



Illinois Poets

News of the Illinois State Poetry Society

March – April 2022

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Champaign - Central
Kathy Robinson

Darien – W. Suburban
Caroline Johnson

Haiku chapter (meets in
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Lisle – SW Suburban
Wilda Morris

Northbrook – N. Suburban
Mary Beth Bretzlauf

Pontiac - N. Central
Kathleen Murphy

President's Message



A Message From The President - March 2022

I am writing this in February and happy to report that a few green sprouts pushed their way through cold earth and revealed themselves along a neighborhood road. Their greening spread through me and signaled first signs of spring next month. Many poets have written about such occasions of unexpected joy. These works are often composed in first or third person as an observation without a more confessional point of view. The difference is worth considering.

It is not as common to write a poem that may serve to talk to ourselves, one that might be read by someone else but not necessarily. How often do we confess something on our mind that once written starts to clarify, heal, sooth, celebrate or perhaps scold? Poetry can serve as our best listener and scribe, a confidant that feeds back our yearnings, fears, joys and hopes. We can use the power of poetry to befriend us when no one else is available or the topic too personal to speak aloud to others. Personal poems can record moments that serve as reminders of our life journeys whether shared or not. Sometimes world events, often outside our control, can rattle moments of tranquility. It's then that a conversation between self and self via succinct language into the deepest concerns can offer solace, a sorting out and a possible mending meditation. Emily Dickinson's poems are often a conversation with no apparent audience but rather an exploration of ideas expressed on the pages she mostly kept tucked away. Enjoy these days sliding into spring and happy writing.

Susan T. Moss

ISPS April Poetry Month Event – April 23, 2022

A Virtual *Spoon River Anthology* Presentation – Saturday, April 23, 2022 at 2 PM

Save the date for a very entertaining presentation of *Spoon River Anthology*, readings adapted from Edgar Lee Masters, the Illinois poet whose collection of free verse epitaphs centers on a fictional Illinois town named after the Spoon River. This spoken word performance will be presented by Paddy and Jon Lynn at 2 PM on April 23, 2022. There will be time for questions and answers immediately following the program. This is virtual Zoom production requires advance registration in order to receive the link: ISPS.manningham@gmail.com. **Be sure to register due to limited space.**



ISPS Manningham Poetry Contest Status

This year's Manningham Poetry Contest for students saw a large increase in both number of schools participating and the number of poem submissions received. We received a total of 143 poems from 34 schools compared to last year we received 126 poems from 26 school. Breaking the stats down further - Junior high division: 20 poems from 8 schools; Senior division: 123 poems, 26 schools!

Currently the poems are being reviewed by the two judges. ISPS Manningham Poetry Contest results will be reported in the May/June issue of the ISPS newsletter.

New Procedure for Posting ISPS Member Poems on Website

Alan Harris has announced a new procedure for posting poems/haiga written by ISPS members on the ISPS website. Instead of a bi-monthly posting of all poems submitted, he will do a posting every month for about 1/4 of the membership, based on the member's last initial. For April, 2022, poems/haiga submitted by members whose last name begins with A - D will be posted; for May, E - H; for June, I - M; for July, N - Z; etc. To discover the months your poem/haiga can be submitted, and to read our other submission guidelines, see illinoispoets.org/submitting.htm. The net effect of this change will be that a member may submit one poem and/or haiga every four months instead of every two months. The submission period has been reduced from 14 days to 7 days (the first 7 days of each month).

ISPS Chapter News

West Suburban Chapter (Darien)

Saturday, March 5, 2022, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Indian Prairie Public Library (2nd floor)

401 Plainfield Rd

Darien, IL 60561

<http://ippl.info>

Caroline Johnson, Facilitator, twinkscat@aol.com

Masks are required. Please bring 8 to 10 copies of up to 2 poems to share with the group. Also bring a snack item to share, and a beverage for yourself.

