

# Wisconsin Fellowship Of Poets Museletter

founded 1950



Frank Moulton

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Summer 2009

[www.wfop.org](http://www.wfop.org)

Editor: Christine Falk

# Welcome

Welcome to the new members of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets that have joined since the Spring *Museletter* issue:

Trillian Bergmann	Poynette
Logan Corlett	Sussex
Joanne Cunningham	Brookfield
Marcie Eanes	Racine
John Fons	Madison
Carly Heyman	Pound
Maryann Hurtt	Elkhart Lake
Jerome Jagielski	Fontana
Robyn Kohlwey	Grafton
Madison Larson-Rolf	Pewaukee
Bennett LeDuc	Chippewa Falls
Betty Les	Madison
Isabel Markowski	Eau Claire
Melissa McGraw	Wauwatosa
Samuel McLaughlin	Fort Atkinson
Rachel Meyer	Kenosha
Mariah Ross	Coleman
Barb Schmeling	Rhineland
Linda Schumacher	Edgerton
Natalie Turner	Eau Claire
Haley West	Horicon
Holly Zehfus	Sheboygan

New member inquiries should be directed to Gillian Nevers, the membership chair. Her contact information is listed in the masthead.

*Welcome to all!*



August 7, 2009

## President's Message

Yesterday (April 30th) on NPR, Martin Espada stated that McCarthyism pretty much killed political poetry in the U.S. He went on to explain that while there are still poets writing political verse, there are no large publishers carrying their voices to the masses, and that small presses don't have the distribution to do so.

Whatever you may think of Espada's politics, his concern about the silencing of dissident voices is undoubtedly valid. Without dissent, the body politic becomes a tyrant and civilization stagnates. Unfortunately, as Randolph Bourne explains in "War Is the Health of the State" (a Google search for that essay is well worth your while), we humans have a natural inclination to submerge our individual identities in groups, particularly in times of crisis—and there's always a crisis somewhere. This makes me think that community pride should always be suspect. For one thing, it's just too easy. For another, we all know "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

That caution noted, I must admit that there are certainly reasons to feel pride in the community of Wisconsin arts, and particularly in the WFOP. The organization accomplishes quite a lot in support of poetry. Let me mention just a few things your dues help to achieve.

First, there are many member benefits. Did you know that as a member you can have your own page on the WFOP Web site? Further, you can include announcements in the weekly email update and the quarterly *Museletter* mailing. Of course, those two publications also provide you with poetry news regarding your region. Your dues also fund the annual Triad contest. In addition, the WFOP helps to sponsor other poetry happenings, from contributing to the state's Poet Laureate fund (and filling a seat on the PL Commission), to supporting this year's first Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival. Last year, the WFOP contributed \$1000 to help Madison's slam poetry team travel to a national slam competition. This year, we've donated a like amount to fund continuation of *Free Verse* magazine, and we've made a \$100 contribution to support the School of Arts in Rhineland (SOAR). I'd also mention that while conference fees pay the bulk of our spring and fall conference expenses, your dues help to defray the cost of speakers and allow us to provide free passes to members who might otherwise be unable to attend those conferences.

These are just a few of the benefits your dues help to provide. Thank you.

I'd like to mention now a few other ways you can help to support the organization. Certainly you can donate financially to support WFOP efforts, if you like; the new Web store ([www.wfop.org/store](http://www.wfop.org/store)) has options for contributing to particular programs, or you can send a check by mail. More importantly, however, we can always use volunteers at events—contact your regional VP for details. (You can find the VPs listed on the home page at [www.wfop.org](http://www.wfop.org).) In addition, simply promoting the mission of the organization helps, so mention the WFOP to your friends and colleagues. Show them the "poetic license" you received as a member, and consider sponsoring a friend. (WFOP members can sponsor a new member for only \$20).

Another great way to help is to purchase old calendars (they're available at quite a discount) and ask to leave them in waiting rooms at doctors' offices or in coffee

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# What's Happening in Your Region?

## East Region

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or

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Threaded Metaphors: Text & Textiles, Part 3: On the Edge. An all-new exhibit of the work of fiber artists inspired by poetry and poets inspired by fiber art opened at Charles Allis Art Museum, 1801 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee, on Wednesday, May 13, 2009, with a free reception from 5:30-8:30 p.m. WFOP poets **CJ Muchhala**, **Helen Padway**, **Mara Ptacek**, **Margaret Rozga**, **Carolyn Vargo**, and **Phyllis Wax** read their new ekphrastic poems between 6-7 p.m. Artists Mary Ellen Heus, Judith Zoelzer Levine, **Elizabeth Lewis**, Margaret Magill, Connie Tresch, and Pat Zalewski spoke informally about their pieces and the creative process involved in responding to poetry through art. This was the third exciting collaboration in the Threaded Metaphors series. The 12 poems, 10 quilted pieces and 2 weavings are shown adjacent to the pieces that inspired them, a true collaboration between object and text, inspiration and creativity, each interwoven with the other. Don't miss it! The exhibit runs through July 26, 2009. Museum hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Admission is \$5.00 adults, \$3.00 seniors, veterans & students. The exhibit is free to members of the Allis Museum, active military personnel and children. For more information, call (414) 278-8295 or log on to [www.cavtmuseums.org](http://www.cavtmuseums.org)

**Thomas J. Erickson's** poem, "Ghazal for a Crow", was accepted for publication in the 2009 edition of *The Los Angeles Review*.

