

A COMMON WEALTH OF POETRY

Newsletter of the Poetry Society of Virginia ♦ April 2020

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

by Derek Kannemeyer, President *Pro Tem*

On January 11, China announced its first death from COVID-19. It is now a global pandemic. And then on February 27, in Norfolk, our own Poetry Society of Virginia president, Jeff Hewitt, was lost to us in a motorcycle accident. He was only 48.

We are shaken, and we are shocked.

Jeff is, and will continue to be, very greatly missed. This newsletter will pay tribute to him, and to the impact he made on the lives of those around him, in the worlds of poetry, and the arts in general, and social activism. Meanwhile, because he had designated me as his president *pro tempore*, I am left to serve out the last three months of his first year as the society's president.

Even without the complications of the coronavirus, this transition comes at our busiest time of the year. While we hold regional events from January to December, our statewide business comes to its head in the spring. This includes, for example, our individual poem contests and our book award; our annual festival and our yearly elections; and in even-numbered years, our Poet Laureate search. Although Jeff was also the Poetry Society's webmaster, and his death left us with a locked website and some dangling threads, we are ruled by an executive committee, and it is as a body of people that we have worked to navigate the storm.

In mid-March, we sent out the list of our top three candidates to succeed Henry Hart as the Poet Laureate of Virginia. I trust that you received that ballot and that by now you have voted. If not, contact Henry Hart today! Because of our web site delays, Henry has agreed to extend his deadline to April 15. His email address is hwhart@wm.edu.

I hope that by the time you read this, our website will be back up and running and that the contest judges will have resumed their work. They have been given an extension to do so. Award winners were to be informed in early April, and the list of names was to go up on our website after May 9, the day of the ceremony: please be patient. There will probably be delays.

The judging of the book award, on the other hand, is proceeding on schedule, and the festival details have been announced. I like to urge our members to flock to that festival, as to our contest awards ceremony. They are our two biggest annual events, and we forge ourselves as a statewide community through our attendance. This year, of course, we must be cautious, as well as patient. Look for more in our May newsletter and on our Facebook page.

There was much to admire about Jeff's work for the society, but what I myself most appreciated were his efforts to make PSV younger, and fresher, and more modern. He upgraded our digital presence. He encouraged younger writers to join us and to join our leadership. He reached out to the community of performance poets. He wished us all, during this month in particular, since April is National Poetry Month, to recruit new members and to continue to broaden our poetic presence. (See my article on "Our April Specials" for more!) With our annual elections coming up, I invite each of you to consider standing—including for president. Let us continue to trend younger. Whatever the challenges we face, let us honor Jeff by meeting them head on—and by coming out stronger.



Jeff Hewitt



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ARTICLES	2-6
POEMS	6-10
ANNOUNCEMENTS	10-14
CONTRIBUTORS	14-15
EDITOR'S NOTES	15

INSERTS:

- ♦ PSV FESTIVAL REGISTRATION FORM
- ♦ PSV FESTIVAL FLYER



ARTICLES

TRIBUTE TO JEFF HEWITT

by Kindra McDonald, Co-VP Southeastern Region

Like many of you, I have been grappling with the shock of the loss of our PSV president, Jeff Hewitt. That he was taken far too young and just days after our first board meeting of 2020 is a devastating loss for the arts community as a whole. At that February meeting, Jeff revealed the cover he designed for the PSV 2019 anthology, talked passionately about his plans for our 100th anniversary celebration, shared ideas for celebrating National Poetry Month, and generally looked ahead to the future. While we navigate these plans without him, we can honor his impact, his vision for what PSV could be, and the importance of poetry in our world.

Jeff loved words and what they could do, and he could spark fire with them. I have struggled to find the perfect words to honor him. I know they would fall short in describing a man whose orbit was far reaching and who had a magnetic pull that could be galvanizing. In his own words, he said, "I've been out here for years and have a track record for telling the truth as best I can." I'll try to do the same.

He was not just a poet; he was a photographer, artist, musician, mentor, teacher, activist, archivist, father, and friend. He was truly brilliant at everything he tried. Jeff Hewitt was often prickly and rough on the outside, stubborn and opinionated, but kind. He was a beautiful human who recognized his own flaws and was made more beautiful by them. He was fiercely protective of those he loved and the things he cared about. Though he would say he didn't care what people's opinion of him was, he cared deeply about making our community better, about his children and their future, about the poets and musicians making their way in this world. He literally created a place for them to call home and nurtured an art scene long before there was social media tracking such things.

If you are an artist in Hampton Roads, I guarantee that you were touched by Jeff in some way. Even if you didn't know him, he either paved the way for you, photographed you, covered your gigs and features for *AltDaily* or *The Anonym*, or fought for arts funding. Jeff invested his time and energy in our community and a seemingly impossible number of projects simultaneously. He appeared to have an endless reserve of energy and a magical way of creating the time to juggle all that he did. He was so intricately tied to the fabric of our collective arts community that the threads trailing behind him will take an army of us to pick up and keep weaving.

He was not afraid to go to the corners of hurt and despair and to sit in those dark places with you, listening and slowly, quietly guiding you out. So much of that empathy and understanding came through in his poetry. He could recognize both the brokenness and beauty in others, and he could accept it without judgement.

He could recognize potential and foster talent, and if he believed in you, Jeff did not say no. When he was needed, he stepped up. It is not hyperbole to say he saved lives; he certainly changed them. While Norfolk, and the Hampton Roads community where he was an absolute fixture for decades, mourns deeply, Jeff had an impact across the state and nationally through his writing and photography. He was many different things to many different people. His reach was large, and he did, indeed, contain multitudes.

