

Illinois Poets

News of the Illinois State Poetry Society

November – December 2021

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Jim Sullivan

Lisle – SW Suburban
Wilda Morris

Northbrook – N. Suburban
Mary Beth Bretzlauf

Pontiac - N. Central
Kathleen Murphy

President's Message



The ISPS newsletter has been an important source of communication within our society, and we on the board are very appreciative of Kathy Robinson's efforts as editor. Unfortunately, she has had to take a medical leave from this position. We send good wishes for her better health in the days ahead. We welcome Jennifer Dotson who has kindly volunteered to take over the job, and you are invited to contact her with ISPS related news that requires a two-month notice at the following: jennifer@highlandparkpoetry.org.

Now that trees have dropped their colorful robes and winter is on the way, we poets might learn something from this annual event and shed what's left of former ideas and creative motivations that don't add up to initial intentions to capture what we tried to say but missed the mark. Before the year is over, we have time to weigh, word for word, what best represents our individual efforts to save what we know of this year, this life we have observed and experienced.

We can discover a lot from our own poetry and even be surprised by our words. Sometimes when we are fully absorbed in our writing, we dwell in a place beyond the moment and are carried by deeper inspiration that seems to magically emerge on the page. These are the "keepers," the ones that we can learn from and then try to find that creative place again and again. As we move into winter, we can set new tracks to follow and trust that they will lead to more insights. The poet William Stafford also seeks ways to explore deeper connections. In "Bi-Focal" he offers the following view:

So, the world happens twice—
once what we see it as:
second it legends itself
deep, the way it is.

As we leave the *Sturm und Drang* of this past year and gather the positives to take with us into 2022, let's keep our sight on the horizon of possibility, joy and creativity.

Happy writing and a healthy new year,

Susan T. Moss

In Memorium

Michael Galati, a long-time member of the Illinois State Poetry Society, the member who arranged for the original chapter to meet for many years at the Lemont Public Library, died on October 9 at the age of 90. His family has expressed thanks to ISPS for the condolences received from the society and numerous members. The following poem was included in the program for his memorial service.



Stars

by Michael Galati

I have come to believe
all stars are wishes, wishes that
somehow the phone would ring
with you on the other end
asking if I were there - -
that kind of thing.
What did you ever suppose
happens to wishes made like that?
Surely they must hang from somewhere
by their thin threads,
so why not from the sky?
Do you remember that time we prayed,
and the sky turned dark enough
for us to see the whole of the Milky Way?
Oh the wonders of things we asked for that night,
though others are calling them stars.

If you did not have a chance to get to know Michael, here is his brief bio statement from the ISPS website:

(September 4, 1931 - October 9, 2021) Having taught English in an Illinois high school for some years, **Michael Galati** awakened to the realization that he might teach poetry more effectively if he practiced the art of writing poetry himself. In this way he began his apprenticeship in the poetic arts. His work has been successful in gaining publication, most notably in the *Christian Science Monitor* and in anthologies published by area colleges and poetry organizations. He also served as editor and columnist for his local newspaper, the Lemont Metropolitan. Widowed, he lived with his second wife, Judy, in Lemont, Illinois, a village nestled in the midst of the region's old dolomite quarries and three shipping canals. His walks met with wildlife among oak forested moraines and numerous streams. [Read his poems](#)

Manningham Trust Poetry Competition 2020-21

by Mary Beth Bretzlauf, Youth Chair

This year, a poster was designed to spur competitiveness between schools. The guidelines, templates, and a checklist for students are available on the ISPS website. <http://illinoispoets.org/contest.htm>. For the first time, we are spreading the word about the competition with RAILS since our libraries are vital to students and the communities. I have already received several entries!



