

2016, ISSUE 3
EDITOR, KATHY COTTON

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 news-links.htm](http://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.



Writing Challenge: PoeTree

My favorite 2016 National Poetry Month idea came from Bloomington Public Library's creative staff who fashioned printed ISPS poems into a "PoeTree." What an apt visual for the season!

By mid-April at my southern Illinois home, the Bradford pear, dogwood, weeping cherry and redbud had splendidly cycled through bare branch, bud, and blossom to their verdant leaves. I found myself standing at a window, reciting from grade-school memory Joyce Kilmer's famous 1913 line, "I think that I shall never see / A poem as lovely as a tree."

Across time and place, from Rumi to Basho to Shakespeare to ISPS members, poets are inspired by trees. Our May/June challenge to submit a short poem about trees probably sounds deceptively simple. But to write something fresh about a well-worn topic is certainly a challenge. Send me your best PoeTree to be considered for publication in our next issue. ~Kathy Cotton, kacotton7@frontier.com. ✍



A Message from the ISPS President

Now that April's Poetry Month has passed, we can review some ISPS events and accomplishments. This year members' poetry was in 15 libraries throughout the state along with some of our poetry on free bookmarks. There was a shared reading with artwork at the Lisle library and an interview about ISPS and poetry aired Sunday April 17 on The Arts Section of WDCB 90.9 which can be heard by checking <https://soundcloud.com/wdcbnews/illinois-state-poetry-society-celebrates-poetry-month>. On the topic of celebrating poetry and poets, it is a good time to thank all the board members and webmasters for all their many efforts to keep our society vibrant and constantly growing. Thanks also to all the members who contribute their talents and enthusiasm.

As poets, we frequently seek the next idea for a poem, perhaps in an experimental form. We may discover a reoccurring theme or explore something that motivates us to simply put one foot in front of the other. In March I had the opportunity to hear Richard Blanco, the 2013 United States Poet Laureate, read some of his work at Hill-Stead Museum in Connecticut. Before the reading, I had a conversation with him about his poetry that is often about the theme of seeking "home." Blanco has lived in many places and claims Cuba and Spain as part of his heritage but now spends his time in Maine and New York City. The rich texture and insightful exploration of his work seek to define and confront what seems to elude his sense of peaceful belonging.

With careful scrutiny of our own poetry, we might be able to find personal motifs that start to take shape through various memories, stories, observations or conversations, such as in Richard Blanco's poetry of longing. Thus, there is often more to our poetry than first appears when randomly read. If we want to better understand ourselves, it is useful to look with an objective eye at our work, and as the artist Wolf Kahn said, we should always "start out with a capacity for enthusiasm." Then, beyond the deeper transitions and feelings, we might see the possibility of a first or another book starting to coalesce. Whatever our endeavors, it is all good, all worth the effort to pin words on the page and contribute to a global conversation.

Happy writing, Susan T. Moss ✍



Chapter Meetings

CENTRAL CHAPTER, PONTIAC

1:00 p.m., Saturday, June 11
Pontiac Public Library, 815-844-7229
211 E. Madison St., Pontiac, IL

HAIKU CHAPTER, NORTHBROOK

1:00 p.m., Sunday, June 26
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, May 15
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, May 1
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, June 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, May 7
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. ✍

Illinois Poet Wins



For the second year in a row, an Illinoisan has won the Kahn Memorial Award of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies. Michael Welch of Chicago, a 2016 graduate of Marquette University with a double major in English and public relations, is one of two winners of the College Undergraduate Poetry Competition. He will read from *But Sometimes I Remember* at the NFSPS convention. ✍

May Poetry Challenge: Poems from our Dreams

BEYOND THE DREAM

Sleep curls on the bed
in the shape of my shadow,
while I walk through soft

curtains of black air
and vines of stars
that hold time in their stems.

In one hand I carry
a snake's hiss,
in the other, the moon.

I offer thanks to my scars
for sending me to this place
where your laugh

echoes down the mountain
like shards of glass
melting into water, falling

through wind, as a bird's song
dances and twirls
from the beak of night.

Patty Pieczka
Carbondale

SUDDEN ENTRANCE

Down below the library's
lowest level
we came to an entrance
brilliant white and ellipsoid.

My companion looked in
and called "Anyone in here?"

We began to enter but then
my companion put up his arm
to stop me.

We listened for a moment.

My companion
whispered to me,
"He wants to come back
as flower drops."

Whereupon I awakened.

Alan Harris
Tucson AZ

WINTER NIGHTMARE

I sleep in the arms
of a grizzly, his mouth
a nest of kisses,
his scent sinister.