So many of his photos capture poets and musicians as they first step up to the mic in that intimate, suspended moment of held breath before they give their words life. He both captured and created art in such a way that you could feel witness to something private, personal, particular, and universal all at the same time. He was a force.

We are poets because we feel the world deeply and we write with empathy over experience; Jeff felt deeply. As I'm writing this, with a ragged nerve of emotions and frayed heart, I know that Jeff lived well and captured so much of his life in his art, and we are better for it. When we take pen to page, we can honor him. When we voice injustice, when we play a soulful guitar riff tuned to open G, when we vote, when we capture a moment in a photograph, when we write that perfect line that makes us know "this is po'try," we can honor Jeff.

It is hard to capture him in the finite space of a newsletter, but I see him revolving around us all. In one of the pieces Jeff wrote for *The Anonym*, he said, "Tomorrow is no promise. And if something as simple as a collection of sounds matched to words can move you through whatever pain is holding you down? That's gotta be worth something. Hell, it might be worth everything."

You were so loved, Jeff, and you will be deeply missed.

JEFF HEWITT

How fortunate I am to have had Jeff Hewitt as a close friend who left an indelible mark on my life by sharing his expertise as both an editor and graphic designer of San Francisco Bay Press. When I first met Jeff twenty years ago, I treasured his talents as a performance poet, musician, and photographer. His respect for those of us old enough to be a surrogate parent was stellar. Regardless of whether Jeff and I were discussing the design of a book cover or the layout of a collection of poems, his mannerly approach to resolving issues was praiseworthy. A few months ago, Jeff requested a blurb for his recently released poetry book entitled *a poacher. trampled by elephants. and then eaten by lions*. Throughout, Jeff explores humankind's predicament by questioning "his own resilience, his capability to cope, to endure whenever 'the failures rise'—and in doing so, carries the reader with him on a philosophical quest 'to figure out / what the path is to a better world.'" Jeff has found a better world. I will never forget this admirable man who shared his intelligence and witty insights, as well as a genuine and caring spirit.

Carolyn Kreiter-Foronda
Virginia Poet Laureate Emerita

In Memoriam

Though I knew him only by email over the last two years, Jeff Hewitt was extremely kind and helpful to me, a fellow poet and newcomer to this society. In addition to his encouragement and appreciation for my work (so unexpected! so heartening and welcome!), I will be eternally grateful for the help he cheerfully rendered in retrieving 24 of my poems written for the PSV contests when I lost a lot of my work due to a USB drive failure. Despite his many duties and great involvement, he always had time for me. And he did so much for the Poetry Society of Virginia, with his enthusiasm and vision—changes I appreciated even in my short time here. Jeff, my heartfelt thanks—I'm glad I had the chance to know you, even a little. I will miss you. I'm so sorry.

Adele Gardner

APRIL IS NATIONAL POETRY MONTH . . . WRITE, WRITE, WRITE!

ANNUAL POETRY CONTEST NEWS

Derek Kannemeyer & JT Williams, Contest Coordinators

Poets, we are in the midst of a global health crisis—and our own website crisis, as I write this, is also unresolved. **So there will be a contest update in the May newsletter.** But in case of the best possible outcome to these two crises, here is what we have planned.

The Poetry Society's annual contest ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, May 9, at Glen Allen Public Library, from 10 - 2. Glen Allen is in the county of Henrico, just outside the Richmond city limits, and is easily accessible from both I-95 and I-64. The address is 10501 Staples Mill Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060.

Judges have been given an extension to complete their work. Award winners will be notified as soon as the judging is complete. They and all other society members are invited and encouraged to attend the ceremony. This is an opportunity to support and celebrate some of the best writers among us. All first-place poems will be read aloud by each winning poet, if present, or by the MC. 2nd place, 3rd place, and HM poems will be presented by the poet if he or she is in attendance.

Schedule: 10-10:20 meet and greet and sign in
10:20-12:20 a reading of the winning poems, part 1
12:20 -12:45 refreshments break and a chance to hobnob a little!
12:45 - 2:00 (at the latest) a reading of the winning poems, part 2

Coffee, water, and some light refreshments will be provided. Those who wish to bring their own boxed lunch are encouraged to do so. Those who wish to go out after the ceremony for an informal convivial lunch will be invited to gather at a local eatery.

Our anthology of the award-winning poems, together with poems by the category judges, will be collected in book form and available, we hope, for purchase by the fall.

For a first announcement of any new developments, check our Facebook page.

Finally, Jeff's family announced funeral arrangements. Along with several other services, Jeff was memorialized by his family at The Norva in Norfolk on Saturday, March 21st from 2-6. The Norva is actually a music venue, and I can think of no better place to honor Jeff. He was a fixture there as a photojournalist photographing all forms of musicians from local to major acts.

THE 2020 POETRY SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA FESTIVAL

Terry Cox-Joseph, PSV Eastern Region Vice President

The 2020 Poetry Society of Virginia Festival will take place on campus in The College of William and Mary Sadler Center on May 29 and 30, 2020. Friday night runs 7:00-8:30 p.m. and will include a book signing and refreshments. Saturday begins at 10 a.m. and will include a book signing. The closing banquet will take place at Fords Colony. Keynotes Gregory Donovan and Michele Poulos will present a film on Friday night. Saturday we will have presentations by E. Ethelbert Miller and Lisa Russ Spaar, as well as a panel discussion with all four of the poets. Saturday evening will conclude with a dinner banquet and short reading by the winner of the Virginia Book Award. See attached flier for more information.



PSV APRIL SPECIALS

by Derek Kannemeyer

At our February leadership meeting, Jeff Hewitt urged the PSV to make a yearlong push to recruit new members—and also to find ways to celebrate National Poetry Month together while making April a time to offer new members some special benefits.