ILLINOIS MANNINGHAM TRUST Student Poetry Contest

**Put YOUR school
on the map in 2022!**

**JUNIOR DIVISION:
Grades 6-8**

**SENIOR DIVISION:
Grades 9-12**



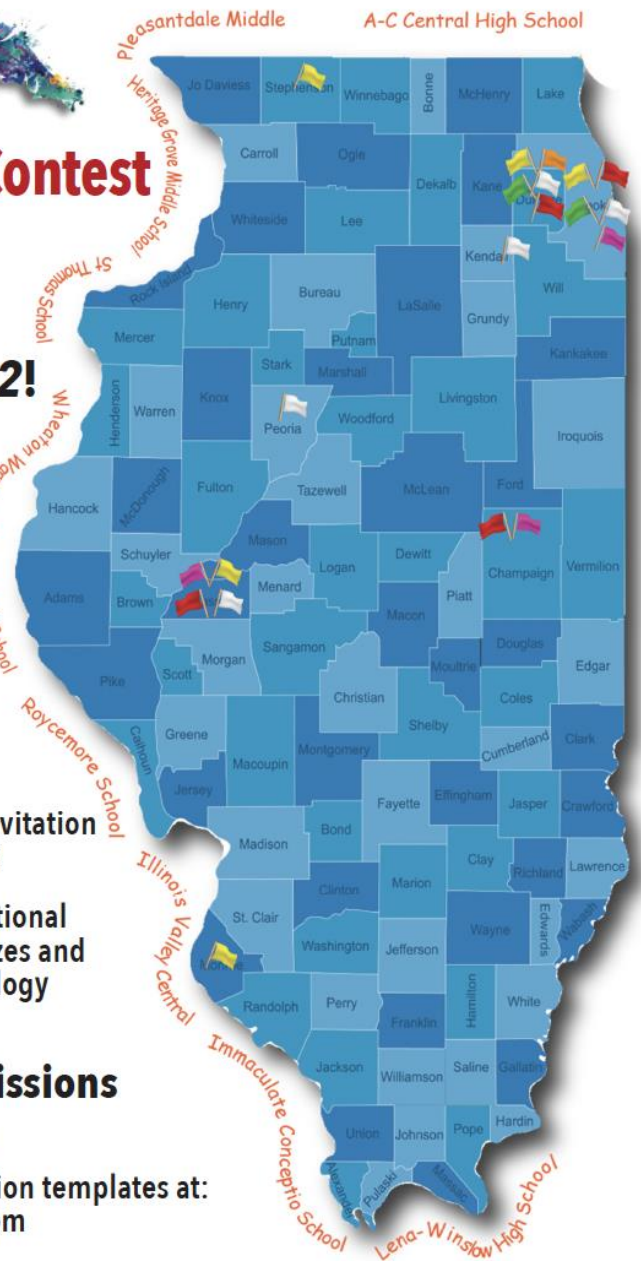
**Top 10 winners
in each division:**

- Receive certificates and an invitation to read at an ISPS poetry event
- Advance to Manningham National Contest which awards cash prizes and publication in the MTSP anthology



Contest Submissions

- Deadline: January 31, 2022
- Guidelines and free submission templates at: isps.manningham@gmail.com



Sponsored by Illinois State Poetry Society & National Federation of State Poetry Societies

ISPS Chapter News

Illinois State Poetry Society-Haiku Society of America Haiku Chapter

The ISPS-HSA Haiku Chapter held its Zoom meeting on Sunday, October 24. We had postponed our normal third Sunday meeting because the Haiku North America Zoom conference took place on the third weekend of October, and many of us attended that conference. Thus, our haiku chapter meeting was a week later. Those who attended were: Jo Balistrieri, Tom Chockley, Janice Doppler, Susan Farner, Margie Gustafson, Cielo Jones, Wilda Morris, and Leslie Peet.

Then we moved on to the workshop conversation of draft haiku from participants, who wanted feedback regarding their poems. Each haiku was presented anonymously and discussed. Then the haiku poet had the chance to give his or her feedback about the haiku. We also asked the poet to tell us about the “haiku moment” that had been the impulse for the haiku.

We had time to talk about new haiku journals for further reading and enjoyment. We also spent time talking about highlights of the Haiku North America conference.

Our next Haiku Chapter Zoom Meeting: Sunday, December 12, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. CST. The deadline for RSVPs to attend will be Tuesday, December 7. Contact Tom Chockley (tomzhaiku@outlook.com) to attend the Zoom meeting and to receive further information.

Illinois State Poetry Society - North Chapter

The North Chapter of ISPS meets the second Sunday of every other month (the odd months). Currently meeting on Zoom, members submit a poem for critique. Our next meeting is November 14th at 1 p.m. Anyone wishing to attend can contact Chapter Facilitator Mary Beth Bretzlauf at mbbretzlauf@comcast.net.

Want to brighten up a winter’s night with some poetry and fellow poets? Chapter Facilitators are planning on an inter-chapter open mic on Zoom in January. A date has yet to be determined, so watch your inbox for an invitation to the event!

Opportunities

East on Central, Highland Park’s Journal of Arts & Letters, just published its 20th anniversary edition this fall. The volume features a mix of poetry, prose, and artwork. Several ISPS members are active on the EOC board: Mary Beth Bretzlauf, Julie Isaacson, Marjorie Rissman, R. M. Yager, and Editor-in-Chief, Judith M.K. Kaufman. Copies are \$20 and may be ordered through the website at www.eastoncentral.org. East on Central is accepting submissions for their 21st edition. While poem submissions of a general nature are welcome, next year’s edition will feature a special section on the theme of BLUES. The deadline is March 1, 2022 and submissions are made through the journal’s website.



Highland Park Poetry has announced its 2022 Poetry Challenge. Poets of all ages and experience are invited to write about one of the following challenges: 1) U.S. National Parks (honoring the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Yellowstone National Park though works may find inspiration from any of the U.S. National Parks), 2) Underwater Life, or 3) a Waltmarie, a poetic form invented by Candace Kubinec. There is no fee to submit one poem and previously published work is accepted with acknowledgment. The deadline is January 31, 2022. For complete submission guidelines, entry form, and instructions on writing a Waltmarie, visit www.highlandparkpoetry.org.

