

PST September News and Events

All, PST-West Tennessee had its (virtual) meeting Saturday, September 5th. Wanted to share the following news and updates with everyone. The meeting was followed by a board meeting; minutes are posted to PST's website.

64th Annual Festival/Contest

Judges are busy judging over 500 poems received from 45 poets! Thank you to all who entered! We are looking forward to our (virtual) Festival on October 24th, beginning at 1 pm central (2 pm eastern). John Mannone will be our workshop leader, and his topic will be the intersection of science and poetry. We are not charging any fees for this year's festival (donations are always welcome — send to Janet Qually (4030 Summer Ave #15, Memphis, TN 38122) with a notation "festival donation"), but I do ask you to RSVP to Lori at poetrytennessee@gmail.com so that we can have a headcount. I will send a link and log-in information closer to the date. If you would like to invite a guest, please do... Remember that the Google Meet platform has closed-captioning, if you are worried about not being able to hear.

PST Poetry Readings

All members are invited to participate in poetry readings (any chapter, state-wide, out-of-state)! We share poetry for about 1.5-2 hrs. Plan on having about 3-4 poems to share. We sit and visit, read poetry, and relax. Dates and times for our readings are below. Links will be sent out in separate emails, 7-10 days prior to each reading.

- September — Thursday, 9/17, 7 pm
- October — Thursday, 10/8, 7 pm
- November — Tuesday, 11/17, 7 pm
- December — Tuesday, 12/15, 7 pm

Student Contest

Remember our Student Contest has been published and is available on our website, <https://www.poetrytennessee.org/student-contests.html>

Please share this link with students, teachers, home schoolers, scouts, forensics/thespians, and any other groups you can think of. These are extraordinary times! We are counting on our members for word-of-mouth "marketing" about this contest. Note that deadlines vary for different age groups.

Russell's NFSPS Challenges

Many of you have asked, "Where are Russell's challenges?" Trust me, as soon as NFSPS publishes its contest brochure, you will see Russell's challenges. I will make sure they are sent out to PST, and that they are published to the website. Keep this link handy, because they will be published here: <https://www.poetrytennessee.org/russells-challenges.html>

This year, because of COVID, we'll be managing our challenge critiquing a bit differently. If you have a poem you would like reviewed:

1. If you plan on attending PST-West Tennessee's meeting, email Lori Goetz at poetrytennessee@gmail.com so I know to email you copies of the critiquing poems.
2. Email the poem to Lori Goetz (poetrytennessee@gmail.com) no later than 5 pm the Wednesday before PST-West Tennessee's meeting (the first Saturday of the month).
3. If you are out-of-state/in another chapter and would like to participate in the critique, let Lori know, so she can send you the Google Meet link.
4. Lori will consolidate all poems into a single file and email to all participants for review prior to the meeting.
5. Poems will be (a) read aloud at PST-West Tennessee's meeting and (b) shown onscreen at the meeting for editing. Those who requested copies will have their own copies for review.
6. If the poet is not in attendance at the meeting, a marked-up copy of the poem will be emailed-back to him/her after PST-West Tennessee's meeting with comments/questions, grammar suggestions, etc. If the poet is in attendance, and can make changes/edits from the review, then no transmittal will be necessary.

September Monthly Members-Only Contest Winners

Sponsor: Pamela Watson; Subject: Any; Form: Iambic pentameter, rhymed or blank verse; Lines: 40 max

- 1st Place Howard S. Carman, Jr. Blountville, TN — "Back When"
- 2nd Place Russell Strauss, Memphis, TN — "Future History"
- 3rd Place Sara Gipson, Scott, AR — "Hot Summers"
- 1HM Von S. Bourland, Happy, TX — "Freestyle Skydivers"
- 2HM Janet Qually, Memphis, TN — "A Strong Influence"
- 3HM Ann Carolyn Cates, Southaven, MS — "Safety Concerns at the Grave"

Upcoming Monthly Members-Only Contests

The next few monthly members' only contests are shown below...start writing, folks!!!

November — Sponsor: Lori Goetz; Subject: The hunter or the hunted; Form: Any, Lines: 24 max

December — Sponsor: Florence Bruce; Subject: Any; Form: Blank verse narrative; Lines: 40 max

January — Sponsor: Carol Roberts; Subject: Any; Form: Ghazal; Lines: 10-24

Request for Assistance

We have received a request for assistance from a non-member poet in Collierville, TN. He is compiling a poetry book and is looking for an editor. Free verse, approximately 40 poems. He is willing to pay. If interested, please contact Lori Goetz (poetrytennessee@gmail.com) and I can provide you with his contact information.

Chapter News and COVID-19

I have received questions from some of you when we're going to meet in person again, if we're going to have an in-person Festival next year, etc. All chapters are currently meeting virtually, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. We will not consider in person meetings until 2021, and the decision to meet will be based on public health advisories, COVID case rates, etc. We may not be able to meet in person again until there are enough vaccines to establish herd immunity. We will continue to plan (and have back-up plans) which address these contingencies. In the interim, we ask all of you to consider exploring poetry through our chapters' virtual meetings and readings, as well as what we post on our webpages and Facebook pages. Virtual meetings have allowed many of us to connect with members across the state (and across the country), and to enjoy some amazing poetry. And our webpages and Facebook pages are great avenues (even in this time of COVID) to continue our mission of adult and student education.

As always, feel free to reach out to me, or to any of your PST chapter board members.

- Lori