Therefore, on Jeff's initiative, **those who join the society this April can do so at a reduced first year rate of \$20. Please pass the word to your friends in poetry who are not yet members!**

But this is no normal Poetry Month. The coronavirus pandemic requires us to cancel April events, not stage special new ones. So instead, **may I invite you all to a digital poetry party?** Social distancing does not mean we can't commune poetically on social media!

APRIL CHALLENGE FOR NEW MEMBERS: The Welcome Poem

New society members this April are invited to post a poem on our Facebook page.

No special permission is needed: just "like" our society's page and post ONE poem. Page poems and performance pieces—print, audio, or video—are all solicited. Ekphrastic poets, add photos. And please say something about yourself, or about your poem, in a comment.

Current members who recruit a new member: post a companion piece!

Members who are on FB: visit our page daily. *Read* these poems! Say hi! Comment!

Actually, since our Facebook page is open to all of us, **any member may post a poem** at any time. Go ahead: do so! **But only new members and those who recruit them will be eligible for "The Welcome Poem Prize."** Fair warning: we have yet to decide how we pick the winner and what this prize is! But we do plan to offer 1-3 poems a spot in our annual contest anthology. (Previously unpublished work preferred but not required.)

APRIL CHALLENGE FOR ALL MEMBERS: The Daily Short Poem

1. This challenge is open to all society members, new or old, who have access to Facebook. You may post up to 30 poems of 16 lines or fewer but no more than one piece for any day.
2. Challenge some friends to participate with you. And have fun with it! When William Stafford, who would not get out of bed until he had drafted a new poem for the day, was asked what he did when he was too uninspired to write anything decent, he replied, "I lower my standards." The first way to improve our writing is to commit to write.
3. The title of your poem must include that day's prompt word or a variant of it.
(e.g., for April 1st, Fool: April Fool's Day, Fooling Around, Raspberry Fool, etc.)
4. You have one day's grace. Poems should be submitted on the day of the prompt or no later than one day after.
5. If this experiment works, we may also include some sample poems in our annual anthology. At the board's discretion, there may be a "free year of membership" prize. The full list of daily prompt words is posted on our Facebook page. Below, I give the first five only:

- 1st: Fool
 2nd: Neighbor
 3rd: Air
 4th: Playground
 5th: Apple



NORTHERN REGION REPORT

Mike Maggio, Northern Region Vice President
 mmaggio@poetryvirginia.org

Hello, PSV Northern Region Members and Happy New Year to ALL of you!

March 6th at Arts Herndon featured readers **Linda Ankrach-Dove** and **Cathy Hailey**, plus open mic. Host: **Mike Maggio**

Our Northern Region Poetry festival took place on Saturday, March 14, at Northern Virginia Community College – Alexandria campus. Our featured reader was Georgy Orr with a panel discussion on the business of poetry as well as an invitational reading. I want to recognize, thank, and commend **Cathey Hailey** for the excellent job she has done on putting this festival together.

Please continue to send your announcements and accomplishments, so I can disseminate them to our members. And thanks to all those who help make our region active and successful, and to **Sally Zakariya** for gathering each month's listings.

for North Central Region Report see page 6

NORTH CENTRAL REGION REPORT

David Anthony Sam
VP for PSV North Central Region
www.davidanthonysam.com

My goal is that the PSV North Central Region have regular meetings where we can discuss organizational matters as well as share poetry.

Key Goals

- Increase membership in the region (please consider bringing an interested guest to events and meetings)
- Plan regular meetings, locations, and agendas
- Create an advisory group to the VP (currently me)
- Have a group who would be available to help with events and meetings

Announcements and Events

Jenna Veasey recently started a Plein Air Poetry group in Fredericksburg . . . the link to our Meet Up information is below. In addition, my employer, River Rock Outfitter (also in Fredericksburg) is going to host a First Friday "Nature Indoors" Poetry open mic night to kick off National Poetry Month. Jenna will share specifics as soon as available.

<https://www.meetup.com/Plein-Air-Poetry/>

POEMS

Venus

by Thayer Cory

The sky has gone dark.
Tangled branches
form a frame to house
a slender waxing moon
promising to swell
like a pregnant belly.
Suspended above
her smile,
Venus, a diamond
so bold other stars
take flight.

Named for the Roman goddess
of love and beauty,
They call her Earth's sister,
the brightest planet.
I can't stop thinking
about my own sister

Slowly waning
into Alzheimer's.
At 76 she looks girlish
and innocent, stroked by loss
but not afraid - open,
absorbing the love that is hers,
doling out gratitude to those in her
orb.

When I was a girl,
she was a goddess,
a star in my eyes,
I her pale shadow.
Now she looks to me
for guidance.

Love and beauty.
Love and beauty.
I can't stop
saying the words.

I know, one day, dawn
will come to take my
sister.
Tonight I feel the
darkness
tilting, raining
diamonds
and slivers of moon

down around me.

POEMS

The Bird Returns

by Farin Powell

I tell my friends:
 "If you ever saw me happy,
 don't be jealous;
 I was not destined to be happy."
 The happiness I know is like a
 bird
 that finds me sometimes
 in odd places, or
 unexpected times.
 It sits on my roof,
 for a little while.
 Then, it gets bored,
 and flies away.
 The bird doesn't see the
 destruction
 it leaves behind.
 and never knows about my pain.

Years later,
 when I've got all
 the broken pieces glued together,
 the bird returns,
 singing again,
 giving me the hope,
this time, he'll stay.
 But he flies away,
 leaving me wondering
 how long should I wait;
 another year,
 another decade,
 or maybe forever.