Driving directions can be obtained on [MapQuest.com](https://www.mapquest.com), or by calling the library at 630-986-1976

Illinois State Poetry Society-Haiku Society of America Haiku Chapter

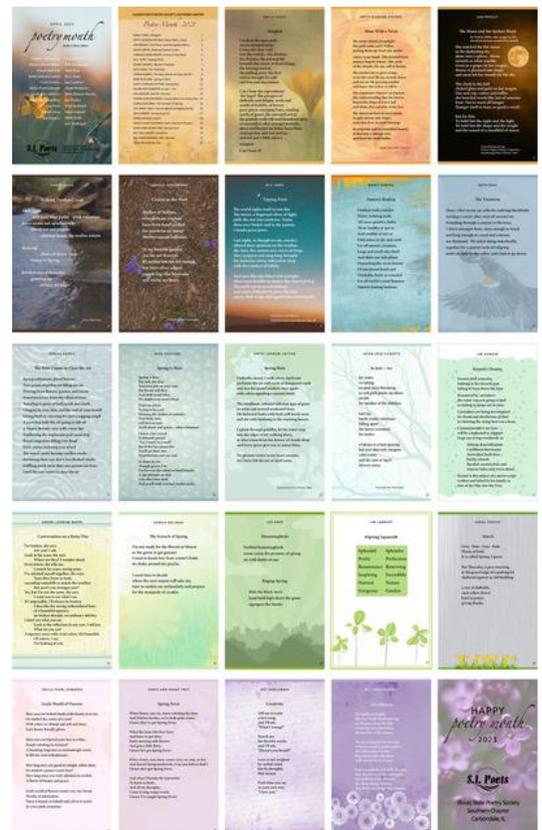
The ISPS-HSA Haiku Chapter held its bimonthly Zoom chapter meeting, February 20, 2022. Those who attended were: Susan Auld, Jo Balistreri, Tom Chockley, Jeanne Cook, Janice Doppler, Susan Farner, Lee Gurga, Margie Gustafson, Cielo Jones, Jeff Kressmann, William Ledder, Wilda Morris, Jennifer Thiermann, and Joan Volkman. We began the meeting looking at innovative haiku recently published in Paul M.'s *Witness Tree* as well as haiku in *Modern Haiku* 53.1, Winter/Spring. 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.

Our next Haiku Chapter Zoom Meeting: Sunday, April 24, 2022 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. CST. The deadline for RSVPs to attend will be Tuesday, April 19. Contact Tom Chockley (tomzhaiku@outlook.com) to attend the Zoom meeting and to receive further information.

ISPS Southern Chapter

The Southern Chapter's March meeting will be at the Carbondale Library on Sunday, **March 13, 2022 at 1:30 PM.**

Throughout April, National Poetry Month, the library will feature an art exhibit of the chapter's broadside poetry collection, as well as a display case of poetry books by Southern Chapter poets. The image to the right offers a graphic of the display in its entirety.



Welcome New ISPS Member – Jane Desmond

Jane Desmond is an emerging poet in Champaign, Illinois with recent publications in *Persimmon Tree*, *The Intima*, *Words for the Wild*, and the *Shrew Literary Journal*. She is grateful for the wonderful work and support of the Champaign-Urbana Poetry group, and has studied with Kim Addonizio and Stuart Kestenbaum. In March, 2021 she was awarded her first poetry residency, at the Write On creative writing center in Door County,

Wisconsin. A former choreographer, many of her poems center on the idea of embodiment, including in the more-than-human world.

A version of "A Tree is Breathing" first appeared in the online Journal "Words for the Wild" in the U.K. on March 24, 2019,

<https://www.wordsforthewild.co.uk>

A Tree is Breathing

Leaves hang like small
green hearts, tiny pulses
each tipped lightly to a tendril
and that in turn to branch.

Tatted tracery against the paling sky
of early morning's dull blush
ebbs and flows, dancing
the puffs and exhales
of the invisible.

Stirring, just slightly,
shaking tree awake at dawn.

~ Jane Desmond

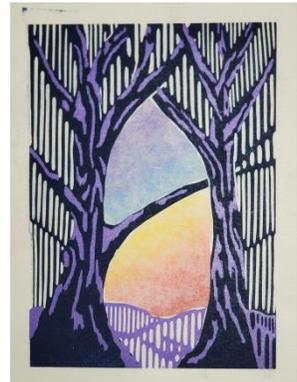


ISPS Member News

Poets & Patrons of Chicago hosts a **Virtual Open Mic for Poets and Patrons Members on Saturday, March 19, at 1 PM**. Help us celebrate **Women's History Month**. The theme of this virtual open mic is Women's History, in celebration of the 101st anniversary of women's right to vote. Poets are encouraged to read poems inspired by this theme, but as always, you may read any poem that moves you. Anyone interested in any of these events can RSVP to poetsandpatrons@gmail.com.