A crazed doll in a rocker
stares nowhere.
At the window, a wild
wet wind hisses.

Bony cold fingers
of moon hook the sill
and drift into snow.

A cry cracks the night.
Frozen tears of the Dead
shine in the bear's eyes.

Mary Ann Eiler
Oakbrook

Third Anthology Planned

The ISPS board set a July 15 submission deadline for the third members' poetry anthology. Readers will be Beth Staas, Tom Moran, and Carolyn Jevelian, with book design by Judy Tullis.

A maximum of four poems may be submitted by a poet with current ISPS membership. Each poet will be limited to two printed pages. Submissions will be accepted at isps.submissions@gmail.com or by mail to Tom Moran. Watch for additional information by email and at www.illinoispoets.org. ✍

WHAT GOOD ARE DREAMS?

Good ones are too short.
Bad ones often return
like a jobless brother-in-law.

Dreamers, like dreams,
are flawed.
Awake or asleep,
I can't sing or draw.

I fly great distances,
shoeless and alone,
unable to land.

I find it easy
to breathe underwater,
but hard to outswim
the sharks.

I reminisce with Mother.
She smiles but doesn't speak.

A dark figure
chases me home.
I arrive breathless
to a house that isn't mine.

I would avoid bedtime
but for the man
of my dreams, here now,
his leg slung over my hip,
snoring softly into my neck.

Judy Tullis
Indian Head Park ✍

Spotlight on Pontiac Chapter Facilitator Kathleen Murphy



Kathleen Murphy of Cullom is our new Central Chapter facilitator and ISPS board member. A native of Dayton, Ohio, she received a B.A. in English from Ohio Dominican College, Columbus. She and husband Kevin have four sons.

Across the years, Murphy has utilized her writing skills as a correspondent and feature writer for the *Pontiac Daily Leader*, humor columnist for the *Cullom Chronicle*, and as a freelance writer at a site where she has sold more than

530 articles. In the early 1990's, she began publishing poems and articles in small magazines and has had blogs on *Factoidz*, *Helium*, and *Triond*, posting more than 200 articles. Murphy is also in her 18th year as a writing tutor at the Heartland Community College, Pontiac Extension.

Your resume shows a lifetime love of writing; when did you first write poetry?

I remember writing poetry when I was 10 or 11, and then kept it up on and off into adulthood.

Much of your writing is geared to business. What inspires you to write poetry?

Usually things in my everyday life, like stories I've read, or things I'm doing. Sometimes about problems I'm having, or people I know are having. Inspiration can come from the weather, or even sports—like my poem about fantasy football!

Do you have favorite poets who inspire you?

My favorites are Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Charlotte and Emily Bronte, Felicia Hemans, and Gerard Manley Hopkins. I also enjoy old anonymous ballads, especially spooky ones.

Though your chapter is small, it has been creative and active in the community. What goals do you, as new facilitator, have that might also inspire other chapters?

We have six regular active members, and want to increase the membership some. We would like to continue a joint project we've done the past two years with the Pontiac Art Center, where we write poems about their paintings, and they do paintings about our poems, with an exhibit of both. We also plan to do presentations, some with Power Point, about kinds of poetry we like, or some aspects of poetry we're interested in. We plan some presentations in June.

What advice would you share with the members of Central Chapter and other aspiring poets?

Don't worry about being good at it, just go for it and write what you really feel. Write about things you want to write about. To begin getting published, small literary magazines are a good option. The editors are often friendly and encouraging. The Internet is a good option, too, because it's fast and easy. You should read a publication first to see if your work is a good fit for it.

Where have you published your poetry?

In small literary magazines like *Reflect*, *The Bracelet Charm*, *His Garden*, *Voice of Fatima*, *Ancient Paths*, and others.

What are you working on now?

I'm trying to write enough scary Gothic poems so I can eventually put a chapbook together. I have about 30, but I need more like 50. I'm going to call it, "It's Halloween Every Day." ✍️

Poems by Kathleen Murphy

HORSES

Life is a horse that races for gain
Not round a track, but across a wide plain.
The nearer the end the faster he'll run,
Wanting to finish and just be done.

The young horse runs with a heart of fire,
Driven by glory and wild desire,
But the old horse races the setting sun,
Running to finish what he's begun.

Poor old horse, seeing the end of the race,
And thundering there at a furious pace,
And now he's passing and now he's done,
Beat in a race that can't be won.

THINGS GROWNUPS SAY

I wonder at the stars above
And why they twinkle so.
I wonder at the seasons
And why they come and go.
I wonder how the robins fly
And night turns into day,
But most of all I wonder at
The things that grownups say.