**Charles P. Ries** has had his interview with four small press editors that first

appeared in *Free Verse*, also accepted for publication in: *Poetry Dispatch*, *Gloom Cupboard*, *Working Writers*, *Creativity Connection*, and *Ibbetson Street*. His review of **Bruce Dethlefsen's** new book of poetry, *Breather* has appeared or been accepted for publication in: *Gloom Cupboard*, *Ibbetson Press*, *Word Riot*, *Pen Himalaya*, *Outsider Writers*, *Creativity Connection*, *ESC!*, *Small Press Review*, *Quill and Parchment*, *The World Audience Review*, *Notes From the Underground*, *Axe Factory*, *Poetry Dispatch* and *The Wisconsin River Journal*. His poetry has been accepted for publication in *Gloom Cupboard's* forth coming print edition, as well as *Canary*, *Heavy Bear Three*, *Concrete Meat*, and *Radiant Turnstile*. His 2003 electronic chapbook, *I'd Rather Be Mexican* has been accepted for print publication by Cervena Barva Press. He also was the Master of Ceremony for the First Annual **Barbara Bach-Wiig** Poetry Month Reading in Waukesha, as well as a live reading at the Bad Genie Rock Lounge in Milwaukee.

**John Campbell** had poems published in the annual anthology of Goose River Press, Waldoboro, Maine. A poem of his entitled, "Finders Keepers" that won \$25 in a *Free Verse* contest a few months ago will be in the 2009 anthology which comes out around Christmas time.

## Northwest Region

Jan Chronister, Northwest Regional VP  
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The annual Seeley Poetry Slam will take place on Saturday, July 11th (in Seeley, Wisconsin). This event has cash prizes, one of which is sponsored by WFOP. It is part of the Namekagon Arts Festival. For more information, please contact **Jan Chronister** at [janchronister@yahoo.com](mailto:janchronister@yahoo.com).

**Jan Chronister** has had poems accepted for publication in *Talking Stick Volume 18*, *Heart*, and will have a poem on a postcard in the latest series produced by Poetry Jumps Off the Shelf, Lines in the Sand. Jan is teaching a Poetry Tune-up class through WITC-Ashland

beginning June 22nd. More information is available at [www.witc.edu](http://www.witc.edu).

submitted by

Jan Chronister, Northwest Regional VP

## West-Central Region

Sandra Lindow, West-Central Regional VP  
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Robins are back and the Chippewa Valley is dizzy with daffodils. March 12th **Dina St. Louis** held a reading of *Zebra* her new poetry collection. March 22nd, **Bill Wiese** participated in the White Pine Spring Equinox Open Mic at the Raw Deal in Menomonie. March 25th, twenty-five sets of Chippewa Valley artists and poets celebrated the beginning of the fourth Vision and Word collaborative project. **Dina St. Louis**, **Candace Hennekens** and **Yvette Flaten** participated in the Eau Claire Regional Arts Series Jazz at Five series at the State Theater in Eau Claire. During spring break, **Sandra Lindow** moderated a poetry panel and read poetry at the International Conference of the Fantastic in the Arts in Orlando, Florida. Memorial Day she will be reading poetry at WisCon Science Fiction Convention in Madison. July 2nd she will be giving a poetry workshop at CONvergence in Minneapolis. Two of her speculative poems, "Of Lycanthropy and Lilacs" and "The Hedge Witch's Upgrade" will be published in upcoming issues of *Asimov's*. **Bruce Taylor's** poem, "The Artist," based on the original Korean of Han Yongwun, was published in *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry*, edited by Ilya Kaminsky and Susan Harris, Words Without Borders, March 2009. The spring issue of UW-LaCrosse's literary journal, *Steam Ticket*, published **David Blackey's** poem, "What To Do When Geese Attack."

submitted by

Sandra Lindow, West-Central Regional VP

**Jane-Marie Bahr**, Menomonie, has an upcoming poem, "Plum Trees Blossom," in *Hummingbird* and "Redemption" in issue #99/100 of *Free Verse*.

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## Northeast Region

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The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Door County has initiated the Dickinson Poetry Series on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at 10341 Water Street in Ephraim. Each evening will feature one poet followed by an open mic. Summer readings will feature **Cynthia B. Johnson** (read May 13th), **Hanne Gault** (June 10th), **David Clowers** (July 7th), **Tom Toerpe** (August 12th). Readings are open to the public. Check [www.uufdc.org](http://www.uufdc.org) for additional information.

**Kathryn Gahl's** poem and essay appear in *A Call to Nursing*, a humanities anthology published by Kaplan (2009). She participated in a reading at the Windhover Center of the Arts, Fond du Lac, on Thursday, May 7th. Gahl, a recent poetry finalist at the journals *Lumina* and *Chatauqua*, was also a finalist in the James Richey Short Story Contest. Her recently released *Life Drawing Class* (The Cottage Corollary, 2009) weaves published poems with original watercolors. It is available through the WFOP on-line store.

**Michael Kriesel's** sestina "Hidden Snow" won the 2009 WFOP Muse Prize at the Spring conference in Oconomowoc April 25th. His article on the Wisconsin Justified Poem appears in the current issues of *Rosebud*, *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, *Chiron Review*, *Small Press Review*, and *Free Verse*. His poem "Over The Rainbow" was a finalist in *North American Review's* 2009 Hearst Competition, and appears in the April issue. He has poems in recent or forthcoming issues of *Rosebud*, *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, *Free Verse*, *Nerve Cowboy* and *Chiron Review*.