Expressions: Art & Verse 2022

The opening of the joint exhibit of ISPS and the Addison Center for the Arts was held on February 19, 2022, in Addison. Sixteen poets' work is currently on display with corresponding art in the center at 213 N. Lombard Road, Addison, Illinois. Each poem was read by either one of six attending poets or in a virtual presentation while the art was projected on a screen. The featured poets who submitted work are the following: **Marie Asner, Diane Lotko Baker, Carole R. Bolinski, Mary Beth Bretzlauf, Hanh Chau, Kathy Lohrum Cotton, Carole Croll, Gail Denham, Charlotte Digregorio, Idella Pearls Edwards, M.E. Hope, Mark Hudson, Dr. Emory D. Jones, Maggie Kennedy, S. Michael Kozubek, Lennart Lundh, Wilda Morris, Susan T. Moss, René Parks, Marie Samuel, Linda Wallin, and Curt Vevang**. The exhibit will be on display until March 19, 2022.



Sample art images from the Expressions: Art & Verse 2022 show are above and listed from left to right: Re Kielar for Lennart Lundh's poem "Shall We Dance"; Joan Ladendorf "Threes" for Carole Croll's poem of the same name; Margaret Bucholz for Mary Beth Bretzlauf's poem "Fly Away" and Benjamin Calvert III for Emory D. Jones' poem, "Deep Freeze."

Colors in Nature

Another collaboration of members' poetry and artists' work will be held on April 30, 2022, at the Elk Grove Public Library, 125 S. Prospect Avenue, from 1 - 3 PM. The theme is Colors in Nature, and the exhibit will be up through May. Poets will have an opportunity to read their poems or have them read for them. The following ISPS members will have one or more poems interpreted by artists: **Patrice Boyer Claeys, Idella Pearl Edwards, Carolyn Jevelian, Bakul Banerjee, Michael D. Scott, William L. Lederer, Susan T. Moss, Michael Escoubas, Mark Hudson, Gail Denham, Mardelle Fortier, M.E. Hope, Charlotte Digregorio, Ricky Sadler, Cara Schuster, Bonnie Manion, Susan Gundlach, Jill Langlois, Mary Beth Bretzlauf, Judith Tullis, Nancy Ann Schaefer, Marie Samuel, Lennart Lundh, Judith Tullis, Rafael Lantiqua Medina, Kate Hutchinson, Kathy Lohrum Cotton, Amy Jo Schoonover, Hanh Chau and Kathy Robinson**. More reminders and any pertinent information will be sent as it comes from the coordinator, Tammy Haman.

More ISPS Member News

Karen Christensen was appointed the Poet Laureate for Aurora, Illinois in January of 2020. In January 2022, Karen appeared on a segment of Talking Cities, "If the Pen is Mightier Than the Sword." She talks briefly about the origins of poet laureates and what they do as well as how poetry helps us process challenging times. The approximately four minute spot includes a marvelous poem written and read by Karen. Go to <https://talkingcities.com> and click on "If the Pen is Mightier Than the Sword..." or search for "Poet Laureate."

William Marr had three books published by assorted presses in 2021: *A Dreamless Night: the Selected Chinese/English Poems of William Marr* (Chicago Academic Press), *Every Day A Bue Sky: the Humorous and Satirical Poems of William Marr* (Washington Writers Press), and *Selected Chinese/English Poems of William Marr* (The Earth Culture Press, China).



P2 Collective Poets and ISPS Members, **Caroline Johnson**, **Wilda Morris**, and **Susan T. Moss**, have their recent collaborations with P2 Collective Artists posted on Highland Park Poetry's the Muses' Gallery:

www.HighlandParkPoetry.org/themusesgallery.html. This will remain posted and available for viewing through the end of March.

Highland Park Poetry offers monthly in-person poetry readings and open-mics at Madame ZuZu's, 1876 First Street, Highland Park, Illinois. All events at Saturdays at 5PM. Poets may read up to 3 poems in the open-mic. There is no cover charge but attendees are expected to purchase an item from the café. The upcoming line up includes the following ISPS members as featured poets:

- **March 12** – **Gail Goepfert** is the author of *Self-Portrait with Thorns*
- **April 9** - **Sibling Revelry** with sisters and poets, **Gay Guard Chamberlin** & Anara Guard
- **May 14** – **Charlotte Digregorio**, author of *Ripples of Air: Poems of Healing*, with Amelia Cotter, author of *Apparitions*

For more details, please visit www.HighlandParkPoetry.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)

Mary Beth Bretzlauf, facilitator
mhbretzlauf@comcast.net

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
mhbretzlauf@comcast.net

North Central Chapter (Pontiac)

Contact
Kathleen Murphy, facilitator
kathleenmurphy@mail.com

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