Conjuring You

by Robert A. Rickard

*for Pat Adler, 2006 **

Tell me about your eye
 And I shall tell you what happened to my ankle
 Visiting Cézannes now hang on the finest walls in my city
 You and I walked through another gallery on a summer day
 My window to the outside world is a mirror
 In which I imagine myself reflected
 Released from career, a matured farm boy
 Still running as fast as rabbits in snow
 Old family keepsakes wink at me
 Through antique glass of a corner cupboard
 The street lamp began its sleep at dawn
 All my lights sparkled out, it seemed for years
 I forget whether you were ever released from your vows
 Perhaps I renounced too many of mine, or made too few
 I wonder what you see these days that is bright or dark
 My eyes glass over with the fog of time.

* Editor of *The Poet's Domain* and
 Publisher, Live Wire Press

A Matter of Difference

by Erin Newton Wells

Leonardo's Salvatore Mundi

What thrilled him was change, seeing it begin
 from nothing as he constructed wing frames
 to lift a man, transforming him to a bird,
 or wheels to catch water and turn it into force.
 He watched seed become root, stem, leaf,
 saw the first white fleshy form and drew it,
 found it worthy of his secret mirrored writing.

Notebooks are filled with opened chambers,
 this peering inward to find the engine of change,
 to take apart and reassemble, to duplicate
 the moment of beginning. His hand records
 an infant curled in the oval womb, efficiency
 of space, what he can never truly know,
 never feel as matter quickens into energy.

Is it this metamorphosis he wants to convey,
 what a man can never bear but a spirit man
 may show in eyes and smile, this change,
 rebirth of himself, old into new, world
 into world, face floating in transformation,
 hand with liquid orb held forth to show us
 the past and future, the moment it begins.



POEMS

My Call

by J. Scott Wilson

Starting today
 some of you will call me Anubis
 but when the phone rings and it's my number on the face
 then you will curse me as the Asphyx
 wondering whose soul I have come to carve free
 perched upon your lips *"James, is it me?"*
 and, in that moment, that one fears I have become Ammut
 Devourer of Heavy Souls
 made delicious by regrets
 or the very crocodile maw, to the very tooth
 But in truth
 I am the Ba. That flapping, fluttering bird of the self
 my call, my email is the squawk
 your departed's soul demanding to be noticed
 long enough to impart that you ever notice
 Notice now the souls about you,
 Look now upon the beautiful gems
 that are your friends
 Feel my siblings fluttering in the chests of those about you
 Feel your very own Ba in your neck, in your wrist
 reminding you to connect
 and not leave hearts unchecked
 least you gather only regrets
 Delicious
 Know you that to the ancients; Anubis,
 Ammut, even Asphyx
 bureaucrats
 merely having a job to do
 even a welcome, comforting Who's who
 Terrible mainly to those with that one more thing to say
 So tend to that business before you leave this day
 and when my call heralds Your Ba set free
 you'll be glad for those who had to hear from me.

**El Rodadero (Rolling Mountain)**

by Norma I. Cofresí, PhD

My mother's people know the Tao of the land:
 when to plant and when to harvest,
 where to dig for fiber-rich yucca, yautía, yams, and
 ñame:
 tubers with thick brown skins peeled, boiled, drizzled
 with
 olive oil or rendered fatback from slaughtered pigs.
 My mother's people are one with the land.
 They hold reverence for the sacred and ineffable,
 pray to Papá Dios and Madre Santa to heal and restore,
 keep harmony with the ways of nature,
 and mostly, follow the good path.
 My mother's people are mountain dwellers.
 Each new day welcomed, each birth a celebration.
 Each death a heart-piercing good-by.
 Hurricanes, droughts, and floods are seasonal
 afflictions,
 but tremor after tremor bewilder, even the wise.
 For weeks unrelenting earthquakes shift the earth.
 The ground trembles the land awake, rests, moves again.
 Pink, yellow, and bright blue houses tumble
 down hills, onto driveways, blocking roads.
 On the hollows, away from trees and houses, my
 mother's people sleep.
 An old lady keeps watch with her lit cigar.
 She is one with the goddess of the land.
 She grieves with the land, its unhappiness.
 She grieves, inconsolably, she weeps.
 She stomps her foot amid earth's renewal.

Poem for Jeff

by Taz Weysweete

The night Tonie Morrison died, Janis Joplin asked her for a
 dance
 They talked about Vietnam all night
 Reminiscid on Woodstock and the Bluest Eye
 Nelson Mandela and John Lennon
 You know
 Just what it was like when their souls hit the air
 Jan whispered bout how she fucked a Black man who had
 ducked the war
 And Tonie whispered about how she loved men who could
 never be a representation of her people
 You know, the things we women talk about over playing cards
 or sipping tea
 Behind closed doors and kitchen sinks yo that's just that on that
 When revolution could be questioned
 Because we believed everything we had been taught was a lie
 Or at least not science
 When everything was God
 And we could challenge that nigga cause we ain't seen him

(Poem for Jeff continued on next page)

POEMS

(Poem for Jeff continued)