Eat all your broccoli, they say,
And never be ungrateful.
The starving kids in China
Would be glad to have a plateful.
But I have an idea that
I think is really fair,
If I can have an envelope,
I'll mail my broccoli there.

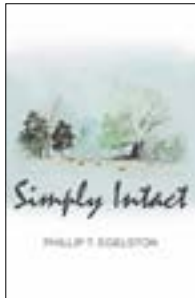
Don't ever make that awful face,
The grownups always say,
Because if you keep doing it
Your face will freeze that way.
And if you cross your eyes like that
They'll stick there just like glue.
I looked in Wikipedia
And saw it wasn't true.

Comb your hair and brush your teeth
And see your bed gets made,
And do your homework, that's your job
(Then why don't I get paid?).
But grownups can surprise you
And be nicer than they seem,
Like when they say you can go and play,
And then we'll get ice cream.

Or when they call you over,
And you think, what did I do?
But then they say you got an A
In math, I'm proud of you.
Then, when it's dark and quiet out
And Mom and Dad are near,
They say, Now here's your Teddy bear,
Goodnight, we love you, dear. ✍️

ISPS New Members / Members' News

JOAN COLBY's poem "Clio Sings the Blues" is a winner in the 2016 Atlanta Review International Poetry Contest and will appear in the fall issue.



PHILLIP EGELSTON of Jonesboro has published a new full-length collection of poetry, *Simply Intact*. He is the author of *Reste Placide*, *Light Stalking the Dark*, and the chapbook, *A Liberal Education*.

All books are available at amazon.com.

WILLIAM MARR of Downer's Grove has poetry collections now available as free e-books. Read Marr's English poetry anthology *Between Heaven and Earth* at www.fengtipoeticclub.com/book/book80/index.html. The Chinese/English/French trilingual poetry anthology *Chicago Serenade* is available at www.fengtipoeticclub.com/book/book77/index.html. The links are corrected from our last issue.

WILDA MORRIS was a featured poet in the March issue of *The Basil O'Flaherty* with ten ekphrastic poems and an essay.



PATTY PIECZKA, of Carbondale, announces publication of *Finding the Raven*, by Ravenswood. A long-time poet, Pieczka uses poetic passages as a feature in her first novel.



CURT VEvang announces publication of *A Scant Bagatelle*, a collection of new and previously published poems. It is available at amazon.com.

ART VOELLINGER of Belleville is a retired journalist with nearly 60 years of experience as a sportswriter, editor, and columnist for publications including *Belleville News-Democrat*, *The*

Sporting News, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and *Suburban Journal*. In addition, he was a high school English teacher for 32 years and coached wrestling, tennis, soccer and baseball. Voellinger has a bachelor's degree in English and journalism from St. Joseph's (IN) College and has written two sports fictions—*One Home Run*, and *Double Play*. In 2015 he published *Verses by Art*. Voellinger is a new member of the Southern Chapter.



MICHAEL WELCH of Chicago is a new ISPS member. His chapbook, *But Sometimes I Remember*, is the 2016 NFSPS Florence Kahn Memorial Award winner.

JAMES REISS of Wilmette, author of six poetry collections, announces his seventh book and first novel, *When Yellow Leaves*, available soon. For information, visit jamesreiss.com.

Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming Poetry Events

MAY 14, 2:00 p.m., Jennifer Dotson of Highland Park will be a Poet in the Parlor at the Vachel Lindsay House in Springfield.

MAY 21, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Local Authors' Book Fair, Highland Park Library.

MAY 22, 12:30 p.m. ISPS board meeting at the home of Susan Moss.

MAY 27, deadline for Highland Park Poetry "How To" poems. Send to jennifer@highlandparkpoetry.org.

JUNE 1–14, submission period for member poems on the ISPS website.

JUNE 9–13, NFSPS convention in Chaska, Minnesota.

JUNE 18, ISPS Reading, Oak Brook

Public Library.

JUNE 30, end of ISPS annual membership year. Renewal memberships are due for the 2016-2017 year.

JULY 15, deadline for submission to the third ISPS anthology. Send poems to isps.submissions@gmail.com.

SEPT. 1, deadline, Helen Schaible International Sonnet Contest. Information at www.poetsandpatrons.net.

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

JUNE 10, 8:00 p.m., Poetry Pentathlon: North Shore Edition, The Art Center of Highland Park.

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

Sponsor a Contest Category

May 16 is the deadline to submit a category sponsorship for the 2016 ISPS Poetry Contest.

