written down soon after they come our way. However, these insights can happen while out walking, for example, and you could even miss saying hello to someone or continue past your street while absorbed in a poetic reverie.

It's all quite rewarding when our existence becomes infused with unbidden creative ideas. Such gifts require that we pay attention when they appear, and they often become more frequent when we spend increased time thinking and writing. Basically, creativity begets creativity.

Happy writing,

Susan T. Moss

Member News and Updates

New Members

We have three new members since the last newsletter.

Susan Farnor lives in Urbana and is a new member of the Champaign (Central) Chapter. She has concentrated on haiku until now, but is looking forward to branching into other genres.

Nina Kadera is a member of the Lisle Chapter and lives in the Warrenville/Naperville area, in the far western suburbs of Chicago. She has written poetry much of her adult life, "mostly for my own viewing." More recently, she was invited to join two small, local poetry gatherings. She says, "It has been wonderful personally, and for my writing. It is a joy to hear well-written poetry by local poets. I have a few advanced degrees, and am working on a doctorate; hurrah for lifelong learning."

Sheryl Lain, of Cheyenne, Wyoming, is an At Large member. As an English teacher she discovered that a wonderful way to connect with her students was to write for them personalized poems. A collection of these poems, *A Poem for Every Student*, was published by the University of California Press. Sheryl has published both poetry and nonfiction in a number of educational journals, as well as other venues. She has found, like many writers, that writing clarifies her life and helps her find her way.

If you have bio updates to share, send to oasis@alharris.com; for possible member news, send to ISPS newsletter editor, Kathy Robinson, at krobdzyns@gmail.com. The ISPS website is at: illinoispoets.org.

Member Updates and Upcoming Events

Charlotte Digregorio of the Northbrook chapter has a haiga exhibit at the Glenview Park District (East Wing) in Glenview, IL from October 2 through December 31. See images and more information on p. 4.

On October 23, webmaster **Alan Harris** posted the October member **poems** and **haiga** on our website (www.illinoispoets.org). Note that some publishers and agents consider pieces posted on the Web as being "previously published." Thanks to all who submitted poems and haiga, and to all who read them.

Champaign Chapter member **Ruth Siburt** reports that the Decatur Area Poets (DAP) group participated in an ekphrastic collaboration with local middle school students from Hope Academy, who created artwork in response to the DAP group's poems. See photos on p. 4.

The Pontiac Chapter has been holding monthly poetry readings, interspersed with 10-minute segments where visitors may read. They meet the second Saturday of the month (Nov. 9 is coming up), from 6 to 8 pm at Cup and Scone Coffee House in Pontiac.

Chapter Meetings...

in alphabetical order by location. See MapQuest.com for directions or phone the venue at the number provided.

Carbondale - Southern Chapter Sunday, Nov 10, 1:30 pm, Carbondale Public Library, 405 W. Main, 62901. Facilitator: kacotton7@frontier.com. ISPS members and other interested poets are invited. Bring 10 - 12 copies of your poem. **Library: (618) 457-0354.**

Champaign - Central Chapter Sunday, Nov 3, 1:30 at the **Champaign Public Library**, 200 W. Green St., Champaign, 61820. Facilitator: Kathy Robinson, krobdzyns@gmail.com. Bring 10 - 12 copies of your poem, covered drinks only; (no snacks in conference rooms). **Library: (217) 403-2000.**

Darien - West Suburban Sat., Nov 2, 1 - 4:00 pm, Indian Prairie Public Library, 401 Plainfield Rd. Fac: Caroline Johnson, twinkscat@aol.com. Please bring 10 to 12 copies of 1 or 2 poems for critique and a snack to share, plus your own drink. **Library: 630-986-1976.**

Lisle - Southwest Suburban Chapter Sunday, Dec 15 1-4:30 pm, Lisle Public Library, 777 Front Street, Lisle 60532. Barbara Eaton, facilitator: Eatonb1016@aol.com. Please bring about 20 copies of one or two of your poems and a snack to share plus your own drink. **Library: (630) 759-2102.**