**Barbara Larsen, Estella Lauter,** and **Sharon Auberle** were featured as poets who have either recently published or are working on new books at the April 18th Poetry Month reading at the Sister Bay/Liberty Grove Library. These poets joined others as featured readers during

the May 17th service at the Unitarian Church in Sister Bay. The Wallace Poetry group sponsored the 10th annual Poetry/Art show at the Meadows Gallery, Scandia Village, in Sister Bay during the month of May. The theme was "Journeys." There was a tea and reading of the poems by the participants on May 20th. WFOP members involved are: **Joan Traver Apple, Sharon Auberle, Anita Beckstrom, Loraine Brink, Hanne Gault, Phil Hansotia, Barbara Larsen, Estella Lauter, June Nirschl,** and **Judy Roy.**

## South-Central Region

James Roberts, South-Central Regional VP  
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As my old compadre, the late actor Ben Johnson always used to say: "this has been one downright 'high-lacious' spell." So much going on, so little time. Nevertheless, here's the round-up for all you poetry cowpokes. Giddyup, little dogies... And if I missed some stray critters, let me know.

**James P. Roberts** was the featured reader at the Edgar Allan Poe Bicentennial celebration at the Village Booksmith in Baraboo on January 9th. He read "The Cask of Amontillado" and also brought some Amontillado to share with the audience (bricks and mortar were optional).

**Lincoln Hartford** read pieces celebrating the Abraham Lincoln bicentennial and was joined by jazz/gospel singer J. P. Olson on February 6th at the Village Booksmith in Baraboo.

On February 12th there was a reading at Avol's Bookstore in Madison featuring Mark Kraushaar, winner of The Felix Pollak Prize in Poetry for "Falling Brick Kills Local Man," and WFOP stalwarts **Richard Roe** and **Richard Merelman**.

On Friday, February 13th was held the 15th Annual Love & Lust Poetry and Song, featuring: **Andrea Potos, Katrin Talbot,** and others, along with the women's acapella group, Ancestra, at A Room of One's Own Bookstore in Madison.

**Robin Chapman** continues to stay busy. She read poems of love and mathematics from recent anthologies at the Chaos and Complex Systems Seminar, University of Wisconsin-Madison on February 17th, appeared on WORT's Radio Literature

program on February 26th and read from her latest book *Abundance* on February 27th at A Room of One's Own in Madison where she was joined by **Jesse Lee Kercheval** reading fiction from *The Alice Stories*.

**Katrin Talbot** continues to mix her poetry with music and photography in conjunction with Sundance Cinemas and Edenfred. On February 26th she read poetry at a reception held at Bistro 608 and later the same evening joined Paul Rowe, baritone, presenting an evening of song, including Georges Enescu's 7 chansons de Clement Marot, a beautiful song cycle based on love poems of Marot's from the 1500's with a photoessay by **Katrin Talbot** at Mills Concert Hall, UW-Madison.

Friday, March 6th was a very special night: "Poems for the Wicked." Members of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets: **F.J. Bergmann, C.X. Dillhunt, Ronnie Hess, Catherine Jagoe, Mark Klierer, Richard Merelman, Gillian Nevers, Adam Gregory Pergament, James P. Roberts, Eve Robillard, Richard Roe, Angela Rydell, Shoshauna Shy, Sandy Stark, Richard Swanson, Katrin Talbot, Jeanne Tomasko, Timothy Walsh, Linda Woito, Laurel Yourke** and **Susan Elbe** (reading for the late **Judith Strasser**) read original poems that delve into themes depicted in *Something Wicked This Way Comes* on view in the main galleries of the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art in Madison.

On March 12th there was a reading by **John Lehman**, joined by members of the Prairie Fire Poetry Quartet—**Robin Chapman, Richard Roe** and **Shoshauna Shy**—in a program titled "Stage Left" to celebrate the launch of his new book titled *Acting Lessons* at Avol's Bookstore in Madison.

**David Scheler** read on Friday, March 13th (ooh, scary!) at the Village Booksmith in Baraboo. He was joined by Wisconsin Poet Laureate, **Marilyn Taylor**.

March 22nd featured a poetry reading by **Bruce Dethlefsen**, author of *Breather*, and **Robin Chapman**, author of *Abundance* at Avol's in Madison.

March 24th saw a poetry reading by **Jan Chronister**, author of *Target*

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Practice, **Jeanie Tomasko** and **Steve Tomasko** at Avol's in Madison.

April 26th featured a poetry reading by Madison Poet Laureate **Fabu** and The Hibiscus Collective at Avol's Bookstore.

April 30th and May 1st saw WFOP members **James P. Roberts**, **Mark Lilleht**, **Josephine Zell**, **F.J. Bergmann**, **Judith Zukerman**, **Katrin Talbot**, and **Palmer Haynes** read poetry and participate in group sessions at the Mount Horeb Middle School Poetry Cafe. Thanks to Tracey Gross for continuing this splendid program.

**Alice D'Alessio** won a first prize in the *Earth's Daughters* chapbook contest. Her book will be out later in 2009.

submitted by

James P. Roberts, South-Central Regional VP

**Shoshauna Shy** read at the Windhover Center for the Arts in Fond du Lac with **Ron Czerwien**, at Avol's with the Prairie Fire Poetry Quartet to celebrate **John Lehman's** book launch, and at Room of One's Own for the launch of *Eating Her Wedding Dress: Poems About Clothing* released by Ragged Sky Press. She also was part of a presentation with the Prairie Fire Poetry Quartet at the Minhas Craft Brewery in Monroe. Poems selected for the latest Poetry Jumps Off the Shelf project on the theme "Lines in the Sand" are now in production on postcards and will be available this summer.

**Ronnie Hess** has poems forthcoming in *Poetica*, *Albatross*, *Tipton Poetry Journal*, and *Poetry Jumps off the Shelf*.

**Sara Parrell** was an invited reader at Womanmade Gallery in Chicago on May 17th from 2-4 p.m. for the opening of the "Celebrating the Body" exhibit.