New ISPS Members

Heidi Bellile was raised in Iowa. She started writing poetry as a teenager. She stopped writing for many years, but re-engaged after her close friend from the military passed. She obtained her teaching certificate from Indiana University Southeast. She finished her Master of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling. She is currently a counselor at a non-profit mental health agency in Kentucky. She recently bought a home in LaSalle County, Illinois, not far from Starved Rock Park. She has been inspired by Chicago area poets and attends poetry readings all over the United States, mostly in Illinois, though. She has written one book, *A Walk on the Poet's Edge*, and has been published in about 20 magazines, journals and other media sources. Heidi has joined the Pontiac Chapter.

Mark Hammerschick is a new member in the Northbrook Chapter and writes both poetry and fiction. He holds a BA in English from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and a BS and MBA. He began writing in grade school and has contributed a number of poems to literary journals over the years and has been published sporadically. His professional life has been focused on digital strategy and online consulting as a solution architect and digital transformation strategist. He is a lifelong resident of the Chicago area and currently lives in a northern suburb near the shore of Lake Michigan. His poem "Rise on Up" won first place in the Poet's Choice category of the *Oregon Poetry Association*, one of his poems won third prize in the Highland Park Poetry Challenge. His current work has been featured in: *Naugatuck River Review*, *Grey Sparrow Press*, *Button Eye Review*, *The fictional Cafe*, *East on Central*, *Blue Lake Review*, *Calliope*, *Disquiet Arts*, *North Dakota Quarterly* and *The Raw Art Review*.

Terry Slaney was born in Chicago and raised in Aurora. While she has been writing both prose and poetry for many years, it has only been relatively recently that she has begun to share her poetry with others. She credits A-Town Poetics, a poetry group based in Aurora, as an excellent source of support. When asked about where she finds inspiration, Terry responds: "Life, the seasons, three years in New York City, twelve years living in Greece (Terry's son, grandson, and daughter-in-law live in Athens), a year in Erfurt, Germany a few years after the wall (with her husband on his Fulbright). I am lucky to have traveled well." Terry has a diverse background as a dancer who taught dance (modern) for many years; her dance credits include Julliard and Connecticut College. She was also a high school social worker, now retired. Her academic accomplishments include a BS from Miami University of Ohio as well as an MSW from Aurora University.



A reminder to all members: You should periodically check your bio online at illinoispoets.org to be sure it is current and complete.

More Member News

Three ISPS members, **Caroline Johnson**, **Wilda Morris** and **Susan T. Moss** are participating in a poetry and photography exhibit in November. The P2 Collective show is a conversation between poetry and photography with ekphrastic endeavors among four poets and three photographers. The Perspective Gallery is located at 310-1/2B Chicago Avenue, Evanston, IL. The gallery is open Thursday-Sunday each week from noon until 6 PM (5 PM on Sundays).

Jennifer Dotson will be the featured poet for Highland Park Poetry's monthly reading and poetry open-mic on Saturday, December 11 at 5 PM at Madame ZuZu's, 1876 1st Street, Highland Park, IL. This is Jennifer's first in-person event to promote her newest collection, *Late Night Talk Show Fantasy & Other Poems*, published in 2020 by Kelsay Books. Poets may read up to 3 poems in the open-mic. There is no cover charge but all attendees are expected to purchase an item from the café.



The Addison Center for the Arts and interested ISPS poets have been working on a collaboration entitled **Art & Verse Festival 2022**. Participating poets are now busy choosing a visual artist who will respond to a poem for the event planned from February 19, 2022, to March 19, 2022. A reception will be held on Saturday, February 19 from 1-4PM at the Addison Center for the Arts. The last exchange was centered around poets creating a poem based on artists' work. Watch for a reminder of the event next year.

If you have bio updates to share, send to oasis@alharris.com, for possible member news send to ISPS newsletter editor Jennifer Dotson, Jennifer@highlandparkpoetry.org (be sure to include "ISPS News" in the subject line of your email. The ISPS website is at: Illinoispoets.org

Chapter Contacts

While Covid-19 gathering restrictions are in flux statewide, please contact the chapter facilitator for more info on possible meetings online and how to access them.

All ISPS members are welcome at any monthly meeting (space permitting) after first contacting the facilitator.

Southern Chapter (Carbondale)

Contact Kathy Cotton, facilitator
kacotton7@frontier.com

Central Chapter (Champaign)

Contact Kathy Robinson, facilitator
krobdzys@gmail.com

West Suburban Chapter (Darien)

Contact Caroline Johnson, facilitator
twinkscat@aol.com

Haiku Chapter

Contact Tom Chockley, co-facilitator
tomzhaiku@outlook.com

Southwest Suburban Chapter (Lisle)

For the Zoom link, contact
Wilda Morris
wem@americitech.net

North Suburban Chapter (Northbrook)

Contact
Mary Beth Bretzlauf, facilitator
mbbretzlauf@comcast.net

North Central Chapter (Pontiac)

Contact
Kathleen Murphy, facilitator
kathleenzmurphy@mail.com