Too many of us don't know our daddy's
 Too many of us don't claim our feelings
 So God became needles
 Or basketballs
 Or pens
 And the only way you see heaven is if you kill yourself practicing for Coachella or if you almost freeze standing in 30 degrees
 Beyoncé ,my weed man , and poets is angels
 In heaven
 I imagine the black people mingle and talk shit
 Like Malcom X sitting with the Kennedys over an Irish breakfast and a Muslim fast
 Or like Capone facing Warhol for a painting while he snickers that the fruit cup better not paint him as a soup can
 Basquat chuckles he would never, plus it'd make his momma mad
 Respect got layers
 But the truth is the truth
 The universe blesses us with examples
 We tend to call them legends
 Or ancestors
 We tend to call them monsters
 Or lost
 We tend to call them genius
 With demons
 We tend to call them everything but what their mamas called them like if I had prolific tatted on my face you'd gun me down like I
 ain't human
 Am I too prolific to be human?
 Will they shoot me off my podium
 Will I die unrecognized
 I'm not ashamed to say their names
 Will they lift mine?
 Want to be worthy of sitting between Eartha Kitt and Afeni in heaven
 ask them what bravery b about
 I wanna kno why Marvin wasn't on Ooooh Child, but at least once a week I play inner city blues on an Old town road
 And
 Wait
 For
 The
 Beat
 To
 Drop
 Cause that's when everything gets a little bit easier
 Forgiveness is a virtue
 Feel like I've been living in my church shoes a muse for failure and God
 I fear failure and God
 I fear not being forgiven by those I love and being ripped of my vocal chords
 Or the ability of my fingers to move
 The night Tonie died, Janis asked her for a dance
 Janis told her not to cry
 To just wipe her eyes and dance, furiously
 Because dying doesn't have to be hard even if it is
 And Alice is holding up her Walker under a purple sky waiting for them to drop blood on the dance floor of an awkward
 wonderland
 So they danced
 And they danced
 By the end of the song they were both screaming In paradigm
 Creation on its last breath
 I think I heard it



Elegy for Jeff

by Ann Falcone Shalaski

It makes no sense,
it doesn't add up.

Bold and wild,
you navigate life on city streets

as earth turns on its axis. Slip
out of existence, and depart

to who knows where?
Fingertips like polished stones,

touch the moon. Earth, dust
on your tongue.

Stunned by the news, your passing
consumes us. A strong man

with a young man's face, full of promise,
gone too soon.

Now, so little seems so right.
There is nothing left for us to do,

except stir the cells of memory.
Pull you gently back into the light

and remember you. Remember you.
It makes no sense, it doesn't add up.

Of Myths and Men

by Crickyt J. Expression (Meyer)

Legends are not born
but crafted

Unintentionally.

Through circumstance
and reactions,
Through curiosity-
disregarding the words
Forbidden and Can't,
Through willful sharing
of mind and talent,

Unapologetically.

Through laughing
in the face of fear,
Through daring to push
envelopes and limits,
Through fiercely railing
when others stay silent,

Unabashedly.

Through prolific exhaustion
of every thought,
Through embracing people
as adventures and secrets,
Through cartography
of the human condition,

Unceremoniously.

Through way-points,
scribblings and glyphs
left to be deciphered
by friends and foes
long after meeting
the Reaper's gaze,

Unafraid.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**BE SURE TO CHECK VENUES PRIOR TO EACH EVENT TO MAKE SURE
THEY HAVE NOT BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19**

The **PSV 2020 Contest Awards Ceremony** will be held at Glen Allen Library in Henrico (Greater Richmond) on Sat., May 5, from 10 - 2.

MAY PSV ELECTIONS & other news

Our annual elections ballot will appear in the May newsletter. If you wish to stand for society office, or to nominate a willing candidate for any open position, including that of President, please contact our Elections Chair, J. Scott Wilson, at HRACandWPP@outlook.com.

Our next newsletter has been rescheduled to come out in May instead of June; therefore, articles are due to the newsletter editor by April 15. We may change to an odd month schedule for the remainder of the year, but this is still TBD.

As of this writing, our website is in limbo as we search for a new webmaster. The situation may be resolved by the time you read this, but it may not be. If you are interested, and qualified, or can recommend someone who is, please contact the interim president, Derek Kannemeyer.

Poetry at the Chrysler: Jack Callan and Judith Stevens will present a poetry ensemble program, "Points of Agreement," with musical accompaniment at The Chrysler Museum of Art, One Memorial Place, Norfolk, Virginia 23510. The event will take place on Thursday, April 16, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Room 205 - The Baroque Gallery.

Poets and musicians include PSV members from the Hampton Roads area and the Blue Ridge Mountains: Lisa Kendrick, Dave Lego, Colleen Redman, and Jack and Judith. They will be accompanied by Jim Best on hang drum and Brian Magill on clarinet, diggery-doo, and the Javanese gamelan. Admission is FREE and all are invited to sample this acoustically welcoming, light-filled venue, surrounded by glorious oil paintings and sculpture.

Seventh annual 30 for 30 Poetry Celebration

The 7th annual 30 for 30 Poetry Celebration will again take place in April. Thanks to John Wang, editor of *Potomac Review*, for sponsoring this event once again this year. This year's judge is David Lotte, and the winner will receive a one-year subscription to the journal. Send an email right away to mikmaggio@mikemaggio.net stating your intent to participate because the first 30 poets who respond to this call will be selected to submit their Re(en)visioned poem. Do not send any poems at this time, but do contact Mike Maggio as soon as possible.

Aromas Coffeehouse and Word4Word Poets

Open Mic Poetry is the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Sign-up @ 6:30pm; Open Mic @ 7:00pm. The coffee is great, the food is delicious, and we have an Open Mic. We love, support, and encourage First Time Readers in this family friendly venue. Bring a friend. Everyone is welcomed. Hosted by **Ann Shalaski, Tanya Cunningham-Jones, & J. Scott Wilson** Aromas Coffeehouse, 706 Town Center Drive, Newport News, VA 23606

WIDER PERSPECTIVES PUBLISHING is proud to specialize in bringing Virginia poets to print. Let's sit down together and start forging your dreams into very real form. The mission is your book in 1/3 the time and around 1/3 the cost of the big publishing houses. Contact HRACandWPP@outlook.com for more information.