### Central-Fox Valley Region

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**Cathryn Cofell's** poem "What to Give Her" was selected for the **John Lehman Poetry Award** from *Wisconsin People & Ideas*. The poem was published in the spring issue of the magazine with *B-Movie Victims*. A selection of five poems

published in 2008 were also selected as an Honorable Mention for the 2008 Lorine Niedecker Poetry Award from the Council for Wisconsin Writers. She was a volunteer for Fox Cities Bookfest, hosting a Café Conversation on the poetry of Simon Armitage and was emcee at the festival's open mic.

### Mid-Central Region

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Poets from the Mid-Central Region attending the Spring Conference were: **Linda Aschbrenner**, **Bruce Dethlefsen**, **Lincoln Hartford**, **Joan Wiese Johannes**, **Jeffrey Johannes**, **Lucy Rose Johns**, **Linda Lee Konicsek**, and **Michael Kriesel**.

**Michael Kriesel** was awarded the first place WFOP Muse Prize and trophy for his poem "Hidden Snow."

**Linda Aschbrenner** received a lifetime membership to WFOP in appreciation for her support of poetry by founding, editing, and publishing *Free Verse*, Issues 1 through 100.

**Bruce Dethlefsen** read from his new book, *Breather*, at McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids on April 9th. He will also be featured at the Original Voice series on July 2nd at the Coloma Hotel.

**Barbara Cranford** conducted a poetry workshop in Hancock in May. Poets included in the anthology *Write Away!* edited by **Barb Cranford** read at the Thimbleberry book store in Marshfield on May 29nd, and will read at the McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids on Thursday, June 11th, at 7 p.m. Current WFOP poets included in the anthology are: **Linda Aschbrenner**, **Barb Cranford**, **Julie Eger**, **Phil Hansotia**, **Mary Lou Judy**, **Linda Lee Konicsek**, **Lou Roach**, **Kris Rued-Clark**, and **Sue Twigg**.

**Joan Wiese Johannes** and **Jeffrey Johannes** were the featured readers on April 2nd at the Coloma Hotel in Coloma, and on April 30th at the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay.

**Beverly Scott** and **Michael Kriesel**

have poems featured in the advertising flier for the *2010 Wisconsin Poets' Calendar*.



### Don't Forget...

to notify the *Museletter* editor if you move or change your email address.

### Would you like to read your Museletter online?

As many of you already know, the WFOP's *Museletter* is available on our website at [www.wfop.org](http://www.wfop.org). You can read it right on the site or you can choose to print a hard copy of the *Museletter*. To print a copy of the *Museletter*, go to the *Museletter* link on the left hand side of the page and then click on the "printable .pdf of current issue" in the upper right corner. If you would like to discontinue receiving the *Museletter* by mail and get your newsletter online instead, please notify Chris Falk (contact information on page 1). You will be notified by email when the *Museletter* is available for viewing on the website.

### How to reach the Editor

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## Fiscal Fourth Quarter Financial Report

January 1, 2009 through March 31, 2009

To coincide with our federal tax filing our fiscal year is April 1 to March 31.

### General Account: submitted by Nancy Rafal, treasurer

Balance January 1, 2009		\$49,542.84
Income:		
Dues	\$3,472.50	
'09 Spring Conference income	7,888.00	
WFOP store test deposit	.12	
5 for 4 CD interest	52.99	
Total Income:	\$11,413.61	
Expenses:		
<i>Museletter</i> -Data Design	\$819.16	
MC Printing (2 issues <i>Museletter</i> )	731.50	
N. Rafal-postage/supplies	69.00	
Internet domain name (2 years)	79.90	
Postmaster-bulk mail permit	180.00	
'09 Spring conference refund	60.00	
Miscellaneous	160.00	
Total Expenses:	(\$2,099.56)	
Closing Statements Balance on March 31, 2009		\$58,856.89
Outstanding checks		(\$60.00)
<b>General Account Balance on March 31, 2009</b>		<b>\$58,856.89*</b>

\*\$25,000 of this is invested in three interest bearing CDs. One \$5,000 CD (22 months) for the General Account to help bridge the gap created by "5 for 4" and two \$10,000 CDs (13 months) the interest from which goes to the Literary Fund for our contest prizes.

### Literary Fund Account: submitted by Susan Kileen, Literary Fund Co-Chair

Balance January 1, 2009		\$1,370.99
Income:		
MUSE Contest entry fees	\$571.00	
	\$571.00	
Expenses:		
MUSE postage	\$15.30	
MUSE judge	300.00	
Total Expenses:	(\$315.30)	
Closing Statement Balance on March 31, 2009		\$1,626.69
<b>Literary Fund Balance on March 31, 2009</b>		<b>\$1,626.69</b>

### Calendar Account: submitted by Michael Farmer, Calendar Business Manager

Balance January 1, 2009		\$5,044.66
Income:		
Calendar Sales	\$2,262.67	
Total Income:	\$2,262.67	
Expenses:		
Postage	\$111.46	
Editor's expenses	45.92	
Total Expenses:	(\$157.38)	
<b>Calendar Account Balance on March 31, 2009</b>		<b>\$7,149.95</b>
General Fund	\$58,856.89	
Literary Fund	\$1,626.69	
Calendar Fund	\$7,149.95	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$67,633.53</b>	

## New Triad Contest, Muse Contest and Literary Fund Chairs Named

Thank you to Susan Kileen for chairing the Muse Prize for Excellence in Poetry contest, the Triad Contest and the Literary Fund over the past few years. Susan is stepping down from these positions and new chairs have been named.