Northbrook - Haiku Chapter Sunday, Dec 15, 1-4 pm, Northbrook Public Library, Civic Room, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook 60062. Tom Chockley & Jim Sullivan, facilitators. Bring 8 to 10 copies of six to ten haiku on a single page. tom.chockley@outlook.com. **Library: (847) 272-6224.**

Northbrook - North Suburban Chapter Sunday, Nov 10, 1-5 pm, Northbrook Public Library Civic Room, 1201 Cedar Lane, 60062. Facilitator: Mary Beth Bretzlauf: mbbretzlauf@comcast.net. Bring 8 - 10 copies of one or two poems. **Library: (847) 272-6224.**

Pontiac - North Central Chapter Sat., Dec 14, 1:00 pm. Cup and Scone Coffee Shop, 213 W. Madison St, Pontiac 61764, Kathleen Murphy, facilitator. (Note the "z" in her email): kathleenzmurphy@mail.com. Please bring one or two of your poems.

ISPS Annual Poetry Contest Deadline LOOMING

For any procrastinators among our crowd.... The deadline for entering the 26th Annual ISPS Poetry Contest is less than a week away: **November 1, 2019**. All the categories have cash prizes, and modest entry fees that differ depending on membership in ISPS and the number of poems submitted. For full details, see the official guidelines at Illinoispoets.org, or the digital version sent out to the membership by our own “William Shakespeare.”

To summarize those details, there are eleven separate poetry awards. Six of the awards accept poems in *any* form (sonnet, haiku, free verse, etc.); the remaining five contests specify the form to follow.

On the flip side, four of the contest *subjects* are unspecified; the seven remaining topics are (alphabetically): Bipartisanship, Brothers, Compassion, Gratitude, Home, Humor, and Shawnee National Forest.

Poems must not have been published (in print or electronically) and must be the original work of the contestant. Poems that have previously won monetary awards are ineligible.

Two of the categories have a 24-line limit. The others must not exceed 40 lines. In all cases, line count includes blank lines after the title and between verses (if any). Poems must be typed and single spaced on regular paper. For full guidelines, see the official announcement mentioned above, at Illinoispoets.org.

ISPS thanks the chapters and individuals who are sponsoring the awards. Now, poets, fire up your grey cells and sharpen your pencils—or electronic devices, as the case may be. Happy writing to all!

How to Join the Illinois State Poetry Society (ISPS)

Membership is open to anyone who is interested in poetry. You do not need to be a resident of Illinois. To join, fill out this form (or a copy) and send it with a check for the **yearly dues (July 1 -June 30) of \$20** (\$30 for patron status, \$50 for benefactor status) to:

**Illinois State Poetry Society
c/o 6455 Big Bear Drive
Indian Head Park, IL 60525**

You are invited to send a short bio for the newsletter and a possibly longer one for the website so we can introduce you to the members. Send a paper copy with your dues, or email bios as directed in the box on p. 2.

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please indicate which chapter/location you wish to consider your “home” (you may visit other chapters):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carbondale (Southern Illinois) | <input type="checkbox"/> Lisle (SW Suburban Chicago) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Champaign (Central Illinois) | <input type="checkbox"/> Haiku (meets at Northbrook, separately) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Darien (W. Suburban Chicago) | <input type="checkbox"/> Northbrook (N. Suburban Chicago) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pontiac (North Central Illinois) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At Large (for residents outside Illinois – full member benefits apply) | |

These images are from the display of haiga (artwork plus haiku) at the Glenview Park District (East Wing), featuring the poetry of ISPS member **Charlotte Digregorio**, beautifully enhanced by the graphic design of ISPS member **Lidia Rozmus**, and (in the case of the “Homeless” poem) art student Nicole Garcia, who was recruited for the role by **Jennifer Dotson**, ISPS member and founder/Program Coordinator of Highland Park Poetry. “Homeless” debuted on suburban Chicago buses in 2010. This haiga exhibit will be in place until December 31, 2019. Hours are available at 888-952-7975. For directions from your location, consult an online navigator. The address is 2400 Chestnut Ave, Glenview IL, 60026.



ISPS member **Ruth Siburt** (far right), with other founders of the Decatur Area Poets, gathered at the Decatur Public Library to celebrate art pieces created by local students in response to poems written by the DAP poets. At the event, the poets presented the poems that had served as inspiration for the student artists.