James Wilson, Director of Innovation
Hampton Roads Artistic Collective
and Wider Perspectives Publishing

OPEN MIC AT WILLIAMSBURG LIBRARY: The Williamsburg Library and the Chesapeake Bay Writers are sponsoring an Open Mic on the third Sunday of every month from 1 – 3:00. Bring your poetry, prose, fiction, or non-fiction and share your writing. For more information, contact Susan Williamson at susanwilliamsonnc@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONT.)

Talya Chapman lists the following poetry venues

04-01-20 April Fool's Day

Funny Poem Slam!
The Venue on 35th
631 W 35th St., Norfolk
Doors Open 6:30, Slam 7:30
\$5 at the door

04-02-20 Open-Mic Poetry

Poetry & Jazz Tasting
C'est Le Vin
15 N 17th St., Richmond
Starts at 7:00 (1st Thurs)
804-649-9463
Host: Joanna Lee

04-03-20 The 15th Annual Poetry Slam

Richmond Public Library
101 E Franklin St., Richmond
6:30 - 8:00
Sponsor: Friends of RPL
Host: Roscoe Burnems

04-05-20 YWW Poetry Workshop/OpenMic

Mobjack Coffee Roasters
411 Main St., Yorktown
10a-12p
Host: Jill Winkowski

04-07-20 Words on Fire:

Poetry Happy Hour at Firehouse
Firehouse Theatre
1609 W Broad St., Richmond
6:00 - 8:00
Host: River City Poets

04-11-20 Poetry in Motion

ODU Writers in Community
Slover Library
235 E. Plume St., Norfolk
10:30 - noon

04-14-20 Word4Word Poetry Open Mic (FF)

Aromas, City Center
706 Town Center Dr., Suite 104
Newport News 6:30-8pm
757-240-4650
Hosts Ann, James, @ Tanya

04-14-20 25 Mics

Spoken Word Poetry Series
Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Ctr
2410 Wickham Dr., Newport News
7:00 - 9:00 (2nd Tues)
Host: Nina Brewton

04-16-20 Points of Agreement: Poetry Ensemble

Lisa Kendrick, Dave Lego, Colleen Redman, Jack Callan,
Judith Stevens, Brian Magill, and Jim Best
The Chrysler Museum of Art
One Memorial Place, Room 205
The Baroque Gallery, Norfolk
6:30 - 8:00

04-18-20 Poet Fest 2020

The Venue on 35th
631 W 35th St., Norfolk

04-26-20 PoetTree: In Motion

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Ave., Richmond
10:00a - 4:00p
Hosts: LGB Garden and River City
Poets

05-02-20 VA Welcomes Chicago!

Spoken Word Showcase & Open Mic
Featuring: Cass Is Free, Jule Lyle,
Mannarzm and Elia Qasim,
The High -
307 B High St., Portsmouth
7:00 - 10:00
\$10 entry (food, beverage, raffle)
Host: Lady Jacqueline &
Just Mic "Da Poet"
For more info: 252-302-1304



(FF) Family Friendly Venue (i.e., no vulgar, obscene, crude or cuss words) If you're new to a venue, always check with the host for house rules.

Events can change or be cancelled with little or no notice. When in doubt, please contact venue before attending.

You can also find the venue list and more on Talya's blog:

<http://goodwordpoetryplus.blogspot.com/2020/02/poetry-week-highlights.html>

ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONT.)

SATURDAY POETRY SERIES

Four outstanding poets graced the stage of the Williamsburg Library Theatre on February 1. Introduced by our ever-creative M. C., Bill Glose, Bill Ayres, Thayer Corey, Jeff Hewitt, and Linda Partee shared their unique styles with us and sent us home feeling inspired to sit down at our own computers and get to work. Thank you to everyone who came and to those of you who couldn't be there—we missed you and hope to see you in April at the Stryker Building in Williamsburg at 11 a.m.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

APRIL 18 Featured poets will be...Serena Fusek, Toni Sheeley, Ken Sutton, and Guy Terrell.
 MAY: No Saturday Series. Be sure to attend the Poetry Festival and Poetry Awards Ceremony
 JUNE 6 The James City Poets will be the featured presenters.

5TH ANNUAL LITTLE RIVER POETRY FESTIVAL

June 12-14, 2020 in Floyd, Virginia

Featuring workshops, poetry readings, open mics, and writing excursions: \$15 per day
 Walk-ins also welcome! Contact Jack Callan and Judith Stevens at 757-622-8721

Sharon Ackerman announces that *Streetlight* magazine of Central Virginia is opening for submissions for the spring and summer editions. See <https://streetlightmag.com/>

Linda Ankrah-Dove's poem "Chalice" was published in *SDI International*, Jan. issue. In addition, her poem "Mirage" appeared in *Poetry X Hunger 2019*, the online partner to U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization.

David Black reports 3 recent publications: 2 poems, "Nocturnes" in *Lamplit Underground, Vol 2* and "Somewhere in This Large Field" in *Friends Journal*, March 2020, and an article, "Behold the Clerihew" in *Virginia English Journal*, Winter 2020. David is a rural Virginian whose poetry reflects that heritage. A graduate of UVA and a retired teacher, he's published a collection of clerihews and a volume of spiritual verse, as well as lyric poetry.

Pia Borsheim's fifth collection of poems is under contract negotiations, to be titled (tentatively) *Above the Birch Line* (GUPress, forthcoming in 2020). She will serve as a semi-final-round judge for the Poetry Out Loud competition, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, to be held April 23-24 in Lisner Auditorium in D.C.