### Triad Contest Chairs

Jackie Langetieg and Alice D'Alessio

### Muse Contest Chairs

Brenda Hansen and Jane Osypowski

### Literary Fund Chair

Jackie Langetieg

Thank you to those who have stepped forward to take these positions.

## Door County Retreat for Rent South Nest

Three bedroom, two bath house near Cana Island. A quiet, restful, woodland retreat located in the boreal forest just off County Q. Woodburning fireplace, convenient location for all of northern Door County.  
N. Rafal, PO Box 340, Baileys Harbor, WI 54202-0340  
(920) 839-2191 mrsticket@dcwis.com Rates: \$50/night/room or \$125/whole house/night

## 2009 Muse Prize Winners Announced

The 2009 Muse Prize for Excellence in Poetry was judged by Robert Arnold. There were 143 entries which included 100 WFOP members and 43 non-members.

First Place: Michael Kriesel, Aniwa, "Hidden Snow"

Second Place: Candace Hennekens, Fall Creek, "The Distant Shore"

Third Place: Jean Tomasko, Middleton, "Little Lives"

1st HM: Marilyn Taylor, Milwaukee, "Any Constellation"

2nd HM: Sandra Lindow, Menomonie, "Small Change"

3rd HM: William Charlesworth, Stockholm, "Puzzled Farm Boy Dies in Battle"

## The First Time

### FIRST STROKES

words slide across the page like cadmium blue  
so watered just a hint of sky peeks  
from behind the umber crags of distant steeps  
and floods the valley in apple green  
while silence wisps heather-breath through  
chestnut branch and rustles crimson leaf.

—P. Jordan Spencer, Carefree AZ & Madison

### FIFTIES COOL

I first lit up at age 14  
practiced with my friends  
but could not overcome  
the difficulty of appearing  
sophisticated  
while nauseous  
my friends moved on  
learned to dangle  
a cigarette from their lips  
exhale smoke  
through their nose  
they carried a pack  
in a purse  
the smell of smoke  
on their clothes  
I on the other hand  
quit trying  
it was just to much  
of a drag

—Janice Hysell, Somers

### ENTERING THE REALM OF GARDENING

In May we dug through sod and roots  
a fifty-foot plot  
and then it rained.

The clumps sprouted  
memory grass; the worms  
ate and pooped, and the old roots searched  
for each other to tie the soil together.

My husband left that June  
and I went back to work. By July  
a dormant corn stalk broke through  
to shade the rhubarb that wouldn't die.

In August the dirt hardened to concrete. Wisps  
of sedge and clover covered the ground  
like a bad beard. Rabbits stopped in wonder  
and our vegetarian crows died of hunger.

By Fall, we'd harvested three ears  
of miniature corn—enough for a stir fry;  
plowed the garden flat, bought a dog, built his house  
and laid in concrete blocks over May's lost intentions.

—Jackie Langetieg, Verona

### AT FIRST, POEMS CAME OUT OF NOWHERE

You back down the driveway.  
Just as the rear bumper enters the road  
and you're ready to give it some gas,  
a poem zips past. Too fast.

You drive to the end of the block,  
begin to turn left. A verse runs  
the stop sign and you're left gasping  
for words. After parking your car,  
you walk to the intersection,

look both ways, step off the curb when  
a Hummer of a poem spins you around,  
then suddenly reverses, leaving you  
stranded, waving your pen like a fishing rod.

Home again, you pull into the drive,  
dash for the keyboard, fingers poised, and wait.  
And wait. Suddenly a poem

roars around the corner,  
crashes through the window  
and into some other waiting laptop.

—CJ Muchhala, Shorewood

### FIRST FEAST

Do you remember the first dinner with guests?  
How you set the dining room table  
(not the card table in the kitchen)  
with the better dishes? full place settings?  
Do you remember the time you spent  
planning the menu—your mother's  
mushroom appetizers, your mother-in-law's  
silken mashed potatoes—the latter the perfect  
complement to your first full-sized  
golden and crisped stuffed turkey?  
Do you remember being warmed  
by candle glow and a now forgotten wine  
as you scooped out the apple and currant  
dressing, just before lifting the skin  
away from the neck and pulling out  
the bag of giblets still intact?  
I do.

—June Nirschl, Baileys Harbor

### FIRST TROUT

Barely sixteen, on family vacation,  
sojourner north of corn field flatness,  
he's found a thickety creek with muscular current.

Throws a worm in, expecting nothing.

Boom. The brookie lunges deep, thrashes up  
floppy floppity on the surface, and sighs, heaving,  
dotted sides radiant in the boy's shaking hand.

Later, supplicant trout given back, it's in his chest,  
churning and wild, the floppy floppity.

—Richard Swanson, Madison

### WHAT COULD BE VERSE?

The first time that I ever wrote a sonnet,  
'Twas filled with grand Romantic affectation,  
As tho' perhaps Shelley or Keats had done it  
And I had merely taken poor dictation.

And so I tried to write free verse instead,  
Which left me feeling somewhat loose and sore  
As if, instead of a four-poster bed,  
I'd slept in random rags tossed on the floor.

Up next, I thought maybe my talents tended  
Toward more sentenced verse—the prosy poem.  
But how to tell when such a thing was ended?  
If there are secrets to it, I don't know 'em.

So back to fourteen lines my hand has come,  
And five fixed feet remains my rule of thumb.

—Lester Smith, Delavan

### WELCOME TO THE HUMAN BODY

In the first week of medical school  
I shuffled down a formaldehyde-corridor  
lined with jars of anatomical specimens  
and entered a hall with cadavers on marble tables.  
A man's body, possibly in his sixties, a small frame  
with half-shut eyes, bloated abdomen and  
wasted hands lay ready for dissection.  
I wondered who he was and how he got there?  
I found it hard to make that first incision.