Current categories include the four ISPS-sponsored contests: Free Verse, Formal Verse, Haiku and "The Arts". New sponsored categories are: "Celestial" by the ISPS board members, "Music" by the Southern Chapter, and "Compassion" by Judy Tullis and Curt Vevang.

Complete and return an application form with a check for prize monies, postmarked by May 16 to Judith Tullis, 6455 Big Bear Drive, Indian Head Park, IL 60525-4379.

Sponsor applications are available at jim@jimlambert.com.

ISPS Celebrates National Poetry Month Throughout the State



Poems by ISPS poets were displayed in 13 libraries across the state. Additionally, ISPS printed 1200 bookmarks for distribution to libraries for National Poetry Month. The bookmarks featured nine poems by nine ISPS members, along with the ISPS logo and web address. Several hundred bookmarks will also be distributed at the NFSPS convention June 9–13.

Left: ISPS Poetry Month displays at Glenview; Hinsdale with Caroline Johnson; Aurora Santori; Lisle; Carbondale with Candace Armstrong, Jan Presley and Deborah Corker; Aurora West; and Bloomington. Other libraries with ISPS exhibits were Glencoe, Highland Park, Northbrook, Wheelton, Wilmette, and Winnetka.



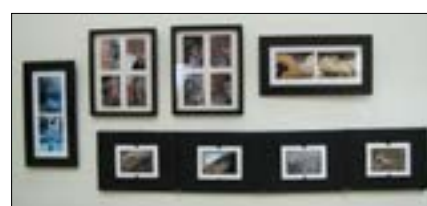
ISPS poets Camille Balla, Mary Jo Balistreri, Bakul Banerjee, Gail Denham, Barbara Eaton, Mardelle Fortier, Gay Guard-Chamberlain, Caroline Johnson, William Marr, Wilda Morris, and Judith Tullis participated in the Lisle Library poetry and art collaboration.

Photos left: Bill Marr, Judith Tullis and artist Sandy Finch, and poet Wilda Morris with artist Patricia Pope, poet Camille Balla, and artist Mary Yezek.



POETRY MONTH ART EXHIBITS

(Left) "Moments," 44 haiga by Kathy Cotton, Carbondale. (Below) Exhibit by Charlotte DeGregorio at the Chicago Public Library.





Georgina Milsted of Chicago with her father, John Mahoney of Westmont, as he reads his poetry at the January Brewed Awakening. At 96, John is one of our senior members.

ISPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Susan T. Moss
stm48@hotmail.com

Vice President, Jim Lambert
jim@jimlambert.net

Secretary, Wilda Morris
wem@ameritech.net

Treasurer, Judith Tullis
jtullis@ameritech.net

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gjeve@aol.com

Newsletter Editor and
Southern Chapter, Carbondale
Facilitator Kathy Cotton
kacotton7@frontier.com

Haiku Chapter, Northbrook
Facilitator Susan Auld
www.hsa-haiku.org

Central Chapter, Pontiac
Facilitator Kathleen Murphy
kms.poetry@hotmail.com

North Suburban Chapter, Northbrook
Facilitator Susan Moss
stm48@hotmail.com

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

ISPS Annual Memberships Expire June 30: Renew Now

To continue all the benefits of belonging to a great group of poetry supporters, don't let your ISPS membership lapse. For the small investment of \$20 (optional \$30.00 for Patron status or \$50.00, Benefactor status), your renewal dues support poetry in Illinois and receive all these perks:

- ★ Triple membership: the Illinois State Poetry Society PLUS the National Federation of State Poetry Societies PLUS any of the ISPS chapters.
- ★ ISPS bimonthly newsletter plus email notices of poetry events.
- ★ NFSPS quarterly publication, *Strophes*.
- ★ Special submission rates for annual ISPS and NFSPS contests.
- ★ Free admission to ISPS seminars and lectures and any/all chapter meetings.
- ★ Poetry critiques at chapter meetings across the state, plus availability of online critique groups.
- ★ Bimonthly publication of a poem submitted to the ISPS website.

Stay with us! For your convenience a membership form follows and is also on the website, www.illinoispoets.org

If you are unable to print the form, send your check with your name, address, email address, phone number and voting chapter (Northbrook, Darien, Lisle, Pontiac, Carbondale or At Large).

If you have not submitted a brief bio for the newsletter and website, you are invited to send one with your membership form.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2016-2017

ISPS Membership Form PLEASE PRINT

Complete the information below and send the form with a check: membership through June 30, 2016 annual dues, \$20.00 (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