Jeff Campbell had a poem featured in the Z Publishing, *Virginia's Best Emerging Poets 2019 Anthology* and recently self-published a full-length poetry collection on Amazon.
https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1712179241/ref=dbs_a_def_rwt_bibl_vppi_i0

Sharon Canfield Dorsey's essay "Well-Behaved Women Rarely Make History" was awarded 3rd Place in the National League of American Pen Women Annual Essay Contest from a field of over 300 submissions. She has been invited to participate in a special Winners' Circle reading on April 25th at the Darcy Hotel in Washington, D. C. Sharon's newest book, a travel memoir, *ROAD TRIP*, is now available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble and High Tide Publications.

Terry Cox-Joseph has been awarded annual prize for best artwork by *The Northern Virginia Review's* Editorial Board. *Hummingbird Fairy* and *Whangaparaoa in the Morning* were chosen for spring publication, as well as a cash prize. The spring launch of Volume 34 will be held Thursday, March 26 on Northern Virginia Community College's Annandale Campus.

Stan Galloway informed us that the Bridgewater International Poetry Festival (Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, VA) offers 5 workshops over 4 days, May 13-16 (with open mics on May 13 and 17). Details of the workshops (and the festival as a whole) can be found at wp.bridgewater.edu/bipf. Poets who are attending may also apply to present their work. Registration for the entire 5-day event is only \$35; workshops are an additional \$30 each, registration fee waived if attending 2 or more workshops. Contact lit-conf@bridgewater.edu.

Jan Hoffman will share her children's book *Four Fairy Friends* at FaeryFest 4—Earth Day Celebration (50th Anniversary) in Gloucester on Sat., Apr. 18, 6619 Main St., from 10-3:00. This is a street-wide festival for all ages hosted by The Nurtury and Gloucester County Library-Virginia. All are welcome!

Sarah Kohrs's poem "I Walk Through" was published in *Cumberland River Review's* Jan. issue and is available at <http://crr.trevecca.edu/article/i-walk-through>. Her poem "Holding a Placenta" will be in *The West Trade Review's* Spring 2020 issue. For more information, visit <http://www.senkohrs.com/writing.html>.

Farin Powell's poetry collection *Life Is Good: A Book of Poetry* was released in Jan. by Author House. "A Bird Returns" is from the book.

David Anthony Sam is the proud grandson of peasant immigrants from Poland and Syria. He graduated from Eastern Michigan University (BA, MA) and Michigan State (Ph.D.) and now lives in Virginia with his wife and life partner, Linda. His poetry has appeared in over 90 journals and publications and his poem, "First and Last," won the 2018 Rebecca Lard Award. He has five published collections including *Final Inventory* (Prolific Press, 2018) and *Finite to Fail: Poems after Dickinson*, the 2016 Grand Prize winner of the GFT Press Chapbook Contest. He teaches creative writing at Germanna Community College from where he retired as President in 2017. David is VP of the North Central Region.

Erin Newton Wells has won the recently announced *Sow's Ear Poetry Review* 2019 Poetry Contest, judged by Jericho Brown, for her poem, "Dream Sequence, Following Late News," as well as The Writer's Eye 2019 First Place Poetry Prize, judged by Gregory Orr, for her poem, "For My Hands, for My Village of Eyes." The poems, respectively, will be published in *The Sow's Ear* and *The Writer's Eye* journals. See more under Contributors.

Taz Weysweete is author of *Cocoa Blues* and *bite* (Poetry). She is a self-proclaimed spoken word artist, troubadour, and baby mama with home stages at The Venue on 35th in Norfolk and Cipher Tuesdays at The Train Station in Newport News.

CONTRIBUTORS

Norma I. Cofresí is a psychologist, psychoanalyst, and a writer. She was born in New York City to Puerto Rican parents and has lived in Puerto Rico, New York City, and Cleveland. Retirement in Williamsburg has given her the gift of time to write, commune with nature, and enjoy her family, especially her grandchildren. "El Rodadero" pays tribute to her mother and her culture.

Thayer Cory's poem "Venus" is a tribute to her late sister. Thayer is retired but is an active member of the Williamsburg Poetry Guild and recently presented some of her work at the Saturday Poetry Series in Williamsburg.

Kindra McDonald is the author of the collections *Fossils* and *In the Meat Years* and the chapbooks *Concealed Weapons and Elements and Briars*. She received her MFA from Queens University of Charlotte and teaches poetry at The Muse Writers Center in Norfolk.

Latasha Drax's poetry collection *Metamorphosis of Rhythm* debuted in September 2019 and is available on her website at <https://latashadrax.com/my-books/>. The book is also available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Target, and other major online retailers. Also, join Latasha in April during National Poetry Month at any of her scheduled events or workshops: Not So Pretty Poems: Techniques to Write Poetry with Traumatic Themes at 3:30pm on April 11, 2020, at the main Hampton Public Library and at Dog Eared Books in Hampton on April 25th. For more information or details, contact her at (631) 530-7954.

Crickyt J. Expression (Meyer) is a relatively new member to PSV. Crickyt J. Expression serves as a pen name though many simply call her C.J. Her tribute to Jeff honors him as a legend to so many in the poetry community of Hampton Roads. She continues, "To say he'll be missed is an understatement. The very air here in Tidewater is different. Perhaps it isn't the salt from the ocean in the current but all the tears still falling over his loss."

CONTRIBUTORS (cont.)