*Cunningham's Manual* ignored these thoughts  
and moved straight to lay open the chest and  
abdomen and had us tracing aorta, femoral artery,  
nerves of the brachial plexus down to the hands.  
Dissection by day and *Gray's Anatomy* at night.  
I no longer noticed the formaldehyde, or the face  
with the half-shut eyes,—my books had taken over.  
In the next few weeks the old man was changing  
me even as he was losing himself in the process.

—Phil Hansotia, Ellison Bay

There was a girl named Nan,  
whose limerick didn't scan.  
Although she endeavored  
to be quite clever,  
she wasn't.

—Nancy Bernstein, Milwaukee

*Theme for Fall issue:  
See page 8 for more specific submission  
information.  
Deadline: Friday, August 7, 2009*

Submit via email, either pasted into the message or attached  
as a Word document, to: [mlt@uwm.edu](mailto:mlt@uwm.edu).

Or send via snail-mail to: Marilyn Taylor, 2825 E. Newport  
Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53211.

Membership status must be current to be considered for  
publication on these pages.

### PANTOUM, THE FIRST

The pantoum will now be my signature poem.  
At my age, I repeat myself anyway  
And I get credit for 16 lines while only having to write 8.  
Who came up with this great idea?

At my age, I repeat myself anyway.  
Did I already say that?  
I'd really like to thank the person who came up with this.  
Why, it's as if the poem writes itself.

Did I say that already?  
Believe me, it will be only pantoums from now on.  
This one is virtually writing itself.  
I have hit the mother lode!

My specialty is pantoums from now on.  
I do so love that 16/8 part.  
I have definitely hit the mother lode.  
The pantoum, from this day forward, my signature poem.

—Laurie Risch, Oconomowoc

### BEFORE VICTORIA'S SECRET

The first time I tried on  
an over-the-shoulder-boulder-holder  
the murky dressing room  
in the department store contained  
a decrepit curtain to shelter me and  
the sales lady in sweet perfume,  
her veiny hands securing the  
hook-and-eye closure, then  
yanking those straps  
of cotton with concentric circles  
that pointed to a future  
trying to restrain me

—Kathryn Gahl, Two Rivers

### THE FORGOTTEN CHILD—HAITI

The first time I saw hunger  
her brown smiling face devoured  
the rest of her body with  
its deep indentations and  
graceful lamentations.

She balanced her small brother  
on one hip and her world on  
the hem of her tattered skirt.

Her dark eyes were pools  
of distrust and longing  
as she carefully dissected  
the garbage heap outside  
the village wall.

For many long years now  
she has become my  
nighttime playmate as her  
image dances and stalks  
my wasting dreams.

—Susan Anderson, Baraboo

*President's Message from page 1*

houses. We also welcome you to donate your own poetry chapbooks for sale on the WFOP site (which additionally promotes your poetry, of course).

Finally, whenever possible, join us at one of the two yearly conferences. Taking part in the fellowship at those events, reading your poetry in the Friday night open-mic session and the Saturday Roll Call, and attending the general business meeting, all help to strengthen the organization.

Today Britain has installed a new Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy, a triple dark horse candidate in that she's the first female, openly bisexual, and Scottish person to the post. Apparently she considered turning down the appointment, to avoid feeling constrained by the politics of the position. Instead, she chose to take on the challenge of remaining edgy even under the increased public scrutiny. As poets, that is the mission to which we're all called—to be a voice to the public, reminding our civilization of things it might otherwise trample, whether that be the posies or the dispossessed. Thank you for the role you play in that mission, and for your membership in the WFOP.

Sincerely,

*Les*

## A Message from the Poems By Our Membership Editor

Just a sincere word or two of gratitude to all who submitted to the Poetry Pages this time around. There were many fine poems in this particular batch—possibly because the “First Times” theme seemed to elicit some wonderfully engaging subject-matter. In several instances it was exceedingly hard to say no—but because our esteemed editor has so cruelly limited the amount of space available to me, I had no choice but to obey.

It's my hope that you'll enjoy this selection—but I wish I also could have included the one about an open-mic reading, and the one about a “hope chest”, and the one about a kayak, and the one about the ducks in spring, among at least a dozen others. You know who you are. Meanwhile, thanks again for submitting—and I hope you'll do it again for the Fall issue!

## Poems By Our Membership Pages Theme & Guidelines for Fall 2009 Issue

1. Submit no more than two poems per member, please.
2. Title of poem, name of poet and home town of poet must appear on the submission itself.
3. Email submissions are preferred, either as attachments or in the body of the email. Send to: mlt@uwm.edu
4. Snail-mail submissions are also acceptable. Send to: Marilyn Taylor, 2825 E. Newport Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53211. (Poems will not be returned.)

## Poetry Publications

This section is for the listing of recent publications by WFOP MEMBERS EXCLUSIVELY. Recent publication: Copyright 2008-09. For more information, **please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope** to the author or publisher.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Publication</u>	<u>Author</u>
<i>Crow Ink</i>	Poetry	Sharon Auberle Publisher: Little Eagle Press \$12.00 plus \$1.00 S&H Order from the publisher at Little Eagle Press PO Box 684 Baileys Harbor, WI 54202 littleeaglepress@gmail.com \$15.00 plus \$3 shipping & handling
<i>The Essential Rudder: North Channel Poems</i>	Poetry	Estella Lauter Publisher: Finishing Line Press Order from publisher at Finishing Line Press Box 1626 Georgetown, KY 40324 www.finishinglinepress.com \$14.00 plus \$2 shipping and handling Also available from: www.amazon.com Or call Estella at (920) 839-2741
<i>Sing the Poem Electric</i>	Poetry DVD	R. Virgil Ellis A recreation of his performance in September 2008 at Woodwalk Gallery in Door County For more info contact Ron at (608) 423-9660 or ronellis@hughes.net
<i>Target Practice</i>		Jan Chronister Publisher: Parallel Press Order from Jan at 3931 S. County Road O Maple, WI 54854 janchronister@yahoo.com \$10 plus postage

### THEME: HAPPY UN-BIRTHDAY!

For the Fall Poetry Pages, your challenge is to research the year of your birth. Did anything particularly memorable take place? Did something historic happen? How was the world of that year different from the world of today? Write a poem that mentions the specific year and includes references to at least some of the actual events, facts or details that you discover about that year—and use them however you'd like. Form, tone, and point of view are entirely up to you. Maximum length, 24 lines—excluding title and stanza breaks.

## Open Letter to the Members of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets

Dear Friends and Fellow Writers:

We are profoundly grateful for the financial gift WFOP made to *Free Verse* at the spring conference. The membership's generosity helps us face the financial pressures of publishing a magazine as we carry over many previously paid subscriptions. It also demonstrates the broad support of Wisconsin poets, as we consider applying for funds from a variety of other sources.

We can't create a successful *Free Verse* without you! We hope that everyone will consider a subscription. Just \$25 will get you a year of poetry—with interviews of Todd Boss and Matthea Harvey coming up, as well as numerous features and poems by a wide range of Wisconsin poets and others. We hope you will join us!

Equally important, we need your submissions. We see *Free Verse* as a calling card from Wisconsin—our letter to the world, to quote Miss Dickinson, and we are only as strong as your strongest work. We will start reading submissions September 1st. A few words about what we're seeking:

**POEMS:** Please send three-five poems in the text of an email, with a bio which includes your connection to Wisconsin, and/or the broader region, if any, and a brief publication history. We are committed to continuing Linda Aschbrenner's tradition of welcoming poets who have not previously published their work. We hope to feature newcomers with each issue.

**PROSE:** We are always looking for people to write book reviews for us. We want to foster ongoing conversations within the pages of *Free Verse* and one of the best ways to do that is by asking Wisconsin writers to consider and review the work of other Wisconsin writers. If you have a book or chapbook out, send us a review copy!

We are also seeking broader essays and reflective pieces on the writing life, poems, poets, and your experiences as a writer. We hope to print these pieces as we can, to give us all a chance to share our passions and ideas, and hopefully provide a good introduction to a broader readership of what this poetry thing is all about.

Email your submissions in the text of an email to [fvqueries@gmail.com](mailto:fvqueries@gmail.com), with your name and the word "submission" in the subject line. If you must send hard copy, send with SASE c/o Sarah Busse, Co-Editor, *Free Verse*, 14 Pebble Beach Cir, Madison, WI 53717. We will both read all submissions. We will try to keep our response time to 8 weeks.

Lastly, there are a variety of ways to get involved beyond subscribing and submitting. Please see the flier also included in this Museletter for more ideas. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sarah Busse, Co-Editor

Wendy Vardaman, Co-Editor

### 13 Ways of Helping *Free Verse* (and they don't all involve money!)

Sarah Busse & Wendy Vardaman, co-editors, [fvqueries@gmail.com](mailto:fvqueries@gmail.com)

1. Subscribe—see page 10!
2. Submit your best work: poetry and prose about poetry. Open September 1, 2009.
3. Buy a gift subscription.
4. Ask your local library to subscribe, or donate a subscription to them!
5. Donate: \$10 or \$20 can make a difference.
6. Share *Free Verse* freely: with a friend; at your doctor's office; at the coffee shop or the staff break room; with your local high school, community college, four year college; bring a copy to your book club; going to a conference? take along a few copies (we'll give them to you!)
7. Tell creative writing and English departments we are planning to feature student writing. Tell professors we're interested in their work, too—poems and prose.
8. Advertise with us—your workshop, your book, your business...
9. Volunteer—see page 10!
10. Write reviews & send us a review copy of your book—we will list on our "Books Received" page and make the copy available to reviewers!
11. Ask us to present at your festival, workshop or class. We're available!
12. Join our new email list: sign up below!
13. Watch for our website—meanwhile help spread the word about us on list-servs that you belong to, blogs, Facebook, etc.

*Free Verse* continues on page 10

Free Verse from page 9

### 13 Ways of Helping Free Verse

Yes! I'd like to:

\_\_\_\_\_ Subscribe                      \_\_\_\_\_ Give a gift subscription (\$25)                      \_\_\_\_\_ Make a donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Get on the new email list for news/submission info: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Advertise                      \_\_\_\_\_ Review books

\_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer, with individual issue tasks, e.g., proofreading, mailing, distribution

\_\_\_\_\_ Contribute professional advice or time in one of these areas: accounting, nonprofit experience, nonprofit law, website development, graphic design, fundraising

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

For Subscription:                      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal                      \_\_\_\_\_ New Subscription                      \_\_\_\_\_ Gift Subscription

Free Verse, Sarah Busse, Co-editor, 14 Pebble Beach Circle, Madison, WI 53717

Special WFOP Ad Discount (if placed by September 1st, pdf to fvqueries@gmail.com):

Business card	\$30	\$35	1/4 page	\$75	\$65
1/2 page	\$125	\$105	Full page	\$200	\$170
Front inside	\$250	\$210	Back cover	\$300	\$250

### 2010 Calendar Book Order Form for WFOP Members

As a current WFOP member, you are entitled to a discount on the purchase of calendars for personal use and gift giving. If you are a contributor, a calendar containing your poem would make an excellent birthday, anniversary, holiday, or special occasion gift. There now is no limit to the number of calendars that members may purchase at the wholesale rate of \$9.00 each (retail price is \$13.95). Please use the following form to place your order. Send to: Michael Farmer, Business Manager, *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar: 2010*, PO Box 555, Baileys Harbor, WI 54202-0555 Phone: (920) 839-2191 Email: mfarmer@dcwis.com (Information is for in-house use only and not to be sold, traded or given away.)