Farin Powell practices law in Washington, D.C. In addition to many legal publications, she has published short stories and poems in various literary magazines and poetry anthologies. She is the author of two books of poetry: *A Piece of Heaven*, and *Life Is Good*. *The Mother* is Powell's fourth novel. Previous novels are *Two Weddings*, *Roxana's Revolution*, and *The Judge*. See www.farinpowellbooks.com, www.farinpowell.com, and Amazon.com, Farin Powell page.

Robert A. Rickard's poem, "Conjuring You" (for Pat Adler, 2006 *), appeared in his book, *Until the Singing Ends* (Live Wire Press, 2019) Editor and Publisher, Patricia S. Adler. Bob is a PSV Life Member and a retired executive who lives and writes on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and at *Laetare*, his waterfront haven in the Northern Neck of Virginia. His poetry appears in PSV's 80th *Anniversary Anthology of Poems, 2003*; in *Pleasant Living Magazine*; and in 13 volumes of *The Poet's Domain*. His book, *Until the Singing Ends*, was published in 2019 by Live Wire Press, Publisher and Editor, the late Patricia S. Adler.

Ann Falcone Shalaski of Newport News will judge the poetry contest for children through adults for the Poquoson Public Library in honor of national poetry month. She presented a poetry composition workshop on March 8th to encourage reluctant and closet writers with prompts and support for the written word in preparation for the contest. Ann's third poetry collection, *Just So You Know*, was published recently by Live Wire Press.

Erin Newton Wells is a teacher with a background in the visual arts, languages, and writing. She has received numerous awards for poetry, including the Academy of American Poets University Award and the Sow's Ear Poetry Prize, judged by Jericho Brown, as well as the Golden Nib and frequent Poetry Virginia awards. Her work appears in *Spillway*, *Poetry South*, and *Valley Voices*, among others. Currently, she lives in Charlottesville. "A Matter of Difference" previously appeared in *Valley Voices*.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Jan Hoffman

With all that's happened since the last newsletter, I may have omitted a submission and/or repeated information. Also, some of the events listed may have been or may be cancelled due to the COVID-19 virus. Some submissions are being held till the next issue. If there is misinformation, please let me know, so I can correct it.

The address on your newsletter is that of our printer/publisher. If you wish to send a note to PSV, please contact the following address:

Poetry Society of VA
PO Box 14046
Newport News VA 23608

Finally, because there is so much going on at this time of the year, PSV will publish the next newsletter in May rather than June. Please send submissions to janhoffpoetry@gmail.com prior to April 15—the earlier, the better. We may switch to odd months, and if so, the next issue after May will be July, but I'll let you know for sure in the May issue.

Thanks for your submissions, and thanks for your patience. Keep writing!

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS: Please send articles, announcements, and poetry to share with your fellow PSV members. Your work may be unpublished or previously published, but if necessary, don't forget to include an acknowledgement. Remember to include a brief bio for the Contributors' page, and keep work apolitical and family friendly. Please send to janhoffpoetry@gmail.com. The deadline for May newsletter is April 15.

POETRY SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

1709 Memorial Avenue
Lynchburg, VA 24501

RAY/MARIN ABELL
4500 BASSWOOD WAY
WILLIAMSBURG VA 23188

PSV EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President

Jeff Hewitt
j.hewitt@me.com
757.412.5642

President Pro Tempore

Derek Kannemeyer
derekannemeyer@gmail.com

Southeast Regional Co-VPs

Michael Khandelwal
michael@the-muse.org

Kindra McDonald
ardnik615@yahoo.com

Northern Regional VP

Mike Maggio
mikemaggio@mikemaggio.net

North Central Regional VP

David Anthony Sam
davidanthonysam@gmail.com

North Western Regional VP

To Be Filled
Interested in Serving?
Contact the President!

Central Regional VP

Joanna Lee
joannasuzannelee@gmail.com

Eastern Regional VP

Terry Cox Joseph
tcxjoseph@aol.com

Western Region

Pedro Larrea
larrearubio_p@lynchburg.edu

Treasurer

Talya Chatman
tchatman4@cox.net

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Robert P Arthur
robert.peebles.arthur@gmail.com

Henry Hart
hwhart@wm.edu

Luisa Igloria
luisa.igloria61@gmail.com

Ann Shalaski
ashalaski@msn.com

Sofia Starnes
smstarnes@cox.net



POETRY SOCIETY
OF VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Archivist

Dr. Melissa Johnson
mcjohnson@vcu.edu

Annual Contests Chair / Poetry

Virginia Editor
Tom Williams
blogferatu119@gmail.com

Book Award Chair

Sofia Starnes
smstarnes@cox.net

Development Chair

Daniel Pearlman
poetree@cox.net

Calendar Coordinator

Sally Zakariya
sally.zakariya@gmail.com

Finance Committee Chair

TBD

Festival Chair

Terry Cox-Joseph
tcxjoseph@aol.com

Institutional Outreach Chair

Jose Roman
jose@asapasap.org

Membership & Elections Chair

J Scott Wilson
HRACandWPP@outlook.com

Newsletter Editor

Janice Hoffman
janhoffpoetry@gmail.com

Out-of-State Coordinator

Linda Nottingham
nottlinda@aol.com

Parliamentarian

Robert P Arthur
robert.peebles.arthur@gmail.com

Poetry in the Schools

Cathy Hailey
haileycp@gmail.com

Recording Secretary

Tasia Weysweet Linton
tazlyn7@gmail.com

Saturday Series Contact

Bill Glose
billglose@cox.net

Social Media Coordinator and

Communications Chair

David Anthony Sam
davidanthonysam@gmail.com

Webmaster

Matthew Overstreet
kid_o@mac.com

LITERARY ADVISORY BOARD

Jorge Mendez

Ron Smith

Ken Sutton

Carlton West

Eddie Dowe

Pia Borsheim