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ books @ \$9.00 each                      1 book:                      \$3.00                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

2-3 books:                      \$4.00

If ordering by mail, please add shipping charges:

4-5 books:                      \$5.00

6-10 books:                      \$6.50

Shipping and handling:

over 10:                      Call or email                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: Make checks payable to **WFOP Calendar Account**                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the RETAIL brochure to distribute to potential individual buyers.

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the WHOLESale brochure for bookstores, gifts shops and other potential sellers in my community.

# WFOP Triad Poetry Contest Rules 2009

1. Contestant must be a current WFOP member in good standing.
2. There is no entry fee. Do not send a SASE. Entries will not be returned.
3. Entry Form must be completed in full, included with the submission and postmarked by the contest deadline date listed on the Entry Form.
4. Contestant may enter only one, original, unpublished poem in each category. The same poem may not be entered in more than one category. Categories are described on the Entry Form. Note: **Only poets who have not won a monetary award in a WFOP contest are eligible for the Kay Saunders Memorial New Poet category.**
5. Manuscript must be typed on 8½" x 11" white paper, one side only, one poem to a page. Type the category in the upper left corner.
6. Writer's name should **not** appear on the page with the poem.
7. Only the winners will be notified prior to the Fall Conference where the presentations will be made. The names will be posted on the WFOP web site and included in the *Museletter* following the conference.
8. The First Place winner in each category will be ineligible to enter that category again the following year.
9. Prizes will be awarded only if:
  - a. there are sufficient entries
  - b. the contest judge determines that an entry warrants an award.
10. WFOP is not responsible for lost manuscripts. Entries will not be returned and there will be no notification if an entry is disqualified for failure to follow any of the above rules. Author retains all rights to her/his work.
11. Prizes are: Theme: FOOD \$50, \$30, \$20  
Poet's Choice: \$50, \$30, \$20  
Kay Saunders Memorial New Poet: \$50, \$30, \$20

## Membership Renewal Form

KEEP YOUR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT. Dues for the 2009 year were due January 1, 2009. If your mailing label doesn't have (09) or beyond after your name, please pay your dues immediately to keep your membership current. Dues MUST be current to participate in the Triad contests and to be published in the *Museletter* poetry pages.

Mail to: **Nancy Rafal, PO Box 340, Baileys Harbor, WI 54202-0340.**

*Please make checks payable to: WFOP.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Active \$25.00**

**Student \$12.50**

**\*\*\*5 for 4 Deal\*\*\***

**\$100 paid now will give Active members 5 years of membership for the price of 4 (2009-2013)! Save \$25.00!**



# Markets

Do you miss the Markets column? If you would like to be the Markets person for the *Museletter*, please contact Les Smith. It has been such a useful source of information for members looking for places to get their poetry published and it is sad to see it gone. Think about it!

## Membership List Available to All Members

Fellowship members are entitled to receive a list of members at a minimal cost. This list includes names, addresses and phone numbers of members, but not email addresses. The price of the list is \$2.00 which covers the postage (free if sent to members by email). ***Please send cash or check payable to Chris Falk.*** E-mailed lists will be sent as a .PDF which requires Adobe Acrobat Reader. Acrobat Reader is available as a free download from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). In order to receive the list, members must sign an agreement and submit it with each request. This form can be obtained by contacting Chris Falk (address info on page 4) or on the website at [www.wfop.org](http://www.wfop.org).

## Help Wanted

The East Region (Milwaukee) has swapped with the Central Region (Fox Valley) for the hosting of the Fall 2009 Conference. **Central Region volunteers** are needed for the following positions: registration table (Friday 3 - 8 p.m. and Saturday 8 - 10 a.m.), hosting the Friday night open mic reading, and producing the conference program. If you're interested, please contact Cathryn Cofell at [ccofell@gmail.com](mailto:ccofell@gmail.com). Thank you!

As vice-president I am responsible to elicit a roster of officers for the spring 2010 slate of officers. Secretary and treasurer slots have had members volunteer to serve,

Lester Smith and I ask any other members interested in serving as president or vice-president to contact me for further information.

The Fellowship has had significant growth of members and offers many enriching events to promote poetry. The generosity, time, talents, and efforts of W.F.O.P. members allows for our continued vitality.

Michael Belongie

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# WFOP 2009 Triad Poetry Contest Entry Form

Deadline: August 1, 2009

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I am a current member of WFOP. The poetry submitted is my original unpublished work and not under consideration elsewhere.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Complete for each category you are entering

**THEME: FOOD** Length: 75 lines maximum

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

First Line: \_\_\_\_\_

**POET'S CHOICE:** No specific subject or form. Length: 75 lines maximum

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

First Line: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*KAY SAUNDERS MEMORIAL NEW POET:** No specific subject or form. Length: 75 lines maximum

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

First Line: \_\_\_\_\_

\*I have not won a monetary award in any WFOP contest (New Poet contestants only).

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Send entry by **August 1, 2009** to: Richard Swanson  
7320 Cedar Creek Trail  
Madison, WI 53717

Submit this single form for entering in more than one category.

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